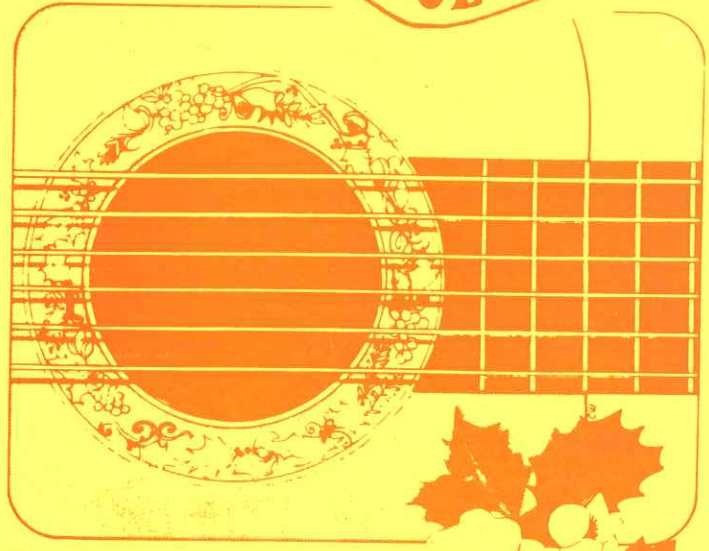


THE NORTH WEST FEDERATION OF

SEPT, OCT, NOV, '87

FOLK CLUBS



Newsletter

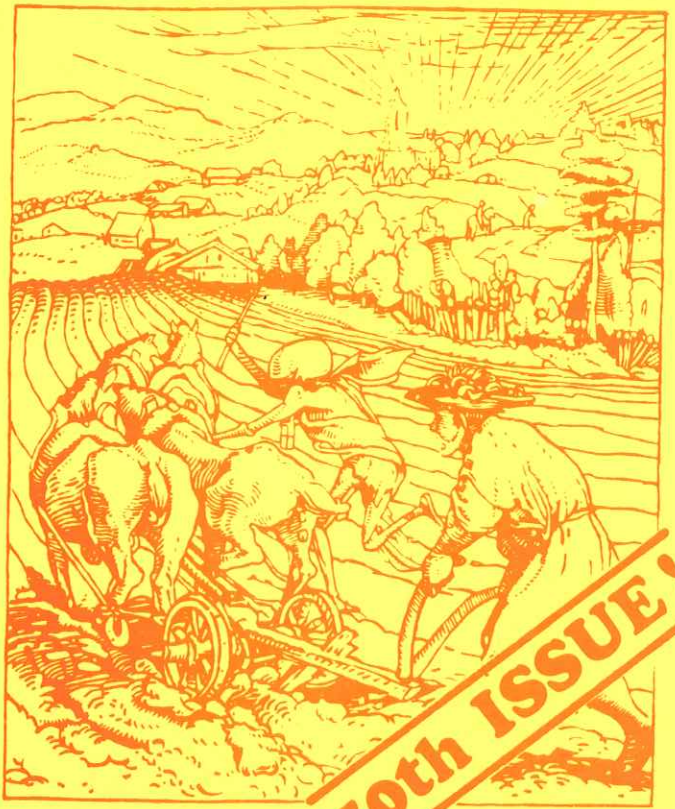
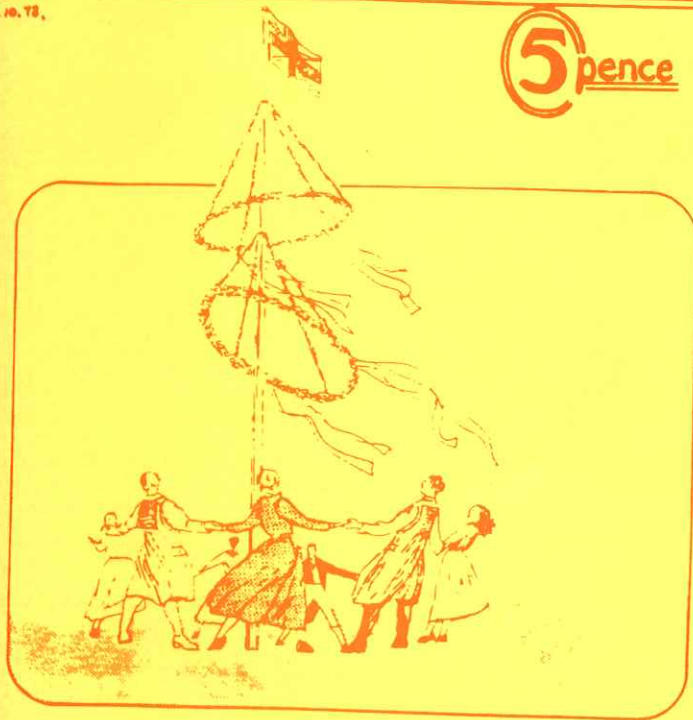
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NEWSLETTER

April-May 1980.

10p.

50th ISSUE!

NEWSLETTER

35p

Page 2 Comment:

WELCOME to another issue of the Newsletter, and if you haven't already noticed, this is our 50th issue. This year is also ten years since the Federation first began.

In celebration (?) of this ten year anniversary, Derek Gifford has contributed an article of some of the trials and tribulations we have faced over the years. Simon Jones has an article on the collectable nature of Folk albums and we have our usual collection of live & record reviews.

THIS issue is a 32-page issue, mainly to try to accommodate a very large number of record reviews. Despite this, I haven't been able to include all that I should have. Apologies if your favourite album hasn't made it this time. I'll try to catch up next issue.

I MAKE no apologies for devoting most of the rest of this column to our AGM. Before you all skip to the end of this article, let me assure you at once that it isn't just a dry AGM. Once again, we have combined it with a Folk Club organisers seminar which on this occasion will feature representatives from most of the local radio stations (Usually the presenter or producer of the Folk program).

At the time of going to press, I am hopeful of having all three BBC local Radio stations represented.

This time we have allocated about half of the evening to the AGM, the other half being for the seminar. Any club organisers or other interested parties, whether they are associated with a Federation Folk Club or not are welcome to attend. Voting at the AGM will, of course, be restricted to accredited representatives of Federation Clubs.

BY NOW, you will all be asking when and where this is to be held and I can tell you it will be at:

THE ALLISON ARMS, COPPULL
(On the A49 out of Wigan about 5 miles from the Town Centre).

On Wednesday, 23rd September starting around 8pm. Formal notification will be sent to the member clubs in the usual way. There will be a singaround downstairs in the bar, as is usual at the FOLK AT THE NEST club on Wednesdays.

FINALLY, I've just room to thank all these without whom this would not be possible: Diane Crump, Angela Forkin and Janet Hale for typing, Phil Capper for the club dates and Ian for distribution.

CLOSING DATE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE (DEC/JAN) IS OCTOBER 25th



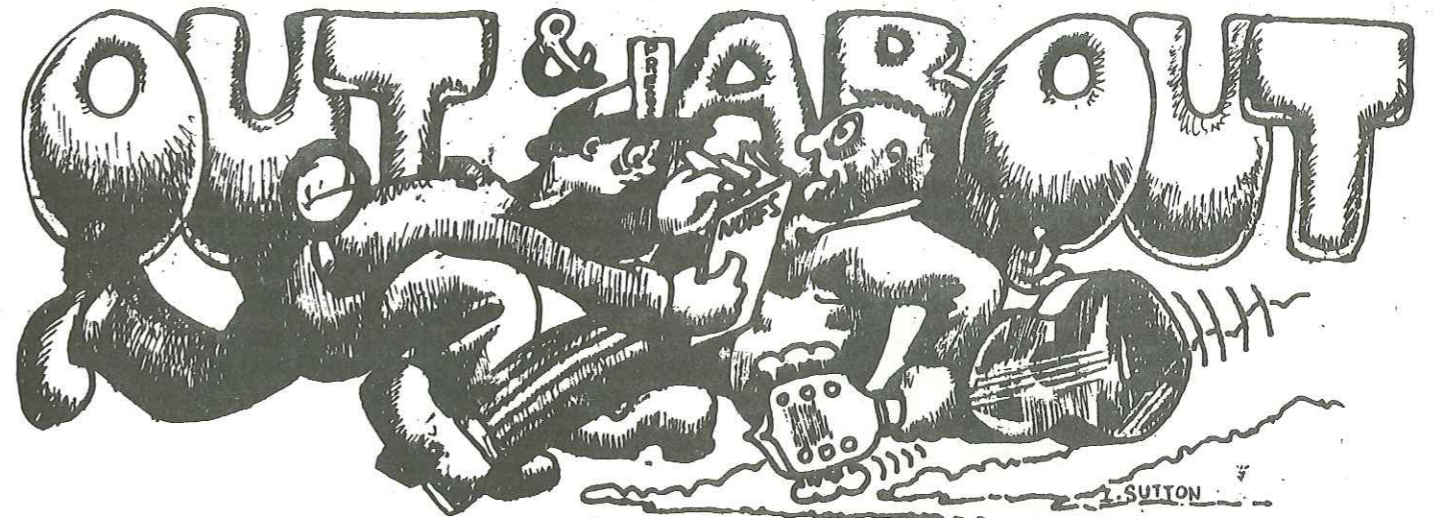
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THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE EDITOR OR OF THE FEDERATION.

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FYLDE FOLK FESTIVAL once again dominates the beginning of September with something for everyone over the weekend of September 4th - 6th. From Roaring Jelly to Strawhead, with Whippersnapper and Gregson & Collister, the Festival features an impressive guest list. More information from Alan Bell on 03917 2317.

BROMYARD FOLK FESTIVAL later in September (18th - 20th) includes Whippersnapper, Pyewackett, Cosmotheke and the ubiquitous Kipper Family. The programme promises a wide range of events some with intriguing titles: Fooling animals and dames, for example. I hope Derek Gifford reviews that session! Advance tickets and information from the Festival office: 053 183 593.

MANCHESTER FESTIVAL, September 11th - 27th caters for every taste, with jazz, theatre, dance and a good helping of folk: Robin Williamson, The Chieftains and Patrick Street amongst others. The Festival Office has more information, contact the Central Library, St. Peter's Square, Manchester, M2 5PD.

BURNLEY MECHANICS feature some famous folk performers this quarter, including Martin Carthy on September 17th and the Kipper Family on October 25th. Both nights start at 8 p.m. and tickets at £3 are available from the Box Office: 0282 30055.

WILL'S BARN consists of twenty four tracks from the Holme Valley Tradition, the Copper Family, Bob Davenport and the Rakes, Martin Carthy and Norma Waterson. The cassette comes complete with a nineteen page booklet and is produced by the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library. "Will's Barn" (VWML 002) is available for £5 plus 50p postage, from The Library, English Folk Dance & Song Society, Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regents Park Road, London, NW1 7AY.

NORTHWICH FOLK CLUB are organising a Folk Event on September 5th, at Verdin Park. During the day there will be dance displays and a concert by local folk performers. The evening concert will feature Relativity, the folk super group containing elements from Silly Wizard and The Bothy Band. Also on the bill are John Hobson and Howard Lees, guitar virtuosos from Macclesfield. Daytime tickets are £1 and Concert tickets are £4. Tickets can be obtained from Northwich library, the Folk Club (Friday nights, Harlequin Theatre, Queen Street, Northwich) or phone Sean Boyle: 0606 44361.

VIN GARBUTT and Fiona Simpson start the season of gigs at Royton Assembly Hall on September 17th, followed closely by Zorn and Benns on September 24th, Clive Gregson and Christine

RADIO DETAILS:

FOLK PROGRAMMES ON NATIONAL & LOCAL RADIO -

BBC Radio 2 : Saturday 6.00-7.00pm, repeat Tuesday Jan 330m (not on VHF)

BBC Radio Merseyside : Tuesdays 6.30-7pm, repeat Sat, 6.30pm 202m (95.8 VHF) 051 708 5500

Piccadilly Radio : Sundays 9.30-11.00pm 261m (97.0 VHF) 061 236 9913

BBC Radio Lancashire : 'Sounds Local', Sundays 11.30-12am 351m (96.4 VHF) Simon Johnson 0254 62411

BBC Radio Manchester : Folk Diary after 6pm News, Fridays 206m (95.1 VHF) Cathy Dixon 061 228 3434

Collister with John Kirkpatrick on October 1st, Sally Barker on October 8th, local heroes Caught on the Hop on October 15th and Derek and Di Boak on October 22nd. Singers and musicians are welcome and more details and ticket information can be obtained on 061 620 3505.

JAKE THACKRAY and The Auld Triangle are performing at the Octagon Theatre, Bolton on October 18th at 8 p.m. Tickets, priced £3.50 and £3 are available from the Box Office: Bolton 20661 or from Pat Batty, 439 Manchester Road, Westhoughton, Bolton, BL5 3JR. Make cheques payable to the Red Lion Folk Club and enclose an s.a.e..

SWINTON FOLK DAY on October 24th has a line up which includes The McCalmans, the Kipper Family, Ellie Ellis and Sara Grey and Bram Taylor. Tickets are £3 in advance or £4 on the day. Information and tickets available from Dave on 061 793 6556 or Ged on 0942 811527.

B.B.C.'s CHILDREN IN NEED Appeal will take place in November and Radio Manchester is producing a double album length cassette with artists confirmed so far including Stanley Accrington, Fairport Convention, Gregson and Collister, Keith Hancock, Pete Morton, Bram Taylor and Bernard Wrigley. Most performers have contributed previously unrecorded tracks and the cassette will be launched this quarter, so listen out for more news on "Folk Like Us", Mondays at 8 p.m.

THE ALBION BAND take to the road in November touring 15 cities in support of the Royal Society for Nature Conservation's British Wildlife Appeal. The tour starts in Bristol on November 6th and finishes in Dunstable on the 24th. For further information contact Sarah King or Prafula Shah: 01 831 6131.

PATRICK STREET and Mary Coughlan's "Tired and Emotional" are both now out on CD. (CNSF 1071 and MRCD 1 respectively) Available through WEA Distributions on 01 998 8844, the albums are both still featuring strongly in the Folk Roots charts, with Patrick Street at No. 8 and Mary Coughlan at No. 15 at the time of writing.



SINCE LAST ISSUE, there is one brand-new club, and a number of venue changes:

THE NEW club is Hambleton Folk Club, which meets at the Shovels in Hambleton, near Blackpool. It runs on Friday nights and starts at 8.30pm. The organiser is Dave Littlehales, and you can contact him on 0253 855652.

THE MAIN changes since last issue are:

Derek Gifford's Mawdesley Folk Club has become the YARROW VALLEY Folk Club and now meets at the Grapes Hotel in Croston (near Preston). It still meets on Tuesdays at 8.30pm and you can still contact Derek Gifford on 0704 822574 for more information.

The POTTERIES Folk Song Club are now meeting at the Crown & Anchor, Tower Square, Tunstall, Stoke-on-Trent. Jason Hill is still the organiser, 0782 813401

TWO MORE Folk Clubs I've been given details of, but which being very new clubs are not yet members of the Federation:

Wrexham Folk Club meet at the Europa Wine Bar, Town Hill, Wrexham on Thursday nights. More information from Geoff Jones, Gresford 4517.

There is a monthly Singers' Club at St. Alban's Parish Social Centre, St. Alban's Road, Liscard, Wallasey. Residents are the Draymen, one of whom is Stan Jardine (a name you may know) and you can find more information on 051 608 3894. It's usually the second Staturday of the month, but its best to ring first.

Tom Shepley's Band has reformed in the same line-up, but without Pat Knowles, who will now manage the band. They are looking for a guitarist & vocalist to complete their line-up. Contact Jamie Knowles on 061 368 2339.

THIS YEAR'S EFDSS National Gathering & AGM is being held outside London for the first time in its history. It takes place on Saturday 14th November 1987 at the Victoria Community Centre, Crewe, Cheshire. The AGM takes place in the afternoon, while in the evening is a Folk Dance and singaround. More information from Alan Barber, 0772 742690.

ADVANCE DATES, such as I have them to cover the period beyond November.

DECEMBER DATES:

1	Ages Apart/Christmas Do	Mawdesley
2	Fisher & Tresize	White Swan
2	Brian Boothby	Whitehaven
2	Paul Metters	Folk @ Tute
4	Amazing Mr. Smith	Bee
4	Sally Barker	Forkies
7	Dave Summers	Preston
8	Family Ceilidh	Brewery
9	Electropathic Batt. Band	White Swan
9	Dave Burland	Whitehaven
9	Jake Thackray (tickets)	Folk @ Tute
11	Keith Hancock	Northwich
11	Lunny/Cunningham	Brwery
11	Geoff Higginbottom	Bee
17	Maxi & Mitoh *	Brwery
18	Tom Topping Band *	Forkies
18	Christmas Party	Northwich
16	Martin Carthy	White Swan
16	Tom McConville	Folk @ Tute
19	The Kipper Family	Bury
23	Christamas Singers'	Whitehaven

Events marked * are special Christmas shows/party nights. The event marked † is Christmas with the Kippers at the Derby Hall in Bury.

NEWS OF some Ceilidhs up and down the Federation area:

September:		
	12th Poynton Folk Centre	Band TBC
October:		
	10th Poynton Folk Centre	Caught on the Hop CB
	23rd St. John's Hall, Southport (Wright St.)	with HOT PUNCH
	24th Bradwell Lodge, Porthill, Newcastle-u-Lyne	with Oatcake Billy's Ideal Band
November:		
	21st Northwich F.C.	Usquebah

DATES for Southport Arts Centre/Brewery Arts Centre do not fit the pattern of the centre pages, so are listed here. Brwery=BAC; Southport=SAC. All 8pm

September:		
Sat. 5	Dust on the Needle	SAC
Thur. 10	Patrick Street	SAC
Thur. 17	Patrick Street	BAC
Wed. 30	Rumillajta	BAC
October:		
Fri. 2	Balham Alligators (TBC)	SAC
Thur. 15	Oyster Band	BAC
Fri. 16	Mary Coughlin Band	SAC
Mon. 26	Steeleye Span	SAC
Tue. 27	Family Ceilidh	BAC
Fri. 30	Tom Paxton	SAC
November:		
Thur. 5	Bonfire Ceilidh	BAC
Sat. 7	Incantation	SAC
Fri. 13	Loudon Wainwright	SAC
Sat. 24	June Tabor/Maddy Prior	BAC
Thur. 26	Capercalie	SAC

STOP PRESS!

Dates arriving too late for inclusion in the club calendar pages:

Whitehaven:		Forkies:	
Sept. 2	Hobson/Lees	Sep. 11	Isaac Guillory
9	Bram Taylor	25	Ad Hoc
16	Wilson Family	Oct. 9	Mike Whellans
23	Local S/N	23	Rosie Hardman
30	Isaac Guillory	Nov. 6	Hobson & Lees
Oct. 7	Jon Strong	20	Mike Silver
14	Mike Whellans	Dec. 4	Sally Barker
21	Local S/N		
28	Bill Zorn/Bennis		
Nov. 4	Ralph McFell (at Civic Hall)		
11	Dave Walters		
18	Tilson/Boyle		
25	Tom McConville		

DON'T FORGET the Federation's AGM & Club Organisers' seminar to be held at the Allison Arms, Coppull on September 23rd from 8pm. This is a Wednesday night, the same as the Folk at the Nest-Club Night, so there will be a singaround downstairs in the bar as well.

CLUB OF THE MONTH: MAGHULL Folk Club

On April 28th 1982, the Maghull Folk Club threw open its doors to the waiting multitudes - and they both came in!!!

Some of the 'Originals' are still with us today, though sadly, some are not. Some have moved away, one died (though is still fondly remembered), one went all the way to India to escape us, and one is now in Broadmoor - albeit as Deputy Director of the place!!!

Admission in 1982 was 50p. Admission in 1987 is still 50p, for both Guest and Singers Nights. We have always been primarily a Singers Club and decided on a standard charge when one of the Residents pointed out that putting up prices on a Guest Night not only made those nights 'special' but made our Singers Nights 'less than special'.

The aim from the beginning was to have a large number of 'Residents', which meant they didn't have to come every week, and the audience got a permanently rotating variety of singers. We have always had a complete 'Open House' - anyone coming along and supporting the Club is welcome to join the Residency. We've been fortunate in that new people have joined as others have left, and we currently have about 30 'Residents', split into solos, duos, trios, four's etc.

The 'Residents' split into 3 teams, and those teams take monthly turns at being responsible for running the Club.

We allocate a fixed amount of money to be spent in an average week, so if its a 4 week month, that Team has 4 times the weekly amount to spend.

Each Team meets separately and decides how to run their month and spend their money. They decide on any Theme Nights etc., they want to run, and who will be the presenter each week. They may decide to spend all their money in one week on a national guest, or have 2 local guests, or have no guests at all but spend the money some other way. These decisions go to a central 'secretary' who then does the admin bit, arranges any bookings etc.

Twice a year we have an Open meeting to report on finances and where everyone can give their opinions on how things are going and suggest improvements. "Audience" are welcome as parts of the Teams and at all meetings - its a sort -of 'Peoples Democratic Folk Republic of Maghull'! Sounds mad and complicated but its not - it works very well and ensures that the Club belongs to everyone who comes along and wants to get involved.

We have 'bred' many of our current residents - people who came to listen and were 'encouraged' to have a go, and who have since developed into a very talented, but friendly, crowd. This is perhaps the greatest enjoyment - its much better to see one of your own finally perform and succeed, then to pay your money to see some professional go through two well rehearsed 'sets'.

So - beware of coming along if you are one of those quiet, concert audience types. We like involvement, enthusiasm and repartee in the room. We don't even advertise our guest nights very much because we don't really want people who only want to come because there's someone 'known' appearing and its only 50p. Its great to be able to see the Garbutts, Carthys, Cosmotheikas etc., for only 50p - but is that really what Folk Clubs are about??

This year we mounted a 'Celebration' to mark our first 5 years. We hired Melling Tithebarn and presented 'Whippersnapper' plus Allan Taylor. A full house (plus waiting list), a terrific evening, and a 'break even' financially, ensued. So now, we've done it again with the 'Deighton Family' due there on 18th September, and we're planning another major 'Break Even Celebration' on 20th November - that should be a cracker!!

We love doing Club Swaps and Charity Nights - normally at least a dozen performers turn up - so why not get your organiser to ask us along to your Club.

FASCINATIONS with FOLK

Increasingly folk albums of any vintage are becoming the domain of vinyl junkies. SIMON JONES sticks his nose into the world of acetates, rare 'B' sides, and alternate mixes.

So there you are with a scratched copy of 'Babacombe Lee' and wondering about replacing it, because it's a favourite. The local record store you can guarantee will have trouble finding you a copy. "Fairport who?" "Oh, folk is it?" and will then rush you about £6.99 for the trouble. So a good option should be a decent second hand copy right? Think again my friend. Last time I saw a good secondhand 'Babacombe' it was £10. Of course you might get lucky and come across one in a place that doesn't charge the earth, but these days more and more folk albums of recent and slightly superior years have acquired inflated values. Yes, in certain cases someone else's dodgy copy can cost more than a new disc; crazy isn't it? The truth of the matter is that of late folk/folk rock albums have become the targets of what you might call collectors, and where there's people willing to spend there's always somebody willing and able to make.

No doubt there's those of you who value your albums like they were gold bullion, but even more treat them as I do; records are to be played and enjoyed, I've never understood people who buy vinyl just to stare at it and say how rare it is. Rare it may be, but if the music's any good let's hear it. The deputy editor on this very magazine will tell you all about the delights and otherwise of collecting the Beatles legacy, it's probably thinned Bernie's wallet in the process but he now has as fine a Fab Four collection as EMI. Collectability and silly price tags have long been commonplace on the rock market, now sadly similar arguments are being applied to the relatively limited folk sphere.

So why has this come about? Well partly because in the past few months rock collectors have turned their attention to the early 70s as a viable source of revenue. The progressive rock phase was seen to include much of the contemporary folk, folk rock and straight traditional releases of that period. So as prices on labels associated with one style have soared, so have the prices on similar musics. Hence the high money wanted for Fairport releases I saw at one recent record fair, which had a knock on effect on Sandy Denny, Richard Thompson, Steeleye, Fotheringay, Martin Carthy etc. Another factor is in the fluctuations of the artists themselves. Very often folk rock bands only stay together for a limited period and so produce a limited number of albums which get rarer as time goes on. Folk orientated acts aren't known as money spinners when signed to major labels, thus after two or three albums they are dropped, contracts torn up and records deleted, again ensuring rarity. Because of it's independence the folk scene often produces it's own albums, more likely than not a fixed run is made and once the pressing is sold it's not renewed, again leading to scarcity.

In some cases it isn't simply that the old album is hard to get. Very often the original release may have carried a booklet, gate fold sleeve, lyric sheet or similar which has been cut out of the modern issue to avoid too much expense. A case in point is the lavish packaging that came with Steeleye Span's 'Ten Man Mop' when it was first released in 1971, a luxurious purple gate fold, marbled inner and an eight page book with the band posing at the seaside and notes on all the tracks. The 1980's B&C issue is a pretty crumby red affair with a picture of the band in concert, though the original notes are duplicated on the back. But try to find a copy of the original album and your'e talking quite a few pounds.

Another example is the recent reissue by Island of 'Leige And Leif' in it's birthday celebrations, gone are the sleeve inner and gatefold replaced by mere copies of the front and back giving photos of the band and track listing. Surely such a classic record deserves better treatment.

The market for these albums are undoubtedly increasing as the months go by. Witness 'Record Collector,' the rock junkies shop window has recently run features on both Roy Harper and The Incredible String Band, both a bit hippy dippy it's true but equally regarded as folk acts too. In fact the same organ ran a Fairport piece years ago. Goldmine it's American sister has just done the same, matching Fairport with Richard Thompson. Such signs mean collectors are interested and ready to fork out. Recently an enquiry to a specialist record dealer in Cornwall about a Richard Thompson radio transcription disc was met with a smirk when the potential customer offered him twenty quid for the record. An American collector had secured it with £200. An extreme case you may say, but again another reason for owning some vinyl is the fact that it isn't available elsewhere. Did you know for example that Steeleye have recorded a whole series of albums in Australia since 1982 that haven't seen the light of day up here? Or that a whole slew of British folkies made a double album at Nyon in Switzerland in 1979, including, Maddy Prior, Fairport, Loudon Wainwright, Tannahill Weavers and more? Perhaps you may say, so what? But some fans do want those discs and will pay for them. Such is the mentality of collecting that Bob Dylan bootlegs have even gone to the lengths of recording his ansaphone and issuing that. One only hopes such fanaticism never strikes folkies.

In order to deal with this demand a series of new record labels have been set up to cope and make long deleted albums available again at a sane amount. Hannibal caters for the Thompson/Drake/Denny axis with an ever increasing roster and Awareness does the same for both Harper and Robin Williamson.

"I'd sure like to get my hands on more stuff, but lots of it is still underlicence or the artists don't want it out. You only have so much money," says Andy Ware of Awareness.

Yet despite such sterling efforts the original issues still remain expensive. It's worth putting down your scratched 'Babacombe Lee' and going back to check which of those LPs are in good condition, some of them could be quite valuable. Much of the high price game can be put down the Record Collector itself which puts prices on releases in it's discographies and everyone taking them as gospel. A recent article which priced early seventies albums valued Scots folk rock band Trees who recorded for CBS and made two albums at upwards of £60 each, the first Amazing Blondel at £15 plus and Martin Jenkins early Dando Shaft over £20 per album. Now I'm laughing I've got most of this stuff and it's not set me back anything like that. In fact 'An Evening With Dando Shaft' I picked up in Toronto last summer for a mere couple of quid, dealers over here are asking eight times that for it. Things wouldn't be so bad if the music some of these releases contain was of decent proportions, but to take a case in point, Trees. Surely rare records, long deleted and early electrified folk, but but compared to Fairport, Steeleye or other peers recording at the same time it's weak kneed and you really do wonder who is daft enough to fork out for it.

Somebody is, just set up in Herefordshire in Hergest records, proprietor Mick Young who claims his mail order outfit is 'The British Folk Specialists.' "We cater for the collector," he says. He does too and not at the high line prices that some dealers charge.

His fourth and latest catalogue (yours for an S.A.E. from Mick, Orchard House, Lower Hergest, Kington, Herefordshire,) lists over 200 records, albums, from Albions to Young Tradition and all shades between. (Don't confuse Hergest with mail order outlets like Projection or Roots who sell new albums by the way.) Mick is in fact excellent, his

service is quick, painless and ruthlessly honest, he even urges you to get in touch if you have a complaint so he can deal with it. Again though as he says, "some albums will be expensive, you just don't see them about." I suppose that is the bottom line, records are getting older with each day and in the course of time become scarce quite naturally.

Though it is still worth a hunt in Oxfam shops and car boot sales where you sometimes pick up elder vinyl for a few pence. A classic example happened to me recently. As you no doubt appreciate from my blabberings I like folk rock, and am very fortunate that much of it comes my way because I'm a hack for this scandal sheet and others, but because I didn't get deeply into the music until six years or so ago, I missed much. My co-editor on First Hearing Lyndon Noon is a compulsive vinyl hoarder and many's the hour we've spent digging around for a bargain. He phoned me, "Si, there's this sale near me, they've got" he reeled off a whole list of records and then "Alan Stivell, his early work on Pontana. Do you want it, 65p an album, all in mint condition." Being no mug and knowing such albums were the £8 plus variety I agreed. The day was hot, Cash was flatt-

ening Lendel at Wimbledon. The phone went, it was Lyndon sounding apologetic, "sorry mate the fools had left them out in the sun all the lot had warped beyond playing."

The signs are all there that many folkie albums will become increasingly collectable and that in certain places they'll be heavy on the pocket when you try to replace. Records appear and become rare, the very mechanism of the folk scene makes it so. The impact of long lasting compact discs on the folk scene will I think be minimal, a small clutch only thus far. The appearance of cassettes as a quick and cheap way of getting a recording out can only complicate the situation.

Perhaps sometime I'll find out what are the top collectable folk releases and their relevant values. You'd be suprised what you've got in the cupboard. Meantime treat your scratched 'Babacombe Lee' with a bit more respect, especially if it's got all the inserts, and a gatefold sleeve, and be very careful of the bloke who whispers "ppsst, wanna buy a Trees album guv?"

Simon Jones

AIMING LOW— A look back at ten years of the Federation

Picture a scene, It's a cold winter's evening in a pub' somewhere in Wigan; several young and handsome men (yes we were!), a few still with own hair, are deep in discussion. A few beer-stained papers are carelessly strewn over the table.... they never clean the tables in Wigan. "If we get together on this one we could save a lot of money on the deal," says one of them. "Yes but will we get agreement with all the rest?" asks another. "Surely the most important factor is mass advertising?" chips in a third, all the chips in Wigan come in thirds.

The formation of a North-West business consortium do I hear you ask? Perhaps the start of a multinational corporation to solve the North-West's unemployment problem? The launch of a brand new beer? WRONG! It was Nigel Firth and associates stirring a few folk club organisers into concerted action by forming the North-West Federation of Folk Clubs.

HAIL TO THE FEDERATION!! Now there's a cry (weep?) with a ring to it.

That was all back in 1977 - yes the Federation has been around for ten years I know it does take a fairly substantial amount of imagination but ... There were 14 clubs in the original listing and 5 of them are still going strong. (Curses! How did that happen?) Yes, folks that's what the Fed' can do for you ... close your club!

In fact the main aim was to support clubs in various ways including organising tours for performers, publicising folk events, supporting local festivals, holding joint ceilidhs and attracting the under 18s to the folk scene we never had trouble attracting them to the pubs!

What went wrong? You may well ask pal, but WE are still here.. what's your excuse?

The fact is that clubs and the people who run them have come and gone over the years with a resulting lack of continuity and the Federation is to all intents and purposes now the Newsletter. A few of us remain or have returned to the fold but there is one, much mightier than I or even Bernie Forkin, who has stayed through from the beginning, taken much criticism, sometimes justified, often carping and petty and carried on producing this gutter-press folk magazine. Yes, the man to blame for all this is NIGEL FIRTH!

Why Nigel? Why not? I'll tell you why because he is the least apathetic of all the club organisers that have graced the Federation's committee line up. Oh! Yes, apathy has been the major factor in the demise of the Fed's other laudible aims. "How does he know?" I hear you shout. Because, pal, in my time I have been Chairman, Treasurer, Youth Officer, Tours Organiser, and, when Nigel had the audacity to actually take a well earned holiday one summer, I even had to produce the Newsletter. Even when I resigned from the committee things didn't improve!

Don't believe me? Well now let's take them one by one like all methodical investigators. ... Chairman: ever tried to get club organisers or their representatives out of the woodwork to attend a meeting? Ask Ian Wells how many attended the last A.G.M. ... Treasurer: ever tried to collect money that is owed from clubs for newsletters or subs. without the help of Terry McCann? Ask Kath Holden, and now we really are aiming below the belt, how many clubs still owe for issues received months ago and, more important, how MUCH they owe. ... Youth Officer: what happened to our lost youth? When

DISPLAY ADS

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CHAIRMAN'S RANT

by Ian Wells

Sorry! To paraphrase the Book of Common Prayer: I have not done what I ought to have done. As a rule of thumb, if the Fed has failed you in the last six months, it was probably my fault.

No excuses, but an explanation is that I've been too busy. Certain of our other activists are now able to take over some of the things I've been slipping up on, and I hope to be able to concentrate on what I do best - publicising folk music generally and the Fed in particular. More volunteers would still be welcome.

It's a long, slow, uphill battle, but we are getting slightly more acknowledgement of the existence of English traditional music from broadcasters, although ACGB and national newspapers are still very difficult.

Dave Tarpey and I held that post we had three very successful youth concerts, one at the Linacre Theatre, Wigan, one at the Guild Hall, Preston and one at the Civic Hall, Leyland. In other words it can be done but when we had to give up the post did anyone rush in to fill the gap? NO, NOT NOW, NOT THEN, NOT EVER! (Apologies to Perry Como fans of course.)

... Tours Organiser: "Hello, I've got Albion Boys of the Whipper-snappers Kippers on tour next Easter. Only thirty-bob plus accommodation. Interested?"

"Well, I don't know ... I'm not sure if I've heard of them and thirty-bob is a bit over our budget and anyway I only book guests once a year and we're fully booked to a week last Michaelmas and anyway the wife's just left me and I can't cook breakfasts and ..."

... Editor: "What do you mean it's going to be late? What do you expect when I'm still waiting for half the club dates and Derek Gifford to send this bloody article!"

Ah, but ... we HAVE survived where Leyland Area Folk Society has not, we HAVE lasted longer than Chorley folk society and we will continue to survive and serve clubs and punters as long as there are mugs around like me, Wellsy, Capper and Bet .. sorry - Nigel.

And, as long as you, dear reader continue to read this drivel and pay your 35p to the heavy bloke that's standing over you at this very moment.

HAIL TO THE FEDERATION!

(Psst! (Who is?) Nigel, do you think that's polemic enough? ... Polemic well it means oh, never mind.)

GIFF.

SONG CONTEST

Joint second place in the recent Hindley Folk Song Contest was this song, written & performed by Tony Hewitt:

DON'T LET THEM STOP YOU SINGING

Chorus: Don't let them stop you singing
You really have no choice
For those who are still listening
They demand to hear your voice

You must tell of the poor
Who go through every day
Trying to feed their children
And never find a way

Chorus

You must tell of the fight
That must be won
To bring total peace
One day under the sun

Chorus

You must tell of the right
That each living thing
Should live another day
Free of suffering

Chorus

You must tell the world
For each passing day
That for each man's joy
Someone has to pay

Chorus

You may change the world
But then you may not
But at least you tried
What else have you got

Chorus

This song is also entered in our contest to find the best song submitted to the magazine in a period of a year. This will be judged again soon.

Each month, I try to publish a song or poem which is the best of those I have received since the previous issue.

Send your entry to:
Song of the Month,
118, Bolton Road,
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There will also be a seminar for all Folk Club Organisers featuring representatives from the local radio stations. Non-member & prospective member clubs are all welcome. Also there is a singaround in the bar downstairs during the evening.

ENQUIRIES:

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SWINTON FOLK FESTIVAL

SATURDAY
24th OCTOBER
11 A.M. -
MIDNIGHT

AT THE
LANCASTRIAN
HALL
& WHITE LION

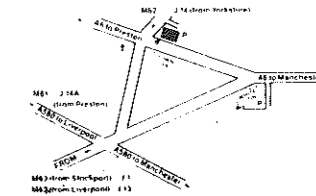
GUEST PERFORMERS

- THE McCALMANS
- THE KIPPER FAMILY
- SARA GRAY AND ELLIE ELLIS
- JOLLY JACK
- THE RAN TAN BAND
- DAVE HUNT
- CHAS CHAN
- GEOFF HIGGINBOTTOM
- BRIAN TAYLOR
- PHIL HARE
- STAFF FOLK
- DAVE AND HELEN HOWARD
- PENNYGATE
- MARTIN GITTERS
- TRILOGY
- HANDS IN POCKETS
- JOHN WILSON
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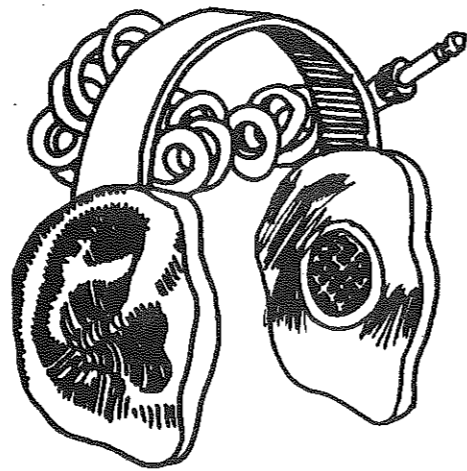
BROADFOLK

In this season of rainy festivals and television repeats, what might have been a good TV series for folk music was rather disappointing. BBC2's 'Celts' seemed to be at war with itself: Frank Delaney's commentary was anti-cliche, while much of the visualisation was cliche ridden. Tucked in between the Penge Amateur Light Operatic staging of iron age orgies and a modern Irish pop video were one or two splendid moments. Paddy Tunney appeared in two different episodes, both times singing a little, once acting as alternate narrator, and once telling a real tale.

We saw some of the Whistlebinkies, Derek Bell, some penethlion, a gaelic song, a waulking song, and some Breton song and dance. The sig tune was a drone by Enya in sub-Irish contemporary, but the most irritating thing was a short appearance by producer Tony McAuley. He delivered himself of the phrase "folk music suggests dead": that was in contrast to the living tradition of Irish music!

The other good thing was a re-run on C4 of 'Down Home'. This was extended from three to four hours by using 'offcuts' from the first three. This re-run doubled unintentionally as a valediction to Elizabeth Cotten, writer of Freight Train, who died recently.

A BBC2 series called 'The Wild Side of Town', which hymned the value of urban wildlife, was accompanied by a jaunty march by the Albion Band, which was commented on positively by The Listener's TV critic. The Llangollen 87 coverage managed to ignore any English traditional contributors (even though Fiddlers Fancy were there) although the Liverpool Scottish Dance troupe were featured. I loved the Punjabi dance team with broad Brum accents, and Ukrainians both from the Ukraine and from Reading. The most interesting thing about this was the production credit: BBC Wales Music Dept.



The C4 series 'People to People', treated us to 'Time on Barra'. This was filmed in a slightly 'alternative' style, and included islanders' comments on previous media misrepresentation. They used a 'waulking' song under the opening credits, and a local accordion player's own tune 'The Leaving of Barra'. It was pointed out that the 'Festival of Barra', which supports traditional music and dance, is a modern revival by the local parish priest.

'Grand Junction' was a fairly dull documentary built round the Crewe celebrations, and included a railway ballad. This was one of the new independent productions on BBC TV. The repeat of 'The She Devil' gave us Christine Collister's voice under the opening titles. A BBC children's series (Treasure Houses) on canals featured an accordion, 'Poor Old Horse' to leg to, and a lament set to The Sheffield Grinder.

What a headline: traditional Irish music on R3, Irish folk musicians at the Proms! Unfortunately, this was part of a piece of post-modern randomised music about James Joyce. Accurately called Roaratorio, it buried their performance under extraneous sound. The Listener preview featured the folk music element - the Radio Times one totally ignored it.

Meanwhile, over on R4, Maddy Prior was credited with the creation of a music hall song (Never Been Kissed in the Same Place Twice) for a dramatisation of Allan Prior's novel of that name. 'Breakaway Afloat' included Eynsford (Ladies) Morris and Mikron. R4 did a short feature on Sam Laycock (produced in Manchester).

Letters to The Editor...

A PAT ON THE BACK

I read with much interest, the article by Simon Jones on Canadian Musicians etc. in the April/May issue. It occurred to me that the ground work for this article must have been quite considerable and I really think a pat on the back is most deserving.

When I think of Canadian artistes my mind automatically goes first to George Hamilton who, as we all know is regarded as a Country Singer. However I would be prepared to say that he's certainly made a meal out of very many 'Folk' songs. I could not say anything derogatory about Canadian music, in fact, on June 30th 1987 Jeff Speed, presenter, on BBC Radio Merseyside ('Folk Scene') put out a track from the Irish band called DeDannan 'Ballroom'. Delores Keen sang the lead on the song SWEET FORGET-ME-NOT. It's said that the singer collected the song in Canada where it is now regarded as something of a second National Anthem.

I've been impressed - and put off, by a very broad spectrum of what we call Folk Songs and I don't ever remember having heard SWEET FORGET-ME-NOT sung before. It was good. Well sung, well presented, and as always necessary in Folk, well pronounced. Three verses and a chorus - not too long either. Listen out for it, or request it locally. You'll be pleasantly impressed.

Stan Jardine.

BRITISH Bluegrass news

for news of tours, etc - what's on - record reviews - features.

Available by subscription (£2.50 for 4 issues) from:
10 Bishops Wood,
Woking,
Surrey GU21 3QA.

Local radio has been serving Derek Gifford well with his Nature Trust/folk hybrid. The Manchester GMEX exhibition saw local radio linked to unleash on an unsuspecting public not only radio mini-star Norman and the whole of the Weavers, but the incomparable S. Accrington. Booked to appear in a former station, Stanley promptly sang 'The Last Train has Gone'!

One Richard Digance re-appeared on Radio 2, still supported by the Kippers, but still denying us their singing. He also appeared, without the aid of any support, on an ITV Saturday night seaside special. That nice Mr Digest raised the tone of an otherwise quality free hour. Stop press: self styled fat man Tom Vernon, cycling across Scandanavia for C4, came across a Swedish church boat tradition. Both the rowing across the lake, and final procession into the church, were accompanied by folk fiddling. They were modern instruments, but tone and style were very obviously influenced by the Hardanger fiddle tradition.

Folkear

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BILLINGE FOLK FESTIVAL

Supported by Greenall Whitley, to their great credit, and held on the worst day of an already foul year, Billinge still turned out to be pretty terrific with everyone having a whale of a time (there was quite enough water to support the well-being of the afore said whale, so Greenpeace supporters need not write). When I say everyone, I exclude the lugubrious director, Bernie, who retained his customary demeanour of the family lawyer in possession of some particularly unwelcome news; but even his Keaton-esque kisser was seen to crack sporadically while The Doonan's and Maxie & Mitch were on.

Both these headliners turned in fine performances, combining great stagecraft and musicianship with a carefree eye for the mood of the audience. I'll remember for a long time The Doonan's version of The Animals "Bring It On Home To Me". Maxie and Mitch were just themselves which means they were the funniest thing in Christendom. Let the hipsters sneer, as they will, there will always be a welcome for this kind of stuff.

Bernard Wrigley also staked his claim in the giggle market to great effect. Away from the waggery, there were corking performances in the Irish mode from Gibbons, Kelly, and Coyne and Gentleman Soldier, some fine unaccompanied singing from The Ranting Sleazos and the superb Quartz ("After The Goldrush" being a particular highlight) and a blast of the modern from Caught On The Hop with fiddler Steve Padget playing like a man possessed, presumably fired up by the all day bar session.

Children were well catered for with Rick Harrop's Magic Show, Codmans Punch and Judy and Geoff Higginbottom's hardworking sing session. All in all, a great day and at £3.50 damn good value. I was disappointed not to see more local faces among the crowd,

though. Obviously, how you spend your time and money is your decision but, if you won't support local events, then like Ormskirk and Liverpool before them, they will wither and die. Don't come crying to me when they do, that's all.

Your Roving Reporter.

& OTHERS

Bloody hell, not another Caught On the Hop travelogue, I hear you moan. Well, yes and no....

First of all, let me make it clear that I can't do a proper review job on any of these festivals, for the simple reason that we were playing at them all which means that I couldn't get to see all the acts that I might have wanted to. What I can do, though, is to try to give you a sample of what the festivals were like, and do some sort of purely subjective comparison between them, from a performer's point of view, if you like.

Redcar Festival, then. This took place from 10th to 12th July at the none-too-pratty resort on the North - East coast.

We were down to open-up the afternoon concert, which we duly did, and then sat-back to watch the rest of the show - the one major benefit of doing the "Death Spot", that. Of the other acts on the bill, however, I can remember but little. Sheila Douglas, I think, was what is sometimes called a "veteran" performer; other than that, her performance, like that of Robin Garside and Ray Fisher has been lost in the haze of beer that inevitably descends on me after we've done our spot. As I recall, we spent much of the time outside the main hall talking to other North-Westerners like Bernard Wrigley (who was due to go on after Ray Fisher) and Geoff Higginbottom, who had just finished taking the roof off the singaround in the bar.

We did all troop in to see the top of the bill act, which was the Battlefield Band. What a disappointment! I used to think they were one of the top bands in the country, with their use of synths along with the bagpipes, fiddle, etc. Whether this was just a duff performance on the day, I don't know, but I got the strong impression that they've broken their last mould, and they are now content to go on as they are. I know there are a lot of folkies, especially the purists, who would say so what? That's what trad. music is all about! For me, though, when a band starts-out along the road of being innovative, it has to continue to innovate - otherwise they might as well have stayed a straightforward traditional band.

In the evening, we did a bit of bill-topping on our own account, albeit at a fringe concert at Redcar Cricket Club - not officially part of the Festival, but something that seems to take place every year. With us at the concert were Tich Frier, Ray Fisher and others, and we were performing basically to a non-folk crowd. It was great! Being a non-folk audience, the punters had no pre-conceived notions and they just enjoyed the music.

On then To Trowbridge, alias the "Village Pump" festival, which in fact is held in a field in the village of Wingfield. This has been my personal favourite since we first played there in 1985, so this review is probably biased.

Wherever you go at Trowbridge, there are informal sessions taking place. There is a wide choice of food available, including some tonsil-destroying Middle-Eastern delicacies. On the bill were the Boys of the Lough, the Balham Alligators, Tonight At Noon, the Home Service, Mara!, Jim Couza and many others.

I found it an extremely friendly and well-organised festival, with the friendliness in large part due to the potent brews offered by the bar. We settled for Smiles' Best Bitter, and by the inane grins we were sporting for much of the time, it's easy to see how it gets its name. As well as doing a "Death Spot" on the main stage (which was well-received by the friendly audience), we did a ceilidh using a local caller whose face went ashen when he saw the sequencers and drum machine; and took part in an interesting workshop in which our electronic music was compared with the purely acoustic and traditional music of the McDonald family of Canada.

Biggest disappointment of the do? The Strawbs, topping the bill at the Saturday concert

Abiding happy memory?

There are two, really. Firstly, the best feature of the bar, apart from the Smiles': Debbie, I think her name was.... Secondly, a wild and drunken game of mixed soccer at midnight. The honour of the North West upheld by a couple of goals from Steve J. and myself, and some spectacularly bad goal-keeping by Bernie.

Into August, and on to Warwick. This takes place in a whole series of venues around the town, the main ones being the Lord Leicester Hotel, and the Guy Nelson Hall. The guest list was pretty impressive, including Whippersnapper, the Boys of the Lough, Maire Ni Chathasighathaidhigaigh, or however you spell it, and Strawhead.

They certainly made us work for our money this year. On the Friday and Sunday, we were to run tune sessions in the bar of the Leicester - not a particularly onerous task, of course, but it set us an interesting problem - how does an electronic folk band run an acoustic session? The answer is, it doesn't - out came the mandolin, the acoustic fiddle, the bouzouki etc., and the other musicians did the rest. On Saturday, we were doing the "Death Spot" again, and as at Trowbridge, made a decent fist of it. We must

be getting used to it, I suppose. We also did a "Meet The Band" spot that morning, and considering no-one at the festival had heard us yet, it was not surprising that it was rather sparsely attended. Either that or we'd better invest in some deodorant for next time. In the evening, we had the novel experience of performing in a Unitarian Church; an ideal venue for unaccompanied singing, but a pig of a venue for trying to follow the beat of a drum machine with about fifty different echoes coming back at you from all directions. We got our first view of Doglogarum, a family singing, instrumental and dancing group, at that concert, and very impressive they were too. Well worth catching if you get the chance.

So there we are, then - a band's eye view of three festivals this year. If you want my comparisons, for what they're worth, these are they:

Venues, P.A., lighting etc. - more or less a dead heat, with possibly Trowbridge main stage getting my vote.

Guest lists - Trowbridge 1st, then Warwick, then Redcar.

Festival location - same order as above.

"The Crack" - same order as above. Told you I was biased!

Mick Burrows.

CLUB DATES - SEPTEMBER

Tuesday YARROW VALLEY HINDLEY MAGHULL BLACKPOOL BREWERY	1st PORTWAY PEDLARS Singers THE SISTERS singaround	8th closed ROGER WILSON STEVE TURNER PETE LAITY Family Ceilidh	15th closed Singers DAVE DAY BRAM TAYLOR	22nd closed Singers GENTLEMAN SOLDIER DEREK GIFFORD	29th closed Bullen Bush Band Lancs. Wildlife * PHIL SWAIN Family Ceilidh
Wednesday WHITEHAVEN FOLK AT THE TUTE WHITE SWAN FOLK AT THE NEST	2nd PORTWAY PEDLARS THE WILSON FAMILY singers' night	9th singers' night SEAN CANNON singers' night	16th SCOLD'S BRIDLE KIRKPATRICK/HARRIS * singers' night	23rd DEREK & DY BOAK RAY FISHER singers' night	30th HARVEY ANDREWS * PETE MORTON BULLENBUSH BAND
Thursday DARWEN POYNTON WIGAN MAGAZINE BURNLEY	3rd singers' night singaround singaround ENOCH KENT PORTWAY PEDLARS	10th closed singaround singaround singers' night singaround	17th JOHNNY CRESCENDO singaround singaround singaround singaround	24th closed singaround singaround singaround singaround	
Friday BEE POTTERIES NORTHWICH PORKIES CUT ABOVE BLACKBURN HAMBLETON	4th singers' night singers' night singers' night closed	11th singers' night JO & FI FRASER * DAVE BURLAND	18th singers' night PETE MORTON singers' night	25th JOHN McCORMACK singers' night GORDON TYRRALL Party Night	
Saturday BURY BREWERY SOUTHPORT POYNTON Miscellaneous	5th LOL LYNCH DUST ON THE NEEDLE RELATIVITY *	12th BRAM TAYLOR 10th PATRICK STREET Ceilidh - band tba	19th QUARTZ 17th PATRICK STREET 18th DEIGHTONS *	26th BULLENBUSH BAND 30th RUMILLAJTA	
Sunday CROWN BOTHY EAGLE & CHILD LEIGH POYNTON RAVE ON WIDNES LLANDUDNO ROCHDALE ASHTON KING'S HEAD	6th singers' night Socialaround CLOSED closed TOM TOPPING BAND singers' night singaround	13th singers' night ROBIN DRANSFIELD MAURICE + MINORS closed Richard Kirkman * singers' night singaround	20th singers' night singers' night SINGERS closed BILL ZORN/JON BENNS MEG DAVIES singaround	27th singers' night HOBSON & LEES BULLEN AVEN GARY & VERA ASPEY HARVEY ANDREWS singers' night singaround	
Monday HORWICH PRESTON POYNTON BREWERY * TRITON	7th singers' night TUMUN PLATT singaround club swap - Yarrow	14th singers' night singaround singaround singers' night	21st singers' night singaround singaround singers' night	28th singers' night RICHARD GRAINGER singaround singers & club AGM	

RESIDENTS

BURY - various
BOTHY - Clive Pownceby, Pete Rimmer, Paul Reid
EAGLE & CHILD - Caught On The Hop, Quartz, Bric-a-Brac
LEIGH - Trevor & Joan Hunt, Calico
RAVE ON - Volunteers
LLANDUDNO - Stuart King, The Rambling Boys
HORWICH - Joyce Riding, Tom Ferber
POYNTON (Mon.) - Joe Beard and friends
(Thurs.) - Vic Hassal and friends
TRITON - Ages Apart
BREWERY (Mon.) - Mountain Road
HINDLEY - Pennygate, Pocheen

MAGHULL - hundreds of 'em
WHITEHAVEN - Knotted Cord
FOLK AT THE TUTE - Phil Capper, Ian Brandwood, Mike Evans, Lemon & Mc.Carthy
WHITE SWAN - Geoff Higginbottom, John O'Hagan, Dave & Helen Howard, Pete Morton, Andy & Alison Whittaker, Hollerin' Pot
FOLK AT THE NEST - Northern Comfort, Phil Clayton
YARROW VALLEY - Derek Gifford
WIGAN - Joan Blackburn
MAGAZINE - Dave Locke, Ranting Sleazos, Frank & Helen Mc.Call, Jack Coutts, Mary-Ann Wise, Arthur Garnett
BEE - various
NORTHWICH - Sean & Sandy Boyle, Graham Sowerby, Tony Howard, Sara Burden & Ian Sherwood, Jamie Anderson
BLACKBURN - Pendlea, Ian Hornby

CLUB DATES - OCTOBER

Thursday DARWEN POYNTON WIGAN MAGAZINE BURNLEY	1st Lancs. Wildlife * singaround singaround HARE & WISE * singaround	8th closed singaround singaround singers' night Lancs. Wildlife *	15th singers' night singaround singaround singers' night STEVE TURNER	22nd closed singaround singaround singers' night singaround	29th singers' night singaround singaround PETE CASTLE singaround
Friday BEE POTTERIES NORTHWICH PORKIES CUT ABOVE BLACKBURN HAMBLETON	2nd singers' night BRIAN PETERS singers' night	9th STEVE TURNER GREGSON & COLLISTER G & E PRATT *	16th singers' night JIM COUZA singers' night	23rd singers' night singers' night TOM McCONVILLE	30th singers' night MABSANT GRAHAM SOWERBY
Saturday BURY BREWERY SOUTHPORT POYNTON Miscellaneous	3rd GERRY HALLOM FLACO JIMENEZ 2nd BALHAM 'GATORS*	10th RICHARD GRAINGER 9th DE DANNAN "COTH" CEILI BAND	17th TOLL BAR BAND * 15th OYSTER BAND 16th MARY COGHLAN	24th TAYLOR/EDWARDS * 26th STEELEYE SPAN 23rd/24th Ceilidhs*	31st TOM SHETLEY'S BAND 30th TOM FAXTON
Sunday CROWN BOTHY EAGLE & CHILD LEIGH POYNTON RAVE ON WIDNES LLANDUDNO ROCHDALE ASHTON KING'S HEAD	4th singers' night singers' night SINGERS JOLLY JACK guest t.b.a. PHIL HARE singaround	11th singers' night ROY BAILEY SWAN ARCADE singers' night guest t.b.a. singaround	18th singers' night singers' night MARTIN SIMPSON THE KNOWE O'DEIL CILLA & ARTIE * singaround	25th singers' night JOHN JAMES SINGERS MARIE LITTLE Eric Brock memorial singers' night singaround	
Monday HORWICH PRESTON POYNTON BREWERY TRITON	5th singers' night Lancs. Wildlife * singaround singers' night	12th singers' night ROGER WILSON singaround singers' night	19th ROSIE HARDMAN singaround singaround KATHRYN TICKELL *	26th singers' night BERNARD WRIGLEY singaround BRAM TAYLOR	
Tuesday YARROW VALLEY HINDLEY MAGHULL BLACKPOOL BREWERY	6th singers' night Singers PETE MORTON (tbc) singaround	13th closed Singers singers' night STEVE TURNER Family Ceilidh	20th closed Knowe O'Deill CREAM OF THE BARLEY PACKET OF THREE Family Ceilidh	27th closed Singers singers' night singers' night Family Ceilidh	
Wednesday WHITEHAVEN FOLK AT THE TUTE WHITE SWAN FOLK AT THE NEST	7th FLASH COMPANY * singers' night singers' night	14th DAVE BURLAND (tbc) TIM LAYCOCK singers' night	21st THE KIPPER FAMILY ARTISAN singers' night	28th VIN GARbutt ANONYMA singers' night	

NOTES

Brewery various
Sept. 5th Misc.
11th Pottaries
13th Poynton
16th W. Swan
18th Misc.
30th Tute

Mons. various
MOUNTAIN ROAD and guests
Lancashire Wildlife Appeal benefit nights at several clubs as noted
1 day festival at Verdin Park, Northwich
JO & FI FRASER with RALPH JORDAN
Richard Kirkman Memorial Concert
JOHN KIRKPATRICK and SUE HARRIS
THE DEIGHTON FAMILY at Melling Tithebarn includes Lancs. Wildlife

Oct. 1st Magazine
2nd Southport
7th Tute
9th Northwich
17th Bury
18th Poynton
19th Triton
23rd Misc.
24th Bury
Misc.

PHIL HARE & MARY-ANN WISE
THE BALHAM ALLIGATORS
MARTIN SIMPSON'S FLASH COMPANY
GRAHAM & EILEEN PRATT
Ceilidh at Derby Hall - TOLL BAR BAND
CILLA FISHER & ARTIE TREZISE
KATHRYN TICKELL plus Derek Gifford, Quartz and Eddie Morris
Bothy Ceilidh at St. Johns Hall - HOT PUNCH
RON TAYLOR & SUE EDWARDS
Northwich Ceilidh

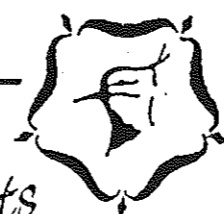
CLUB DATES - NOVEMBER

Sunday	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th
CROWN BOTHY EAGLE & CHILD LEIGH POYNTON RAVE ON WIDNES LLANDUDNO ROCHDALE ASHTON KING'S HEAD	singers' night singers' night WIPPER SNAPPER guest t.b.a. guest t.b.a.	singers' night Dance Stance * SINGERS singers' night guest t.b.a.	singers' night TILSTON & BOYLE * HARVEY ANDREWS PAUL METSERS JAKE THACKRAY	singers' night JOLLY JACK SINGERS REDMAYNE THE KNOWE O'DEIL	singers' night singers' night SINGERS HEATHER WHITTAKER guest t.b.a.
Monday	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th
HORWICH PRESTON POYNTON BREWERY TRITON	singers' night singaround singaround singers' night	singers' night STEVE TURNER singaround	KASHMIR singaround singaround	singers' night singaround singaround	singers' night singaround singaround
Tuesday	3rd	10th	17th	24th	Dec. 1st
YARROW VALLEY HINDLEY MAGHULL BLACKPOOL BREWERY	RICHARD GRAINGER Singers singers' night JOLLY JACK	closed Geoff Higginbottom singers' night singaround Family Ceilidh	closed Singers MIKE SILVER TILSTON & BOYLE *	closed Jim Couza singers' night singaround Family Ceilidh	Dec. 1st closed Singers singers' night THE KNOWE O'DEIL
Wednesday	4th	11th	18th	25th	Dec. 2nd
WHITEHAVEN FOLK AT THE TUTE WHITE SWAN FOLK AT THE NEST	MAIRE ni CHATHASAIGH RICHARD GRAINGER singers' night	ALLAN TAYLOR ALISTAIR ANDERSON * singers' night	DAN ar BRAS LIZZIE HIGGINS singers' night	4th "Folk Aid" FIONA SIMPSON singers' night	Dec. 2nd PAUL METSERS guest t.b.a singers' night
Thursday	5th	12th	19th	26th	Dec. 3rd
DARWEN POYNTON WIGAN MAGAZINE BURNLEY	closed singaround singaround singers' night singaround	singers' night singaround singaround singers' night singaround	closed singaround singaround singers' night singaround	26th REDMAYNE singaround singaround DEREK GIFFORD singaround	Dec. 3rd closed singaround singaround singers' night singaround
Friday	6th	13th	20th	27th	Dec. 4th
BEE POTTERIES NORTHWICH FORKIES CUT ABOVE BLACKBURN HAMBLETON	singers' night DICK MILES PYRAMID	singers' night ALISTAIR ANDERSON * singers' night	singers' night singers' night THE KNOWE O'DEIL	27th singers' night PHIL HARE JULIE KENNINGTON	Dec. 4th singers' night t.b.a t.b.a
Saturday	7th	14th	21st	28th	Dec. 5th
BURY BREWERY SOUTHPORT POYNTON Miscellaneous	DICK MILES 5th Bonfire Ceilidh INCANTATION	COCKERSDALE SILLY SISTERS * 13th LOUDON W. III* Ceilidh (band tba)	21st DAVE TOWNSEND Ceili - USQUEBAH *	28th PETE CASTLE 26th CAPERCAILLE	Dec. 5th WHISKY BEFORE B'FAST*

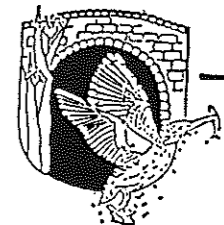
NOTES

Nov. 8th	Bothy	"Dance Stance" with ARGAMELES CLOG and SOUTHPORT SWORDS
11th	W. Swan	ALISTAIR ANDERSON with JOE HUTTON,
13th	Potteries	WILL TAYLOR & WILL ATKINSON
14th	Southport	LOUDON WAINWRIGHT III
14th	Brewery	"SILLY SISTERS" with JUNE TABOR, MADDY PRIOR and band
15th	Bothy	STEVE TILSTON & MAGGIE BOYLE
17th	Blackpool	Ceilidh with USQUEBAH at Northwich
21st	Misc.	
Dec. 5th	Bury	WHISKY BEFORE BREAKFAST

THE NEXT ISSUE IS FOR
DECEMBER & JANUARY
ALL CLUB DATES MUST
BE IN BY NOVEMBER 1ST



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Contact: Joyce Riding 0257 792304
- Wed Sept 30th 8.45pm Folk at the Tute, Kirkham
Guest: Harvey Andrews
Contact: Phil Capper 0772 684537
- Wed Sept 30th 8.15pm White Swan Folk Club, Manchester
Guests: Alistair Anderson, Willie Taylor, Joe Hutton, Will Atkinson
Contact: Anne Morris 061 8818294
- Thurs 1st Oct 8.30pm Royton Folk Night, Royton
Guests: Clive Gregson & Christine Collister with John Kirkpatrick
Contact: Phil Brown 061 626 5993
- Fri 2nd Oct 8pm Westhoughton Folk Club, Westhoughton
Guests: Graham and Eileen Pratt
Contact: Pat Batty 0942 812301
- Sat 3rd Oct 8.30pm Bury Folk Club, Bury
Guest: Gerry Hallom
Contact: Jean Seymour 061 761 1544
- Sun 4th Oct 8.15pm. Leigh Folk Club, Leigh
Guest: Jolly Jack
Contact: Steve Eckersley 0942 677955

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- Thurs 1st Oct 8.30pm Darwen Folk Club, Darwen
Contact: Joan Molloy 0706 220611
- Sun 4th Oct 8.00pm Bothy Folk Club, Southport
Contact: Clive Pownceby 051 924 5078
- Mon 5th Oct 8.30pm Swinton Folk Club, Swinton
Contact: Ged Todd 0942 811527
- Mon 5th Oct 8.15pm Triton Folk Club, Liverpool
Contact: Doreen Rickart (work only) 051 227 3911 Ex 448
- Mon 5th Oct 8.30pm Preston Folk Club, Preston
Contact: Hugh O'Donnell 0772 745498
- Tues 6th Oct. Yarrow Valley Folk Club, Croston
Contact: Derek Gifford 0704 822574
- Tues 6th Oct 8.30pm Hindley Folk Club, Hindley
Contact: Kath Holden 0942 58459
- Wed 7th Oct 8.30pm White Swan Folk Club, Manchester
Contact: Anne Morris 061 881 8294
- Wed 7th Oct 8.30pm. Cross Keys Folk Club, Saddleworth
Contact: Pat Courtman 04577 3202
- Thurs 8th Oct 8.30pm Burnley Folk Club, Burnley
Contact: Joan McEvoy 0282 38199
- Fri 9th Oct 8.30pm Blackburn Folk Club, Blackburn
Contact: Ron Crane 0254 40347

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REDCAR REVIEWED

"Not Redcar again? Don't you know the Tandoori Restaurant has closed as well as Augustus Barnett's wine shop?' In addition the guest list was so beset with changes this year that it's a wonder John Taylor didn't give up, what with Fred Jordan and Keith Marsden both in hospital after heart attacks. Thankfully neither men are seriously ill but we were all wondering who would be next - even Derek Elliot refused a plate of chips on Saturday night!

But with the regular combination of concerts, singarounds, ceilidhs, workshops and 'unofficial' singing and music sessions Redcar still retained it's magic. With the absence of the 'crack' at the Lobster on Friday night I popped into the evening concert at the Coatham Hotel first. Here Syzygy (no, I can't pronounce it either!) were just ending their set of unusual contemporary songs. They have an original 'avant-garde' sort of approach to the music which is refreshing to the ear but takes a little time to get accustomed to. Artisan completed the concert with one of their sets of excellent harmony singing.

Thence to the opening ceilidh at the Redcar Bowl where Hugh Rippon was calling the dances and the Peeping Tom Ceilidh band was providing the music. An innovation this year was the inclusion in the dancing displays of traditional folk groups from Bangladesh (Udichee) and West Germany (Groenegau) who looked resplendent in their colourful costumes. Next year it'll be Redcar International!

Finally a quick look in at Pete Bett's folk club singaround in the Functions Suite (fondly known as the 'sauna') where things were well under way; so well that the night ended with renditions of 'Wild Mountain Thyme' and 'All the Good Times are Past and Gone' and everyone thought it was Sunday and time to go home!

Later, back at the campsite, the Wilsons were reminding us that we'd only just started by leading the singsong in the shower-block till the early hours I hit the sack early - I've been to their sessions in previous years and didn't want festival lag by Saturday lunchtime.

It rained quite hard on Friday night but by Saturday the weather was warming up as I warmed to the sound of Ray Fisher who ran a smashing little workshop entitled 'Sing Us a New Song' at the Pig & Whistle. This is also the new venue for Redcar's Cutty Wren folk club and was an excellent place to hold the singaround which followed hosted by the Portway Pedlars plus the rest of the Berry family.

I left a little early to get a chance to have a sing in the Open Shanty competition at the Swan Hotel, run in the absence of it's instigator the late Gus Russell, by Cris Roach. Unfortunately the sparse attendance at this event lead to it's early demise. A pity both for the shanty singers and the memory of Gus's efforts to get the thing started. Perhaps the answer is to include it as part of one of the singarounds (as was successfully done at the 'National') and for it to be more of a shanty session rather than a workshop/lecture. For Gus's sake I hope it is repeated next year in a modified form.

At the afternoon concert at the Swan I just caught the tail end of a hilarious set by Derek Brimstone and some fine singing and melodian playing from our own local lad Keith Hancock. R. Cajun & the Zydeco Brothers rounded things off with a lively and noisy session which sounded even better from the bar!

The evening concert was held at the Coatham Hotel Ballroom which although a plush venue suffers from bar noise despite the heavy drapes. Notable moments were Pete Betts and Vin Garbutt doing a double act with Pete's 'They Don't Write' 'Em Like That Any More' and Brimstone wowing everyone with wizard guitar work and Cockney wit.

The evening ceilidh was as usual in full swing by the time I got back to the Bowl and big 'Geordie' Keith was attempting to maintain order in the singaround in the 'sauna'. The singing carried on later at the campsite of course.

Instead of my usual jaunt to one of the four Sunday singarounds I decided to attend 'A Lunchtime with Cecil Sharp and Ashley Hutchings'; I was not disappointed. Ashley mixed his own personality with that of Sharp's by creative use of Sharp's hat and had everyone enthralled for an hour and a half including a break while Sharp had a post-prandial nap! These little dramatisations at festivals make a very pleasant change from the music - if only more organisers would take the plunge.

The Sunday afternoon concert was a six hour marathon - only a few stayed the whole course. I managed to see the Wilsons, as polished as ever - mainly because Pat was keeping the lads in order, The Kippers, who have managed to dig up

(sic!) a few more of the old songs from Trunch, Brimstone again (!), Vinny, say no more, and a super set from Swan Arcade who did many of the songs featured on their latest LP. I left as Whippersnapper were whipping everyone up into a frenzy.

The Albion Bank and Hugh Rippon were doing the same at the Bowl in the final ceilidh and Tom Wilson was vainly trying to fit in all the guests and floor singers into the informal concert in the 'sauna'. I remember this session from last year and like then it was a bit of a mish-mash with many disappointed floor singers and irate members of staff trying to get everyone out by 11.30! Vinny took the

honours for both staying calm and finishing his set of three songs. Yet another madcap ending to a super festival of which I have only managed to cover a small part. It's their 20th next year.. see you there!

Derek Gifford

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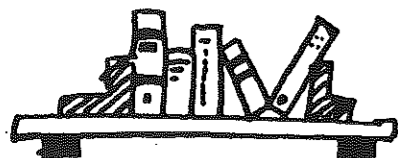
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Book Review



STRICTLY Speaking, this is a book & cassette, so probably should be under the record reviews, but I thought it would be better noticed here - EDITOR

RING O' BELLS COUNTRY DANCE BAND
"Square dance Saturday Night"
Book & Cassette BEE0002

This combination is ideal for either the new club, or a new band that's about to get going. So many bands have commented that at the start, they were at a loss as to what tunes to put to what dances and indeed what tunes went best with each other to make up the dance sequence.

To do real justice to all concerned I will take the book and cassette as two separate items of discussion, and talk about the book first.

The book is a real joy in what it has to offer, and also the way it has been produced. Beautifully presented and well written, with the dance notation followed by the set of tunes. The tunes have been carefully selected to follow on both in tempo and tonality. It is so easy to have tune after tune in the same key, so that no matter how good the tune, it will become boring on the ear. Not so with this - each tune with a subtle and fitting change of key providing good music to dance to and to play. Also, at the beginning of the book a full list in great detail, of all the dances, tunes, bars, formation and time. An invaluable guide to new bands and occasional callers alike. I really cannot enthuse about the book too much, and would say to all aspiring bands and callers: go out and get your copy today!

I wish I could enthuse about the band as much! Don't get me wrong; they play lively, danceable music, but I feel they are crying out for variety. When you look at their line-up and the range of instruments on offer, the tape is crying out for arrangement. All the tracks sound much the same and really there should be much more variety.




There isn't a bad track, but equally there isn't one that particularly stands out - except track 3 on side one. The difference is the variety they manage to put into this dance; instead of starting with the whole band the glockenspiel starts on its own, giving a breath of relief. By far the best track on the cassette.

Having said all that, it's still a creditable effort from a band with a lot to offer. As the introduction states "the band plays with the intention that the dancers should enjoy dancing as much as Ring O' Bells' enjoy playing for them" - and there is a lesson for us all to learn and remember.

Kevin Downham

(By Kind permission of Roy Smith and Lancashire Wakes)


 worthington hotel,
market st,
TUESDAYS 8-30pm

Hindley Folk Club welcomes anyone who enjoys listening to, or would like to know more about folk music. The resident group is Hindley's PENNY GATE who have an interesting and entertaining repertoire, and are always there to host the nights. You don't have to be a member - just come along. Our singer's nights give an opportunity to local singers, musicians and poets to try out their talents. Many of the national and international folk artists started on their way as "floor singers" around their local folk clubs. Come and have a go or relax and enjoy someone else. We also like to provide guests every two or three weeks, sometimes solo artists, sometimes bands, but always most entertaining and varied. After a summer break, the club re-opens with a singer's night on 25th August 1987.

GUEST NIGHTS

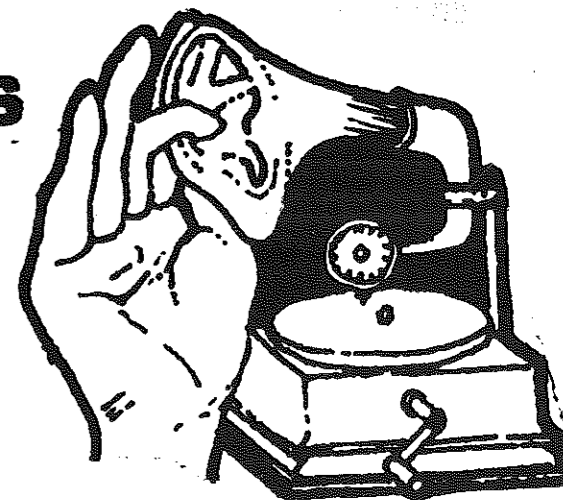
Sept 8	Roger Wilson	from London
Sept 29	Bullen Bush Band	from Somerset
Oct 20	Knowe O'De'il	from Orkney Islands
Nov 10	Geoff Higginbottom	from Manchester
Nov 24	Jim Couza	American based in Somerset
Dec 8	Mic Dow	now based on The Fylde

All other Tuesdays are singer's nights.

Further information from residents and organisers Kath and Paul Holden - Wigan (0942) 58459.
WE HOPE TO SEE YOU NEXT SEASON AT HINDLEY FOLK CLUB.

residents - **PENNY GATE**

RECORD REVIEWS



DE DANNAN: Ballroom
W.E.A. Records DDLP I

The last De Dannan LP I bought and listened to was back in '83, I thoroughly enjoyed the sound and compilation of that record, therefore I looked forward with interest to reviewing this copy of their latest '87 offering.

Three of the '83 line-up appear on this new LP, however I shall not enter into a discussion of comparisons, but rather look at it entirely on its own merits.

Right! The very first thing which struck me, after only about 18 or 20 bars was the crispness and quality of the recording. It was a "treat to me ears". All too often we have to put up with indifferent recordings and poor pressings - I suppose because we have what is described as a 'minority interest'.

The contents of the record I found to be a well balanced mixture of instrumental and vocal tracks. The excellence of the accordion playing by MARTIN O'CONNOR, ably supported on the fiddle by FRANKIE GAVIN creates a feeling of real excitement in the reels and jigs. The inclusion of two JEWISH reels: A Shepherd's Dream, and Onga Burcharesti, can only be described as inspired. The sound and musical picture De Dannan create must be heard to be believed.

DELORES KEANE has a voice like pure Irish Velvet and gives a good account of herself on all four of the vocal tracks. My personal favourite is the latest anti-war song from Eric Bogle: All the Fine Young Men (the last anti-war song he intends to write, claims Eric!) It is destined to join the ranks of The Band Played Waltzing Matilda and The Green Fields of France.

My only real criticism is of the last track on the record. Oh dear, oh dear I can only say that if it had been track one, side one,

the rest of the record may never have been heard.

With that one monstrous exception a superb record, thoroughly recommended to lovers of good folk music.

COLIN WILSON

RED SHIFT: BACK IN THE RED
Backshift BASH 4I.

If nothing else this bouncy record tells it like it is. Life up in our necks as the woods isn't all that pleasant, we do have our problems. But despite all the gloom we face there is a resilience and happy go lucky philosophy that surfaces alongside the northern 'grit'. Above all Red Shift reflect their environment, a fact with which I should imagine Pete Coe is well pleased. Hard hitting social comment like 'The Waves of Tory' or 'Sold Down The River Again' are vignettes for the north sung with conviction and the hope that eventually things will change for the better. God bless them too they've included a new Bob Pegg song, (when will somebody give that guy the recognition he deserves?) 'The Last Dance' a semi religious piece about a kind of Armageddon, taken out on a storming set of tunes. Failing the chance to see these perceptive and precise musicians live with their 'Northern Echoes' show then the record's the next best thing.

Why even our deep blue deputy editor would like this one.

Simon Jones

KATHRYN TICKELL: BORDERLANDS
Black Crow CRO 210.

Despite my particular liking of the sound of the Northumbrian Small Pipes I did wonder if a whole album of tunes on this delicate instrument might begin to pall after a while. In fact Kathryn is far more versatile than being merely a player of the small pipes and her fiddle playing which is also featured is as proficient as her piping

Reels, polkas, hornpipes, airs and lullabies fairly flow from this talented young lady and it is easy to understand why she has been seen on so many club and festival lists in her so far short career. Triplets, the musical kind, are but a minor challenge to her and 'Wark Football Team', which is her own composition, seems to defy the fact that she only has ten fingers like the rest of us!

She has also written five other tunes on the album which are all a delight especially 'Brafferton Village' which is crying out for someone to write words to it (Scowcroft, get over here and listen!)

Kathryn is skillfully assisted by several of her friends who play a variety of guitars, piano, cittern and Scottish Small Pipes and on concertina by one Alistair Anderson which is a significant compliment indeed from one of the folk scene's most accomplished musicians. The only track I'm not sure about is the last, 'The Flowers of the Forest' which includes Rod Clements on bass and slide guitar - the piping is fine but the accompaniment doesn't quite fit somehow.

There is a wealth of material here for musicians or for those of us who, like me, can only listen in wonder and amazement I wonder if I could write some words to that track on side two I must play it again ... no, I'll play it all again!

DEREK GIFFORD: WINE, BIRDS & SONG
Fellside C2048

Having enjoyed singing with Giff at his various clubs over the years and having enjoyed the hospitality for which he and his wife Janet are justifiably renowned, I was very pleased to receive a copy of his first album WINE, BIRDS & SONG to review.

Some years ago Eric Winter, in giving me some instruction in the art of reviewing, told me that reviewing an album you liked was easy; you listened - you liked it - you said so. The hard work came when you didn't like it because then it was necessary to play it over many times to see if one's opinion would change on repeated hearing, and in order to analyse exactly what it was one didn't like about it.

With a pleasant feeling of anticipation I played WINE, BIRDS & SONG for the first time - thought back to Eric Winter's instructions - and played it again! Then I started to worry because I really liked it, and I thought of all the cynics who, not knowing Giff's work, would think that I was writing this review with one eye on that wonderful cellar of Spaetleses and Ausleses that I have so often sampled and enjoyed. However I think that everybody will welcome this permanent record of a small selection from his wide repertoire.

For those of you who don't know Derek Gifford, he has been resident singer and organiser of clubs in the Midlands and Lancashire for 20 years. For the past 3-4 years he has been reaching a wider audience with Festival appearances and country-wide tours. He is a good singer and a competent guitarist, who also plays a very effective bowed psaltery. On WINE, BIRDS & SONG he presents a varied and nicely balanced programme of familiar and not so familiar songs with a couple of refreshingly different versions, in particular THE TAILOR AND THE CROW, and the HERRING SONG.

Nice to see my good friend Keith Scowcroft's ALE OF OLD ENGLAND (with tune by Giff) on record. This is a song that is destined to be heard in many a bar and festival beer tent sing in the future.

For me one track stands out head and shoulders above the rest. DARK ISLAND - just Giff singing with bowed psaltery, but with an almost sub-liminal solo female harmony line which gives the track a beautiful ethereal quality. It's worth getting the album for this one track.

Side two kicks off with a lively rendition of WIBSEY FAIR which makes effective use of the talented friends Giff has gathered together to back him.

Another track worth singling out for mention is Graham and Eileen Pratt's THE MINSTREL. A demanding song to sing it is very well tackled here.

The album rounds off nicely with Giff and friends very obviously enjoying MON LIKE THEE.

Giff mate, this is a cracking good effort which should give pleasure to your friends and win you lots more.

Jonny Collins

THE DEIGHTON FAMILY 'Acoustic Music To Suit Most Occasions' ROGUE RECORDS FMSL 2010

I haven't seen the future of folk music, and even if I had, I wouldn't be so pretentious as to make such a claim. However I know that whilst its name isn't THE DEIGHTON FAMILY, the future can wait whilst we all slap on this record, get happy and waste no time on such imponderables. You'll probably have read the Folk Roots item on the band, perhaps have seen them at Chester or Whitty festivals or had Dave Day bend your ear about their freshness, their unaffected charm and sheer joy in performing. What you've heard is all true and it's captured quite faithfully on this 'Ian A. Anderson - label' album.

(THE STORY SO FAR.... The Deightons are a six-piece family band - Mum, Dad and the 4 kids ranging in age from 10 to 19, which plays Barnsley/Indonesian/Dutch Cajun folk pop on a variety of instruments including guitars, fiddles, mandolins, flute, melodeon et al. Fun is the prime objective but with "Folk's" new validity to the person in the street, the band has found itself much in demand for gigs, increasingly far and wide. You can thank John Leonard for finding 'em, Andy Kershaw for Radio 1 exposure and Ian A. for the marketing job. NOW READ ON....)

An in-depth analysis of this record would really be superfluous. A track listing which includes 'Travelling Light', 'Handsome Molly', & 'Tennessee Wig Walk' gives you an idea of the eclecticism of the Deighton household where Bill Monroe rubs turntables with A-ha, and why not?

Dave and Josie Deighton have taught their children well. The musicianship throughout is more than competent, making up in feel what it lacks in techno-wizardry. To summarise - very enjoyable, nothing cerebral but my feet are happy, and you'd have to have a pretty narrow outlook on life generally not to warm to this disc. The family that plays together, stays together y'know.

-oo- CLIVE POWNCEBY

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Pick of the Crop

Geoff Higginbottom, **Flowers Tomorrow**, Dragon Records, DRGN 871
 Nick Dow, **A Mark upon the Earth**, Old House Music, OHM107
 Sara Grey & Ellie Ellis, **"You gave me a Song..."**, Greenwich Village, GVR231

First, our own Geoff Higginbottom, whose first record **Flowers Tomorrow** fulfils the promise of his excellent tape, Songs from the Levenshulme Triangle. This is an enjoyable selection of traditional, contemporary, and self-written songs, performed with spare and well chosen accompaniment. Chris Pollington provides a characteristic synth ripple to 'Alderly Edge' as well as producing with taste and restraint. Quartz give backing harmony voices on four tracks, with 'Shallow Brown' the best. Geoff has included only two of his own songs, the title track and 'The Man on the Sanddune' but his choice of other contemporary material is sound. When you've enjoyed this record, remember that Geoff is even better live. I don't know about flowers, but Geoff can certainly look forward to applause tomorrow.

Nick Dow's new record, **A Mark upon the Earth**, contains the expected quota of well sung traditional variants accompanied by understated but superb guitar. However, if you caught Radio Lancashire's relay of a concert from Burnley Mechanics you will not be surprised at the inclusion of some harder contemporary songs. These include Leon Rosselson's 'The World's Police' (with Pollington on synth again), Pete Morton's 'Just Like John Barleycorn', and Sydney Carter's ironic dialogue, 'The Crow on the Cradle'. Listen with care to the version of 'Sweet William's Ghost' taken from the singing of Paddy Tunney and to the lovely song 'The Hills of Isle Au Haut' which has become popular without people realising that it was written by Gordon Bok.

Nick is developing a reputation as a folklorist as well as a performer, and this trend has always been visible in his sleeve notes. Here he is well served by support Fiddlebridge on some tracks and by producer Pollington on all.

He may not make a mark on the earth, but these songs leave an impression on the mind.

Sara Grey and Ellie Ellis are now well known as immigrants from two widely different parts of the USA living in Lancashire. Their previous records on Fellside gave a good account of their style and this new release from Greenwich Village consolidates their reputation. "You gave me a Song..." spells out their sheer pleasure in singing, whether a Carter family ballad, US contemporary songs from Si Kahn and Utah Phillips, or 40's show songs. A new development is that they are picking up English songs, and include on this record Anne Lister's 'Quiet People' and Dave Goulder's tongue-in-cheek 'Pinwherry Dip'. In their summer tour back to the States they are consciously using a mix of English songs and if they sing them there as well as they do here, then we have good ambassadors for our music.

Sara and Ellie's own abilities on guitar and banjo are splendidly backed up by Paul Downes, Shay Black, particularly the fiddle of Keith Price and Tony Gibbons on bouzouki, and the overall direction by Barry Coope. Favourite track? I'm tossing up between Guthrie's 'Why Do You Stand There in the Rain?' and the Goulder song. Note an Anne Lister song (Quiet People): in a quiet way Anne's songs are creeping into the repertoire. Sara and Ellie are always pleasant without being dull, gentle but never gutless, and full of joie de vivre. The production was excellent (technical wizardry by Brian Snelling at Foel Studios) and don't be put off by the monochrome cover. It may look faded but the singing is full of life.

Ian Wells

Capercaillie: Crosswinds
Christy Moore: Unfinished Revolution
Mary Coughlan: Under The Influence

Three absolute gems from Green Linnet/W.E.A., reflecting celtic music as both a thriving tradition and an adaptable influence.

Capercaillie, pan-celtic winners of yore, sound quite marvellous on their vinyl debut, producing an album of great delicacy and sweetness. Vocalist, Karen Matheson, has a totally gorgeous voice of enormous yearning and tenderness, conjuring up misty celtic visions and urges. The playing is pretty good too, with top marks going to Charley McKerron for his dynamic fiddling on the sparkling "Snug In A Blanket". Play often.

Christy Moore's "Unfinished Revolution" sees yer' man in the finest of fettle and, when he's in that form, he could sing the Greater Manchester Telephone Directory Q-Z Plus Appendix and still sound fine to me. He's reached almost a plateau of perfection by now so there are no real standout tracks, though perhaps "The Other Side" should get 10 out of 10 while the rest settle for 9.99. It's not quite as fire-breathingly political as the title might suggest, but Christy is very much a political animal anyway, so the treads run through all his songs whether overtly polemical or not. Play very often.

Which brings us to Mary Coughlan's debut album 'Under The Influence'. Superbly titled because after only two tracks she had me completely under her spell. God, she's good. A smokey, bad whiskey-flavoured throat, enrobed in some very tasty piano, sax and bass, singing songs that aren't really Jazz, aren't quite folk, couldn't be mistaken for rock, but could, should and will be called wonderful. Titles? There's a beauty called 'Don't Smoke In Bed' a torchy vampish effort, reminiscent of Julie London. There's the best unrepentant addiction song since the Velvet Underground's "Heroin" called 'The Ice Cream Man' and a jaunty, rocky assault on Christy Moore's 'Ride On'. A tremendous effort. Play very often and very loud!

Bernie Forkin.

The Cutting Edge: Cooking Vinyl
 Cookin' pride themselves on having collected a roster full of the more eclectic end of the folk market and this excellent sampler reflects that purpose. One of the jewels in their crown must be The Oyster Band, currently flavour of the month, and they it is who commence proceedings with their wild'n'wooly rendering of 'Hal-an-Tow'. Other standouts on side one include Edward II and The Red Hot Polkas peppy 'Walls Of Butlins' and Gregson and Collister's "We're Not Over Yet", featuring the Voice at her best. Downers? Well, I wasn't crazy about Malcolm's Interview whose contribution is a self written, acappella, 'Sea Never Dry'. O.K., I suppose, but I'd been led to believe they were dangerously frantic, and this isn't: We Free Kings were alright in a ho-hum kind of a way and The Mekons do what The Mekons do. I don't like it myself, but there you go.

Rory McLeod, whom I like beyond all reason, starts side 2 with 'Baksheesh Dance' from 'Kicking The Sawdust' (another album you should own) and then the merriment continues with Liverpool's Gone To Earth hammering out 'Tipping It Up To Nancy', in Pogue mode. Further delights include the Deighton Family whose singer sounds uncannily Bellamyish and the perfectly marvellous Andrew Cronshaw whose 'Debatable Land' closes the album. Side 2's only lapse is an appallingly dull version of 'Flanders' rendered by Pressgang.

So, like I said, a good sampler and C/V should be applauded for their willingness to sign extremists up and vinylise 'em. Bernie Forkin.



Folk BIZZ
 Folk topics and news
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RECORDREVIEWSRECORDREVIEWSRECOR

MARK TAKEL 'Half And Half' STEAM PTE RECORDS SPR 1005S

Oh lor! I wanted to warm to this one, I really did. A new name to me, and an earnest, beaming Mark Takel and musical associates smile out at me from this album's back cover. 'We're proud of this' they say. 'Our savings have gone into it and we want you to share in our achievement and enjoy the music in these microgrooves.' I shamefacedly have to say that I find that the overall feel is as dull and flat as the front of the sleeve which isn't going to win any Design Centre awards. Mark Takel has been playing acoustic guitar and singing around the South Wales area for a number of years. He includes in his repertoire both traditional and contemporary songs as well as his own compositions, and the full gamut is run on this offering - from "Bushes And Briars"(sic) to "As Time Goes Bye"(sic). Additional musicians help to flesh out the sound, notably an excellent electric Bass player - Chris Hughes and there's a nice clean production job by Mark, engineered by Tony Williams, a man for whom I have a lot of time, so why aren't I impressed?

O.K. it's like this:- If you know Mark's work already, and like his easy, pleasant style. If you've seen him live in your local club (and I'm sure he's very popular in his home base). If you want a souvenir of a good night's gig - then you'll buy this record. It'll sell 200/300 copies over 2 years.

However should Mark Takel be hoping for bigger things, expecting to dent a 'market' (sorry - THAT word) already saturated with better 'product' (yeh, I know) this album isn't on target.

It's relaxed, perfectly competent and quite inoffensive folk and folk-based music, but it is neither challenging nor the stuff to set pulses racing.

Oh, and I'm sorry (again) but those mis-spelled song titles on the sleeve are errors which should have been spotted at an early stage of production, no matter how small the label you're on.

Mark, it's a jungle out here, and the monkeys are throwing their bananas around!

CLIVE POWNCEBY

Martin and Jessica Simpson: True, Dare or Promise.

This isn't the new Martin Simpson album so, if you're only looking for the follow-up to 'Nobody's Fault But Mine', leave this alone. Up 'til now, the only contact I'd had with Jessica's voice was the track on the Folk Roots sampler - Judy G - with which I was unimpressed. I'm impressed as all hell now though. From the outset - a brilliant version of "Doney Girls" - this album is class. There isn't a single naff track. It's chock-full of daring arrangements (try "Bedlam Boys" or "Essequibo River" for size) soulful singing from both Simpsons' and some suavely gifted playing from

Martin (obviously) and the various members of Flash Company, shows to best advantage on a jaunty "Keel Row". Jessica's voice, for the uninitiated, is of the type usually described as ethereal. Vulnerable, delicate, tremulous even. It suits this material marvellously and carries the unaccompanied "Young Man" with the panache one would have expected of Martin's other female collaborator, Ms. Tabor. Very tasty.

This is one of the best pieces of plastic I've heard this year and the projected "Flash Company" debut album certainly has something to live up to now. Bernie Forkin.

ANONYMA: BURNT FEATHERS.
Fellside FE 059

Anonyma are Anne Lister and Mary McLaughlin. Who? Well, if I mention the song 'Icarus' - written by Anne - does that ring a bell? I thought it might. In fact Anne is quite well known as a singer/song-writer but it has been a long wait to actually hear a record of her own work. Having teamed up with Mary to form Anonyma she has developed a sound base to exhibit her compositions as they both have lovely voices and their accompaniment is sufficiently subtle to enhance the sensitivity of the songs.

With the exception of Tim Buckley's 'Song to the Siren' and Mary's 'Fionnuala's Song' the rest are from Anne's writing. Many are love songs while others are based on folk tales and legends; some are 'work heavy' but the whole album is refreshingly composed with some gently controlled backing from Martin Simpson and Laurie Harper.

Among my favourites are 'Moth' which is a short but beautiful love song which leaves a lump in my throat - (my Gawd, Giff into love songs; I must be getting old!) and 'Cassandra' which is a subtle but powerful anti-war song which ends the album.

I was also enchanted by Mary's 'Fionnuala's Song' which is hauntingly sung by her and gives her ample opportunity to display her voice's incredible range in a musically demanding song. It is based on the Irish folk tale of the Children of Lir who were turned into swans by their jealous stepmother.

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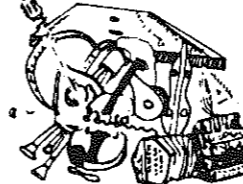
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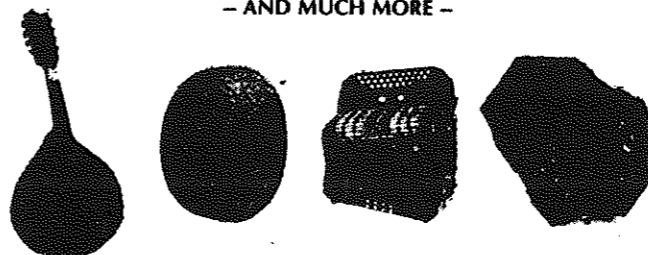
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RECORDREVIEWSRECORDREVIEWSRECOR

Anne sings one Irish traditional lament 'Fill, Fill A Run O' from Donegal and fills the song with an emotion that envelops the listener despite the unfamiliar words.

The album is, as always, technically well engineered by Paul Adams and has an accompanying lyric sheet which means that it won't be long before you hear Gifford singing one of their songs at least! Look out for these two - it won't be long before their anonymity disappears.

Derek Gifford

The Rough with the Smooth

No other innovation of recent years has put so much money into contemporary folk song as the Legal & General SongSearch. This record includes 12 songs from the first two years. They are not simply the top 6 from each year, but Bob Peggs own personal choice. Bob has, rightly to my mind, dropped some that made it to live performance in the noisy sauna at Kendal, and included some that didn't. In effect, it is his selection from 5000 songs.

Each song has been re-recorded by the writer/performer specially for the record with no extra aid than the one instrument allowed under the contest rules. Even if you didn't know the background of the performers you'd guess that 86 winner Sally Barker (Hunting the Buffalo) is a pro singer while 85's Joey Parratt (Home Is Where the Heartbreak Is) was a raw beginner. What they have in common is an effective tag, musical in her case, verbal in his.

What about the songs we haven't heard before? Barry Gardner's Boomtown betrays it's rock group origins in it's rough lyrics with assonance rather than rhyme - but I loved the rhyming of 'land of the free' with 'the King's 5p'! John Connell-Hinkes Toytown is a nice idea not quite carried through - the programme note explains the central idea better than the song. Nancy Nicolson's Maggie's Pit Ponies is splendid agit-prop. 'This horse is not vicious, this horse is not wild ... Walks soft as a lamb past a wee little child, So why should he trample my brother?'

However, to borrow a useful distinction from religious music, it is an anthem for the converted rather than a means of conversion. Ewen Carruther's Love, Love, Love is an effective piece of nostalgia for the cinema as a centre for the community - especially for those courting.

Betwixt-Between, by Brian Smith and John Howes is an interesting evocation of the life of casual workers on travelling fairs with some good language ('Bright islands in the stream', 'I'm queuing for the wrong ride') but I felt uncomfortable with the arrangement in John Howes' performance.

The most complex and subtle song on the record is probably Maria Tolly's The War Children which deserves to be widely heard. 'We are some of the children killed in the course of war. We run about among the living, knocking on everyone's door.' A tangential approach to parts of the same problem is Paul Metsers' What Will You Wear? (to the revolution) which needs no introduction to anyone who's seen Paul perform recently.

I've saved the best to last. Seven Summers is Dave Goulder's subtle and wistful look at the disastrously wet 85 through the eyes of a child: maybe he will follow it this year with Nine Summers! His song came third last year but Dave Sudbury's, though a finalist, was unplaced. I still remember the gasp of disbelief when King of Rome wasn't in the top three. Dave's voice is only just good enough to do justice to his writing, but after the first verse the whole room listened in absolute silence. We found the experience repeated with this recording - you simply hang on the words - and that for a song inspired by a stuffed pigeon! The song is about dreams - dreams fulfilled - and it's strength is in it's deceptively simple use of ordinary language. I can only compare it to MacColl's work in the Radio Ballads. The record costs £5.50, inc p & p, from The Brewery Arts Centre.

Ian Wells

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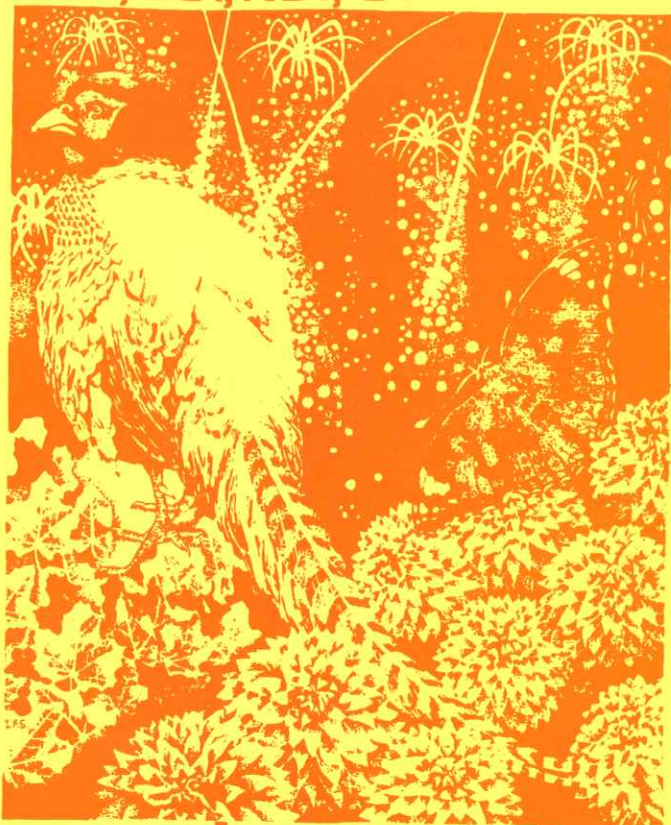
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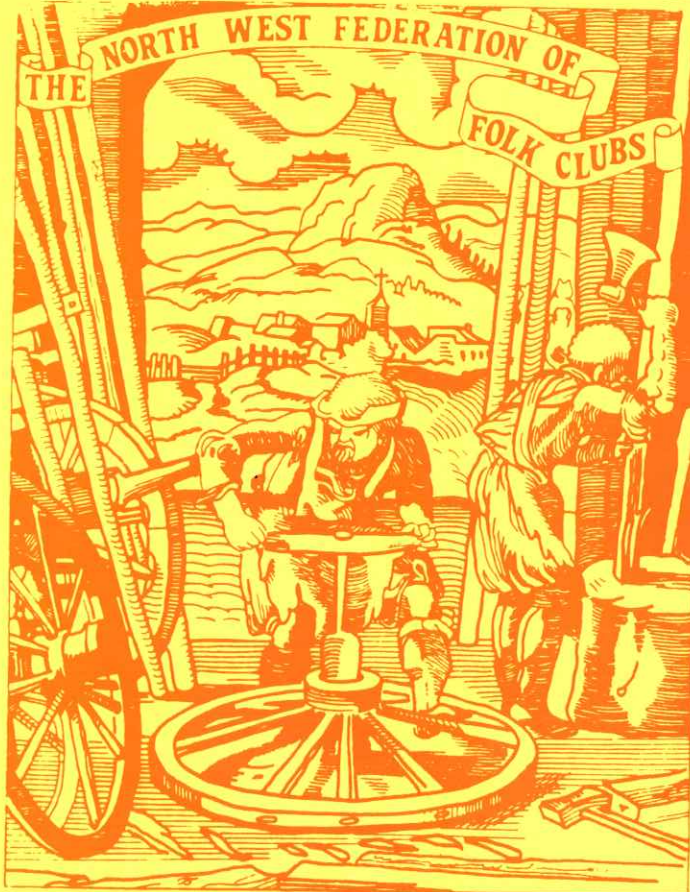
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