

THE NORTH WEST FEDERATION OF FOLK CLUBS

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NEWSLETTER

Page 2 Comment:

WE START, as so often these days with an apology - yes its late again. Just at the crucial moment I was struck down with a one-week 'flu and hence this is getting to you rather later than I had intended. I hope you won't be disappointed with the contents - better late than never.

AS YOU will see from the article inside we are currently striving to improve the presentation and timing of the Newsletter and I hope you will be able to see tangible evidence of this before very long.

INSIDE the magazine, our special interview is with Fairport Convention, although Bernie is the other side of the microphone instead of the ubiquitous Simon Jones. This issue Simon has taken over Benie's 'Rise up Old Horse' and is looking at Horslips and Jack the Lad this issue.

APART FROM these, we have reviews of FYLDE and BROMYARD together with hosts of Record Reviews just in time for Christmas!

ALTHOUGH we've only just had our AGM, our next one will be at the proper time of year, around April. If you've any ideas as to what form this should take or ideas as to what we should be discussing, please get in touch with our Chairman, Ian Wells, 0772 813267.

IF YOU would like to help in any way with the magazine, please get in touch with me. I'm always glad of articles on any relevant topic, volunteers to help with typing (or word processing). At present I'd like to hear from any Graphic Designer or similiar who could suggest a change of image for our page layouts, headings etc. I'm trying to move towards a presentation like that of FOLK ROOTS eventually, but I accept its going to be a slow, gradual transition. Contact me, Nigel Firth on Wigan 833293.

THANKS as always are due to Janet, ANGELA + Diane for typing, to Steve and Phil for the dates. And of course to anyone who has contributed in any way to this issue of the magazine.

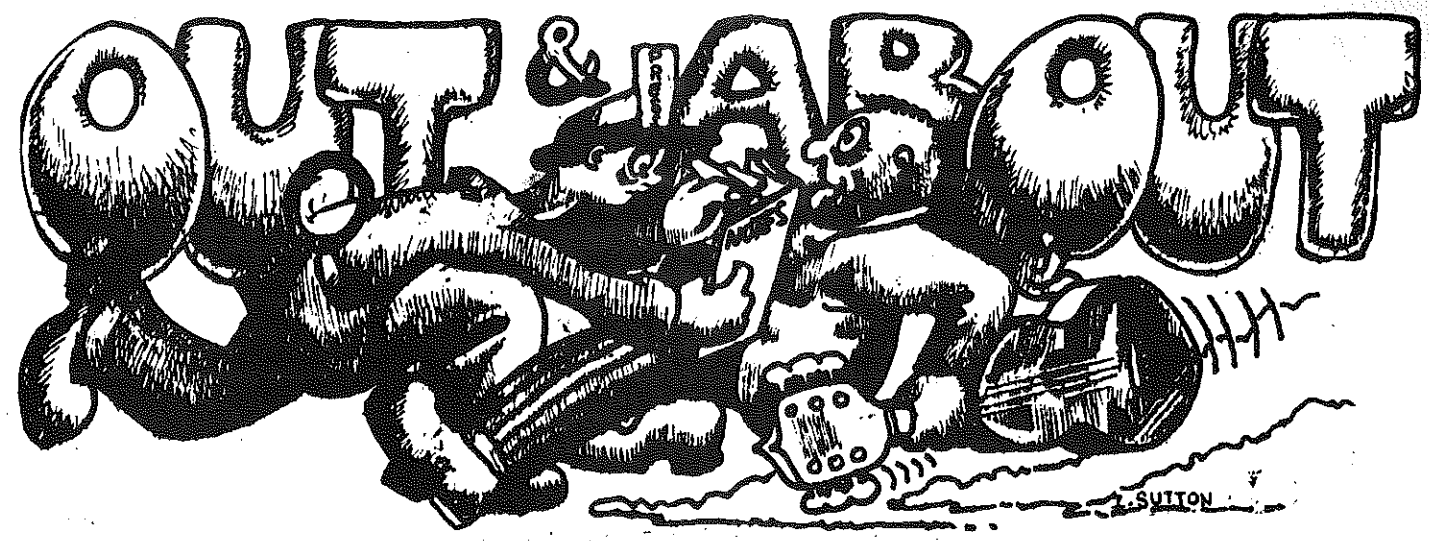
THAT'S ALL, see you in February!

Nigel Firth
EDITOR

CLOSING DATE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE (FEB-MAR) IS JANUARY 6th



OUT & ABOUT	3	RISE UP OLD HORSE (Horslips) .	11
CLUB NEWS	4	LETTERS TO THE EDITOR	13
SONG OF THE MONTH	5	CLUB DATES (December/January)	14
INTERVIEW (Fairport Convention)	6	FYLDE REVIEW	16
AGM REPORT	8	BROMYARD REVIEW	17
THE ELECTRIC MUSE	9	CHAIRMAN'S RANT	18
BROADFOLK	10	RECORD REVIEWS	19on



FOLK PROGRAMMES ON NATIONAL AND LOCAL RADIO

'Folk on Two'	BBC Radio 2	330m (90.2 VHF)	Wednesday	7.00-8.30pm
'Folk like Us'	BBC R/Manchester	206m (95.1 VHF)	Monday	6.05-7.00pm
'Folk Scene'	BBC R/Merseyside	202m (95.8 VHF)	Tuesday	6.30-7.00pm
			repeat -Sunday	8.00-8.30pm
'Lancashire Drift' (Alternate weeks)	BBC R/Lancashire	351m (96.4 VHF)	Wednesday	6.30-7.00pm

WITH REGARD to the above list of programs, it is worthy of note that none can be regarded as totally secure. It is vital that they should receive regular information about what's on at YOUR club, tell them what you think of the program (but be CONSTRUCTIVE if you criticise), suggest records to be played, guests to featured etc. This is the lifeblood of such programmes, and I know they get precious little feedback at present. This is also the main reason why there are no programmes on the independents- they will say there is no demand. The solution is in your hands- write in NOW and demand a programme on folk music. If in any doubt, contact Ian Wells, who can tell who to write to and what sort of thing to say.

MICHELLE SHOCKED was among 1000 people to take part in a candlelight 'Walk for Homes' through central London on World Habitat Day, October 5th. She is also donating the proceeds of her Midlands tour to the same cause. This is just one of many events in aid of the 'International Year of Shelter for The Homeless'. If you would like to help, please contact IYSH, Iveagh House, Loughborough Rd., London SW9 7SF (Tel 01 737 7033)

RADIO WALES' Folk on Monday returns to the airwaves in October, featuring a wide range of roots music from around the globe. Starts 10pm, Radio Wales 882kHz (340m) on MW.

NOW AVAILABLE from the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library based at Cecil Sharp House in London are new postcards, selected from their photograph collection. There are now 10 singers, 12 dance/dancers and now 4 collectors. They are 12p each; add 50p for p&p. For list send SAE to Library, EFDSS, Cecil Sharp House, 2, Regents Park Road, London NW1 7AY.

YAMAHA-KEMBLE are giving away £35000 of musical instruments in a competition in conjunction with Rowntree Mackintosh. Watch out for entry forms in your local Newsagent.

THERE IS a new book just published that might be of interest to some of you. It is called 'Making a Living as a Rock Musician' written by Kim Ludman. It is published by Kogan Page in paperback and retails at £4.95.

BRIAN McNEILL from Durham has been voted songwriter of the Year in the final of SONGSEARCH '87 held at the Brewery Arts Centre Kendal. Second was John Connelly from Cleethorpes (who will be familiar to readers).

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

EDITORIAL ADDRESS:
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THE EDITOR ACCEPTS NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONTRIBUTIONS CLAIMED TO BE ORIGINAL, OR FOR ANY INACCURACIES HEREIN.



I'LL START with the bad news this month, since there is much good that follows on later as you will see.

THE CROWN is no more in Birkenhead, following difficulties with the Brewery over a 'modernisation' programme, compounded by an altercation with the landlord. No attempt has been made to find an alternative venue.

THE PENNINE Folk Club meet at the Royal Oak Hotel, Union Street in Oldham. The club meets on a Thursday evening every week from 9.00pm. The organiser is Phil Robinson, who you can contact on 061 678 0141 (Ansaphone during day). This club is a new member of the Federation, and their dates will be found in the centre pages.

BLACKPOOL FOLK club have moved to the Kings Arms, Talbot Road (near North Station), Blackpool. From now on they will meet on Sundays at 8pm each week. More details on the club page and see the centre pages for their dates.

DUE TO postal problems, I'm writing this without having seen the dates pages at all, so I don't know whether the club dates I'm directing you to are present or not. Hope they are!

SINCE I haven't seen the dates, I can't direct you to particular events as I don't know what's on myself! Hence this is a very short column for once. Back to usual next month.

TWO NEW CLUBS I have been told about, neither of which is at present in the Federation, but if they become established, I'm sure we'll soon be adding their names to the list.

COCKERMOUTH Folk Club is to start on January 7th, 1988 at the Tithe Barn Hotel, Station Street, Cockermouth. They meet on Thursdays at 8pm and offer an exciting guest list for a new club including Harvey Andrews, Rosie Hardman and Sean Cannon. More details from the organiser, Terry Haworth on 0900 4765.

FLEETWOOD Folk Club has recently reopened at the Mount Hotel, Fleetwood. Thursdays will be the meeting night and they will meet once a month to see how demand goes initially. The next club night is December 15th and after Christmas it will revert to a regular 1st Thursday of the month. The organisers are Mike & Elena Read. (no phone no.)

I HAVE only a few Advance Dates:

February:
7th Gregson & Collister Billinge
21st Ranting Sleazoa Billinge
April:
9th Mabsant Brwery

OVER THE Christmas & New Year period, most clubs close close December 25/26 but you will find most with Singers' Nights even on New Year's Eve, so don't leave your local club in the lurch just because its Christmas.

PERHAPS you would like a Ceilidh over the Christmas period? Let me suggest the following:

Brewery Family Ceilidh 22nd Dec.
Newcastle Potteries All-Star C.B.
12th Dec, Knutton Community Centre
Bothy Caught on the Hop C.B.
11th Dec., St. John's Hall, Wright St.
More details from the relevant club organiser you'll find listed on the inside back cover of the Newsletter. (Club name underlined above)

SONG of the MONTH

Do you write Songs or Poems? If you do, why don't you submit it for the Song of the Month contest. The best in each month will receive a free subscription and a chance to be entered in our Song of the Year contest where you could win a book or record token. Send your entries to

Song of the Month,
118, Belton Road,
Aspull,
Wigan, WN2 1XF

This month's winner is Lawrence J. Hoy with his song:

WALK A TINKER'S MILE.

Will you walk a Tinker's mile boys,
with his troubles in your packs?
Will you walk a Tinker's mile, boys
with his cross upon your backs?
For there's more to life than meets the eye,
and you can go to Hell before you die,
So will you walk a Tinker's mile, boys, before you swing your axe?

1. Tommy's leaving school today, no hope no job nowhere.
He will chase a twisted dream with the needle of despair.
And you'll cut em down and clean em out, chop the rot away,
Just take care when you swing your blade. It could be you one day.
2. Mister's on the town tonight, Mrs. sits alone.
She finds a friend in brandy and another broken home.
But you'll cut em down and clean em out, cast the weak behind,
Just take care when you swing your blade. It might be you next time.
3. For a Tinker is a traveller, despised by one and all.
He's a shining example of how low a man can crawl.
So you'll cut em down and clean em out. Pare life to the bone.
Just take care when you swing your blade or you'll be standing
on your own.

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1 page	£16.00	£22.00	270 x 185

Discounts are available for adverts pre-booked for a number of issues (5 Adverts for the price of 4). All advertising is only accepted on a pre-paid basis, and "camera ready" rates only apply to adverts fitting standard sizes.

Send your copy to : Paul Holden (Advertising)
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Hindley, Nr. Wigan, WN2 2RE } Please enclose your
cheque payable to
N W F F C

UNHALFWITTING!

Bernie Forkin talks to FAIRPORT

Unhalfwitting! Bernie Forkin (a man barely awake) weans Fairporters Nicol and Sanders off the bottle long enough to chat...

Looks like '67 was a better year than I gave it credit for. A few months back, lashed by Angela's tongue into clearing the spare room, I found myself sifting through piles of redundant vinyl, wondering what, on God's earth, possessed me to buy albums by Jefferson Airplane and the Strawberry Alarm Clock, when...Zowie! I found the fine Island sampler: "You can all join in" still bearing its large "Only 19/6" price sticker with its dreadful cover featuring all the participants (Jethro Tull, Spooky Tooth, Nirvana et al) standing in Hyde Park, gawping at the camera and trying to look tough. And there they were in the front row...Richard; Sandy; Ashley; Simon; Martin and Ian, all doubtless chuffed to little mint balls at having "Meet on the ledge" chosen as the opening track and, therefore, bound to get the heaviest airplay on Wonderful Radio One, your tower of power across the nation on 247 medium wave.

Then a letter from Woodworm Records popped through the door announcing the re-release of the aforementioned "Ledge" to celebrate 20 Conventional years and intimating that the band would not be averse to being interviewed. Which was how I came to be liggig about backstage at Cropredy clutching a borrowed Walkman and trying to look as used to it as Simon Jones.

My targets were the only remaining founding Fairport Simon Nicol and newest recruit Ric Sanders. Mr. Pegg had written to me promising the availability of these two, though any hopes I had of having either of them to myself for more than five minutes were rudely shattered. Interviewing is not easy. Interviewing standing up in a field is less easy. Interviewing standing up in a field while the world and his wife walk past shouting "Hi! Ric Howya doin'" and Chicken Shack play the blooze through a p.a. that could

be heard in Oxford is less easy still.

Still I located Mr. Sanders and...

BF Ric, you first flitted across my consciousness while employed as a cog in Soft Machine. So how did you get from there to here?

RS No problems. I'd always been well into folk anyway 'cos it's a natural music for a fiddler to gravitate towards. Great for just messing about with.

BF You were asked to do a hell of a job joining Fairport...

RS Replacing Swarb, you mean? Nowhere near as hard as some folk seem to think. I knew everybody socially and I'd played sessions before joining full time so we all knew what we were getting.

BF How did the punters take to you?

RS They were great! I think the thing to bear in mind is that Swarb and I are totally different players so even when I'm doing stuff he used to do, I'm still doing it my way.

BF The injection of new blood seems to have had a revitalising effect...

RS Well, both Martin (Allcock) and I made it clear from square one that we weren't interested in just playing the oldies. We felt there had to be progress and the other lads agreed.

BF You must have been gratified by the reviews.

RS Oh Yeah! Very much so. Gladys went down really well and the tour was brilliant. So we decided to do another...

BF The first-ever all instrumental one...

RS Mmm. That was a lot of fun.

BF And now the Fairport Ceilidh band - any of your doing, that?

RS Not especially, no. We only really do a couple here and there - like the one in the

village hall next week. A good time is usually had by all.

BF And then what?

RS Well, off to the states with Tull. Should be great. They're huge over there, of course...

BF What about yourselves?

RS Oh, we do ok. This'll be a bit special though.

BF What sort of venues are you playing?

RS Sorry?

BF Y'know. Halls? Stadiums?

RS Oh! Halls mostly. Big ones though.

BF Not Fairport at Shea Stadium, then?

RS Not quite - maybe next time.

BF And then what...for yourself?

RS Continuing with Fairport. Doing a bit with Simon. And we've got a four piece lined up with Simon, me, Gordon Giltrap and Cathy Le Surf.

BF Sounds promising. Is that for clubs?

RS For anywhere, really.

BF How much?

RS Speak to our agent!

BF Thanks a bunch, Ric.

RS Anytime. Enjoy the rest of the day.



There now followed a brief hiatus while I searched for Mr. Nicol. A half-hour during which I found Simon Jones (Hallo Bern! Here for the mag? Good! I needn't bother then!). Met Whippersnapper, and June Tabor. Fielded gully to Richard Thompson's off-breaks, got crushed in the hacks race to interview messrs Anderson and Barre of Jethro Tull and was asked by the German camera crew if I'd seen the topless lady. I hadn't. I found Mr. Nicol. He hadn't seen her either. So we talked instead.

BF Simon, you've been with Fairport almost from the beginning...

SN Almost?

(AAAARGH! Why did I say that? I knew bl*dy well he was the only founder left! Simon's smile loses several degrees of warmth. I start again.)

BF Simon, as the only remaining founder member...

SN Better! (The smile thaws again.)

BF ...did you have any idea 20 years ago...

SN ...What we'd be doing today. No! Did I hell. I mean did you have any idea what you'd be doing? We just lived for the day, as it were.

BF Your entry in the reference books usually contains something about "Britain's answer to Jefferson Airplane"

SN Mmm. Never been able to work that out. We never said it. We both have polysyllabic names and were around in '67, and there comparison ends. There was a lot of it about in those lazy, hippy times, man!

BF As people came and went and directions changed, did you ever find yourself wondering "What the hell..."

SN Well, during our career, and I use the word in the sense of to rush headlong downhill out of control, apart from one brief period in 1971, when I left, I've always been perfectly happy with what we were playing and who I was playing it with.

BF Outside of Fairport, how do you find playing in a duo with Ric.

SN As opposed to Dave? It's very exciting. I mean they're both such different people - as characters as well as musicians - It's hard to compare them. I had a lot of fun with Swarb and I'm having a lot with Ric! D'you like the album?

BF Yes, I do. It's very good. Good Lancastrian song to open.

SN Ah! You like that one, do you? Me too.

BF So what happens now.

SN Well, we're off to the states with Tull...

BF Yeah, Ric was telling me. How did that come about?

SN Well, we're good mates with Ian and the boys...Peggy's playing on their new album...

A.G.M. REPORT

The meeting was held at the Alison Arms, Coppull, on Wednesday the 23rd September, with an enthusiastic representation from about one third of the member clubs.

The Chairman opened by apologising for not having any minutes from the last meeting, and added that this accounted for lack of follow-up of some matters discussed there. In particular, we should have held the next AGM at Sunday lunchtime and discussed the aims of the Fed. The next AGM will be held in spring, as it should be, and at Sunday lunchtime.

The Chairman's report was short - mainly apologies for not succeeding in doing some jobs taken on in addition to the chairmanship - and including some update on Folk vs TV executives.

The Newsletter editor's report was discussed at length and with vigour. The main problems were identified (once more) as (i) late or non-arrival of club dates (ii) typing quality (iii) delivery. Steve Chatterley volunteered to chase dates for the next 12 months. A working party was set up to look at immediate and long term possibilities for the the newsletter. The meeting suggested that clubs be charged at the cover price: carried unanimously. Discussion carried over from these financial implications to the treasurer's report. We are actually less badly off than last year - thanks primarily to Kath Holden's sterling work. Another traditional appeal: please pay your bills on time.

The following officers were elected and volunteers found: Chairman: Ian Wells (and Publicity); Treasurer (and Membership): Kath Holden; Newsletter Editor: Nigel Firth; dep Editor and Tours Organiser: Bernie Forkin; Newsletter advertising: Paul Hogan. Youth and Activities posts vacant. Newsletter working party: Ian, Nigel, Bernie, Phil Capper, Mike Read, Dave Day, with Simon Jones to be co-opted if available.

It was proposed from the floor that the membership fee should be increased. Widely agreed that £6/yr was very cheap for free entries in five issues a year (compare even one local paper ad). After discussion, increase agreed to £10/yr for weekly clubs, £8 for fortnightly, and no change at £6 for monthly clubs: will only affect existing clubs from next May. The point was made that we should all try to help other clubs more, especially those with limited resident resources. Anyone with strong ideas on which of our aims should be changed or on how we should carry them out, please write/ring the chairman. The same applies to constructive suggestions on the newsletter.

Ian Wells

INTERVIEW....

BF Is that a herald of future collaborations?
SN Don't know really...nothing planned. I don't think Martin Barre need have sleepless nights worrying that I'll replace him..

At this point Chicken Shack began their set and my little Walkman went ~~??!!?@~~. So Simon lurched amiably away, grinning broadly.

While queuing for some sushi, I spotted the topless lady picking her way unconcernedly through Daily Muck photographers and assorted Bundes Kamera Herren. "Pose, love," said a voice and she smiled sweetly and reached for the sky. Her underarms were au naturelle so the assembled Grub Streeters ceased to photograph since The Stun will happily print acres of mammary but not a hair out of place. The Germans continued to film avidly. A tall, fazed looking gent in front of me wondered, aloud, if they were the biggest pair of b**bs at the festival, to which a charming lady riposted that he couldn't have seen John Martyn and Danny Thompson on Friday night. The entire queue cracked up. The sushi was good, too. So long Cropredy...and thanks for all the fish.

Bernie Forkin

The Electric Muse

Editor's Note: Record labels are given in brackets after the title.

What a diverse creation folk rock has grown into. Maybe as a category the term is redundant, but the music is still being produced. Going back decades to when electric folk was fresh, Fairport Convention's 'Hey day' (Hannibal), was laid down as a series of BBC sessions. With Sandy Denny at her vocal peak and the band fuelling her with the fragile, teetering melody the album is exquisite, and very heavily recommended indeed.

Another band from those long gone days are The Strawbs and their first platter in ages, 'Don't say Goodbye' (Toots), is a curious mix of middle of the road influences and heavier rock elements. Dave Cousins still warbles at the fore, and Richard Hudson is back in the frummer's seat. 'Evergreen' is quaintly English, though 'We Can Make It Together' probably sums them up best. A reformation without a renaissance I fear.

Red Jasper hail from Bristol, and deliver 'England's Green Pleasant Land?' (Vixen), which marks them out as being a hard rock outfit with rustic influences. They reckon that they're 'rural anarchists' and who am I to argue. There are hints of Jethro Tull on 'Songs From The Wood', but only hints and Jasper are full of vim and character.

Raindance (Axis), weld the sort of celticness that Stivell was noted for ages ago, to more modern Police type rhythms. 'After The Rain' is a gorgeous mix of Skin The Peeler and Moving Hearts, the sax doing all sorts of unspeakable things to a traditional melody, while the rock section gallop hell for leather around them.

The Clan are so far removed from the source of their music it's a wonder they sound as fresh as they do on 'Beginning Of The World' (Clandestine)

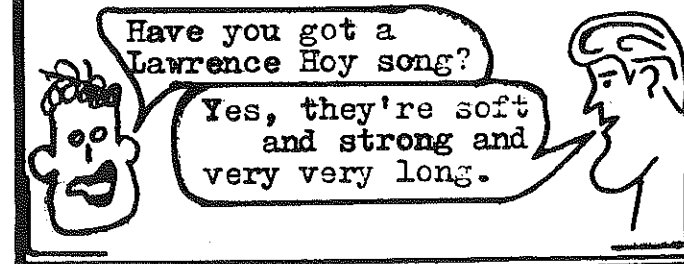
New York is their home base and their muse is a healthy mix of familiar folk rock cuts, 'Hexamshire Lass' and 'Rocky Road to Dublin'. That's not to say these are slavish copies, far from it. The Clan use subtle melodies and have a good deal more tuneful clout than a lot of outfits you could name. This suggests that once they start writing their own material or using lesser known traditional songs that they'll be one from the colonies to watch. Investigate, PO Box M 1354, Hoboken, New Jersey, 07030, USA.

Maddy Prior's newie is a straight traditional release on Saydisc. 'A Tapestry Of Carols' sees the lass tackling a series of both familiar and down right obscure carols in the company of a bunch called The Carnival Band. Precise, clear and as usual vocally superb. A Christmas present or two, could be opened in festive atmosphere with this playing in the background.

Finally the off the wall candidate, Edward The Second & The Red Hot Polkas, 'Let's Polka Steady', (Cooking Vinyl) is a roots rock brew that shuffles along mixing English, African and Indian elements in a heady bouquet. In the band are various Mekons and Old Swan's so whatever they come up with it's eminently danceable. Take the floor and try a twirl with polkatribal. It could be the successor to the Birdie Dance...

Simon Jones

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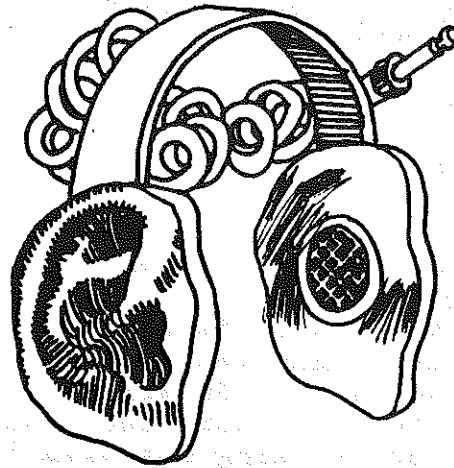
BROADFOLK

Is this typical of TV's knowledge of folk music? The new BBC2 documentary series *Wideworld* included a fascinating, if slightly ghoulish, film on an expedition to exhume members of Franklin's illfated expedition that sought the North West passage. The music accompanying it sounded rather familiar and then burst forth in a full blown chorus of 'Just one more time, I will seek the north west passage'. I thought I also detected a countertheme in the orchestration which just might have been the Franklin ballad.

So far, so good - this would have merited a mention here, but not to be the lead item. However, *Radio Times* printed a couple of letters in praise of the film, one of which ended: "The accompanying song added to the effectiveness of the programme. Can you tell me if it is possible to obtain the words and music?" The overall editor for the series, Tim Slessor, replied thus: "The song, called 'Northwest Passage or Lady's Franklin's Lament', is from the period and was modernised by a small Canadian group. Unfortunately, it has not been published and is certainly not available on record in this country".

It is difficult to imagine how much more misinformation could be packed into two sentences: the confusion of a last century broadsheet song with a modern piece composed in the style of the tradition, the mis-attribution of Stan Roger's work to 'a small group', the blank dismissal from existence of several small record companies specialising in folk music By the time you read this we will know if a correction has appeared.

I was hoping to have some good news about television and folk music, but, as usual, everything is still very nebulous. At the BBC, the meetings between Arts and Music and BBC1 and BBC2 to decide what programmes are to be made have happened, but no information is yet available as to what decisions have been made.



Dennis Marks has vanished on leave - the last time I tried to catch him he was at Glyndebourne! I understand unofficially that one possible series didn't even get out of its regional centre to be considered, so don't hold your breath. Incidentally, Terry Wheeler's films of the Liverpool Shanty festival have been put back to the New Year. They will now appear first in the North West opt out Friday night slot and thereafter on BBC Daytime TV. Over at C4, there is also no hard news but a good deal of 'creative ferment' taking place in connection with new late night music strands. Folk is being considered in this context - but again is in danger of falling down the hole between Arts and Entertainment. Folk on Two has stayed pretty good, including Fylde coverage, and the Kershaw experience also has its fervent supporters. Local radio has switched around a bit. Mike Billington's *Folk Like Us* on Radio Manchester is still Monday but 6.05 to 7.00pm. Radio Lancashire's *Lancashire Drift* is now alternate Wednesdays at 6.30. One edition a month is mostly music, includes club interviews, and is introduced by Nick Dow. The other one will be speech based and in Derek Stanton territory. Radio Merseyside's *Folk Scene* remains at 6.30pm every Tuesday, repeated Sunday at 8.00pm. Finally, some vignettes: in *Fat Man goes Norse* (C4) they found a drunken Finn singing *Maggie May*, Billy Bragg was part of a schools' TV documentary on *Protest Song*, and *Womens' Hour* featured Christine Collister.

Rise up, Old Horse, and Shine Again:

by Simon Jones

So at Cropredy, where I happened across the deputy editor eagerly hunting Fairports to interview, the deal was struck. He'd do the main feature (I was racking my brains who I was going to talk to next anyway) and I'd have a stab at "Rise Up", which explains why I'm on this page, but not with my choice of albums, which are:

HORSLIPS: DANCEHALL SWEETHEARTS RCA 1974

JACK THE LAD: THE OLD STRAIGHT TRACK Charisma 1974

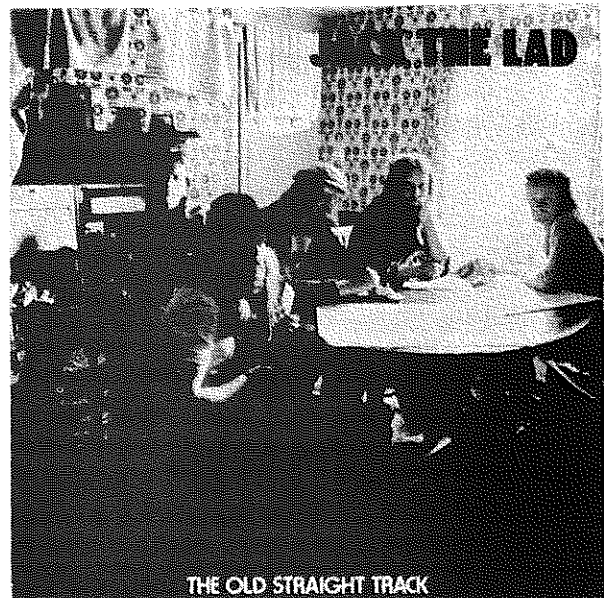
"Old Horse" is way off the mark when it comes to these two gems, which suggests a knackered body which needs resurrecting, both of these have never gone down by my way of thinking, they are timeless and should rate highly in anyone's record collection. Why? Because they're both shining examples of important albums which go some way to finding the answer to the quest for endemic rock, as opposed to the blues based Yankee form we've all been putting up with for years. They spring not from the Mississippi delta, but from the Liffey and Tyne deltas respectively.

Let's start with the Irish first. I expect you all must own some Horslips if you don't, take two hundred lines, and rectify the situation at once. Known more for "The Book of Invasions", which won *Folk News* 'Album of the Year' in 1977 or "The Tain", an emerald folk tale kindled into life by electricity, Horslips had just received much praise for the latter and were considering how to follow it up. They settled on the vague idea of a biography of Irish harper O'Carolann, and that explains why half the songs on "Sweethearts" are about harpers. However that project ran out of ideas and the album was released as a collection of mostly unrelated songs, with a rough raucous rock edge, swathes of keyboard work, stacks of brass (years before John Tams and Home Service) and a clutch of traditional tunes "dragged screaming into the backbeat" as their bassist Barry Devlin described it. Screaming, kicking and brawling would have been more apt, because from the opening pound of "Nighttown Boy" the



pace and attack never let up. They force a beautiful gaelic air "Thir a Bhata" into the opening and closing for "The Blind Can't Lead The Blind". "We Bring The Summer With Us" is a revamped gaelic song, and is stunning with its Irish tinted melody and wafting keyboards. They stomp through "Mad Pat" which wrings a jig, "How Much Has She Got?" for all it's worth. But the most simple and atmospheric piece on the record is where the band let their acoustic roots through with "The Best Years Of My Life", a short homage to the beauty of Galway over "St. Anne's Polka", making a chilling closer. Consider it a tribute to the strength of that disc that some eight years on when they were in their death throes that Horslips still performed a good half of those songs in their set. The tunes are glorious and the lyrics hard hitting, it isn't music that flows or lilt, instead they go headlong like a bull in a china shop. There can be no doubt that if we're talking roots, these lads had produced a record that should be shamrock shaped and emerald in colour. Carr, O'Connor, Devlin, Lockhart and Fean have all gone their separate ways now, and they never surpassed this record, they extended the formula and produced more corking music, no doubt, but in terms of impact, verve and sheer excitement, "Dancehall Sweethearts" remains their definitive statement. **11**

Jack The Lad came from and merged back into Lindisfarne. Originally a four piece of Ray Laidlaw, Rod Clements, Simon Cowe and ex Callie Billy Mitchell, they began as a good time, boozy copy of their parent, but when Clements left the remainder split the current version of Hedgehog Pie and got in Phil Murray (bass) and Ian Fairburn (fiddle/lead guitar). This line up stayed together for two albums, the above and "Rough Diamonds". They would have made a third for United Artists had Cowe not flown the coop shortly before its release to join his old mate Clements in Bert Jansch's band. They had a purpose in mind though with "The Old Straight Track", as Ray Laidlaw recalled when I met him.



"I forget who we were playing with, I think it was the J.S.D. Band, who were of course a well known electric folk outfit. Their fiddler Chuck Fleming said to us 'look there's all those folk songs on Tyneside, why don't you cover some of those. No one else is and you're just the boys to do it.' Well, we were I suppose an r'n'b based group looking for a distinctive sound to take us away from our past, so we gave it a shot."

What a shot too, I have no hesitation in placing this album alongside recognised classics of the folk rock genre, like "Please To See The King", "Leige & Leif" or "Battle Of The Field". "Heresy" you cry, but don't carp unless you've heard it.

Singing by Billy Mitchell, always one of the most underrated vocalists in this land, and the instrumental talents of the other Jacks without

the guest stars such as Maddy Prior or John Kirkpatrick that litter their other recordings make this a compulsive record.

They kick off with a jolly reworking of the mining anthem "Oakey Strike Evictions", before surging through a breakneck "Jolly Beggar" which winds up with a whirlwind chase around two jigs and rock steady drumming from Laidlaw, who is a revelation throughout the album. They could write too, as "Fingal the Giant" and their long ballad set "The Wurm" based around the legend of Lambton proved. "The Wurm" in particular, which is in five sections, penned by Mitchell, is a major work and should be remembered along with other classic English rock pieces like "Sloth" and "Bright Lights". Billy Mitchell drew on all the folk imagery and style he could to write it, taking up half of the second side which also contains their finest traditional reworking, "Peggy" a track no doubt brought from Hedgehog Pie (who recorded it themselves).

The band are wild, they play everything in sight and end up with a stunning example of folk rock. To top it all there's even an acceptable run through of "Dance to thee Daddy". Looking agreeably scruffy on the cover, you'll probably have difficulty in locating a copy of this superb album now. Billy Mitchell is now the Mitch of Maxie & fame, Cowe and Laidlaw are back with Lindisfarne, and Murray plays acoustic bass with the Doonans. Fairburn was last seen bashing out country and western tunes in Leeds. Ah me, what a glorious evening it'd be if they'd just run out the old lugger again.

The vast majority of folk rock albums were carbon copies of what'd gone before and as a style it began to look too closely at its own navel and contemplated a dead end. But be in no doubt this pair were way and above the average and should you find a copy of either add them to the collection, neither will disappoint. I could go on to waffle about Mr. Fox, Dr. Cosgill, Bob Pegg and others who went on to further the search for British music, but I think Bernie wants his column back. Another time perhaps.

Letters to The Editor...

HELP PLEASE

We are carrying out a research project on left-handedness and would like to hear from left-handed musicians, particularly stringed instrument performers who may have experienced learning difficulties.

Any observations - positive or negative - would be appreciated.

Contributions should be sent to :

Miss Diane Paul,
88, Bold Street,
Hale, Altrincham,
Cheshire, WA14 2ES

Yours Faithfully,

D. Paul (Miss)

... AND THANKS FOR HELPING

May I through the auspices of your magazine thank all the folk clubs that took part in the Trust's Wildlife Appeal by holding events at their clubs. The final total is still being worked out, but to date over £300 has been paid into the Trusts' funds.

Because of the success of this joint venture the Director of the Trust has already asked me if there is a possibility of repeating it next year. So all you club organisers who may feel left out in the cold, do not despair, your hour cometh!

Apart from the extra free advertising (eg 3 nights in the Lancashire Evening Post) other spin-offs for the clubs included several Trust members and employees who, to my personal knowledge have become regular 'folkies'. Thanks

again too to all the already overworked club organisers who agreed to arrange the events.

Yours sincerely,

Derek Gifford (Folk Fortnight coordinator)

*EDITORS' NOTE: The Trust referred to here is the 'Lancashire Trust for Nature Conservation', who are celebrating their Silver Jubilee this year.

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CLUB DATES - DECEMBER

Tuesday	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th
YARROW VALLEY	AGES APART	closed	closed	closed	closed
HINDLEY	singers' night	singers' night	Xmas singaround	closed	closed
MAGHULL	singers' night	singers' night	EDDIE MORRIS *	singers' night	HARVEY ANDREWS
BREWERY CEILIDHS					
Wednesday	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th
WHITEHAVEN	BRIAN BOOTHBY	DAVE BURLAND	local singers	singers' night	singers' night
FOLK AT THE TUTE	PAUL METSERS	JAKE THACKRAY	TOM McCONVILLE	STRAWHEAD	HAMISH IMLACH
WHITE SWAN	FISHER & TRESIZE *	THE ELECTROPATHICS	MARTIN CARTHU	singers' night	closed
FOLK AT THE NEST	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night	closed
Thursday	3rd	10th	17th	24th	31st
DARWEN	closed	singers' night	Fancy Dress Party	closed	closed
POYNTON	singaround	singaround	singaround	closed	closed
WIGAN	singaround	RAVING SLEAZOS	singaround	closed	closed
MAGAZINE	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night	closed	closed
BURNLEY	singaround	singers/musicians	PLAN B Xmas Night	closed	closed
PENNINE	ARTISAN				
Friday	4th	11th	18th	25th	
BEE	AMAZING MR. SMITH	singers' night	Xmas Party	closed	
POTTERIES	GILLIE NICHOLS	Music Hall Evening	Xmas Party	closed	
NORTHWICH	t.b.a.	KEITH HANCOCK	Xmas Party	closed	
PORKIES	SALLY BARKER	t.b.a.	TOM TOPPING	closed	
BLACKBURN	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night	closed	
HAMBLETON	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night	closed	
Saturday	5th	12th	19th	26th	
BURY	WHISKY BEFORE B'FAST	JIM COUZA	KIPPER FAMILY *	closed	
BREWERY					
SOUTHPORT ARTS					
POYNTON	closed	Xmas Ceilidh *	closed	closed	
Miscellaneous	ISAAC GUILLORY *	ceilidhs (11/12th) *			
Sunday	6th	13th	20th	27th	
CROWN					
BOTHY	STORMALONG JOHN	THE WILSON FAMILY	Xmas Cracker	closed	
EAGLE & CHILD	CILLA, ARTIE & GARY	singers' night	6 HANDS IN TEMPO	closed	
LEIGH	COCKERSDALE	ALAN BELL (tbc)	Xmas Party	closed	
POYNTON	guest t.b.a.	McCOLL & SEEGER *	BULLOCK SMITHY *	closed	
RAVE ON	singers' night	JIM COUZA	Xmas Party (19th)	singers' night	
WIDNES	tba	tba	tba	tba	
LLANDUDNO	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night	
ROCHDALE					
KINGS HEAD	ME'N'IM	GEOFF HIGGINBOTTOM	Xmas Carols	ROGER WESTBROOK	
BLACKPOOL	singaround	singaround	singaround	singaround	
Monday	7th	14th	21st	28th	
HORWICH	THE McCALMANS	Xmas Party	singers' night	closed	
PRESTON	DAVE SUMMERS	JIM COUZA	DIGBY DENT	singers/musicians	
POYNTON	singaround	singaround	singaround	singaround	
TRITON					

RESIDENTS	
BOTHY - Clive Pounceby, Pete Rimmer, Paul Reid	FOLK AT THE NEST - Northern Comfort, Phil Clayton
EAGLE & CHILD - Caught On The Hop, Quartz, Bric-A-Brac	YARROW VALLEY - Derek Gifford, Phil Hartley, Nothing Yet
LEIGH - Trevor & Joan Hunt, Calico	WHITEHAVEN - Knotted Cord
RAVE ON - Volunteers	FOLK AT THE TUTE - Phil Capper, Mike Evans, Nothing Yet
LLANDUDNO - Stuart King, The Rambling Boys	WHITE SWAN - Geoff Higginbottom, John O'Hagan, Pete Morton,
HORWICH - Joyce Riding, Tom Ferber	Dave & Helen Howard, Hollerin' Pot,
POYNTON (Mon.) - Joe Beard and friends	Andy & Alison Whittaker
(Thurs.) - Vic Hassel and friends	WIGAN - Joan Blackburn
TRITON - Ages Apart	MAGAZINE - Dave Locke, Raving Sleazos, Frank & Helen McCall,
HINDLEY - Pennygate, Pocheen	Jack Courts, Mary-Ann Wise, Arthur Garnett
BLACKBURN - Pendlem, Ian Hornby	NORTHWICH - Sean & Sandy Boyle, Sara Burden & Ian Sherwood,
	Graham Sowerby, Tony Howard, Jamie Anderson
	MAGHULL - hundreds of 'em

CLUB DATES - JANUARY

Friday	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th
BEE	closed	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night
POTTERIES	closed	t.b.a.	t.b.a.	t.b.a.	t.b.a.
NORTHWICH	closed	t.b.a.	t.b.a.	t.b.a.	t.b.a.
PORKIES	closed	t.b.a.	t.b.a.	t.b.a.	t.b.a.
BLACKBURN	closed	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night
HAMBLETON	closed	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night
Saturday	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th
BURY	Ceilidh *	guest t.b.a.	guest t.b.a.	STEVE TURNER	guest t.b.a.
BREWERY					
SOUTHPORT ARTS					
POYNTON	closed	Ceilidh	closed	closed	closed
Miscellaneous			Maghull Special *		
Sunday	3rd	10th	17th	24th	31st
CROWN					
BOTHY	Social-around	GREY & DOWNES *	singers' night	JIM COUZA	singers' night
EAGLE & CHILD	closed	VIN GARbutt	singers' night	JOHNNY COLLINS	singers' night
LEIGH	closed	STEVE ROSTRON	DEREK GIFFORD	singers' night	MAL WAITE
POYNTON	guest t.b.a.	guest t.b.a.	guest t.b.a.	guest t.b.a.	guest t.b.a.
RAVE ON	singers' night	BRIAN PETERS	singers' night	STEVE TURNER	singers' night
WIDNES	t.b.a.	t.b.a.	t.b.a.	t.b.a.	t.b.a.
LLANDUDNO	closed	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night
ROCHDALE					
KINGS HEAD	ME'N'IM	PHIL HARE	ROGER WESTBROOK	ONE TWO MANY	BLACKHEADS
BLACKPOOL	singaround	singaround	singaround	singaround	singaround
Monday	4th	11th	18th	25th	Feb. 1st
HORWICH	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night	t.b.a.
PRESTON	HAMISH IMLACH	BRIAN PRESTON	singers/musicians	RAN TAN BAND	STRAWHEAD
POYNTON	singaround	singaround	singaround	singaround	singaround
TRITON					
Tuesday	5th	12th	19th	26th	Feb. 2nd
YARROW VALLEY	singers' night	closed	closed	closed	NICK DOW
HINDLEY	closed	singers' night	singers' night	DEREK GIFFORD	singers' night
MAGHULL	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night	guest t.b.a.	singers' night
BREWERY CEILIDHS					
Wednesday	6th	13th	20th	27th	Feb. 3rd
WHITEHAVEN					
FOLK AT THE TUTE	free singaround	GREGSON/COLLISTER *	LES BARKER	STRANGE FOLK	JEZ LOWE
WHITE SWAN	KEITH HANCOCK	DICK MILES	KIRKPATRICK/BAILEY *	free singers' night	singers' night
FOLK AT THE NEST	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night
Thursday	7th	14th	21st	28th	Feb. 4th
DARWEN	singers' night	closed	JACKIE FINNEY	closed	singers' night
POYNTON	singaround	singaround	singaround	singaround	singaround
WIGAN	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night	Benefit Night *	singers' night
MAGAZINE	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night	singers' night
BURNLEY	singaround	singaround	singaround	singaround	singaround
PENNINE	closed	DAVE & HELEN HOWARD	SWORD IN THE STONE	closed	singaround

NOTES	
Dec. 3rd - White Swan - CILLA FISHER & ARTIE TRESIZE	Dec. 15th - Maghull - Party Night with EDDIE MORRIS
5th - Miscellaneous - ISAAC GUILLORY plus support at Folk At The Tute	19th - Bury - THE KIPPER FAMILY at Derby Hall, Bury
11th - Miscellaneous - Bothy Ceilidh at St. John's Hall, with CAUGHT ON THE HOP	20th - Poynton - Golden Oldies night with BULLOCK SMITHY
12th - Poynton - Xmas Ceilidh with JACK AT A PINCH	Jan. 2nd - Bury - Ceilidh at Derby Hall, with THE RIOT BAND
Miscellaneous - Potteries Ceilidh at Knutton Country Centre, Newcastle-U-Lyme with POTTERIES ALL-STAR C.B. and LEOPARD SPOT CLOG	10th - Bothy - SARA GREY & PAUL DOWNES
13th - White Swan - EMAN McCOLL & PEGGY SEEGER	13th - Folk At The Tute - CLIVE GREGSON AND CHRISTINE COLLISTER
	16th - Miscellaneous - Maghull Special, Melling Tithebarn
	CLIVE GREGSON & CHRISTINE COLLISTER, JIM COUZA
	20th - White Swan - JOHN KIRKPATRICK & ROY BAILEY
	28th - Wigan - Benefit Night for Abram P.T.A.

REVIEW



What a weekend: campers peeled off their fell walking gear in the sun, no-one at the ceilidh complained they couldn't hear Tiger Moth, the art of the bodhran was raised to new heights, and Fred Jordan sang beautifully again and again. Folk on 2 were recording some of it for the deprived who couldn't get a ticket (weekend tickets sold out before the opening concert) and there was even a sympathetic television director on the prowl. For me, the standard was set during the Friday night singaround: having both Fred Jordan and the Holme Valley Tradition there really did something - not a bad song all evening. After that, it seemed nothing could go wrong. People spoke in awestruck whispers of Jim Sutherland's bodhran solos and Ira Bernstein's flying feet. Even as early as 10.30 on Saturday, Chris Pollington was flooded with

people interested in electrons and folk. By lunchtime just three of the choices were a new faces concert, a splendid unaccompanied session, and R Cajun blowing the minds of the upmarket drinkers in the North Euston lounge bar. I've always enjoyed Fylde, but this year it seemed to reach new levels of pleasure and efficiency. With 86 events crammed into the weekend, there was just one artist change - get well soon, Anne! - one changed venue, and one workshop re-titled. The previous overcrowding problem at the Music Hall disappeared with the addition of several other Saturday evening events. Sunday dawned even busier, with the arrival of the Waterasons, all the competitions, and two concerts I would have wanted to be at if I hadn't been running a media workshop. The tone of the festival was summed up during the afternoon Marine Hall concert when Fred Jordan sang 'Farmer's Boy', stopped when he got to the chorus, and the entire audience sang it in time, in tune, and with a matching pure tone. Can Alan Bell and the hardworking crew top even this next year?

Ian Wells

BROMYARD FESTIVAL REVIEW

The drive down the hill towards Broadbridge revealed what looked like a large Bedouin encampment although it was cow rather than camel droppings I had to pitch the tent among! After imbibing a fine curry at the town's Tandoori House it was time to sample the 'other' Festival atmosphere.

With the Falcon Inn sadly out of commission the Hop Pole had become the main festival meeting place in the town. Upstairs a song session was in progress while downstairs every room had it's own session too - even the square outside was being used for a sing-song. Later the Morris teams processed by torchlight down to the site and I followed them to have a look at the large marquees provided for the main events. The ceilidh in marquee I was being interrupted by some fine singing from Fred Jordan while Pyewackett were rocking the night away in the other ceilidh.

At the song concert in marquee 4 I encountered two new faces; Huw and Tony Williams from Gwent who were to impress me with their entertaining approach to their varied musical styles several times during the weekend. Les Barker followed and showed that his timing has improved beyond measure - yes, he'd got the right weekend!

To prove the fact that the concert was billed as '8 till late' Jim 'Shantyman' Maguan, Johnny 'Singing Chef' Collins and Ian 'Garden Gnome' Woods kept singing till well after 2 a.m. I listened to the final shanty set from the warmth of my sleeping bag; that's one advantage of tented festivals - you don't have to stay up late!!

On Saturday morning after a superb breakfast at 'Holden Hydroman's' staff canteen next to the festival site I was able to face the reviewer's nightmare - 17 events plus a Morris display to choose from, all between 10.00 am and 1.30 pm. The wet weather cancelled out the latter event and economy of time and effort

dictated that the events centred on the delightful town of Bromyard would be the best bet.

Thanks to the excellent little map in the programme I easily found the 'Social Club' where Les Barker was compering 'Traditional Songs and Stories' ably assisted by Fred, Holme Valley Tradition, Taffy Thomas and volunteers from the audience. I reluctantly left this excellent session in order to catch Off the Cuff's workshop. With the intriguing title of 'Animals and Dames' Eric Presley was making the most of the rather sparse audience's enthusiasm, especially the animals and dames - ritual dancers will of course understand - the rest of you plebs can remain mind-boggled!

Moving onto the little Conquest Theatre for Jim and Johnny's shanty session I was met by friendly but firm stewards who announced the event was full up and waving my press card would do me no good at all! As I made my way to the Hop Pole it seemed that festival fever had gripped the town as every pub was bursting with music and song - an atmospheric moment indeed with the rain providing more atmosphere!

The Hop Pole song club (they don't have singarounds at Bromyard) was full and ably compered by 'Now and Then' and later by Richard Grainger. I left before the end to grab a snack and return to the site which had now become a simulation of the Battle of the Somme due to the rain. Up to my neck in bodrahns and bullets I made my way to the song concert.

There I caught the end of a competent set from 'Life and Times' and a super reparté filled session from 'Off the Cuff'. Cosmotheke rounded things off in a professional manner although Al's voice sounded as though it wouldn't last the weekend.

I forsook 'Kippers for Tea' to ensure entrance into Jim and Johnny's 'Songs of the Sea' session where they had enlisted Rod Shearman's help. A memorable **17**

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CHAIRMAN'S RANT by Ian Wells

Are you a Basil? One of the joys of local radio is that you stumble over other people's approaches to their problems. Sometimes it all sounds very familiar. Radio Lancashire's cheerful Cockney fishing correspondent, Mart'n Jaimes as he introduces himself, recently delivered himself of a collective scolding of all those fishermen who cannot be bothered to go to the club AGM, conveniently forget the dates of working parties, and moan a lot into their pints. I was quietly wondering where I'd heard something like that before, when in a later programme he read out a letter from a club secretary: 'are you a Basil?' it started.

It seems Basils are Blameless, Apathetic, Selfish, Ignorant, & Lazy. The secretary said that of course the description didn't apply to you personally, but didn't you recognise at least one of your mates? It's not my fault, I didn't know, Why me? What rules? Couldn't be bothered. I'm glad we're not like that. We are all Dereks: Diligent, Enterprising, Ready, Enthusiastic ... & Knackered. Or are we? If we could just encourage one or two of our closet Basils to try being Peters (Prepared to Entertain Taking Extra Responsibility), maybe the Dereks wouldn't be so knackered.

BROMYARD FESTIVAL REVIEW

moment was hearing Andy Barnes singing his composition 'Last Leviathan' when floor singers had been invited to sing.

With no 'official' (but many unofficial) events in the town on Saturday evening I returned to the 'trencher' to choose from 2 ceilidhs, a song concert and a music hall, the last mentioned after looking in at the 'Tiger Moth' ceilidh which was very lively!

The Music Hall was for me the highlight of the weekend especially when Dr. Sunshine's crew used Les Barker as a target for 'Cosmo' the fairly accurate knife thrower! and Taffy Thomas enthralled us with his 'mind reading'. Acts like Kashmir, The Kippers and the Ripley Wayfarers ensured a full evenings top entertainment and Cosmotheka took us all out on a high.

Out of the Music Hall the sounds from Marquee 4 indicated that the song concert was still going strong. Collins and Mageean seemed content to sing all night - they nearly did!

On Sunday morning I left the song concert early, after hearing excellent sets from Richard Grainger and 'Off the Cuff', to

catch the song club at the Hop Pole run by Dick Nudds and Chris Sugden. In fact they ran it as a singaround - the only one of the weekend! Thence to the Conquest for a well organised, massed Hymn singing session led by Bread and Roses followed by another of Jim and Johnny's popular shanty sessions.

On the way back to the campsite I watched Coventry's Earlsdon Morris Men stepping out some North-Western clog dances obviously enjoying the much delayed sunshine.

The Sunday afternoon events included two ceilidhs and a final club song concert all on site. At the song club the four ladies of 'Bread and Roses' entertained with some competent harmony singing and the local radio folk programme presenter, Dave Cartwright, sang some of his first rate songs as well as amusing everyone with his nervous 'chat'. Whippersnapper were a knock out of course and appropriately the 'Shropshire Lad' Fred Jordan sang out the festival with a few of his classics including the inevitable 'Farmer's Boy'. It overran, like everything else in this festival, because everyone was enjoying themselves so much. I did too.

Derek Gifford.

RECORD REVIEWS

ASHLEY HUTCHINGS: BY GLOUCESTER
DOCKS I SAT DOWN AND WEPT
Paradise and Thorns PAT 1.

The man who is electric folk returns with a record that just about sums up most of the things he's been trying since 1974 and succeeds splendidly. The image of Hutchings as an academic burrowing through volumes of olde ballads and tunes is totally false, more than anything Ashley is a rock 'n'roller with his feet in blue suede shoes not wellies. "By Gloucester" is as I say a culmination of the various whims that he seems to move with, a meeting of his folk, rock and literature roots in a record that has the look of an English based concept album. Is Hutchings close to the elusive Holy Grail he's been chasing since "Leige and Leif"?

Surrounding himself with Albions past and present he doesn't dominate that is his creation, leaving that role to Polly Bolton, ex Dando Shaft and at present laying down her own solo album. This is a musical tale of lost, hopeless but enduring love, soppy it might be in places, certainly weepy by the time you reach the end, but who hasn't shed a tear at "Lassie Come Home". Michael Pennington reads he, Marilyn Cutts she, while the man himself sings our hero's songs. Fine job team, fine job.

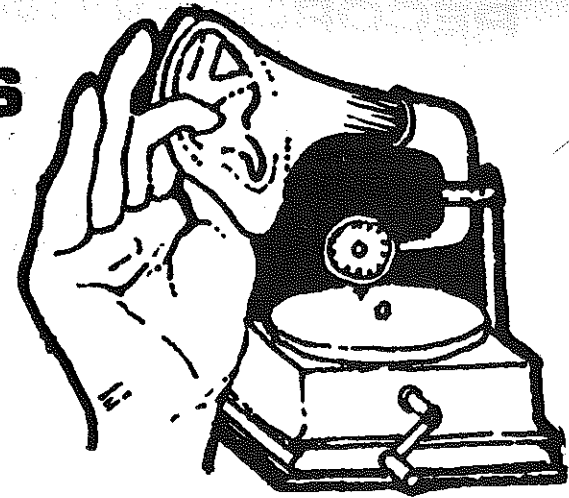
An album that a lot of people will have to listen to for a while before appreciating it, no it's not going to move folk rock on half a league, but in its own charming and very English way, it is what Hutchings has been striving for.

Simon Jones

IAN WALKER: FLYING HIGH
Fellside FE 060.

For those of you who may not have heard of Ian Walker, he is from Scotland and plays guitar and banjo to accompany his 'catchy' songs. His subjects are wide ranging: Love, war, famine, childhood, work and play; it's all here. That makes him one of many you may think but in this album none of the songs can be dismissed as mundane by any means.

I have been hearing people singing



"Roses in December" at this year's festivals indicating that this man's special talent is already being recognised. Apart from the latter, other songs that impressed me were "Do You See My Face?" a tribute to the industrial workers of the past and "Beats of the Heart" which is about breaking down barriers through music - I'll drink to that any day! Clever use of the tune to "The Shearing's Not For You" brings out the lyrics and the sentiments of "The Greatest Thrill" which is a cynical comment on the 'successful' American attack on Libya in 1986.

Indeed, the arrangements of the songs are very well thought out and not overworked despite the proliferation of chorus singers and accompanists that Ian has enlisted including Ian Bruce (two of whose songs are featured on this album). In fact Ian Walker is obviously a fine singer with a powerful voice and clear diction which is well enhanced by Paul Adams's excellent engineering making the accompanying lyric sheet a useful but unnecessary accessory.

This is an excellent first album and a someone well worth seeking out when he plays the English clubs. To paraphrase Ian's chorus on "Beats of the Heart" - You will feel the beating of your heart when you let this music play.

Derek Gifford

RECORDREVIEWSRECORDREVIEWSRECOR

MARIE LITTLE: 'My Eldorado'
Greenage HGN 001

It seems to be a very long time since there was a new Marie Little record and I'm sure her many fans will welcome this one with open arms. The record consists of Marie's interpretations of some of the best of modern song-writers, past and present.

Many of the titles will I'm sure be very familiar to readers of this august journal, such as John Connolly's excellent 'Charlie in the Meadow' and Alan Taylor's 'Rose and the Briar' both superbly sung here. Others may not be as familiar, such as the superb title song which was written by Graham Miles while 'Flue Song' by Tim Norfolk provides some light relief from the otherwise largely serious tone of the L.P.

It was a surprise to find the Eagle's 'Desperado', but I'm afraid it hasn't travelled well across the Atlantic and this isn't a patch on the original. 'John Willie Chadwick' is a song written by Marie herself about the first World War and has to be ranked alongside Eric Bogle's songs. Other favourites apart from these I've already listed are Harry Chapin's excellent song aimed at both teachers and pupils 'Flowers are Red' and Woody Guthrie's classic song from the 1930's 'Ludlow Massacre'.

Overall while there are a few disappointments, there's really very little I don't like here and I can only recommend it for purchase.

Nigel Firth

CHRISTINE PRIMROSE: 'S TU NAM
CHUIMNE
Temple TP 024.

The human voice alone can be a fantastic instrument of poignancy and cut through to the bone. Take one case in point named Christine Primrose, a young gaelic singer who carries with

her a living tradition which up until a few years ago was under threat from the lowland Scot whose English habits had all but put paid to the Gaelic. But their revival is under way and their hour at hand. She's supported here by the regular Temple crew, half of Battlefield and assorted luminaries. Though if the truth be known she needs none of them for her greatest asset is her voice, pure and clear it slays all the studio trickery and revels in its uniqueness.

For all those of you too lazy to tackle gaelic titles then look she's even provided a translation, knowing innately that we Anglo-Saxons are an awkward bunch who think that everyone should speak English. Oh dear, the English. Christine Primrose's music is as wide and inviting as her Highland home. An album that's 'Tha m'eudail, is m'aighear's mo ghradh'. Translate yourself...

Simon Jones

Mischief Clive Gregson and Christine

This is an extraordinarily good album, reflecting the confidence of a duo bidding fair for fame fortune and daytime Radio One airplay. Other reviewers have been drawing the Richard and Linda comparisons long and hard, but, in the end such stuff, however well-meant, is redundant. The simple truth is that Clive'n'Chris owe very little to anyone except to say that they owe it to themselves to make it very big indeed!

To business! This collection sports at least three songs with 'HIT' written all over them: The opening track is one such. Entitled 'I wouldn't treat a dog', sung by Chris and a real bluesy little power house - I swear I could hear Aretha Franklin singing this in my head. 'We're Not Over Yet' is another full of the right stuff - here's where Thompstonesque overtones come in - and, Boy, can that girl YEARN! If you possess, as you should, Cookin' Vinyl's 'Cutting Edge' sampler, it is instructive to compare the acoustic version on that with the electric one on this. Which, I guess, is aggod time to introduce the band, so stand up Howard Lees (guitar); Martin Hughes (drums) and Ruari McFarlane (basses). Very nice lads.

RECORDREVIEWSRECORDREVIEWSRECOR

I won't do a trackalogue - I'll just say that the standout (pour moi) is when Christine takes on the world weary "I Specialise" and manages to conjure echoes of Billie Holiday; Julie London and Alison Moyet without ever being anyone other than her own sweet self. Great.

All this and they still play Folk Clubs.... Like mine..... in February. Hubba, Hubba, Hubba, (dig ya later) as Guy Mitchell used to sing.

Bernie Forkin.

Spirit of the West, Celtic Music
Tripping Up the Stairs, CM035
Shirley Collins, HNBL 1327
The Power of the True Love Knot,
Steve Tillotson,
These Days, Run River RRAS 001

I thank Simon Jones for the chance to review one reissued classic, one awful import, and no thanks to whoever sent the Fed a single.

Shirley Collins' *The Power of the True Love Knot*, a re-issue from 20 years ago, comes up as fresh as a daisy. Shirley's attractive but unusual, almost unfocused, singing voice is as ever well complemented by Dolly's flute-organ. A seminal collection of songs includes versions of 'The Unquiet Grave', and 'Lovely Joan'. The record was originally produced by Joe Boyd and in some ways is better than the more highly acclaimed 'Anthems in Eden'. A must for lovers of folk singing.

Not so with Spirit of the West's *Tripping up the Stairs*. This presumably Canadian pseudo-celtic trio are accomplished but unmemorable instrumentally, with arbitrary changes of tempo. They sing quite adequately totally unexceptional self-penned lyrics. There are no biographical or musical notes and what little information is provided is inscribed in pretty but unreadable handwriting. Celtic Music sell it under licence from Stony Plain Recording - I rest my case.

Steve Tillotson's *These Days/Lazy Tango* is a single 'from the album *Life By Misadventure*'. The cover photo is an uncreative smear, and

the record is recorded and produced by Melvin Klein, who is also credited with part of the backing vocals, additional percussion and the second kalimba. I marginally preferred the instrumental side B, but shudder at the thought of what the less interesting tracks on the LP must be like.

Ian Wells

PETA WEBB & PETE COOPER: THE HEART IS TRUE
Heart Records HR 001.

This album has (justifiably) received so many enthusiastic reviews that this is simply one more to add to the list.

A couple of years ago I walked out on The Armadilloes in mid-set; their lively playing did nothing to convince me that Appalachian music was worth waiting around for. I approached this album with the caution born of that experience, and discovered how much I have been missing in the intervening years.

Pete's superb fiddle playing and Pete's gutsy voice make this an album well worth buying (beg or borrow it if you don't have £5.50). As well as a good selection of Appalachian numbers, the album also contains some sensitive renditions of traditional Irish and Scottish songs, including the unusual "Rere's Hill" (where the seducer actually stays around after the seduction!)

My favourite track on the L.P. is Pete's own composition and solo performance, "Beach Song" which just about sums things up:

"I say to myself, you don't know,
You just don't know what power is"

Listen to this album and find out!

Janet Hale

Wide Blue Yonder The Oyster Band

In which our heroes consolidate the position. O.K. first things first....as an entity this one doesn't hang together as well as it's distinguished predecessor. It has one or two flaccid moments with the tin bum award going to the grotesque version of 'Between The Wars' which closes the album. It also has a goodly quantity of corkers from the clever 'Oxford Girl' (guest vocals: Christine Collister) through the spiffy, upfront, 'The Lost And Found' finally arriving at the totally excellent 'Rose Of England'.... a possible mini-hitette should they care to release it singly.

The Band themselves evidently think a lot of both 'General's Are Born Again' and 'Early Days Of A Better Nation' and I don't blame them since both songs preach to the converted and, I'm sure, go down like hot whatsits in concert. 'Early Days' in particular reflects their 'up and at 'em' approach perfectly. Classy Agitprop.

Of the remaining tracks, Kathryn Tickell helps out on 'Pigsty Billy', and 'Lakes Of Cool Flynn' shows they haven't forgotten how to beef up the tradition.

And that's about it. Give them chance to draw breath and they'll be off again into left field. Good thing too! Just one more push and you'll be through!

Bernie Forkin.

Northern Harmony The Bayley Hazen

Issued as a promotional tape prior to the American choir's visit to Britain in April 1988, this collection of 17 Sacred Harp pieces from New England has, quite frankly, failed to please me. With 24 voices I had hoped for a full, rich, round sound, but instead the group produce, on this offering at least, a thin, ragged out put due in part, I suspect, to not following the directors baton (although he may not actually be conducting as his name appears among the list of basses). It grieves me to admit this but I do feel that it is the Basses, in the way that they are used, that are the root cause of so many of the failings of this tape.

What on earth are basses doing singing the melody line whilst the sopranos sing a top harmony?

Why, on why, couldn't some of the pieces be transposed in order that the basses sing a real bottom line and the rest of the voices are pitched in a more comfortable register?

Having said all that, there are some excellent hymns in this collection, with good arrangements and fine singing; Meditation is first class, as are Parting Friends, Weeping Mary and of course, Babylon. I shall certainly try to catch this choir when they cross the pond, with the proviso that they don't put New Jerusalem and Northfield on the same bill of fare - two tunes so similar that they clash alarmingly on the listening ear.

Pete Gleave.

Gathering Pace Relativity

Ancient Rain Mary Coughlan

I hate the term 'supergroup' 'cos I'm old enough to remember when it meant outfits like Crosby, Stills, Nash, Young, Gifted and Black and like maned crews sounding like firms of Solicitors. With the exception of Cream it never meant that the group were in any way super.

I'm bound to say Relativity are pretty super, though. For a start, it's got some verry tasty tune sets featuring the Brothers Cunningham in magical form and when one adds Triona and sibling to that potent brew, it can mess your mind about something fierce. There's also one glorious moment of pure farce when the drummers of the Black Watch burst out of the left-hand channel, sounding for all the world like a couple of hundred tap-dancing midgets. Triona's in pretty good shape vocally with the title track showing her and her cohorts at their best in a dense, creamy arrangement. Altogether a good thing.

Mary Coughlan, about whom I'm currently ga-ga, put this little albumette out to fill the gap between "Tired and Emotional" and "Under The Influence": Side one is two studio tracks with a strutting version of Chicken Shack's "I'd Rather Go Blind" just getting the edge over the title track and the flip shows her getting down and getting with it in concert. Three corking efforts starting with a terrific "Delaney's Gone Back On The Wine" and culminating with the best version of "Strange Fruit" I've ever heard. Yes, folks, even better than Billie Holliday's original. Should you buy it? Is the Pope Polish? Not generally available but any of the main distributors ought to be able to import a copy for yez.

Bernie Forkin.

The CHINA album

What does Children in Need mean to you? Just Terry Wogan with a load of synthetic celebrities on the box? Think again: BBC local radio stations and their listeners contribute a lot of effort and cash. This year Radio Manchester's 'Folk Like Us' has really pulled out the stops and has produced an incredible cassette of double album length. There are 26 tracks on it - that means Mike Billington has persuaded 26 artists or bands to give their time. There are one or two national names (Carthy, Kirkpatrick/Harris, Fairport, the Cunninghams) but a good 20 of the tracks are by local or locally based artists. What a demonstration of the depth of talent we have in this area, and of the width of styles. It ranges from the homespun of the Houghton Weavers, via the sharp observation of Pete Morton, to the dramatic and powerful Christine Collister and Clive Gregson. I apologise to the artists I haven't mentioned, but there isn't a bad track on it, and virtually all are unobtainable elsewhere. The tape, digitally mastered by Dave Howard, copied in real time onto chrome tape, is incredible value at £5.50 from BBC Radio Manchester, PO Box 90, Oxford Road, Manchester, M60 1SJ.

ISW

R. CAJUN & THE ZYDECO BROTHERS: PIG STICKING IN ARCADIA Discethnique EFN1 LP 01.

Fans of R. Cajun (myself included) have been waiting for this album for a long time - on the whole it wasn't worth the wait. Someone decided to use all the studio techniques at their disposal and these detract from the lively full sound you get at an R. Cajun gig. Two tracks are so appalling in this respect that they deserve a special mention: "Me, Mad-elaine & Madness" (enough said!) and the eponymous "Pig Sticking in Arcadia". The numbers which escaped the harmoniser capture more of the quality of R. Cajun's enthusiastic live performances, especially "Lacassine Special" and "Iota Two Step".

There have been a few changes in line up since their last (and overall better) L.P. "Bayou Rhythms", but I blame the Producer for the difference in quality of the albums, not the incoming "Dr." Tony Dark, Dave Bland and Clive Harvey (from R. Jelly to R. Cajun). Final mention must go to the truly tasteless cover, the full awfulness of which can only be appreciated after listening to the L.P.. In spite of all I've said, don't be put off the band - R. Cajun are a good time Derby Cajun band who always give 100% on stage - but I can't help feeling that their Sidmouth set broadcast on Folk on 2 would have made a better album. Bon ton roulet? Pas cette fois.

Janet Hale

HARVEY ANDREWS "PG" Beeswing LBB05

It's been some time since there was a new LP from Harvey Andrews, but I think you will find its been worth waiting for. There's amix of songs you will find familiar if you've seen him live recently and some that won't be. There isn't anything here with quite the bite of 'Soldier' or 'Unaccompanied', but there are some very good, more lyrical songs here and the social comment is by no means forgotten. It will be difficult to pick favourites, but 'Song that Harry Wrote' is a very good song about Harry Chapin's songs, in the style of that great man. 'First you loose the Rhyming' about a songwriter losing the urge to write has a very catchy chorus and a song I'm sure others will be singing before long.

'Please don't get on the plane' is about the plane crash Buddy Holly and Big Bopper were killed on and manages the style of the time within the confines of a folk song. The title track about violence and video recorders is all too familiar with those who read the papers regularly. My only criticism is that personally I prefer an LP to reflect what I would see at a folk club, so I find some of the tracks are rather over-produced. The songs are strong enough by themselves not to need backing musicians, so why use them? That apart, what can I say but go out and buy it!

Nigel Firth

English Morning: Johnny Coppin
Red Sky Records, RSKC107

I was born in Gloucestershire, tho' to Yorkshire parents and we moved away when I was five, and I hoped to find a thrill of recognition in this setting of poems about the county. It's Johnny Coppin's second selection, the first, **Forest and Vale and High Blue Hill**, became the BBC TV programme 'Song of Gloucestershire'. But there's the catch: these all started out as poems, not song lyrics.

I'm always wary of attempts to turn existing poems into songs, of musical settings of words meant to be spoken. Such settings tread a narrow path between opposing faults. The words can be swamped by the setting, as frequently happens with classical composers, or the music is 'reduced to a mere rum-ti-tum', as Sullivan complained to Gilbert.

With Johnny's pleasant light voice, and the restrained use of mostly acoustic instruments, these settings veer dangerously near the latter. Occasionally, the metrical impetus of the tune forces pauses at line ends where the sense of the words demands a carry-over. Sometimes, stressed words are lost in low notes. The most successful settings are those nearest traditional verse: Forest Carol, Tom Long's Post, and, especially, the only unaccompanied one, Cotswold Tiles.

My other quibble is with the wholly pastoral tone. Little Rissington, where I was born, was the training camp for large numbers of RAF personnel during and after WWII, and every time I drive through the county we pass many active military airfields. We've walked the towpath of the Severn-Thames canal, derelict now but once busy with barges taking Stroud cloth to London. Just as Lancs isn't all clogs and mills, Glos isn't just hills and fruit blossom.

Johnny clearly loves the poems of Ivor Gurney, Leonard Clarke, and Frank Mansell, not to mention the better known W H Davies and John Drinkwater. It's a harsh thing to say to such a good musician, but perhaps the best thing he could for these poems is to leave them alone. Still, if it introduces just one person to just one of these poems, it was worth the effort.

Ian Wells

TOM TOPPING BAND 'One Step Closer'
TTB Recordings (70 Minutes Live)

This so-called 'Live' recording in fact consists of some very desultory applause tagged onto the end of each song. There are no introductions, no banter and no sign of audience participation in the singing!

The songs themselves, mostly self-penned, are pleasant enough background music. At least that's what I thought until I got to 'First Christmas away from home', one of the best and most moving songs I've ever heard about people old and young, having to spend Christmas alone and away from home. I wondered whether I'd missed something in the other songs, but then noticed it's one of two by Stan Rogers on the cassette - no wonder it's a cracking song. I'm afraid most of the ones that stand out are not their own songs either; two shanties 'Alabama' and 'Bound for South Australia' are competent renderings while Stan Roger's other song 'Mary Ellen Carter' is well sung. They also tackle well two spiritual-type songs 'Down in the Valley' and 'Love will guide us'. Among their own songs, probably only two are worthy of mention 'Hold me close tonight' and 'High and Dry'; the rest are just a mass of pleasant, but meaningless strings of words. I'm told they are very good live with a good line in banter - so why wasn't this cassette done in the same way? All I can do is suggest you go and see them live and if you like them, buy the cassette; although it's nearly worth getting just for the two Stan Rogers songs!

Nigel Firth

EAGLE & CHILD

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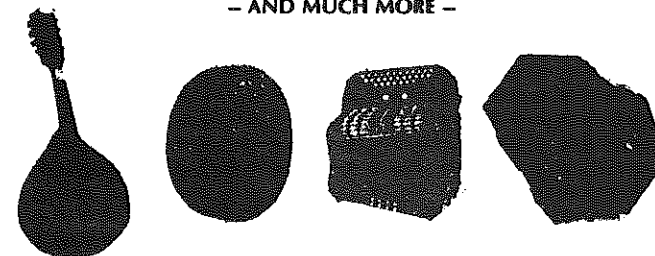
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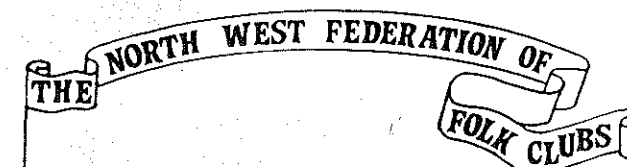


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RECORDREVIEWSRECORDREVIEWSRECOR

MIKRON V

This is the fifth record produced by the floating theatre company in their fifteenth year of touring on their fifty year old narrow boat Tyseley. It includes songs from six shows performed by nine current and former cast members, and was recorded live in front of a friendly audience in, inevitably, a canal side pub.

Someone I know was put off 'Cats' by being played the cast recording in full by a friend who had seen the show. The friend closed her eyes and re-lived the production - the novice listened with bewilderment. This is always a risk with records of theatre productions: incidental music is boring without the visual action, but bleeding extracts lose context. Since MIKRON's house style is short sharp scenes with songs used both to comment on the action and to move it along, the songs survive transplanted quite well. The problem is that they are sung by actors: what is perfectly acceptable in the context of the play and the pub staging can come over a bit rough on repeated playing in the analytical comfort of your own house.

Having got that off my chest, what about the songs? There's a touching lyric put together from mourning cards ('Dear Lovely Child'), a flippant hymn to tropical fish ('Tanks for the Memory'), a traditional set of words ('Navy Song') from the Manchester Ship Canal. There's an interesting sequence out of 'The British Amazon', which is based on the true story of Mary Anne Talbot who served both as a powder monkey and a drummer boy in battle and survived long enough to play herself at Drury Lane! This includes several set of trad words, set to music by Jane Mansel, their current musical director.

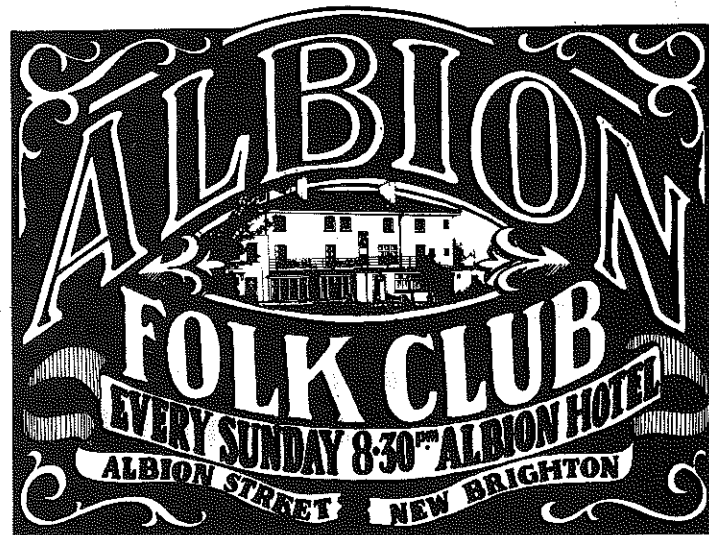
The most memorable song is, quite appropriately, 'Still Carrying': this is about their splendid boat but could be their own motto. The company had their Arts Council grant removed without warning or explanation three years ago, but

are still carrying on. Among the performers are founder Mike Lucas; Mark Williams, who you may have caught in the odd advert on the telly; Sarah Wilson who spent last summer at the Liverpool maritime museum; and Sarah Parks whose good voice can also be heard in the current production.

I wouldn't try to convert people to MIKRON using this record - but after they've seen a production I wouldn't need to urge them to buy it. Time after time I've seen people who've just experienced a production rushing to buy. So, if you missed them this year - they didn't tour the Leeds & Liverpool so that's quite possible - write now to 31 Warehouse Hill, Marsden, Huddersfield, W Yorks HD7 6AB, including £6.10. Or send an SAE to the same address for the details of their South Pennine tour which overlaps our area.

How can I sum this one up? MIKRON V, ACGB 0.

Ian Wells



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	EAGLE & CHILD	8.30 pm	Eagle & Child, Main St., Billinge, nr. Wigan	Bernie Forkin	0744 53058
	LEIGH	8.00 pm	Oddfellows Arms, Twiss Lane, Leigh	Steve Eckersley	0942 677955
	POYNTON	8.00 pm	Poynton Folk Centre, Park Lane, Poynton	David Brock	061 483 6521
	RAVE ON	8.30 pm	Grosvenor Rowing Club, The Groves, Chester	Nick Mitchell	0244 315094
	WIDNES	8.30 pm	St. Maries Am. R.L. Club, Brentfields, Widnes	Patrick Lindley	051 423 3775
	LLANDUDNO	8.30 pm	The London Hotel, Upper Mostyn Street, Llandudno	Arthur Bowman	0492 622049
	ROCHDALE HERITAGE	8.00 pm	Spread Eagle Hotel, Cheetham Street, Rochdale	Elisabeth Andrews	0706 55122
	KINGS HEAD	8.30 pm	King's Head, Junction Road, Deane, Bolton	Chris Caldwell	0204 653464
BLACKPOOL	8.30 pm	Kings Arms, Talbot Road, Blackpool	Mick Read	no phone no.	
Monday	HORWICH	8.15 pm	Crown Hotel, Horwich	Joyce Riding	0257 792304
	PRESTON	8.15 pm	Lamb Hotel, Church Street, Preston	Hugh O'Donnell	0772 745498
	POYNTON	8.00 pm	Poynton Folk Centre, Park Lane, Poynton	David Brock	061 483 6521
	TRITON	8.00 pm	The Triton, Paradise Street, Liverpool	Maisie Potts	051 920 4129
Tuesday	YARROW VALLEY	8.30 pm	Grapes Hotel, Croston, Preston	Derek Gifford	0704 822574
	HINDLEY	8.15 pm	Worthington Arms, Market Street, Hindley	Kath Holden	0942 58459
	MAGHULL	8.30 pm	Hare And Hounds, Maghull	Dave Day	051 526 6661
	BREWERY CEILIDHS	vars	Brewery Arts Centre, 122a, Highgate, Kendal	c/o management	0539 25133
Wednesday	WHITEHAVEN	8.15 pm	Rosehill Theatre Bar, Moresby, Whitehaven	Jim Melvin	0946 2422
	FOLK AT THE TUTE	9.00 pm	Wrea Green Institute, Station Rd., Wrea Green, Kirkham	Phil Capper	0772 684537
	WHITE SWAN	8.00 pm	White Swan, Green Street, Fallowfield, Manchester	Anne Morris	061 881 8294
	FOLK AT THE NEST	8.30 pm	The Allison Arms, Coppull, nr. Wigan	Steve Chatterley	02572 67654
Thursday	DARWEN	8.30 pm	The Crown, Redearth Road, Darwen	Joan Molloy	0706 220611
	POYNTON	8.30 pm	Poynton Folk Centre, Park Lane, Poynton	David Brock	061 483 6521
	WIGAN	8.15 pm	White Horse, Standishgate, Wigan	Joan Blackburn	0942 321223
	MAGAZINE	8.30 pm	Magazine Hotel, Magazine Lane, Wallasey	Jack Coutts	051 220 0152
	BURNLEY	8.30 pm	Talbot Hotel, Church Street, Burnley	Joan McEvoy	0282 38199
	PENNINE	9.00 pm	Royal Oak Hotel, Union Street, Oldham	Phil Robinson	061 678 0141
	BEE	8.30 pm	Bee Hotel, Bodfer Street, Rhyl	Dave Costello	0745 32488
	POTTERIES	8.00 pm	Crown & Anchor, Tower Sq., Tunstall, Stoke-on-Trent	Jason Hill	0782 813401
	NORTHWICH	8.30 pm	Harlequin Theatre, Queen Street, Northwich	Sean Boyle	0606 44361
	PORKIES	8.30 pm	Lady Brooke Hotel, Fir Road, Bramhall, Cheshire	Judy Aucutt	02605 2633
BLACKBURN	8.30 pm	Mill Hill Hotel, Mill Hill Bridge Street, Blackburn	Ron Crane	0254 40347	
HAMBLETON	8.30 pm	The Shovels, Hambleton, nr. Blackpool	Rick Rayworth	039 17 2977	
Saturday	BURY	8.30 pm	The Napier, Bolton Street, Bury	Jean Seymour	061 761 1544
	BREWERY	8.30 pm	Brewery Arts Centre, 122a, Highgate, Kendal	c/o management	0539 25133
	SOUTHPORT ARTS	vars	Southport Arts Centre, Lord Street, Southport	Neil Johnstone	0704 40004
	POYNTON	8.30 pm	Poynton Folk Centre, Park Lane, Poynton	David Brock	061 483 6521