

The Joe MacAtamney Song Book

Joe MacAtamney's Song Book

This Song Book celebrates Joe and his life as a foremost folk singer. In compiling his catalogue, it peppers his songs with stories of his life as a folk performer of note, whether in backrooms of pubs or stages in village halls, in regular Wednesday sessions in his beloved Scotia Bar in Glasgow or in festivals across the length and breadth of Scotland and Ireland.

Mr earliest memory of Joe as a folk singer goes back to the early eighties, but I know, as a significant singer in the folk scene, he went back much earlier than that. He was very much part of the folk revival trailblazers and was still singing days before he died in February 2019 at the age of 82.

Joe's inimitable charm was his hallmark, his warm and engaging personality entertained, educated and enthralled his audience, whether it was a single tourist capturing him for YouTube or an Italian restaurant full of revellers. His amazing voice, somewhere between a crooner, baritone or presenter, carried and filled most environments, bringing the house down or a tear to the eye of many. Whether it was in raucous bars or festival stages, his golden voice demanded to be heard. He wasn't slow, however, in impressing himself, whether in opposition to a fiddle frenzy or a drunken barney, by standing up and letting rip. That was normally enough to quell the session or the crowd. If there were any remaining chatterers he could launch a 'shushed' or, as I remember, a dip of his fingers in his beer flicked their way to catch their attention.

Joe sang with or without a guitar. His Song Book hopes to assist his songs to be sung with (the chords are there) or without (ignore the chords) a guitar.

Joe's Song Book has a home in a session, to be passed around by singers of all or any level. It aims to ensure his songs are sung and his session continues, long after his untimely death, in his honour, respecting the man and his music.

Tom O Keenan

Farewell To Fuinary

The wind is fair, the day is fine

A thousand, thousand tender ties

And swiftly, swiftly runs the time;

Awake this day my plaintive sighs;

The boat lies waiting on the tide

My heart within me almost dies

That carries me from Fuinary

At thought of leaving Fuinary.

We must up and haste away,

Eirigh agus tingainn O!

We must up and haste away,

Eirigh agus tingainn O!

We must up and haste away,

Eirigh agus tingainn O!

Farewell, farewell to Fuinary.

Farewell, farewell to Fuinary!

Up The Noran Water

D
Up the Noran Water
G D
In by Inglismaddy,
G D
Annie's got a bairnie
A D
That hasna got a daddy
G D
Some say it's Tammas's
G D
An ithers say it's Chay's
G D
An naebody expectit it
A D
Wi Annie's quiet ways

D
Up the Noran Water
G D
The country folk are kind
G D
An who the bairnie's daddy is
A D
They dinna muckle mind.
G D
But oh, the bairn at Annie's breist,
G D
The love in Annie's ee –
G D
They mak me wish wi a' my micht
A D
The lucky lad was me!

D
Up the Noran Water
G D
The bonnie little mannie
G D
Is dandled an cuddled close
A D
By Inglismaddy's Annie.
G D
Wha the bairnie's daddy is
G D
The lassie never says
G D
But some think it's Tammas's
A D
An ithers think it's Chay's

The Whiffenpoof Song

I was always close to Joe, every weekend I would help out at his scrap yard out the Balmore Road. He would give me a few pounds and all that parts i needed to keep my car on the road. Later on in life when I was going through a difficult time he took me out to meet his friends in the music scene, and there started a wonderful period in my life from the Clutha to the Scotia to the pool room above the Scotia I spent many a happy hour, meeting all these friends of Joes all very talented people all of whom have now become friends of mine. I must confess nearly every place I go to listen to music there is someone who I met through Joe, not only that he got me back to playing music again. In the early days Joe would be more into Perry Como, Dickie Valentine type songs but when he finished his National Service he met a chap called Hamish Imlach and there stared a journey into the lad of folk music. In between Perry Como there was a friend of Joes called Walter Barr who got himself a guitar, we then had a period of Hank Williams and old American blues i.e. Muddy Waters type music which might have set Joe on to the folk stuff (also inspired me to play guitar) hope this helps you. I must confess I was never a real big fan of folk music all though i did admire the musical talent of the players and singers. The song Gentle Annie was the one song which I really liked but my best loved song was one before the folk stuff a song called the Whiffing poofs song; the first verse was 'from the tables down at Morrys to the place where Louie dwells to that dear old Temple Bar we loved so well.' Joe has left me with numerous friends and great musical memories.

Gerry MacAtamney

To the tables down at Mory's,
To the place where Louis dwells,
To the dear old Temple Bar
We love so well,

Sing the Whiffenpoofs assembled
With their glasses raised on high,
And the magic of their singing casts its spell.

Yes, the magic of their singing
Of the songs we love so well:
"Shall I Wasting" and "Mavourneen" and the rest.

We will serenade our Louis
While life and voice shall last
Then we'll pass and be forgotten with the rest.

We are poor little lambs
Who have lost our way.
Baa! Baa! Baa!
We are little black sheep
Who have gone astray.
Baa! Baa! Baa!

Gentlemen songsters off on a spree
Damned from here to eternity
God have mercy on such as we.
Baa! Baa! Baa!

Too Far From She

We lost it all in one fierce affray.
I stood not to fight and just walked away.
Now I regret, I did not delay
Acting on feelings I held for a day.

CHORUS

Fancy me, so fancy free.
I'm so far from home,
I'm way out at sea.
That's not the way I want it to be.
I'm so far from home and
Too Far From She.

We sail with a crew of a hundred and more.
So many good men, good humour in store.
We drink in a crowd when we go ashore,
But I've never felt so lonely before.

CHORUS

Fancy me, so fancy free.

I'm so far from home,
I'm way out at sea.
That's not the way I want it to be.
I'm so far from home and
Too Far From She.

Six months have gone since I let her go.
Time will not stand the wind shall still blow.
The seas must ever fall and grow.
My world will still turn but ever so slow.

CHORUS

Fancy me, so fancy free.
I'm so far from home,
I'm way out at sea.
That's not the way I want it to be.
I'm so far from home and
Too Far From She.

Living this lie is a foolish game.
I've written to say she's not to blame.
It crossed in the post with a letter that came.
She's written to say she feels the same.

CHORUS

Fancy me, so fancy free.
I'm so far from home,
I'm way out at sea.
That's not the way I want it to be.
I'm so far from home and
Too Far From She.

MY ELDORADO

I had my hopes like we all had hopes
For what I'd be of what I'd do
But then my youth bloomed and faded
And all my dreams they vanished too

I never found my Eldorado
Never walked down silver sands
Never saw those gold pagodas
Nor held a sunrise in my hand
But I just dreamed, dreamed and dream
I just dreamed and dreamed and dream

I was just a kid just a scruffy kid
And I held the world within my hands
But then the world just turned to water
Ran through my fingers into the sand

I never found my Eldorado
Never walked down silver sands
Never saw those gold pagodas
Nor held a sunrise in my hand
But I just dreamed, dreamed and dream
I just dreamed, dreamed and dream

The terraced streets were my grand canyon
The shipyard cranes were my redwood trees
The steel yard tips, my mountain ranges
The brick yard ponds, my seven seas

I never found my Eldorado
Never walked down silver sands
Never saw those gold pagodas
Nor held a sunrise in my hand
But I just dreamed, dreamed and dream
I just dreamed, dreamed and dream

The public bar, it was full of sailors
They laughed and sang and told their tales
I just felt as black as coal
Put down my glass and walked away.

I never found my Eldorado
Never walked down silver sands
Never saw those gold pagodas
Nor held a sunrise in my hand
But I just dreamed, dreamed and dream
I just dreamed, dreamed and dream

Oh, Shenandoah (C – capo 2nd fret)

C G C G
Oh, Shenandoah, I long to hear you,
C G
Away, you rolling river
C Dm Em G
Oh, Shenandoah, I long to hear you
D Bm Em C
Away, I'm bound away, cross the wide
G
Missouri.

C G C G
Oh, Shenandoah, I'm bound to leave you,
C G
Away, you rolling river
C Dm Em G
Oh, Shenandoah, I'm bound to leave you
D Bm Em C
Away, I'm bound away, cross the wide
G
Missouri.

C G C G
Oh, Shenandoah, I love your daughter,
C G
Away, you rolling river
C Dm Em G
Oh, Shenandoah, I love your daughter
D Bm Em C
Away, I'm bound away, cross the wide
G
Missouri.

C G C G
Oh, Shenandoah, I long to hear you,
C G
Away, you rolling river
C Dm Em G
Oh, Shenandoah, I long to hear you
D Bm Em C
Away, I'm bound away, cross the wide
G
Missouri.

Freedom Come All Ye

G Em C G
Roch the win i the clear day's dawin
C G Em C D
Blaws the clouds heilster-gowdie owre the bay
 G Em C G
But thair's mair nor a roch win blawin
C G D G
Thro the Great Glen o the warl the day

C G C G
It's a thocht that wad gar our rottans
 Em C D
Aa thae rogues that gang gallus fresh an gay
 G Em C G
Tak the road an seek ither loanins
C G D G
Wi thair ill-plays tae sport an play

G Em C G
Nae mair will our bonnie callants
C G Em C D
Merch tae war whan our braggarts crouselly craw
 G Em C G
Nor wee weans frae pitheid an clachan
C G D G
Murn the ships sailin doun the Broomielaw

C G C G
Broken faimilies in launs we've hairriet
Em C D
Will curse 'Scotlan the Brave' nae mair, nae mair
 G Em C G
Black an white ane-til-ither mairriet
C G D G
Mak the vile barracks o thair maisters bare

G Em C G
Sae come aa ye at hame wi freedom
C G Em C D
Never heed whit the hoodies croak for Doom
 G Em C G
In yer hous aa the bairns o Aidam
C G D G
Will fin breid, malted bree an paintit room
 C G C G

Whan MacLean's wi' his friens in Springburn
 Em C D
Aa thae roses an geeans turn tae blume
 G Em C G
An a black lad frae yont Nyanga
C G D G
Dings the fell gallows o the burghers doun

Green grow the rashes , O C – capo 2nd fret

C
There's nought but care on every hand
Dm7
In every hour that passes, O:
F C
What signifies the life of man,
Dm7 F G7
If it were not for the lasses, O.

Chorus

C
Green grow the rashes , O;
Dm7
Green grow the rashes , O;
F C
The sweetest hours that e'er I spend,
Dm7 F G7
Are spent among the lasses, O.

C
The worldly race may riches chase, -
Dm7
And riches still may fly them, O;
F C
And though at last they catch them fast,
Dm7 F G7
Their hearts can ne'er enjoy them, O.

Chorus

C
Give me a cannie hour at e'en ,
Dm7
My arms about my dearie, O;
F C
And worldly cares and worldly men
Dm7 F F - G7
May a' Gae tapsalteerie, O!

Chorus

C
For you sae douce , ye sneer at this;
Dm7
You're nought but senseless asses, O:
F C
The wisest man the world e'er saw ,
Dm7 F F - G7
He dearly loved the lasses, O.

Chorus

C
Auld Nature swears, the lovely dears
Dm7
Her noblest work she classes, O:
F C
Her prentice hans she tried on man,
Dm7 F F - G7
And then she made the lasses, O.

Chorus

Ride On

Am
True you ride the finest horse
F
I've ever seen

G
Standing sixteen one or two,
Am
with eyes wild and green

Am
You ride the horse so well,
F
hands light to the touch

G
I could never go with you no
Am
matter how I wanted to

Am
Ride on
F
See you
G
I could never go with you no
Am
matter how I wanted to

Am
When you ride into the night
F
without a trace behind

G
Run your claw along my gut
Am
one last time

Am
I turn to face an empty space
F
where you used to lie

G
And look for the spark that lights the night through
Am
A teardrop in my eye

Am
Ride on
F
See you
G
I could never go with you no
Am
matter how I wanted to

Mingulay Boat Song

Hill you ho, boys C

Let her go, boys F C

Bring her head round F G

Now all Together C F

Hill you bo, boys C

Let her go, boys F C

Sailing homeward, To Mingulay G F C

What care we though white the Minch is

What care we for wind or weather

Let her go boys

Ev'ry inch is

Wearing homeward To Mingulay

Hill you ho, boys

Let her go, boys

Bring her head round

Now all Together

Hill you bo, boys

Let her go, boys

Sailing homeward, To Mingulay

Wives are waiting on the bank or
Looking seaward from the heather
Pull her round boys And we'll anchor
Ere the sun sets at Mingulay

Hill you ho, boys

Let her go, boys

Bring her head round

Now all Together

Hill you bo, boys

Let her go, boys

Sailing homeward, To Mingulay

Gentle Annie

C G C F
The Harvest Time is coming Gentle Annie

C G C G
And your wild oats are all scattered around the fields

C G C
You'll be anxious I know, Gentle Annie

C G C
How your little crop of oats is going to yield

C G C F
Your muttons very sweet, Gentle Annie

C G
And you know it can't be past in New South Wales

C G C F
So you'd better put a fence around your cabbage

C G C
Or they'll all be eaten up by all the snails

C G C F
And you'll take my advice Gentle Annie

C G
You'd better watch old packy going away

C G C F
With his knapsack hung over his saddle

C G C
And he stole some knives and forks the other day

C G C F

The bullocks they are yoked, Gentle Annie

C G C F
And you know with you I can no longer stay

C G C
So I'll bid you farewell, Gentle Annie

C G C
And we'll meet again some other thrashing
day

F C

Yes, I'll bid you farewell, Gentle Annie

C G C F
For you know with you I can stay no more

C G C
So I'll bid you farewell, Gentle Annie

C G C
You're my little black eye girl that I adore.

Waltzing Matilda

G C D G
 When I was a young man I carried my pack
 G D C G
 And I lived the free life of a rover
 G C D G
 From the Murrays green basin to the dusty
 outback
 G D G
 I waltzed my Matilda all over
 G D C G
 Then in nineteen fifteen my country said Son
 G D C G
 It's time to stop rambling 'cause there's work
 to be done
 G C D G
 So they gave me a tin hat and they gave me a
 gun
 G D C G
 And they sent me away to the war
 G C G
 And the band played Waltzing Matilda
 G C D
 As we sailed away from the quay
 C G C
 And amidst all the tears and the shouts and
 the cheers
 G D C G
 We sailed off for Gallipoli

 G C D G
 How well I remember that terrible day
 G D C G
 When the blood stained the sand and the
 water
 G C D G
 And how in that hell that they called Suvla
 Bay
 G D C G
 We were butchered like lambs at the
 slaughter

 G D C G
 Johnny Turk he was ready, he primed himself
 well
 D C G
 He shot us with bullets, he rained us with
 shells
 G C D G
 And in five minutes flat he'd blown us all to
 hell
 G D C G
 Nearly blew us right back to Australia

 G C D G
 And the band played Waltzing Matilda
 G C D
 As we stopped to bury our slain
 G C
 We buried ours & the Turks buried theirs
 C G D C G
 And it started all over again

 G C D G
 Now those who were living did their best to
 survive
 G D C G
 In that mad world of death, blood and fire
 C D G
 And for seven long weeks I kept myself alive
 G C G
 While the corpses around me piled higher

 G D C G
 Then a big Turkish shell knocked me arse
 over tit
 D C G
 And when I woke up in my hospital bed
 G C D G
 And saw what it had done, Christ I wished I
 was dead
 G D C G
 Never knew there were worse things than
 dying

 G D C G
 Then turned all their faces away

 G C D G
 To the green bushes so far and near
 C D
 For no more I'll go waltzing Matilda
 G C G
 For to hang tent and pegs, a man needs two legs
 C G D C G
 No more waltzing Matilda for me

 G C D G
 So they collected the cripples, the wounded, the
 maimed
 G D C G
 And they shipped us back home to Australia
 G C D G
 The legless, the armless, the blind, the insane
 G D C G
 Those proud wounded heroes of Suvla

 G D C G
 And as our ship pulled into Circular Quay
 D C G
 I looked at the place where my legs used to be
 G C D G
 And thank Christ there was nobody waiting for me
 G D C G
 To grieve and to mourn and to pity

 G C G
 And the band played Waltzing Matilda
 G C D
 As they carried us down the gangway
 C G C
 But nobody cheered, they just stood and stared
 G D C G
 Then turned all their faces away

 G C D G
 And now every April I sit on my porch
 G D C G
 And I watch the parade pass before me
 G C D G
 I see my old comrades, how proudly they
 march
 G D C G
 Reliving the dreams of past glory
 D C G
 I see the old men, all twisted and torn
 D C G
 The forgotten heroes of a forgotten war
 G C D G
 And the young people ask me, "What are
 they marching for?"
 G D C G
 And I ask myself the same question

 G C G
 And the band plays Waltzing Matilda
 G C D
 And the old men still answer the call
 C G C
 But year after year their numbers get fewer
 G D C G
 Some day no one will march there at all

Annie McKelvie

Do you fancy a night at the dancing wi'
me
The band in the town hall's the finest
you'll see
If there's no' another place you'd rather
be
Then come to the dance with me, Annie
Dumbarton's the place I met Annie
McKelvie
She was walking alone by the shore
And we talked for a while till as evening
was falling
I walked her back home to her door
She said, Give me a while to think o'er
your proposal
My mother would have to consent
So we parted that night with a kiss at her
doorstep
Back home through Bowling I went

At last she agreed she would come to the
dancing
And travel to Clydebank by train
On that cold station platform I waited for
hours
I never saw Annie again
Of times I walk by the banks of the Leven
And follow its flow to the Clyde
And I think of that day spent wi' Annie
McKelvie
The lassie that wounded my pride
Last chorus:
Do you fancy a night at the dancing wi'
me
The band in the town hall's the finest
you'll see
If there's no' another place you'd rather
be
Then I'll wait at the dance for you, Annie

(4th fret / pick)

Loch Tay Boat Song

When I've done the work of day and I row my boat away
G Bm C D G
C G Am
Down the waters of Loch Tay when the evening light is
G Bm C D
(D7) fallin'
Then I look towards Ben Lawers where the after glories
(G) glow
C D G Em Am
And I dream on two bright eyes with a merry mouth
(D7) below
G D G
She's my beautiful nighnean ruach
C D G
She's my joy and sorrow too
C D G
Though I own she is not true
Am D7
Ah, but I cannot live without her
G Bm
For my heart's a boat in tow
C D G
And I'd give the world to know
C D G
If she means to let me go
Am D G
As she sings horee horo

Nighnean ruach, your lovely hair has more beauty I declare
G Bm C D G
C D G Em Am D
Than all the tresses fair from Killin to Aberfeldy
G Bm C D
Be they lint, white, gold or brown, be they blacker than the
(G) sioe
C D G Em Am D7
They mean not as much to me as a meltin' flake of snow
G D G
And her dance is like the gleam
C D G
Of the sunlight on the stream
C D G
And the songs the wee folk sing
Am D7
Ah, they're the songs she sings at milkin'
G Bm
For my heart's a boat in tow
C D G
But my heart is full of woe
C D G
For last night she bade me go
Am D G
As I sing horee horo

Will Ye Go

C F C F
O the summer time is coming and the trees are sweetly

Ch

C
blooming

C F C
If my true love she were gone I would
F C
surely find another

F G7 Am F Dm
And the wild mountain thyme grows around the blooming

F
Heather

F G7 Am
Where wild mountain thyme grows
F Dm F
around the blooming heather

C F C
Will ye go lassie go

C F C
Will ye go lassie go ?

F G7 C F G7 Am
And we'll all go together to pluck wild mountain thyme
F Dm F C F C

All around the blooming heather will ye go lassie go ?

Ch

C F C F C
I will build my love a tower near yon pure crystal fountain

(repeat verse 1)

F G7 Am F Dm F
And on it I will pile all the flowers of the mountain

C F C
Will ye go lassie go ?

Leaving Nancy

G C
In comes the train and the whole platform shakes
D G
It stops with a shudder and a screaming of brakes
G C
The parting has come and my weary soul aches
D G
I'm leaving my Nancy, oh

G C
But you stand there so calmly determinedly gay
D C
You talk of the weather and events of the day G
G C
And your eyes tell me all that your tongue doesn't say
G D G
Goodbye my Nancy, oh

Chorus
G C
And come a little closer
D G
Put your head upon my shoulder
G C
And let me hold you one last time
D G
Before the whistle blows

G C
But you stand there beside me so lovely to see
D G
The grip of your hand is an unspoken plea C
G C
You're not fooling yourself and you're not fooling me
D G
Goodbye my Nancy, oh

Chorus
G C
And as the train starts gently to roll
D G
And as I lean out to wave and to call
G C
I see the first tears trickle and fall
D G
Goodbye my Nancy, oh
Chorus

End: G C D G

Greenfields of France (capo 4th Fret)

G * C Am
Well, how do you do, Private
William Mc-Bride

D * G D
Do you mind if I sit here, down by
your grave-side
G * C *
And I'll rest for a while in the
warm summer sun
D * C G

(*)
I've been walking all day; Lord,
and I'm nearly done
* * Am *

And I see by your gravestone, you
were only nine-teen
D7 * G D

When you joined the glorious
fallen in nineteen six-teen
G * Am *

Well I hope you died quick and I
hope you died clean
D * C G

Or Willie Mc-Bride, was it slow
and ob-scene

Chorus
D * C G
Did they beat the drum slowly,
did they sound the fife lowly

D * C G
Did the rifles fire o'er you as they
lowered you down

C * D *
Did the bugles play The Last Post
in chorus

G C D G
Did the pipes play The Flowers Of
The For-est

G * C Am
And did you leave a wife or a
sweetheart be-hind

D * G D
In some faithful heart is your
memory en-shrined
G * C *

And though you died back in
nineteen-six-teen
D * C G (*)

To that loyal heart are you
always nine-teen
* * Am *

Or are you a stranger without
even a name
D7 * G D

Enshrined for-ever be-hind a
glass pane
Am * G *

In an old photo-graph, torn and
tattered and stained
D * C G

And fading to yellow in a brown
leather frame

G * C Am
The sun's shining now on
these green fields of France

D * G D
The warm wind blows gently
and the red poppies dance
G * C *
The trenches have vanished,
long under the plough
D * C G

(*)
No gas and no barbed-wire,
no guns firing now
* * Am
But here in this graveyard, it's
still No Man's Land
D7 * G D

The countless white crosses
in mute witness stand
G * Am *
To man's blind in-difference
to his fellow man
D * C G

To a whole gener-ation who
were butchered and damned
And a-gain and a-gain and a-
gain and a-gain

Chorus

G * C Am
And I can't help but wonder
now, Willie Mc-Bride
D * G D
Do all those who lie here
know why they died
G * C

(*)
Did you really be-lieve them
when they told you the cause
of this war would end wars
* * Am *

Well the suffering, the sorrow,
the glory, the shame
D7 * G D
The killing, the dying, it was
all done in vain
G * Am *

For Willie Mc-Bride, it's all
happened a-gain
D * C G
And a-gain and a-gain and a-
gain and a-gain

Jock Stewart

Some of these songs (at Joe's 80th birthday party in Barga) were sang in the Barga Celtic supporters club owned by an xpat Paolo Marchetti. The bar is called Il Bar del Paolo Gas. Paolo is the godfather to Paolo Nutini another favourite of Joes. At the funeral we were played in by the song Autumn Leaves

Paolo Nutini has this on his album and he dedicated it to his grandfather "nonno" and in the videos of Joe singing he is wearing a bikers T shirt Paolo is a biker and he admired the T shirt so Joe washed it and took it up to him the next night. Paolo wears it with pride.

Lots more stories but these are recent and having known Joe for almost 50 years you can imagine there's so many more

Billy Connell

Oh my name is Jock Stewart
I'm a canny gaun man
And a roving young fellow I've been
So be easy and free
when you're drinking with me
I'm a man you don't meet every day

I have acres of land
I have men at command
I have always a shilling to spare
So be easy and free
when you're drinking with me
I'm a man you don't meet every day

So come fill up your glasses
of brandy and wine
Whatever it costs I will pay
So be easy and free
when you're drinking with me
I'm a man you don't meet every day

Well I took out my dog
and him I did shoot
All down in the county Kildare
So be easy and free
when you're drinking with me
I'm a man you don't meet every day

To respect Joe's music please feel
free to pop £1 or £2 into a charity
box at the Bar