

## Paul & Liz Davenport – Biographical Notes

Although involved in the folk scene since the 1960s, Paul and Liz both have singing connections from long before their involvement in the folk revival. Song has been a large part of their growing up in their hometown of Hull in East Yorkshire.

Encouraged to sing from an early age by parents and grandparents Paul was an early fan of traditional song. His paternal grandmother came from the Kilvington family who were renowned as singers in the isolated village of Settrington near Malton. Similarly, on his mother's side Paul has antecedents from Norfolk and the Channel Islands. His Norfolk-born grandfather's family were respected song carriers hailing from the Broads area of the county and his grandfather's great-uncle in particular was a well known and much collected traditional singer.

On her father's side Liz's family originate from the north east where most of the men were shipwrights in North Shields. When not building ships, her great grandfather, Robert Thomas Cowey, was a piper. Liz's mother was a member of the ubiquitous Smith family originating in the South East of England. Some of Liz's earliest memories are of annual trips to visit traveller relatives at Hull Fair. She recalls hours spent in caravans located behind the fairground booths and her granddad's cautionary, "Don't tell your mother!" One of Liz's earliest songs, learned at this time in her life includes the rather ironic line, 'My Mother said, I never should, play with the gipsies in the wood!'

Paul and Liz are fortunate, given that they are city born and bred, to have roots that encompass such a wide range of rural tradition. Although Paul has recently been editor of 'English Dance & Song', the magazine of the English Folk Dance & Song Society, they tend to be in the folk scene rather than of it. They are not regular club singers and, although they can be heard often in informal singing situations in public, they prefer singing in informal settings. They were the closing performers for the 25th Conference of the International Council for Traditional Music in Sheffield in 2005, a privilege which is a testimony to the esteem with which their singing is regarded.

In 2006 Paul & Liz released their first album, 'Under the Leaves' which received a deal of acclaim and which resulted in their attending a number of festivals as booked guests in 2007. Their repertoire is strongly traditional as would be expected, but also includes some self penned material which has attracted attention on both sides of the Atlantic for its compelling authenticity. The title track of their first album is currently in the repertoire of a number of established acts on the folk scene.

Their second album, 'Songbooks' released in 2008, has garnered many superlatives with the content variously described as 'amazing' and 'fascinating' with the CD itself considered an 'important and rewarding offering'.

In addition to singing, as their website indicates, they are also available for workshops and their considerable repertoire of Child ballad variants together with their field and academic research has led to their being invited to take charge at Ballad sessions at both Sidmouth and Whitby in 2008.

### Discography

**Under the Leaves**  
**Songbooks**

Hallamshire Traditions 2006  
Hallamshire Traditions 2008

HATRCD01  
HATRCD02

### Gigs List

Swindon Folk Club  
16th April

Bradfield Traditional Music Weekend  
16th - 18th July

Tenterden Folk Festival  
30th Sept – 3rd Oct

Holmfirth Festival of Folk  
7th - 9th May

Whitby Folk Week  
21st – 27th August  
Bromyard Folk Festival  
10th - 12th September

Lewes Saturday Folk Club  
Ballads Workshop  
4th Dec 2011

Chippenham Folk Festival  
28th – 31st May

Suffolk Folk Festival  
4th - 6th June

Sharp's Folk Club (London)  
14th September

### Contact details;

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