



DEC. '85 - JAN. '86

25p

NEWSLETTER

Page 2 Comment:

AT LONG LAST I've finally reached the point where I can type the Editorial for this issue of the Newsletter. As usual, this is the early hours of the morning, and I'm thinking what to say as I type it, so I will apologise for spelling mistakes or anything that doesn't make any sense.

FIRST OF ALL, many thanks to all those who wrote in expressing their thanks to me for producing the Newsletter. If goodwill would produce a Newsletter, this one would have needed no effort at all from me. Unfortunately, that alone is not sufficient and I do urgently need to fill the Advertising Manager's post - see Out & about for details of this. Special thanks to Bernie Forkin for volunteering to be my assistant editor, and you will find some of his handiwork in this issue.

WE HAVE switched printers for at least this one issue in an effort to get it to you all the sooner. I hope it works! It will be more expensive, so on a regular basis some price changes will be necessary.

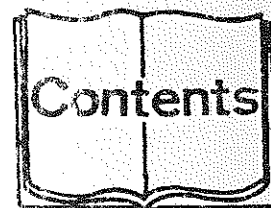
SO WHAT is there in this issue, apart from all the regular features? Eddie Upton contributes a 'Personal View' article about the National Folk Music Festival held at Longborough. Due to delays, I've had to hold over Simon Jones' interview, but he will be back next month. Song of the Month is back with a poem and a new style - why not enter a Song or Poem yourself?

THERE ARE several festival reviews, as well as a large number of LP reviews where we now seem to have lots of records to review each issue.

DON'T FORGET if you want the magazine to continue, I do need that Advertising Manager.

FINALLY as usual my list of thanks to those without whom this would be totally impossible:

Elaine Derbyshire, Angela Forkin & Margaret Marsden for typing; Irene Allen for a superb cover; Bernie Forkin for assisting me; Pete Rimmer for subscriptions; Ian Wells for distribution & club dates; plus anyone else who has contributed in any way to the magazine.



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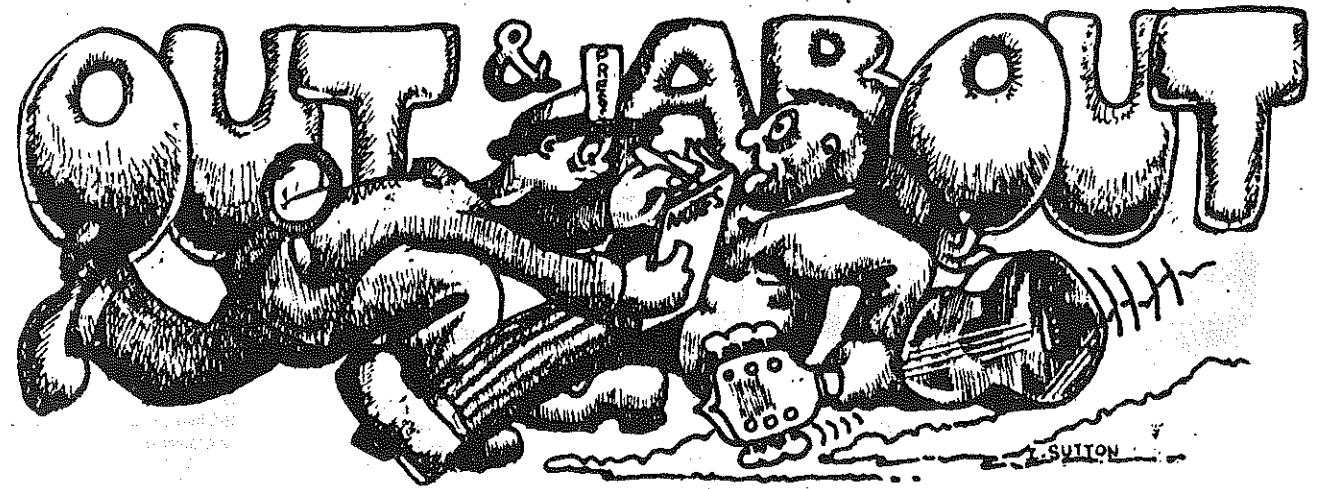
Nigel Firth
EDITOR

CLOSING DATE FOR NEXT ISSUE
(FEB.-MAR) IS JANUARY 5th

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

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



ADVANCE NOTICE first of two festivals that I have been given:

Horwich Town Folk Day takes place on 19th April 1986 in and around the Town Centre; the format is much as last year. More details including guests in our next issue.

Poynton's Easter festival is of course very early this year, and takes place over the weekend of 28-30 March 1986 at the Folk Centre in Park Lane, Poynton. More details of guests etc in the next issue, or contact the centre direct on 0625 875555.

THERE IS at long last a Folk Club in Ormskirk again, back at the Buck i' th' Vine, which will be familiar to some of our readers. The club meets on Thursdays and is run by Mike Lennon & Pam Taylor; no phone number I'm afraid, so you'll have to go along and take the risk.

I GATHER there is a new folk club meeting on Fridays at Hightown near Formby. I've no more details at present. Watch this space!

THERE IS yet another new club opening on the 4th April. It is the Albion Folk Club who meet at the Albion Hotel in Albion Street, New Brighton. They meet on Sundays at 8.30pm and the residents are Ages Apart, George & Gill Peckham plus Mal Jones. For more about the club, please contact the organiser, who is Geoff Dorman on 051 639 7928.

DON'T FORGET That Poynton's Easter Festival is to be held over the weekend of March 28-30. Full details of guests have yet to be finalised, but they will as usual be to a very high standard and there will be the usual range of events including Concerts, Ceilidhs, Singarounds, Shanty & Jam Sessions, Workshops, Dance Displays, Craft Fair, Children's Events. Tickets are £9.50 (£8.00 advance); Child £4.00 (£2.00 advance) from the Festival Organiser, Folk Centre, Park Lane, Poynton, Cheshire, SK12 1NB. (enclose SAE) or phone 0625 875555 for more information.

PETE COE'S new band, Red Shift are doing some dates here in the North-West, so watch out for them. The band consists of Pete Coe, John Adams, George Faux, Paul Roberts, Colin Wood and promise a wide range of music and song described as a travelling festival. Contact for Red Shift - 0422 822413.

A NEW programme on Radio Merseyside is on Thursday at 8pm & will include Rock, Jazz, Blues & Folk.

THE GROUP illustrated below are Marai, formerly known as Tansey's Fancy from Australia, who were recently on tour here in the UK.



WHILST Bernie Forkin has kindly offered to take on the post of Assistant Editor, I have had no offers at all for Advertising Manager, so I will remind you below of the requirements of the job: ADVERTISING MANAGER would be responsible for processing all the advertising requests, ensuring these are to a suitable format for printing, and administering the financial side of advertising. IF YOU are interested in this job, please get in touch with me, Nigel Firth on Wigan 215621.

PETE RIMMER would like to find someone to take over the Newsletter Subscriptions. He tells me that he is even willing to continue to administer the scheme if someone will undertake putting magazines in envelopes & sticking labels on (Takes about 3 hours per issue). Contact Pete direct on this one, phone 0704 67852.

THE ELECTROPATHIC BATTERY BAND are running a series of four special Ceilidhs in Stockport on a monthly basis, starting in January and they will feature some of the top bands & callers in the Country. No more details are to hand as we go to press, so please contact Maggie Andrew on 061 480 5711 for more information.

RADIO DETAILS:
Folk on 2, BBC Radio 2, 330m (MW only) Saturday 6-7pm

BBC Radio Lancashire 'Lancashire Drift' Sunday 11.05am to 11.35am, 351m (96.4 VHF), repeat Tuesday 6.35.

(Monthly, 2nd Sunday)
BBC Radio Merseyside 'Folk Scene', 202m (95.8 VHF) Tuesday 6.30-7.00pm repeat Sunday 8.30-9.00pm
BBC Radio Manchester 'Folk like Us', 206m (95.1 VHF) Sunday 5.15-6.15pm, repeat Monday 7pm-8pm

There are no programmes on any of the independent local radio stations, so please write & tell them they should be running Folk programmes.



SINCE last issue, there is one new club joining the Federation, together with a number of venue and organiser changes.

THE BIRKENHEAD FOLK CLUB meet at the Crown Hotel, Conway Street, Birkenhead on Sunday evenings (since October 13th). The residents are a very impressive line-up including Phil Hare & Kim Farrell, Martin Sumpton, Gareth & Angie Owen, Pete Booth. Initially the club will run mainly singers' nights, but both local and national guests will feature eventually. More details from Phil Hare & Kim Farrell on 051 645 6967.

THE BELLE GREEN Folk Club have moved to the Worthington Hotel, Market Street, Hindley and now meet on Tuesdays. They are now listed as 'Hindley Folk Club' and the residency alternates between Pennygate and Pocheen. More details from Kath Holden, 0942 58459.

THE VALLEY FOLK CLUB have changed to Wednesday evenings, and now meet at the How Croft. They meet alternate Wednesdays, and more information can be obtained from Paul Whitehill on 061 736 6441 (day) or Adlington 482450 (evg) or Derry Yelding on Bolton 793961.

THE WHITE BEAR Folk Club still meet on Tuesdays in Adlington, but have moved across the road to the Clayton Arms, which is their new name. Organiser, Glyn Hughes, Adlington 482570.

BLACKPOOL FOLK CLUB is being taken over in the new year by Mally Dow (Nic's wife). More information on this will be found in the letters page. The venue is at present unchanged; residents will include Nic Dow, Pete Rodger and Brian Osborne.

ADVANCE NOTICE of some dates I've been given they are presented in no particular order -

February:

17	Brian Clare	Horwich
11	Joe Stead	Clayton Arms
12	Martin Simpson	Whitehaven
19	Fox & Lookley	Whitehaven
11	Bill Prince	Blackpool
10	Strawhead	Preston
1	Kipper Family	Bury
9	Bill Prince	Bothy
23	Liverpool B/Show	Bothy
5	The Easy Club	Kirkham
15	Tonight at Noon	Kirkham (saturday)
7	Roy Harris	Northwich
28	John Kirkpatrick	Northwich
16	Fiona Simpson	Eagle & Child
5	Derek Gifford	The Star
5	Roy Harris	White Swan
19	Robin Dransfield	White Swan

March:

19	Bill Caddick	White Swan
5	Jane Tabor & Martin Simpson	Kirkham
16	Mabsant	Leigh
23	Dialect contest	Leigh
9	Pyewackett	Eagle & Child

NB In above dates, Kirkham-Folk at the Tute CEILIDHS of which I have been notified are as follows:

Dec 21, Bury, BLOWZABELLA (venue-Derby Hall)
Dec 14, Bothy, LIVERPOOL CELI BAND (Fleewood Heath Social Club)
Dec 14, Northwich, US-JEBAUGH (Antrebus Village hall)
Dec 14, Poynton, CHESHIRE FOLK CB (Folk Centre)
Jan 11, Poynton, BILBO BAGGINS BDB (Folk Centre)

YOU WILL FIND in the club dates that most clubs are having a Christmas Party; such details as I have of these are listed with the club dates. For more details, please contact the club organiser as listed in the inside back cover (The list has been updated to reflect our latest information about the various member clubs).

DETAILS OF Blackpool Folk Club arrived too late for inclusion in the dates column, so here they are:

December:

3 Jim Smith/Electric Rock Night
17 Stanley Acorington & Amazing Dick
24, 31 Closed

All remaining dates are Singers' Nights

BREWERY ARTS CENTRE Dates:

Wed Dec 11th Beau Temps (from France)
Sat Dec 21st Albion Band Christmas Show
Every Monday (Not 23, 30 Dec) Folk Night with Mountain Road

SOUTHPORT ARTS CENTRE Dates:

Sat Dec 7th Albion Band Christmas Show
Wed Jan 15th Fairport Convention + Martin Simpson
Sat Jan 25th Incantation (prov)
Mon Feb 17th Pentangle (prov)

CLUB OF THE MONTH: BURY FOLK CLUB

"Bury Folk Club - haven't they been Club of the Month before?" do I hear? Well, you're right, but it was several years ago and there must be a number of readers who didn't see the other report, so for both of you, here we go.

The club has now passed its 21st birthday, and maybe its 22nd - we never did find out the exact date, so we'll try again for the quarter century. We have been obliged to move house several times over the years and since the last report have been situated at the Trafalgar for a while but are now comfortably established in the Napier on Bolton Street. The room is 2/3 the size of that at the Old Blue sell but this suits our regular audience of about 2 dozen, and whilst it cannot match the superb acoustics of the old room, we find the sound quality more than adequate, and what's more, it's warm!

As always, the club continues to present traditional music almost exclusively and our guest list is very impressive. How do we manage guests of that calibre with an audience of 2 dozen? Apply to your local Arts Association for a grant and see if you can be as fortunate. Mind you, you have to put in some effort yourselves. We have built up a good relationship over the last 10 years with Bury Metro Arts Assoc., hiring their hall for Ceilidhs, supporting their folk and "folk" concerts, sometimes with an actual support act, and promoting joint events, not least the September mini-festival weekends. As the BMAA became firmly established a message was sent out to member organisations that grants might be available in certain circumstances: we applied and were favourably looked upon, and for the past 2 years have been able to book the artistes we wanted to hear without worrying too much about losing money. I hasten to point out that this does not mean I've become a spendthrift with the rate-payers' money - far from it. I'm still as tight-fisted as I ever was: ask anyone on our guest list! The plain truth is that I have to be, as even with a grant we can't afford to be less than thrifty. Running a club and making ends meet is hard enough without having to hold coffee mornings and jumble sales, or worse still, to dip into one's

own pocket, just because Fred Bloggs and his agent think he's worth £100 plus accommodation at the local Hilton.

Stop preaching Jean and get on with it!

Right, I will.

Since the last time we filled this spot the club has undergone a few changes aside from the venue. We have gained, lost and regained a few resident performers, the losses chiefly being amongst our nucleus of instrumentalists, who established themselves as ceilidh-band players. They became so popular that their services were (and are) in great demand, and as our club-night is Sat. we've lost out, but good luck to them. Our residents now are a motley collection of half a dozen solo singers and a poet, who between them guarantee a good standard of performance and provide a sound basis (no pun intended) for guests and floor-singers. The latter are always welcome and we enjoy the variety they provide. A number of old faces have recently returned to the fold and we have had a small but steady trickle of new ones too. What we want now is for all of them to come regularly and fill up the room every week regardless of whether there's a guest and who it is, but then isn't that the wish of every club organiser?

At the moment we're operating a policy of a guest each week. It would be great to be able to hold regular Singers' Nights, but we've found that when we do, only our own performers turn up! What happened to the days when budding young hopefuls would seek out Singers' Nights in order to gain experience and a possible booking? We're still here if you out there want to come and give us a try, and we really don't deserve the reputation we seem to have in some quarters for being over-serious, less than friendly and full of our own importance. We just happen to think that traditional music is the bees' knees and try to give it the respect it deserves, but even if it's not your particular preference you're still welcome to come along and do your own thing, and we hope you will enjoy the evening as much as we do.

Jean Seymour

What's all this Dancing about?

What IS all this dancing about? Well, that is what I've been trying to explain since I started to write this series for the Federation Newsletter. Having listened for two hours to Mike Barraclough's interesting and revealing lecture on the day of the North-West Area Conference of the EFDSS, I have decided that we should stop wondering what it is about and just enjoy what we have. For a long while I have given up speculating what is right and what is wrong in dancing; I prefer to consider only what is appropriate and what is not.

When I first got involved with Folk Dancing through the 'Square Dance Boom' in the early fifties, the most common form of footwear for dancing was 'white pumps'. Gradually this changed to light leather shoes for the men and flat shoes (like the Scots wear for dancing) for the women. The next innovation was the women wearing shoes with heels. As Mike said in his lecture fashions are changing again with more & more men wearing training shoes. Each change of footwear fashion tends to affect the style of dancing. At one time musicians found 'Playford' music rather boring, so now they are playing their own arrangements of 'Playford' and enjoying it; the arrangements are also superb to dance to.

The North-West Area Conference (why not find a better name for the next one in two year's time) was rounded off in the evening by a Ceilidh. Despite the

reservations expressed by the more staid EFDSS members about Loud Electric music, everybody from 'Playford Plodders' to 'Knees-Up Ceilidh Dancers' enjoyed an evening of excellent music spanning three centuries from from Pyewackett. I spied one older EFDSS member (who had earlier told me they would not be staying for the ceilidh), return in the evening with her husband; they both stayed to the end and went home tired but happy.

I believe Pyewackett are booked for a Ceilidh in the spring in the Manchester area, so watch out for details.

Alan G. Barber

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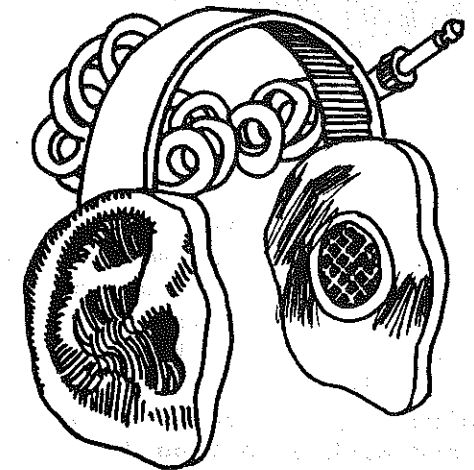
BROADFOLK

First, news of Folk on 2: the casual listener may not immediately notice any difference but there are two immediate changes and the chance of more. It is still to go out at 6.02pm on Saturdays on MW only but from January 4th 1986 it will be coming from regional studios in Birmingham and not from BH in London. Jim Lloyd will still be the presenter but the new producer is to be Geoffrey Hewitt, who did Music From the People with Jim for Radio 4. The other change is that the Manchester editions are being chopped. The programme on November 31st was the last one produced by Peter Pilbeam and introduced by Cyril Tawny. This breaks the connection that was set up with Folkweave and continued with Fo2. When you think of the relative strengths of the folk scene in Manchester and Brum, Birmingham seems an odd choice. When you further consider that the Manchester network production centre also harbours John Lennon and Dave Shannon as producers, the choice seems even stranger.

It is intended to produce about one Fo2 a quarter from the regions. Since that includes the Irish, Scottish and Welsh as well as the English regional production centres, I reckon that means one every two years from Manchester. Under consideration is a schedule change that will give VNF at the normal schedule times.

Incidentally, the Home Office have just announced that the next set of VHF wavelengths will be allocated to the BBC, and not to the IBA. These will be used to provide R1 & R2 with separate VHF transmitters instead of the present shared facility. They may be on air by 1988. That will mean all the BBC's music output will have music quality transmission.

Otherwise, this column is mostly a tribute to Channel 4. First, they have actually put out a folk music programme. OK, it's an old STV Corries series, complete with that set with the see-through fireplace (do the Corries write that into their contracts?), put out opposite



Folk on 2, and with a guest list of old stagers, but it is a folk music programme. The quality of music within the programmes has been quite good, but there has been nothing to gladden the heart of Simon Jones.

Then there was a documentary on The Shepherds of Berneray which included quite a lot of Hebridean music, with the musicians properly credited. It was really a tribute to the Bard of Berneray, Duncan MacLeod and was actually made by the Film Study group of Harvard University. I also caught the middle film of three by Bob Quinn, called 'Atlantean', which was trying to establish a link between Celtic/Irish and Berber cultures. It included some Berber and Gaelic song, a clip of a Breton round dance, and a glimpse of the Bacup Coco-nutters.

However, the series to watch was Beats of the Heart, by Jeremy Marre, which explores popular music round the world. This series of 14 films includes some that have been seen before, but they now fall into place as part of the grand plan. The opening one looked at music in China as the outside world penetrates. We heard 'Poor Old Joe' and foxtrots but the main memory is of a classical style of music played on a curious stringed instrument. Others have included Tex-Mex and a marvellous look at Appalachian gospel styles. Now isn't this ironic? The English based production companies swan off to the States to make films about US roots music, while the Yanks come over here to make films about ours. 19

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Letters to The Editor...

Dear Editor,
On January 1st 1986 Blackpool Folk Club is being taken over by yours truly (Mally Dow) NOT by Nick as some people think. he has far too many commitments to run a folk club although he will be resident there along with Brian Osborne Big Pete Rodger is still going to be involved with the club, but only as a participating member. Incidentally, Brian and Nick have been doing quite a lot of work together and are hoping to do bookings next year as a duo. I am hoping that I am going to be able to offer guests a four or five day tour in conjunction with Southport, Preston, Wrea Green and Leigh. Every one seems enthusiastic about the idea so we'll give it a go.

Obviously in the beginning I'm going to be taking things carefully as the club isn't financially very healthy. Paul Metsers is booked for February 11th as is a friend of ours from Bedford (who was active at Fylde this year) singer/songwriter Bill Prince. The other nights in February will be singers nights and I want to encourage people from all over to come along. We will put them on and give them a listen, and who knows, if we like them we'll give them a booking. Saying we, I don't mean a committee, I mean the members of the Folk Club who I want to see more involved in what's going on, much more than they are at the moment. I want to involve the club and it's members in visiting other clubs and arranging 'swap' nights.

Next Easter I'm going to have a best decorated egg competition and the Traditional Easter Songs, so people should start searching through books and records to see what they can find. In April we are having a Lancashire Night, with Hot Pot supper, and I'm hoping that Musicians and singers from the East Lancs area are going to come along.

We are at the moment a bit unsure of the venue, the Kings Arms has recently been taken over by Boddingtons and plans are afoot for re-modelling. I've been in touch with the Brewery so if we do have to move then they will find us a room in another of their 8 pubs in Blackpool so we shall have good

beer, that's for sure. However, I'll let you know as soon as I know if any changes are to be made.

Mally Dow.

The Glat Wall, Peking.
October 6th 1985.

Honourable Editor,
Enjoyed velly much the Cheiftans leview by Belnie Forkin, but sadly he was mistaken by his plesumption that the Ilish men are filst western musical act to play in old home countly.

Before Chieftans and Wham we were hosts to Jean Michel Jarre, Flench jazz pianist and avant garde composer. Mister Jarre cut lecord album of 1981 concelvs called "Concerts in China" Polydor PODV3.

Must dash have take away to plepare.

Yours faithfully,

Honourable Peking rock collespondant
to the Newsletter.

I.M. Joss None.

(prease accept humbre aporrogies. I am feering comprete warry.)

B. F.

Dear Editor,

Saturday 5th Oct. Venue, Civic Hall,
Ormskirk.

Support for this concert was indeed slim but for all those who came to hall this evening there was talent and professional entertainment unlimited.

Tony Wilson as compere carried the evening with skill and expertise. His easy manner and wonderful singing and playing kept up a lively atmosphere from start to finish.

Cat Island filled the hall with lively music to set your feet tapping.

Shegui have so much talent in one line up it is hard to describe their music. There were wonderful lyrical pieces which left overwhelmed, followed by lively Irish jigs. Fantastic musicians, well presented.

What a pity all this talent was shared by such a sparse audience. It says something for the professionalism of the entertainers that one felt they gave of their very best from 8pm until midnight.

A wonderful evening, they deserved more support.

P. Ritchie.

LETTERS (from P.8)

Dear Editor,
Having read Nick Dow's letter in FOLK ROOTS, which mentions the NW Federations efforts in booking tours (a return to the good old days!), which we applaud, I thought I should remind you that Cyril is open for such a tour; living comparatively close, he tends to be offered one-off gigs, which are useful for me for filling gaps, but are not as economic as they could be for the clubs.

It seems to us that the only way the folk clubs are going to survive in the present economic climate is for them to return to the ways of the 'pioneers' as you are obviously trying to do. I have found that the problem is getting across to organisers that the clubs involved in a tour or federation need not be very close geographically as long as they are conveniently situated for travelling between.

Anyway, I wish you success in your efforts and will, of course, be glad to hear from you.

Yours sincerely,
Rosemary Tawney.

BROAD FOLK (from P.7)

The end of Music From the People was grudgingly marked by Radio Times with two letters of praise under a misleading headline. One of these was from our chairman, who has also had a piece on folk on local radio in The Guardian. Talking about local radio, two programmes in the Folkscene series on Radio Merseyside have been exceptionally interesting. Geoff Speed took the re-released Anthems for Eden (Shirley Collins) and simply played it - pure magic. Stan Ambrose made a very interesting pair of programmes about Sara Grey and Ellie Ellis, using an interview recorded at the Chester festival.

FOLKEAR

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PERSONAL VIEW:

A Tradition revives with style

One of the highlights of 1985 was the continued revival of the National Folk Music Festival.

First held in 1965, the National has tended to be known by the name of the place where it has been held. When I mention that the Festival was held for several years at Keele University before moving to Loughborough University, I feel sure that it will ring a bell for many readers.

The 17th celebration of the Festival, due to be held in 1981, had to be cancelled at short notice, amid much despair, gnashing of teeth and soul searching. The reason for the cancellation was an alarming and catastrophic drop in season ticket sales. A small group of activities felt that the event was far too valuable to lose, and so it re-emerged in 1984 in a new home at the School of Agriculture in Sutton Bonington, near Loughborough in Leicestershire. I am happy to report that its revival in 1984 and its continuation in 1985 were outstanding successes.

What makes the National so special is its unique booking policy. Its philosophy has always been to bring together traditional singers and musicians with the very best of the revival performers. Thus 1985 saw the likes of Martin Carthy, John Kirkpatrick, Pete Coe, Tony Rose and Ray Fisher rubbing shoulders with Will Atkinson, Joe Hutton, Fred Jordan, Willie Scott and The McPeake Family from Belfast.

These just a few of the performers. Events during the weekend were as varied as a session on sea songs and shanties that included The Spinners, Johnny Doughty (a Brighton fisherman in his eighties) and Stan Hugill (the last shantyman on British sailing ships) to a Suffolk work-out with The Old Hat Concert Party featuring Suffolk stories, step-dances, music and songs.

Pipes could be heard in abundance with the Pipers Extravaganza featuring Joe Hutton, old and young Francie McPeake, Jimay Young (no relation) and Paul Roberts, but if that didn't suit your taste then you could go along and listen to a lecture by Doc Rowe on the history, technique and form of the Ewan MacColl/

Charles Parker Radio Ballads. Again, if this didn't appeal there was Keith Summer's lecture entitled "Wheel and Turn" on the survivals, influences and adaptations within Caribbean Country Music. In all, over fifty events to cater for most tastes.

The Festival is always looking for new ideas and has been instrumental in fusing several highly respected partnerships, among whom were Packie Byrne and Bonnie Shaljean and the English Country Blues Band. A highlight of the 1984 Festival was to sit at the back of a room listening to the Kipper family and watching a row of folklorists and folk song academics trying to decide whether to be outraged or to laugh like everyone else.

If there are any "stars" at the National then it is the traditional performers. Indeed, one of the reasons that many of the revivalists are booked is that they can assist with the transport of the traditional performers to the Festival. This is surely as it should be. In the majority of cases, fees are not paid, and yet most of the respected singers in the revival treat the National with enormous respect.

The Festival is organised by the English Folk Dance and Song Society, and if the Society is to retain its credibility in the modern world of folk it is surely essential that it ensures that such events as Sidmouth, Whitby and the National Festivals continue to grow from strength to strength.

For several years the National Folk Music Festival was directed by Roy Harris. It was he who gave the fitting subtitle, "A celebration of Folk Music". In the hands of its new director, John Heydon, the National has returned to the esteem that it enjoyed throughout the 1960's and 1970's.

Eddie Upton.

CHAIRMAN'S RANT

by Ian Wells

There's not much to rant about in this issue. Most of our clubs are getting on with providing a place to hear, sing or play folk music. There doesn't seem to be too much fratricidal strife taking up energies that should be used to promote the music. Our local festivals seem to have done well and some of our club residents are getting known outside the area. All we need now is a volunteer or two to help produce this unlikely but useful magazine.

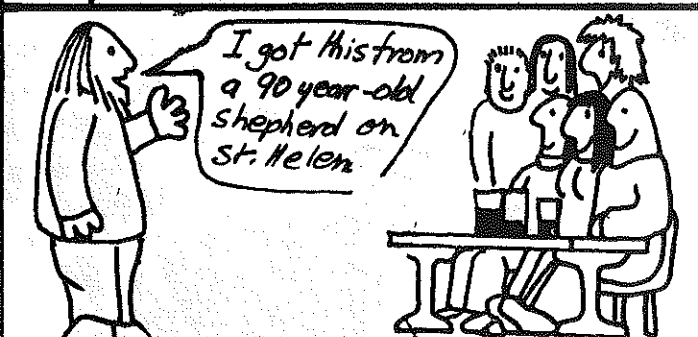
I hope as many of you as possible are taking Folk Roots (offspring of Southern Rag) as it is really providing a national magazine. Our area seems well represented in the live event reviews, and a prolific contributor to reviews in these pages is now displaying his obsession with folk rock to a national audience. A healthy circulation for a national magazine is one element in the battle to get national broadcasters and record companies to take our music seriously. The changes to Folk on 2 are covered by my close colleague Folkear, but I see that, according to Ian A. Anderson (FR29), the current producer of Fo2, Ian Grant, is trying to get a folk record programme going in addition. Write to Bryant Marriott, Controller, R2, or Frances Line, Head of Music Dept, R2, to press for more folk on air. At the moment the needle time is limited to 8 minutes while jazz gets 45 minutes just for one request programme.

small ads

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GOOD GIG GUIDE FOR TAFS

by Ron Baxter



2 TELL THEM YOURS IS AN OBSCURE VERSION - you may lose some of them.

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SONG of the MONTH

FESTIVAL REVIEWS

THE NATIONAL FOLK MUSIC FAIR (stockport)

PORKIES ON THE LAWN '85

A wet windy shower fluttered over my windscreens as I left the College of Further Education at the end of what had been, I suspect, a fairly successful National Folk Music Fair. This had been needed for so long, a day when people could get together, learn, swap experiences, generally chat about folk with folk performers and luminaries. Some workshops were essential, like Beryl Marriotts talk on keyboards - she was advocating sequencers, programming, and all manner of triks. Some lectures were totally confusing, e.g. Ken Dibble on amplification for dances. Dampers on the mufflers? When my one band performed we left it all to the sound man.

Those who came to listen and learn were taught by the best, John Kirkpatrick, Alastair Anderson and The Oyster Band. The only drawback I found was the fact that the entire place resembled Hampton Court Maze, you needed a ball of string to retrace the slightest step. Due to playing with a computer I missed a band I wanted to catch - Aunt Thelma's Candlelight Orchestra - get in touch lads. But the evening concert hosted by Miss Heather Whittaker, whose operatic soaring vocals filled in between varying degrees of "star", was an enjoyable way to wind down after the hurly burly of the daytime sessions.

What your average folkie would make of it I'm not too sure, it was/is rightly biased towards the active participants i.e. dancers, singers and musicians. Still next years event may answer my question. I trust there will be one, mes amis.

Simon Jones.

When I was a cub scout, every so often we'd go off on an expedition, sit in tents, eat burnt hamburgers in a bag, build a bonfire and sit round it singing "Riding Along On The Crest of a Wave" while Akela plunked out a basic chord sequence on his guitar. Since then the question has often crossed my mind, what happened to overage scouts? Now I know, they go into folk clubs and relive those naive camp fire values by organising small scale festivals.

Technically there's nothing wrong with that, as long as the paying customers have a good time as they did here. They joined in with Tom Topping's cabaret-style sea shanties and with Cosmetheka's raucous music hall repertoire while munching their beefburgers and buns, slurping cup a soup and downing pint after pint of ale. All one big happy family, where everyone knows everyone else.

No there's nothing wrong except I found it a bit too parochial and cosy. The guests were ideal for the situation but I could think of a list of more talented and relevant, local groups who would have made a better showcase for folk music. As it was Porkies On The Lawn '85 reinforced my belief that the majority of the clubs are growing divorced from the main thrust of folk in the 80's and locked in a nostalgic time warp.

Those of you who still have your woggles prepare for next year's jamboree. Me I'll settle for a deck chair and the 'Men They Couldn't Hang' LP on the back lawn.

Simon Jones

REMEMBERING ROSE

*We met one February night
And drank at the Rainbow
Neither of us trying to impress.
We saw no future -
But separate loves
Were guiding us to our destiny.*

*Gradually, those loves died.
Driving us together
Into a relationship for which you weren't prepared.
You gave too much; too soon,
And we almost paid the price.
But we stayed together
And, as my love grew,
I confidently wrote for you -*

*The laughter of our loving
Echoes through my mind
To brighten up the days
While we're apart.*

*Though the miles may be separate us,
For hours or for days,
We'll always be together
In my heart.*

*But your love couldn't grow.
Stifled by a ghost I couldn't replace,
And so much I couldn't give,
Its flame dimmed.*

*You lay in my arms as we listened to Brahms,
Then tenderly made love on the floor.
For our bodies, a sharing of joyous fulfilment,
But with a future together no more.*

*The laughter of our loving has passed,
And now I must pay the fee.
Even a broken heart would be a small price
For the happiness you gave to me.*

By Steven Davidson

DO YOU write songs or poems? If so, why not enter one for our Song of the Month. Winner is published here & receives a free subscription to the Newsletter. Best of the Year receives a Book Token. Send your entries to: Song of the Month, NWFFC Newsletter, 3, Cromford Dr., Pemberton, Wigan, WN5 8JU. (Enclose SAE for return of song)

Club

DAY & CLUB	RESIDENTS	DATES IN DECEMBER			
SUNDAY		1st	8th	15th	22nd
Bothy	See (f) below	Alan Taylor	Singers' Night	Stormalong John	Christmas Party
Eagle & Child	See (b) below	Singer's Night	Swarbrick/Whipper (n)	Singer's Night (w)	Six Hands in Tempo
Leigh	See (g) below	John Howarth	Singer's Night	Usher's Well	Christmas Party
Llandudno	See (h) below	Singer's Night	Singer's Night	Guest TBA	Christmas Night
Poynton	See (I) below	Harvey Andrews	Two Beggarmen	Pete Rodger & Ian Gartside	Bullock Smithy Xmas Party
Rave On	Volunteers	Martin Carthy	Singer's Night	Guest TBA	Christmas Party
Rainford		Closed	Closed	Closed	B. Jacques/Brigantine
St. Maries					
MONDAY		2nd	9th	16th	23rd
Horwich		Singer's Night	Singer's Night	Christmas Party	Singer's Night
Poynton	Rick Harup	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Preston		Martin Carthy	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Triton	See (j) below	Surprise Guest	Singaround	Singaround	Spinner's Christmas Party
TUESDAY		3rd	10th	17th	24th
Folk Club Upstairs					Closed
Clayton Arms		Singer's Night	Singer's Night	Blue Water Folk	Closed
Hindley Folk Club	See (k) below	Singer's Night	Erio a Brac	Bram Taylor	Closed
WEDNESDAY		4th	11th	18th	25th
Folk at the Tute		Rodger/Gartside (x)	Robertson/McCombe	Christmas Party	Closed
Old Ship		TBA	TBA	TBA	Closed
The Star		Caught on the Hop	Steve Hodgson	Guest TBA	Closed
White Swan	See (d) below	Carthy/Kirkpatrick (y)	Swarbrick/Whipper (n)	Christmas Party (o)	Closed
Whitehaven	Knotted Cord	L. Singers/Musicians	G. & E. Pratt	Christmas Party	Closed
How Croft	Under-a-fiver	Closed	Cliff Aungier	Closed	Closed
THURSDAY		5th	12th	19th	26th
Fleetwood	See (c) below	TBA	TBA	TBA	Closed
Mawdesley	Gifford/Hartley	Christmas Special (p)	Closed	Closed	Closed
Magazine	See (e) below	Singers with Black Dog	Mabsant with Brass Tacks	Christmas Party	Closed
Poynton	Arthur Wakefield	Singer's Night	Singer's Night	Singer's Night	Closed
Stump		6th/ Ted Edwards	Singer's Night	Christmas Party	Singer's Night
Wigan	Joan Blackburn	Singer's Night	Singer's Night	Singer's Night	Closed
FRIDAY		6th	13th	20th	27th
Bee	Various	Singers' Night	Singers' Night	Singers' Night	Singers' Night
Northwich	See (a) below	Stephens/Martin (m) (v)	L.M. G.Sowerby	Christmas Party	Singaround
Newcastle		Martin Carthy	Singer's Night	Christmas Party	Singer's Night
Cut Above		Closed	Closed	Closed	Xmas Party
Porkies Folk C.		The Hipley Wayfarers	M. Silver Party Night		
SATURDAY		7th	14th	21st	28th
Brewery	See (l) & (m) below	Fri 6th: Dick Gaughan	Wed 14th: Bow Tomps	Albion Band Xmas Show	
Bury	Various	Nic Dow	Mabsant	Ceilidh with Blaxaballa	Singers' Night
Club Ceilidhs			Northwich / Bothy		
Poynton	Ceilidh		Cheshire Folk CB		
Southport Arts C.		Albion Band Xmas Show			

KEY TO SYMBOLS ABOVE:

- * See Club News, page 4
- z Tickets available from club
- (a) Residents: Sean & Sandy Boyle, Iain Bowley, Tony Howard, Rod McDermot, Paul Taylor
- (b) Residents include: Caught on the Hop, Erio-a-Brac, Quarts
- (c) Residents: Scold's Bridle, Bev & Kevin Wheelan (of Thistle), Peter Smith & others (rotating residency)
- (d) Residents: Geoff Higginbottom, Dave & Helen Howard, Andy & Alison Whittaker, John O'Hagan, Hollerin' Pot, Pete Morston
- (e) Residents: Black Dog, Brass Tacks, Arthur Marshall, Dave Looke
- (f) Residents: Ken Dunlop, Clive Pownooby, Pete Rimmer, Paul Reid
- (g) Residents: Calico, Trevor & Joan Hunt
- (h) Residents: Stuart King, The Rambling Boys
- (j) Residents: Jenny Wright & Colin Wilson
- (k) Residents: Pennygate, Pooheen
- (l) Residents for months: Plan 'B' (1), Rick Harup (8), Abalon (15)
- (m) Sam Stephens & Anne Lennox-Martin

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Calendar

		DATES IN JANUARY				DAY & CLUB
		29th	5th	12th	19th	26th
		Closed	Singers' Night	Pete Coe	Devok + Di Book	Singers' Night
		Closed	Singer's Night	Gentlemen Soldier	Singer's Night	Strawhead
		Closed	F. Farrimond	TBA	Singer's Night	Quarts
		Closed	Singer's Night	Singer's Night	Singer's Night	Singer's Night
		Guest TBA	Tarzan's Milkman	Guest TBA	Guest TBA	Bernie Parry
		Singer's Night				Maxi & Mitch
		Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	
		30th	6th	13th	20th	27th
		Singers' Night	Singers' Night	Pete Coe	Singers' Night	Singers' Night
		Singer's Night	Singer's Night	Singer's Night	Singer's Night	Singer's Night
		Jumping the Gun (s)	Singaround	Singaround	Paulow Tricks	Singaround
		Closed	Closed	Singaround	Bullock Smithy	Singaround
		31st	7th	14th	21st	28th
		Closed	Singer's Night	TBA	Singer's Night	Singer's Night
		Closed	Parlour Tricks	Singer's Night	Ken Pearson	Singer's Night
		1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th
		Pete Smith	Singer's Night	Harvey Andrews	Brian Preston	Bryony
		Closed	Singers' Night	Closed	Singers' Night	Closed
		Closed	Guest TBA	Guest TBA	10th Birthday	Guest TBA
		Gentleman Soldier	Alistair Anderson	Peter Bellamy	Cheshire Folk	Singer's Night
		Closed	Jas Lowe	Paul Metzers	Smith/Dinning (t)	Gregson/Collister (u)
		Singer's Night	Closed	Singer's Night	Closed	Singer's Night
		2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th
		New Year Social	Bacchus	Singers' Night	Singers' Night	Sergeant & Semi-Sun Sisters
		Singer's Night	Singer's Night	Singer's Night	Singer's Night	Singer's Night
		AGM	Peter Bellamy	TBA	TBA	TBA
		Singer's Night	Singer's Night	Singer's Night	Singer's Night	Singer's Night
		3rd	10th	17th	24th	31st
		Singer's Night	Singer's Night	Singer's Night	Singer's Night	Singer's Night
		Pete Morton	L.N. A. Braeogirdle	Marsiband	Singer's Night	The Kipper Family
		Closed	Closed	Closed	Guest TBA	Closed
		4th	11th	18th	25th	1st FEBRUARY
		Pete Coe	Mon 6: Mountain Road	Mon 13: Mountain Road	Mon 20: Mountain Rd.	Mon 27: Mountain Rd.
			Critchley/Batty (g)	Eileen Carr	Graham & Eileen Pratt	Kipper Family
			Bilbo Baggins RDB	Stan Lee Memorial Concert		
				Ned 15: Fairport Convention	Jocantation (pww)	

- (n) Dave Swarbrick with Whipperanapper
- (o) Christmas Party with High Level Ranters
- (p) Brian Jacques & Brigantine (tickets only)
- (q) George Critchley & Phil Batty
- (r) Pete Lewis & Eddie McGurk (of Riot Band)
- (s) Jumping the Gun (Ex-Ran Tan Band)
- (t) Dave Smith & Judy Dinning
- (u) Clive Gregson & Christine Collister
- (v) Held at the Hazel Pear, Acton Bridge, near Northwich (one night only)
- (w) Plus Christmas Party Night

- (x) Pete Rodger & Ian Gartside
- (y) Martin Carthy & John Kirkpatrick

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REVIEW

fylde folk festival

Thirteen may be unlucky for some, but not for those with the foresight to book for the 13th Fylde Folk Festival. Not quite all the tickets went in advance, but the last weekend one had been sold by 5pm on the Friday and an estimated 2000 folkies were around sometime over the weekend. I suspect very few would have gone home disappointed. As usual, the sheer wealth of talent appearing in the multitude of events stops any one person from giving more than a personal view of a very biased sample. I found myself mostly in the informal events but the big concert names all performed well, pulled their normal audiences, left many people happy and some amazed. The 'Folk Club' venue, which gives a second chance to see the major artists in a more informal setting, was always crammed to the doors. I tried to catch some of the newer groups which had so far remained names on other reviews, and were impressed by Rhiannon from Sheffield. They are a fivepiece, mixed electric and acoustic group with a superb female lead, excellent whistle, and an electric bass who is visually irritating because of his posing. The sound was excellent - and Fellside are to release an album for them. I also liked Eric (but thought their female addition had yet to blend in) and Easy Chairs. The singaround sessions were generally well attended, and always produced an interesting selection of sounds. Leaders included Matt Armour, Jim Mageean, Johnny Collins, and various segments of the Wilson tribe. The Wirral based

female fourpiece, Ranting Sleazos, woke up one session with a bang. Alan Bell's own concert was very good, but for me the highlight was Singing the Fishing. This brought together the Fleetwood Folk club members who've been involved in the various folk-drama efforts, with East Anglian traditional singer and ex-fisherman Tom Brown, and Matt, Jim & Johnny. This was totally fascinating but two things stand out in particular in my memory. One was Tom Brown's singing of a song about the Caistor Lifeboat tragedy: on the page, it would have been doggerel, but sung by someone who knew the families, it gripped. The other moment was at the end, when Matt sang a song of his about the effect of EEC policies on Scottish fishermen and then Scold's Bridle and Ross Macdonald sang the last song from The Final Trawl. Neither had heard the other before, and I shall long remember the looks on the faces of, first, Ron Baxter and the Fleetwood group, and then on Matt's, as they listened to the different handlings of the same betrayal.

Ian Wells



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REVIEW: ORMSKIRK DAY OF FOLK

One thing that any large scale folk event needs is organisation: without that it won't get the only justification for staging an event, an audience. This event had too small an organisation team and ended up with too small an audience. I'm not going to allocate blame in public, but the first inkling I had that the '84 event was to have a successor was about seven weeks before the day itself. The advertised craft fair was cancelled during the week preceding the Day which left only the pub sessions and the street appearances of Cat Island as daytime activities. The sessions suffered from not having a leader, but Cat Island astonished the stolid citizens of West Lancashire. But what of the main event, the evening concert, I hear you cry? Well, I had my doubts about the wisdom of featuring new songs at any length in a concert format - and that's in spite of being a songwriter myself. We egotists (erm, creative artists) are sometimes a good deal better at writing than performing (OK, so is Dylan) and even worse at selfcriticism or editing. Any non-competitive new song event needs some preliminary work both to cut out the uninteresting or potentially good but badly performed songs and also to attempt some sort of balanced presentation. Fortunately, Tony Wilson was prepared to work his guts out to provide a ration of cheerful songs between the torrent of newly penned gloom, even managing to follow the end of the world. Geoff Speed was recording this section but I don't recommend anyone to hold their breath while waiting for their song to be featured on Merseyside. To be fair, a professional present commented that one of the songs showed promise.

Cat Island Street Band did an interesting promenade set - as a street band, they are used to keeping moving. The particular

music style adopted for this set was Caribbean with overtones of Cajun. Their singing has markedly improved since Ian Woods has been working with them, and he also did an interesting new song he'd picked up at this year's Sidmouth. Finally, came the top of the bill, Shegui. They produced a remarkably laid back set which split the audience. Some people cheered and stamped in the Irish band standard audience manner, while others were bored stiff. One local club organiser hissed at me 'Don't you dare write anything good about this lot, they're ****'. Trying to analyse my own lack of enthusiasm, I was helped by chatting to Tony Gibbons. He noticed a nice build up in tune sets that then seemed to run out of steam, and was inclined to put a lot of the blame on their sound man. He especially complained about not hearing the bazouki properly (I wonder why that instrument particularly?). I felt that the tune sets were too long (Battlefield would have put eight or nine tunes where they used three) and their lead singer was consistently flat.

Was there anything good at all about the event? Yes, the professionalism, workrate, and effervescent Geordie humour of Tony Wilson. If you get a chance to hear him perform in a good setting, then take it.

If anyone still wants to run folk events in Ormskirk, I suggest they go back to the roots and try the pubs. Cat Island were welcomed with open arms in one of them, and again the following Thursday when they once again appeared in the market place.

Ian Wells

SHETLAND FOLK FESTIVAL 1986

MAY 1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th

'The Festival with a Difference'

- Graham Townsend (1983, 1985) ● Sean McGuire (1981)
- Dave Swarbrick (1981, 1982) ● Norwegian (1981, 1982)
- Swedish (1981, 1982, 1983) Danish (1981) Fiddlers
- Douglas Lawrence (1983) ● Spaelimenninir (1982, 1985)
- Rodney Miller (1985)

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RECORD REVIEWS

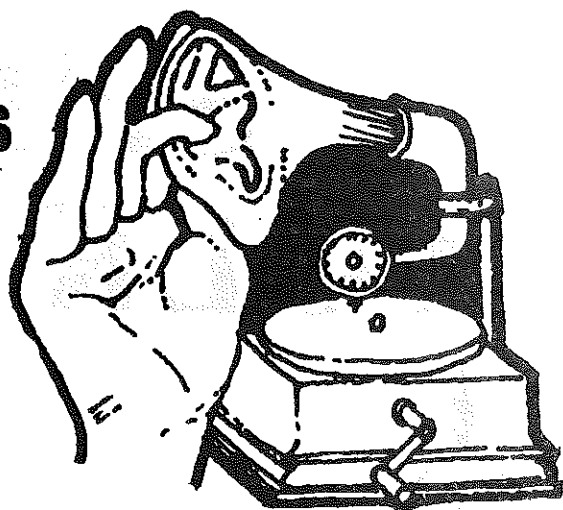
THE OYSTER BAND 'LIBERTY HALL' Pukka Records YOP7

The Oyster Band have trimmed down their line up in recent years from seven, when I first saw them in 1978, to four at present: Ian Telfer, Alan Prosser, John L. Jones and Ian Keary, who are now the regular line up. Though it would seem to be a more viable financial set up, the old Oyster sound has thinned out somewhat. This seems to have led to a more wide use of electronic gadgetry to try and compensate.

On this album the sound is padded out with the use of former member Chris Taylor, harmonica; Martin Brinsford, percussion; Ron Elliott, Northumbrian pipes and Red Franks, trumpet, each on one track.

This is very much a song album, though there is one token tune 'St. Peter's Tea Garden' from the pen of Alan Prosser. Four of the songs are fairly standard traditional ones, although 'Breaking The Lord's Birthday' is new to me. John Jones takes lead vocal on all the songs, and whilst he has a very good voice it does not carry enough variation to carry an entire song album. Perhaps this is why, or so I have heard, they have taken on board another singer on their current tour.

This album is another step in the Band's songwriting experiment, there are six songs coming from the pens of the various Band members. I am sorry to say I am not too impressed with the outcome of it. I struggle to understand what most of the songs are supposed to be about, 'Liberty Hall' is it heaven, hell or what? 'Euston Station' is on the well worn out theme London streets are not paved with gold, should have stayed at home. I am well known as a great fan of 'The Oysters' and think they are a great bunch of lads. Unfortunately this album is a great disappointment on early playings. I had known in advance it was coming out and had been



looking forward to it. It does get better with more playing but I find I am mainly listening to the tunes.

Should it be that like me you prefer the Oysters playing tunes can I recommend you listen to '20 Golden Tie Slackeners' on Pukka Records YOP6.

Trevor H. Charnock.



THE OYSTER BAND

7 TO MIDNIGHT: PYEWACKETT

A regular contributor to these (and other) review pages recently referred to 'Pyewackett's computer ceildh'. Well, they certainly don't generate the incoherent excitement of the Pogues but they do produce an eminently danceable sound. This record is primarily dance music, mostly John Playford tunes, but arranged for the wide variety of instruments the talented quartet play so well. Side one opens with their well known version of Rogers and Hart's '10 Cents a Dance' and leads into the Playford series. Two fiddle tunes, one from the French tradition and one from Kerr's collection, and a Bill Martin original called Bransle de Chien (which translate as dog's brawl) complete the set.

RECORDREVIEWSRECORDREVIEWSRECO

The reviewer's task is made easier by finding things to complain about. That's quite hard to do with this record, but I did wish to hear more of Rosie's voice. The only other problem would present itself with any record by them - you can't see the incredible energy with which Rosie attacks her dulcimer. The record is available from Familiar Records at 7b Farnaby Road, Bromley, Kent, BR1 4BL.

Ian Wells

JOHNNY COPPIN 'LINE OF BLUE' Red Sky. RSK 106.

Ever since I picked up a copy of 'Get Lucky' for 99p, I've had a soft spot for Johnny Coppin. A first rate writer of material that reek like the best or a ballad to tear your heart out. He suffers from two faults. One, he can get very sugary and tend towards folk muzak and two, over production is a crime that he has fallen victim to on more than the one occasion. Yet despite the odd lapses into M.O.R. Coppin keeps his feet firmly on the ground by his refusal to shift out of the folk clubs.

So coming to this album, inspired as it is by locations in England and Bermuda, with a superbly photographed cover, the question was raised:- Has Coppin moved on or does he still work within the same boundaries? Forward slightly, I'd question his choice of session men and would have loved more punch, less precision. A case of cause and effect?

Less charitable souls may use that blandest of terms singer-songwriter to describe Johnny Coppin's work but since the likes of Billy Bragg and Suzanne Vega have given new respectability to the tag, why not?

Line of Blue is a sound investment, a good album, safe as houses, Johnny Coppin being Johnny Coppin, as before, more of the same. Okay, but it'd be nice to see him throw caution to the wind and do a solo album, just him and, say, a Fender Stratocaster. Johnny Coppin has such a left of field move within him, he is capable of surprising us if anyone is.

Simon Jones.

CAUGHT ON THE HOP.

"I Value Not Their Noise" (2nd tape)

Anyone who "knows" anything about folk music may not like this tape - it is not one for the bearded, earringed, hands in pocketed, croaking, Irish-songster type. It is, however, for anyone like me, who appreciates good music when they hear it. These lads have shown real professionalism here, and what a selection! There's the traditional sailing/soldier songs, which I usually find so tedious, brought into a new light with the clever use of their instruments. There's even a bazouki featured - have this group no limits to their ingenuity and talent? Even "golden oldies" like "Last Rose of Summer" and "Women of Ireland" turned my usual snores into whoops of delight.

Bernie Forkin's gusty guitar work, shown especially in "New York Trader" and "Patrick Sheehan" is worth a listen and in contrast, the beautiful, sad "Isle of St. Helena", my own personal favourite, has me weeping uncontrollably, and I don't even know this bloke Napoleon. Mick Burrows sings a Portuguese love song - and with that amount of emotion in his voice you'd swear he knew what the words meant.

Master of the keyboard, Steve Jackman, adds his magic to the songs with his fluent fingers, displayed especially in "Admiral Bembow". He it is who also delights us with his fluting - listen to "Hungarian Melody" and you are sure to get in the mood - (reason enough to buy the tape)!

My only criticism (and they do need criticism for their egos!), is the fact that the lads seem to have compulsion to include a set of silly jigs on their tapes. There are records and tapes a plenty for those who enjoy such gratings on the ears - so let's do without them next time fellas.

Having said that, there's something for everyone here - this is where folk music should be going. "Folk music for the eighties" is the groups motto and they certainly live up to it on this tape.

Helen Tabern.

TUFTY SWIFT 'YOU'LL NEVER DIE FOR LOVE' Shark Records SHARK CA

The problem I always find with records designed to showcase one particular instrument is an inevitable homogeneity of texture - and with the melodeen this difficulty is compounded to the point of no return. Add to these pitfalls a mixed bag of largely unknown dance tunes with nothing familiar on which to hang your interest and the whole album assumes the proportions of musical wallpaper.

None of this detracts from the inescapable fact that he can play the melodeen like David Gewer can cover drive or like Placide Deminge can sing - that is effortlessly, naturally and with style.

It's the best sustained effort on the melodeen since Kirkpatrick's brilliant 'Three In A Row' album and he, I'm sure, would agree that Tufty has little to learn from the master by way of technique.

The tunes, several of which are excellent taken individually, are from the Isaiah Walton collection. He was a fifer in the Belper militia band around the early 1800's, and you now know as much about him as I. I can envisage many silver fingered young fellows assiduously learning these in time for the bar sessions and singarounds at next years festivals. Since it is they at whom this album is probably aimed, I can wholeheartedly recommend it to them. I found it dull going myself, but taking it one track at a time probably nullifies the 'snooze' effect.

Bernie Forkin,

LES BARKER 'THE MRS. ACKROYD ROCK'N'ROLL SHOW' DOG 001

The best need the least explanation, they say. All you really want to know is, this is available now and therefore should be in your collection pretty soon. Like all good humourous shows it finishes with a cry of "encore, encore," on the audiences lips. One man and his dog on form!

Simon Jones.

BRIGHT ROSY MORNING
The Holme Valley Tradition

I remember going to one of our clubs to hear a rare combination of unaccompanied singers and hearing the organiser introduce a couple of floor singers as 'part of the Holme Valley Tradition'. What I heard then whetted my appetite for more and this record goes a good way towards satisfying that desire. The singers are William Noble, Barry Bridgewater, John Cocking, and Ernest Yates. Their collective name, although acquired by accident, is perfectly descriptive - they come from a continuing tradition. They take it in turn to sing, with chorus support from the others, in an unpolished but natural style. Some of the songs come from the singing of Arthur Howard (who died not long after recording 'Merry Mountain Child'), and other Pennine singers. The sleeve notes are very helpful and full of interesting insights. Several of the songs were genuinely learnt through the oral tradition and some are better known in the clubs than others. Naturally, quite a few are about hunting, including 'Bright Rosy Morning', 'Drink Puppy Drink', and 'The Houndpup and Me'. There's a splendid monologue called 'Renshaw's Mule', 'Joe the Carrier's Lad', 'Friezland Ale', and the wellknown 'German Clockmender'. The record opens with 'Holmwoods', a pace egging song, and closes with 'Pratty Flowers', the Holmfirth Anthem.

It is a repertoire and style of singing that is more enjoyable to participate in than as concert music. As a result, this is a record for the converted, and should be in the collection of every serious unaccompanied singer or traditional song enthusiast. The record was recorded at Leake Hall Farm by the much respected Bill Leader and is available from W.Noble, Leake Hall Farm, Denby Dale, Huddersfield, West Yorks, HD8 8QU.

Ian Wells

REDGUM 'IF YOU DON'T FIGHT YOU LOSE'
CRS 16527

A Redgum, so a mate of mine expert in matters Aussie informs me, is a tree. They're two a penny down under apparently, not so with Redgum the band. No sir, they're a glorious one of a kind hybrid, a marriage of songwriters, Australian Bush bands, rock and politics. Sound interesting? You bet it is. The fact that Redgum motivation springs from social injustice will probably alienate some closed minds who don't care for musical sloganeering. However, this isn't political rock as much as music with a point. Those of you willing to listen will find a muse melodic, superbly crafted, played with finesse, blending old Australian themes and folk life into a modern fabric. All this packs as much punch as a Frank Bruno upper cut.

You cannot listen to this record and remain unmoved. No, Redgum do it in such a subtle way with a blending of styles that never once do you feel you have listened to a protest song. Their big success back home was "I Was Only Nineteen" a song for Vietnam veterans recognition (eat your heart out, Paul Hardeastle.). Steel drums and reggae clothe "I've Been To Bali Too", a tirade against the image of the drunken Aussie abroad. "Gladstone Pier", a ballad on exploitation of young labour is straight rock band topped off by a didjeridoo solo!! I could go on.....

By now I suppose you've got the idea I like this record, you're right too. Pass me a tube of Fosters, tie me kangaroo down sport, and spin me Redgum one more time.

Simon Jones.

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FAIRPORT CONVENTION 'GLADYS' LEAP'
Woodworm WR 007.

There comes a time when you have to alter your opinions and here's, well, my hour. Long ago assigned to a gloomy cupboard in my memory the Convention were labelled as loveable eccentrics, trotting out endless cobwebby reunions.

Then up pops this Gladys thing, with a hardly recognisable Fairport lineup. No Dave Swarbrick? Truth to tell they're better off without him. "Gladys' Leap" has taken the old Fairport bus, given it a respray, a service and the banger is 10,000 miles younger.

The opening Scottish swirl of "How Many Times" sets a pace which seldom lets up. Simon Nicol takes a gritty lead except when Cathy LeSurf sings a flowery "My Feet Are Set For Dancing". No Fairport aren't fiddleless, more varied courtesy of new scraper Ric Sanders whose jazz tinges make a refreshing change from relentless reeling. Splintery guitars fragment gloriously as Richard Thompson returns to the fold for alas only one track, "Head In A Sack". And the rhythm section's just fine too in the capable hands of old firm Mattacks and Pegg.

All in all a package of surprising potency from a band whose heyday

was fifteen years ago. Without a doubt the finest release to bear their name since 'Nine'. A fine preview of live dates due this winter. New album, new personnel, new life and new spark.

Simon Jones.

JOHN RENBOURN & STEFAN GROSSMAN
'LIVE IN CONCERT' Making Waves.
Spin 401

Picture the scene, two seminal acoustic pickers from the '60's meet, play a concert to time locked colonial folkies, and forward steps a go ahead label asking to release the result. The ensuing vinyl contains more standards than a boy scout jamboree. Mix blues, ragtime and Irish jigs played in a virtuoso manner, over four sides of duets and solos it palls. True some of the old tunes still have life in them no matter how hoary the delivery, nothing wrong with oldies provided they're interpreted well. You might have guessed this takes absolutely no risks at all. But then what do you expect from greying temples? "Timber!" Two more once proud oaks felled.

Simon Jones.

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newsletter

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COPY DATE: 25th Oct. for Dec/Jan, etc

ADVERTISING RATES:

Camera Ready £16/A4pg, Other £24/A4pg
(& Pro Rata for 1/2 1/4 & 1/8)

SUBSCRIPTIONS: £2.50 for 5 issues

ADVERTISING (Pre-Paid) & EDITORIAL
From: Pete Rimmer, 6, Burlington Rd., Southport, Merseyside, PR8 4RX
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RECORDREVIEWSRECORDREVIEWSRECO

EDDIE WALKER 'PICKING MY WAY'
Ragged Records RAGR 003.

I've never met Eddie Walker but I know instinctively that he is an honest and sincere musician who cares about the quality of all our lives and would never forget to feed his cat! I say this with conviction after digesting the sleeve and contents of his latest album 'Picking My Way'. The comprehensive insert notes read like a chatty letter from a friend and anyone who puts a photo captioned 'Eddie Walker's Guitars' on a cover is saying "I'm in love with my music".

This characteristic shines through the whole record, which is Country Blues, Ragtime, Early/Popular Jazz with a sprinkling of self-penned material - both instrumental and vocal. The latter I'll admit tend to put this writer off. I find the lyrics frankly feeble but I still can't help admiring anyone who wears his heart on his sleeve as Eddie Walker does.

The entire album is dedicated to the memory of Steve Goodman and 'Song For Steve Goodman' is an elegy so personal that perhaps it should have stayed that way. It suffers from an over-sentimentality that whilst feet-shufflingly embarrassing says a hell of a lot about Eddie as a caring, sensitive human being. Similarly 'Away From You' sounds like its title implies - we all knew that isolated, I Miss You feeling but does the world need another song of this ilk? 'Supertreuper' said it all, didn't it? (That is a joke, but the comparison is valid!)

You'll gather then that I find the ragtime/blues items here the mere rewarding? Yes, there's a relaxed, easy feel to the Folk Blues stylings of such standards as 'Glory Of Love' and 'Ain't Nobody's Business' that is a joy. Likewise the infectious jazzmatazz of 'Busy Line' and a little-known blues of Buddy Holly - 'Lonesome Tears' are more than adequate.

26 John James is featured on 3 tracks and it goes without saying that he

embellishes these, giving an extra depth but without taking over. However, my favourite cut is a solo instrumental - 'Chinon In The Rain' - bewitching and evocative. I love it, and on nights when I can't sleep I'll steal downstairs with the Herliks to put this track on, and simply unwind.

File this record under 'inoffensive charm'. As a whole it is pleasant, delightful even, and whilst nothing momentous is going on, it will please Eddie Walker fans, of whom there are many, without taxing their imaginations too much.

Clive Pownceby.

'FEED THE FOLK' Various. F.T.P.01

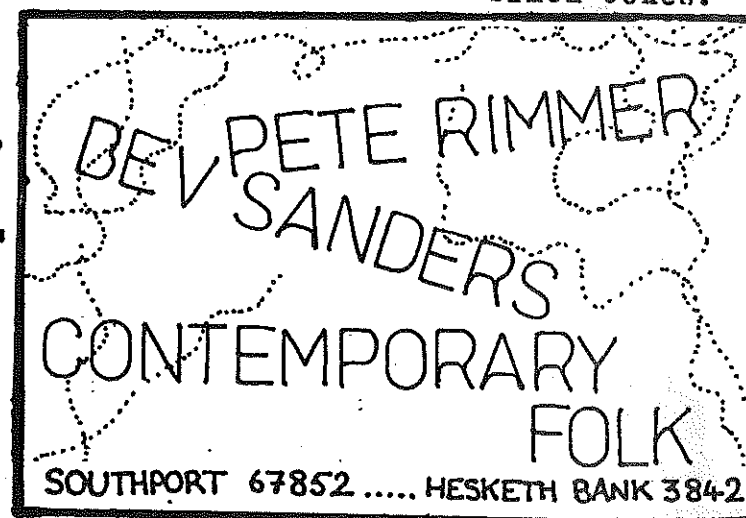
A damn fine venture, destined by my guess to be much imitated, but never surpassed. All such musical famine relief deserves our full support. And as the grandad of them all, this cops most attention.

Some of the music you'll have, some of it you'll not and of course most of it you'll want. Listen you don't expect me to criticize this, do you?

Beyond nit picking like, I've no great love for Loudon Wainwright or the Roches, "Feed The Folk" should be hailed as being just what it is, bloody worthy!

I don't like to use the phrase it's crass, but forgetting my inhibitions. Buy this record.

Simon Jones.



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Bothy	8.00 pm	Blundell Arms, Upper Aughton Rd., Birkdale, Southport	Clive Pownceby	051 924 5078
Eagle & Child	8.30 pm	Eagle & Child, Main St., Billinge, nr. Wigan	Bernie Forkin	0744 53058
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Rainford	8.15 pm	Golden Lion Hotel, Rainford	Bob Leeming	0744 883424
Rave On	8.30 pm	Grosvenor Rowing Club, The Groves, Chester	Nick Mitchell	0244 315094
Widnes (St. Marie's)	8.30 pm	St. Marie's Am. R. L. Club, Brentfields, Widnes	Patrick Lindley	051 423 3775
Llandudno	8.30 pm	The Parade, Vardre Lane, Llandudno	Arthur Bowman	0492 622049
MONDAY				
Horwich	8.15 pm	Crown Hotel, Horwich	Sue Grills	0204 691430
Preston	8.15 pm	Lamb Hotel, Church St., Preston	Mavis Bookes	0254 580283
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The Triton	8.00 pm	Tom Hall's Tavern, nr. Pier Head, Liverpool	Doreen Rickart	051 227 3511 ext.448 work
TUESDAY				
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Folk Club Upstairs	8.30 pm	North Mer. Gen. Hospital Sports & Social, Crumpsall	Mike Smyth	061 798 7677
Blackpool	8.30 pm	Kings Arms, Talbot Rd., Blackpool	Mally Dow	0253 401842
Clayton Arms	8.30 pm	Clayton Arms, Adlington (Main A16 road)	Glyn Hughes	0257 482520
WEDNESDAY				
Whitehaven	8.15 pm	Rosehill Theatre Bar, Moresby, Whitehaven	Ray Downes	0900 826771
How Croft	8.30 pm	How Croft, off Chorley Old Road, Bolton	Derry Yelding	0204 742961
Folk at the 'Tute	9.00 pm	Wrea Green Institute, Station Rd., Wrea Green, Kirkham	Phil Capper	0772 684537
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The Star	8.30 pm	Star Inn, Back Hope St., Salford	Martin Gittins	061 205 3680
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THURSDAY				
Stump	8.30 pm	Rawson's Arms, Peel St., Farnworth, Bolton	Bernard Cromarty	0204 71167
Fleetwood	8.15 pm	North Euston Hotel, Fleetwood	Ron Baxter	03917 78606
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Magazine	8.30 pm	Magazine Hotel, Magazine Lane, Wallasey	Arthur Marshall	051 638 3964
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Newcastle	8.00 pm	Pack Horse, Station St., Longport, Stoke-on-Trent	Jason Hill	0782 813401
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SATURDAY				
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Southport	8.30 pm	Southport Arts Centre, Lord St., Southport (ooo.)	Neil Johnstone	0704 40004
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