

# FATEA

## GREAT BRITISH FOLK FESTIVAL: 2011

The evening has both major venues back up and running, first choice is Steve Gibbons Acoustic or Merry Hell. I used to really enjoy Merry Hell precursor band, The Tansads so for me it's an easy choice, Steve Gibbons is going to be one for another day.

Call it power folk, call it punk folk, whatever you want to call it, call it a good time. This is in your face folk music, with more than a hint of social justice, delivered up tempo with plenty of aggression. Merry Hell were the first band of the weekend that could have got away with having their own mosh pit, space permitting. As it was they managed to get a good number on their feet and even some dancing in the aisles.



The set was a blend of tracks from their recently released debut album and a few that hark back to the days of their former existence as the Tansads. I was more than pleasantly surprised by the number of people singing along the anthemic "Up The Shirkers" and judging by the reaction of the band, so were they.

It was a great start to the evening, whilst not entirely new, Merry Hell, brought a freshness to the proceedings, enough to link them to their past glories, but, more importantly, more than enough to show what they've got to give. The album showed they've still got it in the studio, this shows they've still got it on stage. Hopefully we'll see a lot more of Merry Hell at festivals in the summer.

## GREAT BRITISH FOLK FESTIVAL: 2012

It's been almost a year since I last saw Merry Hell, June Tabor & Oysterband have got the crowd on a real high, if there's any band that's going to hold them there, it's them. The band's power folk with a social conscience is a way to keep a party going or even started if someone else hasn't already done that part for you.

Reds was a room full energy and Merry Hell were the fuel and flame set to burn it off. From stage and pit there was so much movement and bouncing I was convinced we were going to end up in the restaurant beneath us.

This was not a set for the faint hearted, even those shout and cheering along from the tables got knackered just from watching. If you are ever looking for a band to close out a great night of music and ensure everyone crawls away knackered, look no further.