

**FAIRPORT CONVENTION AND
MATTHEWS SOUTHERN COMFORT**
Fairport Convention: Maidstone 1970
MVD Visual 105 (DVD)

What makes this all-too-brief 31.5-minute DVD important is that it is the only filmed performances of the 1970 Fairport Convention line-up of Richard Thompson, Dave Swarbrick, Simon Nicol, Dave Pegg and Dave Mattacks, one of Fairport's best and most important configurations. Their five selections include three medleys of jigs and reels, "Sir Patrick Spens" and the Thompson-Swarbrick original "Now Be Thankful," a B-side that has come to be an eloquent, enduring song Fairport plays to this day. This open air performance at the Maidstone Fiesta finds them in masterful form.

Fairport alumnus Iain Matthews' fine but short-lived Matthews Southern Com-

fort does Iain's "My Front Pages" and Sylvia Tyson's "Southern Comfort." Strong performances both, but they pale beside Fairport in full flower.

The film was only recently rediscovered, and filmmaker Tony Palmer oversaw its restoration. He also added a 15 minute interview to discuss the times, the bands and the filming. Too bad he didn't find any footage of additional songs.

Palmer was one of the era's best music documentarians. His seminal *All My Loving*, one of the most incisive looks into the swinging London of the wild '60s, has also been reissued, and it is strongly recommended.

I did get to see this edition of Fairport Convention when they played Philadelphia's Electric Factory opening for Traffic. This DVD brought back warm memories of that long ago night.

Strongly recommended for anyone at all interested in England's vibrant and burgeoning electric folk scene circa 1970. — MT