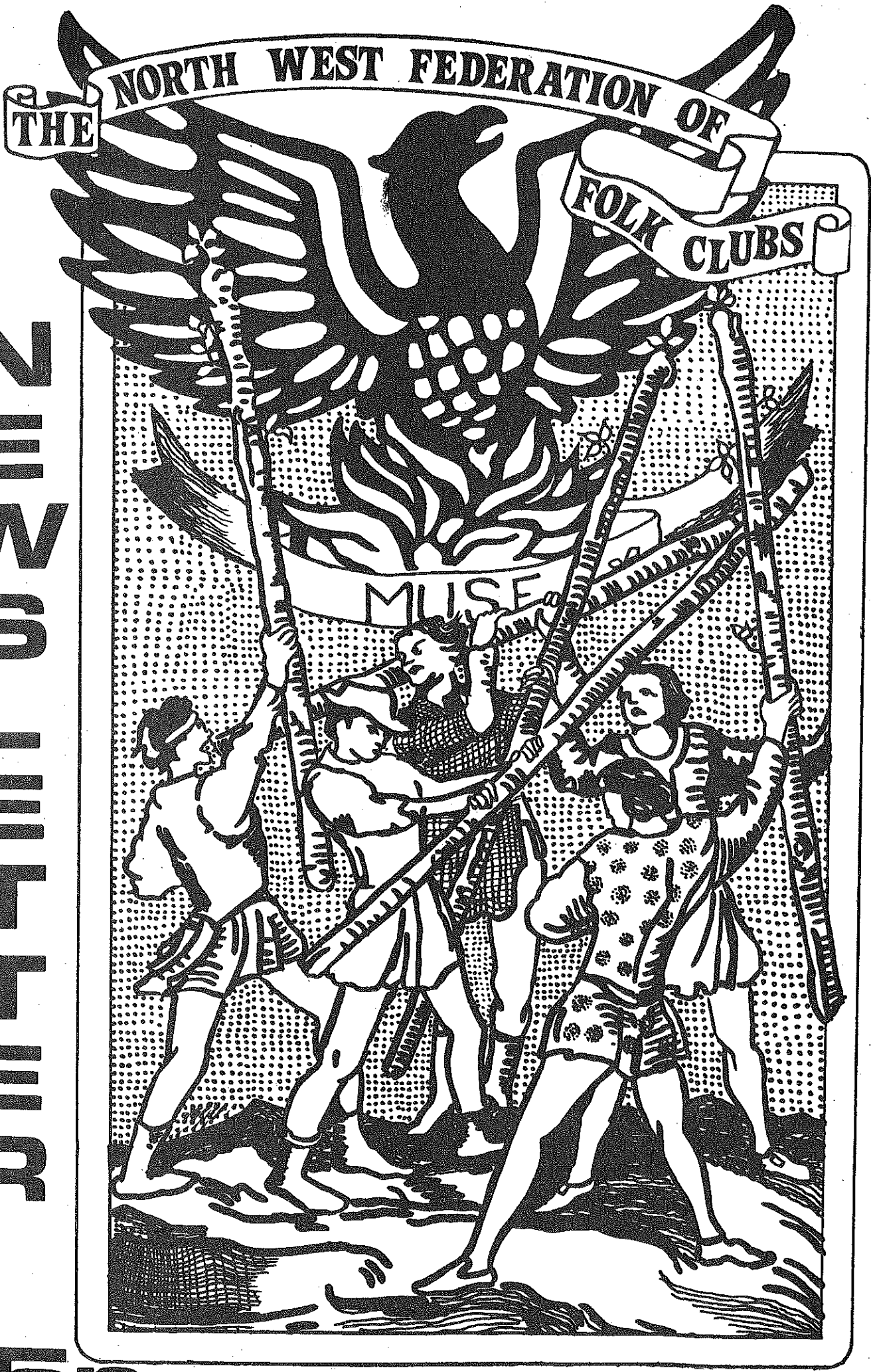


Mark D.



THE NORTH WEST FEDERATION OF FOLK CLUBS

**NEW
SOUTH
WEST**

25p

APRIL - MAY '86

Page 2 Comment:

WELCOME to another issue of the Newsletter! I hope this one isn't quite as late as it has been recently. We are trying to aim for a publication date at least a week into the month before it starts. Unfortunately, as usual, clubs have been very reluctant to part with their dates. It seems to be easier to get hold of secrets than to get hold of some clubs' dates. Come on now, I'm sure you can ALL do better.

IN THIS ISSUE, we interview Paul Metsers, who came all the way from New Zealand to start a career here. There's also an article on Manx Folk Dancing as a preview of the forthcoming festival.

THERE are also of course, all the regular features. I've had to hold over Song of the Month this issue, due to pressure of space, but it will be back in the next issue. Keep those songs & poems coming in!

AT LAST, we have an advertising manager! Kath Holden, the treasurer had already agreed to handle all the invoices for adverts and her husband has now volunteered to take over the rest of that. I'm very grateful for the help that gives to me, so in future all adverts to be sent to 7, Sunleigh Rd., Hindley Wigan WN2 2RE

TALKING of Kath reminds me that we are still short of payments for Newsletter sales. Several clubs have paid up, but there are others who haven't paid for twelve months, and our patience is growing thin. Please send us something NOW! If you are in difficulties, then ring Kath and we'll see what can be done. I only ask that you do something and do it soon.

PETE RIMMER would like some help with the subscriptions, mainly in terms of labelling and wrapping the magazines to be sent out. If you can help, please contact Pete on 0704 67852.

FINALLY as always, thank you to all those without whom this would not be possible: for typing - Angela Forkin, Janet Hale & Margaret Marsden; for club dates - Phil Capper & Ian Wells; for Out & About - Dave Hurst; for general dogsbody & Assistant Editor, Bernie Forkin.

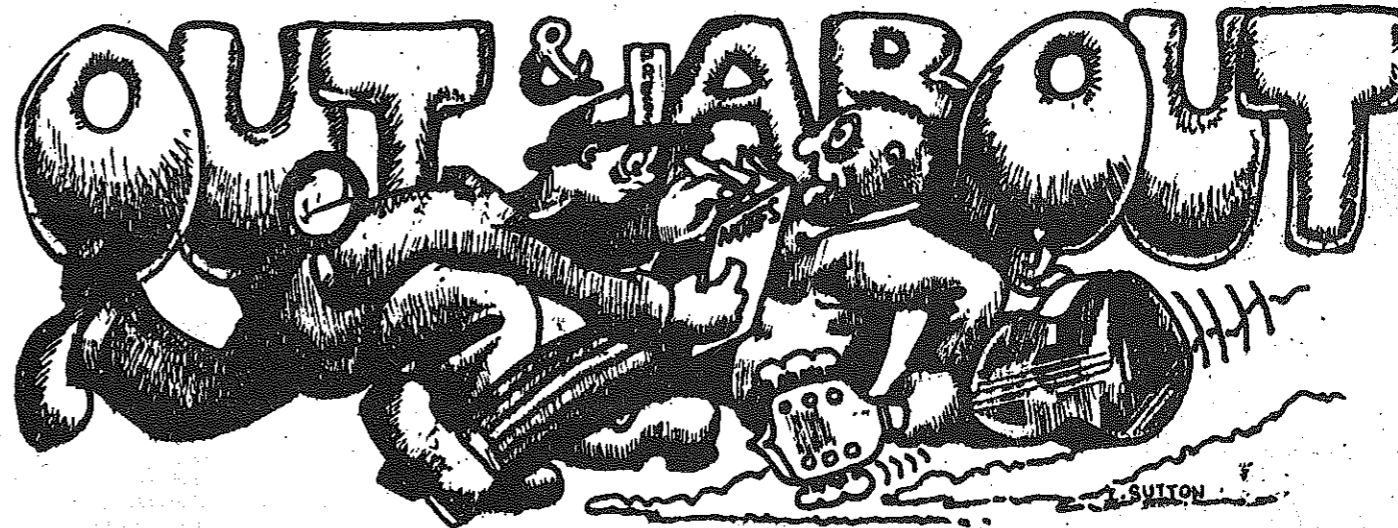
See you all next issue!

Nigel Firth
EDITOR



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FOLK PROGRAMMES ON NATIONAL AND LOCAL RADIO

'Folk on Two'	BBC Radio 2	330m (90.2 VHF)	Wednesday 7.00-8.30pm
'Lancashire Drift'	BBC R/Lancashire	351m (96.4 VHF)	Sunday 11.05-11.35am
Monthly, second Sunday		repeat -	Tuesday 6.35-7.05pm
'Folk Scene'	BBC R/Merseyside	202m (95.8 VHF)	Tuesday 6.30-7.00pm
		repeat -	Sunday 8.30-9.00pm
'Folk like Us'	BBC R/Manchester	206m (95.1 VHF)	Sunday 5.15-6.15pm
		repeat -	Monday 7.00-8.00pm

I haven't listed programmes on the independents, because NONE of our local ones actually have a folk music programme. Write at once to their respective Programme Controllers and protest. It is only by constant pressure that we may eventually get a programme of our own.

FOLK AID '86, a one day festival is to be held on SUNDAY, 4th May in KING GEORGE'S PARK, GARRETT LONDON, SW 18. Profits will be used to buy mobile ambulance and medical equipment for use in famine areas by OXFAM. Artists already confirmed include, THE DUBLINERS THE POGUES, THE BATTLEFIELD BAND, RED SHIFT, THE KIPPER FAMILY, TOM RUSH, JIM COOZA and KIERAN HALPIN. Tickets are £10 each, with a 10% discount on party bookings of 10 or more, from FOLK AGAINST FAMINE, 101 FEMURBY AVE, WORCESTER PARK, SURREY. A stamped addressed envelope is requested, and cheques should be made payable to Folk Aid '86. For further information telephone - 01-330-4122.

While on charity events, DON'T FORGET THE JOE OWEN BENEFIT CEILIDH at ASPULL CIVIC HALL on SATURDAY, APRIL 19th. TICKETS £1.50 from DAVE HURST, 867, ATHERTON ROAD, HINDLEY GREEN, WIGAN. WN2 4TB. Full details in advert in this magazine.

This year's NATIONAL FOLK MUSIC FESTIVAL is to be held from APRIL 18th - 20th. at the SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE, SUTTON BONNINGTON near LOUGHBOROUGH. Artists include MARTIN CATHY, FRED JORDAN, JOHN & PHIL CUNNINGHAM, SHIRLEY COLLINS ALAN BELL and the OLD SWAN BAND. Weekend tickets are from £12.50. Further information from JOHN HEYDON, 5, CHURCH STREET, AYLESBURY. BUCKS enclosing stamped, addressed envelope.

A performance of PETER BELLAMY's ballad opera "The TRANSPORTS" will take place at THE BAND CENTRE, CLUMBER ROAD, POYNTON at 8 p.m. on Friday and Saturday May 16th and 17th. Tickets £3 with proceeds to MENCAP. Ring JOHN WALKER 061-477-4171 for further details.

HORWICH TOWN FOLK DAY takes place on Saturday 19th April, mainly in Horwich Leisure Centre. Guests include: GARY & VERA, BERNARD WRIGLEY, HAYWAIN, SCOLD'S BRIDLE, CHRIS WHILE, PRESTON ROYAL MORRIS, RYINGTON MORRIS, and many others. There will be a Craft Fair, Ceilidhs, Workshops, Folk Club, Singarounds, Concert, Dialect Poetry, Children's Entertainment. For more information, please ring: Coppull 792304, Horwich 691430 or Bolton 40949.

The EFDSS have been invited to present two FOLK WEEKS at the NATIONAL GARDEN FESTIVAL to be held at STOKE ON TRENT. The dates are from MAY 26th. to June 1st. They are joined by MARK O'CONNOR. For directions and COSMOTHEKA, SAM SHERRY, THE RIPLBY WAYFARERS and SHIRLEY COLLINS. The programme is produced and presented by JIM LLOYD. For further information about the NATIONAL GARDEN FESTIVAL ring 0782-274777.

FOLK ON TWO moves to WEDNESDAY EVENINGS from 7 p.m. in APRIL and will be broadcast on RADIO 2 in STEREO. The programme will be extended to 90 minutes and will be followed by a further half hour of Folk featuring such artists as THE McCALMANS. The new producer of FOLK ON TWO is GEOFFREY HEWITT and he's interested in YOUR VIEWS and IDEAS for the programme. Write to him at FOLK ON TWO, B.E.C., PEBBLE HILL ROAD, BIRMINGHAM B5 7QQ

INGERSOLL-RAND SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB are holding a CEILIDH at RIVINGTON BARN with HAYWAIN on SATURDAY, APRIL 26th. This event is open to all comers, and tickets are £2.50 including supper. Details from PAT JONES on HORWICH 690315 during working hours. Dancing is from 8 p.m. to Midnight.

PYEWACKET, MAXIE & MITCH, HARVEY ANDREWS and SWAN ARCADE are amongst the artists appearing at the WATH FOLK FESTIVAL to be held at MONTGOMERY HALL, WATH from MAY 2nd. to 4th. Tickets and further information from JCAN M. BIRNS, "FORE CAPERS", 26, FITZ-WILLIAM STREET WATH ON DEARNE, ROTTERHAM. S. YORES. S637HF. Tel (0709) 87341 or 87040. Advance tickets for weekend are £10, and tickets for individual events start at £2.

Finally, two tours that may be of interest to readers who enjoy other forms of Folk related music. The American Bluegrass Band HIGH COUNTRY, who made friends with their excellent performances when in Britain during October 1984, return in April and can be seen at LEISURE TIME PROMOTIONS, ORRELL LANE, BOOTLE on APRIL 22nd. (tel. 051-520-1275 for full details). On April 24th. they appear at HIGH LANE VILLAGE HALL, STOCKPORT. (Details 061-427-5579). Also in Britain during April and May is PETER BOWAN, who can be seen together with Dobro virtuoso JERRY DOUGLAS at THE MARQUIS OF GRANBY, BAMFORD, DERBYSHIRE on APRIL 25th. The only other date within travelling distance of this area is MAY 8th at the VILLAGE HALL, TRYSULL, WEST MIDLANDS. when the duo are joined by MARK O'CONNOR. For directions to Trysull (it's off the A449 between Wolverhampton and Kidderminster and other information contact JOHN ATKINS, 22 BUCKINGHAM GROVE, KINGSWINFORD, WEST-MIDLANDS. (Tel. 0384-295267) from whom tickets for Trysull can be obtained.

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

EDITORIAL ADDRESS:
3, Cromford Drive,
Pemberton,
Wigan, WN5 8JU

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



ADVANCE NOTICE of some dates I have for the coming months; they are in no particular order.

JUNE:

8	Ian Woods & Charlie Yarwood	Bothy
17	Calico	Hindley
3	Bryony	Mawdesley
4	Six Hands in Tempo	White Swan
11	Johnny Coppin	Whitehaven
6	Eddie Walker	Northwich
4	Nio Dow	Kirkham
11	Jez Lowe & Jake Walton	Kirkham
18	Vin Garbutt plus George & Phil	Kirkham
25	Dave Walters	Whitehaven
22	Asley Hutchings	
	"An evening with Cecil Sharp"	Bothy

THE BOTHEY Folk Club celebrates its 21st Birthday this year, and among the attractions are:

- (All dates in April)
 Thursday 24: Informal Session in Blundell Arms (free)
 Friday 25: Ceilidh at St. John's Hall, Wright St., Southport with Ran Tan Band £2
 Saturday 26: 12-3pm Informal concert of Music, Dance & Song in Southport Arts Centre
 8pm - Club Night with Gaby & Vera £2
 Sunday 27: Reunion night with faces old & new £1.50
 More information and tickets from Clive Pownooby
 051 924 5078 or Pete Rimmer, 0704 67852.

MOORE DAY OF FOLK takes place on Saturday 26th April in the village. Guests: Kipper Family, Sam Stephens & Anne Lennox-Martin, Roy Harris, Fiddlers Fancy, Electropathic Battery Band, Day Ticket £3.

MINI FESTIVAL, Sunday June 1st at the Urban Farm site on Bidston Hill, Wirral. From 2pm, guests include Stormalong John, Fiddlestones, Titanic Disaster Ceilidh Band. Details Jenny Duffy 051 334 7860.

THERE IS NO Folk Festival at Whitehaven this year, as no one was prepared to organise it. The club has therefore altered its guest programme and will run as usual during that weekend.

PETE RIMMER would like either some help with the subscriptions, or someone to take it over. He is prepared to continue to provide the administrative side of this, but needs someone to address and mail out copies of the magazine. Can you help? If so, contact Pete direct on 0704 67852.

KENDAL ARTS CENTRE dates are listed here, since they don't conform to a regular pattern. They are:

April	4th	Blowzabella
	21st	Lindisfarne (at Leisure Centre)
	25th	Bernard Wrigley / Hoson & Lees
May	1st	Paul Brady Band
	30th	American Old Timey Song & Dance Night (Pete Sutherland, Karen Billings, Martin & Jessica Simpson)

More details from Bill Lloyd, 0539 25133

SOUTHPORT ARTS CENTRE dates also don't fit the pattern, so here they are:

April	28th	Paul Brady Band
May	29th	Pyewaokett
	31st	Ralph McTell

More details from the Box Office, 0704 40011.

CLUB OF THE MONTH: MAWDESLEY Folk Club

Although run by an 'old man' of the North-West folk scene (I thought I'd get it in first) Mawdesley is a fairly new club in a fairly old village. It was started on Thursday December 1st 1983 and, until now, has run on the 1st Thursday of every month.

Within days of the club opening the national press had ignored it completely and Murdoch was already looking for a new place to print his Broadsides. Meanwhile the show in Mawdesley went on at monthly intervals (we like to be regular here - it's the ale you know) and before long we had invited our first guests Scolds Bridle to come along and pay us to listen.

From this moment on (and nothing like the song) we went from one audience to another handing out begging letters and holding raffles (he didn't mind).

Later we released raffles but he still plagues the lesser folk clubs to this day while we at Mawdesley have a 'folk card' instead with infamous names on (get in touch with Martin Gittins at 'The Star', Salford for a free sample) including mine.

As you have probably gathered if you've read, but not necessarily understood, this far we have no pretensions of grandeur in Mawdesley, ours is a small country club (no madam! not Country and Western) catering for a mixed audience of locals, sheep, refugees from the Eagle and Child at Billinge (thought you'd escaped didn't you - Har! Har!), sheep, refugees from the Triton club at Liverpool, more sheep, people who have lost their way and drifted in poor souls and a few sheep. We all wear wellies including the audience who sing in the choruses even when there aren't any.

By now (or even "buy now-my life!") of course you'll be on the edge of your seat/settee/bench/floor - delete as applicable - wanting to know how to avoid this den of vice (couldn't spell iniquity). Well hard luck Cos' I'm gonna tell you how to get there!

Firstly don't go on the 1st Thursday (unless you want a quiet drink) because we've changed to the 1st Tuesday of each month so that we can now run in the warmth of the pub proper instead of the upstairs pool room. Secondly get an Ordnance Map of Great Britain and find Lancashire (it's near the left-middle). Then find Ormskirk and Leyland on it. Now you are getting warm - about half-way between these is a little village, which covers about 50 square miles but only has 2 houses, a shop and 30 pubs, called Mawdesley. The pub where we meet is called the BLACK BULL on HALL LANE which is on the main road just north of the village itself.

As there are at least a hundred different ways into the village you are best advised to start out at least 3 days ago instead of reading this rubbish or phone me (see back cover for my number) I'll send you a copy of our 'Country Lanes Plan of S.W. Lancashire' which will completely confuse you but is free of charge and shows where the Black Bull really is.

We start at 8.30 pm. very approximately but landlord Dave opens well before then and Landlady Yvonne will cook you a magnificent banquet, if you ask her nicely and if you want to have your tea out before the club starts - please don't come for your tea half way through - it's very hard to sing and eat and we're not insured against sprayed crumbs!

You will then be thoroughly entertained/bored/pissed off (delete, etc) for the rest of the long evening by myself (you will sing the chorus) and even better by Phil Hartley (jam-man extra-ordinary) my good mate and fellow resident as well as such even better performers like Fiona Simpson (at least - she says she's a performer) who is our guest on Tuesday 6th May - it'll be a real hum-dinger of a night: they're muck spraying locally!

So there you are, and here I am, why not come along and see us soon? Why not indeed - we dare you in fact! We might even let you sing and play but you'll have to be very, very good like the residents and the sheep.

DEREK GIFFORD.

AS THEY say, this month we've some good news and some bad news. First the good news:

DARWEN FOLK CLUB is a new club to the Federation; it started on January 9th and runs on alternate Thursdays, alternate with the Blackburn Folk Club which meets on Fridays. The club starts at 8.30pm, and is held at the Kiosk, a function room in the middle of Sunnyhurst Woods. To get there, follow the A666 (Darwen to Blackburn) and turn up Earnsgale Road (signposted Sunnyhurst Woods Centre); then follow the signs for the Centre. For more information (and better directions), contact Jan Foster, Darwen 775860. The club is currently run as a singers' club, but they intend to book guests when funds permit.

And then the bad news...

Fleetwood Folk Club closed at the end of February, although the Folk club musical 'Onward' will continue. If this production is successful, the club may reopen in summer, or after Pylde.

The Old Ship in Southport is closing for now, but will be back with a Summer Folk Season. Watch this space for details.

Blackpool Folk Club is now running as a singers' club, following some poor attendances.

AS FAR as I know the Albion Folk Club are still running, but I've had no details. For the record, they meet at the Albion Hotel, Albion St., New Brighton on Sundays at 8.30pm. More details from Geoff Dormand, 051 639 7928.

The Long and Winding Road

SIMON JONES talks to PAUL METSERS

Paul Metsers travelled clear over the world to try the British folk scene. Was it a worthwhile upheaval? Simon Jones consults the well seasoned troubadour.

Paul Metsers sits at the far end of the sofa considering the probing question just asked him. Metsers is very much the man I expected from his gigs. Quiet, gentle speaking, but firm in his convictions; you get an answer to every query. Greying, but by no means old fashioned, Paul Metsers is very much a modern wandering minstrel, not that long since he made the ultimate trip from New Zealand, coming to our wet and windy isle determined to work the folk scene here. People there aren't quite as raucous as Australians and life, so my sole N.Z. contact informs, is much slower paced. Sounds like a good place.

- SJ: "What is New Zealand like for folk music?"
- PM: "It's quite good, there's bits here and there. It is concentrated around places like Wellington, mostly the cities, but not a lot in the towns. You can count the good clubs on your two hands. There's a trouble with an intrinsic scene like that and its that there's very little of the place's own music. Most folk tends to be expatriate copy, and the odd singer songwriter like myself. Most of the influences over there are Irish or Scottish. In the end it's all so limiting, you just keep doing the same old thing."
- SJ: "So taking a not inconsiderable gamble you and your wife planned to up roots and get away from the close confines. Why pick Britain though?"
- PM: "You don't realise, being British, what a pull the folk scene here is. This is like Mecca. It's the best, despite what you read about in the folk press. This is the place to come and succeed, here is the only place in the world where you can make some sort of a living at playing folk music."
- SJ: "Surely America...?"
- PM: "No, there it's localised and spread out over such a vast area. There's no Club network which you could claim constitutes a folk scene. You get the odd concert venue or room, but nothing like England. If I'd gone to the

States, I'd never have done as well; have you ever counted the number of singer/guitarists they've got over there?"

- SJ: "Yeah, all the old soporifics, Bob Dylan, Phil Ochs, James Taylor, and they probably breed more each year?"
- PM: "Yet you know I listened to a lot of those names when I was building up my act. My early material was very much based on those sort of people."
- SJ: "It was actually the arrival of a letter from Nic Jones on your door mat that as much as anything galvanised you into action. The letter asked if Jones could include "Farewell To The Gold" on his Topic album "Penguin Eggs".
- PM: "Of course I wrote back straight away and said help yourself. I saw it as a tremendous compliment really."
- SJ: "While the inclusion of 'Farewell' on Nic Jones' record obviously laid some groundwork over here for your arrival, it was far from being red carpet treatment for you. Straight away you found out the Clubs and their floorspots, working very hard, flying up and down the country from concert to festival and round about. Home was a camper van?"
- PM: "Floorspots meant you could go along and try a place out. If you liked it the put a bit of pressure on to try and get a booking. Slowly, very slowly I started getting dates, but it took a lot of hard work. It still does."
- SJ: "Wait a minute. Are you saying, as popular as you are, you still have to get on the blower to organisers and pester for work?"
- PM: "You'd better believe it. The hours I waste on the phone. People just don't call and say 'please play for us, mate'. A folk artist really has to spend time and money promoting himself. An agent doesn't always do it, either. They sit there and wait for the phone to ring. Nothing works like that, you really have to put yourself about."

That's something no-one could accuse Paul of not doing. With two albums out on Highway "Caution To The Wind" and "Momentum" he most certainly came to peoples' attention. I admit that seeing him live at a Festival I'd stored the man under 'acoustic minstrel'. It was his third and latest "In The Hurricane's Eye" on his Sagem label released with Topic which caused an abrupt re-evaluation of the man.

- SJ: "One track stands out on your latest album head and shoulders above the others, "No Quarter Given" had a driving acoustic beat, wind propelled by squealing uilleann pipes."
- PM: "I wrote that song as a reaction to "Gandhi", the film which I'd just seen. It's very much the way the movie left me, and I think it describes the man, too."
- SJ: "It's pretty graphic stuff, 'Christine was a hooker/Removed her garter to applause'."
- PM: "Look, I don't go out to write deliberate political songs. I just write about things as I find them. There's no overt message to anybody. It's a personal view of life in general. You know acoustic musicians are under a disadvantage in this country because when Paxton and the like started up, everyone thought it was dead easy. Get an acoustic guitar and you're away. We got a thousand imitators producing terrible music."
- SJ: "What's more, Paul some of that thousand made records."
- PM: "Yeah, well, there's a lot to overcome. No doubt the time of the camper van is now long since past, Paul is currently absorbed in recording his fourth album, with a new tune collection due too. The mobile home now swopped for walls in Kendal, he might have to still push for work but he's half way established. Why these days you're likely to find his name cropping up as session credits, (most recently on Johnny Coppin's "Line of Blue"). The future seems a little more assured."
- SJ: "Do you at last see yourself as a folk musician?"
- PM: "This music involves the tradition of a society, mine does not do that. Any music can become folk if it is adopted by hundreds of people, so I suppose Bob Dylan and the Beatles could quite easily be folk, they have songs which people take to heart."

SJ: "So by that token "Farewell To The Gold" is a folk song, enough floorsingers do it, and if you follow the line that folk represents modern concerns, then Metsers also classifies as a folk singer, listen to stuff like "Nimbus" and you'll be in no doubt about that. Have you come across any of the new generation of singer guitarists in the light of Billy Bragg, Suzanne Vega, etc?"

- PM: "There's all this talk about the revival of the singer songwriter. But where is it? I haven't seen any of it yet, all record company hype probably. I wish some would come my way then I might get some money."
- SJ: "Look here, Paul you're not about to tell me you regret it all?"
- PM: "No way mate, I came over here and did it. If everything caves in tomorrow I can look back and say, well I gave folk my best shot and had a great time, made lots of good friends. I don't regret doing what I did at all, I'd do it all again."

Paul Metsers drains his coffee cup and the tape recorder goes "clunk", tape finishes.

folk
at the
tute

every Wednesday, 9-10pm

Wrea Green Institute

Station Rd, Wrea Green, Kirkham, Lancs.

tel. 0772-662113 / 694537

APRIL 2nd *singers' night*

9th **Aberjaber** 

16th **Jane Cassidy**

23rd **Mike Silver** 

30th **Dan ar Bras** 

MAY 7th *singers' night*

14th **Paul Metsers** 

21st **Martin Simpson**

JUNE 4th *singers' night*

11th **Allan Taylor** 

18th **Nick Dow** 

JUNE 11th *singers' night*

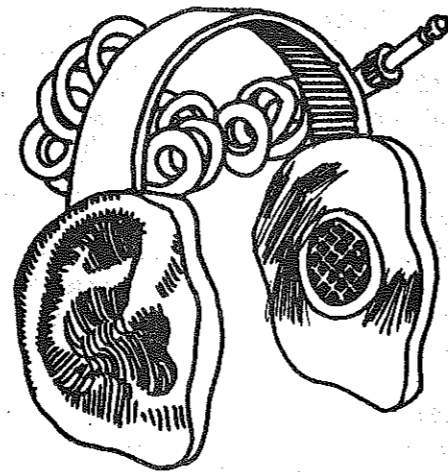
18th **Jez Lowe & Jake Walton** 

JUNE 25th *singers' night*

1st **Vin Garbutt** 

BROADFOLK

The year kicked off well with Barrie Gavin's personal tribute to Bert Lloyd. This excellent hour programme went out on C4 but contained 20 minutes from the seven BBC films Barrie had made with Bert. New sequences were filmed in Birtley Folk Club. It included a lot of folk song in snippets, including Bert himself in lecture/song mode. The history of this programme is a sad comment on television executive's attitudes to folk music and it's exponents. First, the BBC failed to commission it or even to rerun any of the Lloyd/Gavin films (one of which had won an award) as a memorial to Bert. Second, even though they commissioned it, C4 then sat on it for 15 months. Newspaper critical comment was even more revealing: Byrom Rogers of the Sunday Times publicly demonstrated his ignorance. "I have always loved folk music....but I do find it disturbing to learn that it's foremost practitioners have such extreme political views. All that innocence, and green woods, and walking out so early, sung by charming old Marxists: none of it will be the same now." Where has he been? Well, we know where he is now - fortress Wapping, that well known bastion of free speech. Incidentally, the Guardian has allowed the hilarious folkish correspondence to leak into the arts columns with the occasional article. That included a rave preview by Michael Grosvenor Myer of the excellent C4 series 'Down Home'. Aly Bain has made a marvellous series on fiddling, leaping backwards and forwards across the Atlantic from Nashville to Up Helly Aa. The US-Shetland cross influences were shown in detail, with musical extracts of good length freed from too much editorial comment. Many thanks to Douglas Alexander and PELICULA films. Some female folk artists appeared without labels in the R2 series The Gentle Touch, another production from Birmingham.



Geoffrey Hewitt is putting his stamp on Folk on 2, with ideas ranging from a broadcast ceilidh to a sort of broadcast biography. The extra needletime has shown up well, with one entire programme devoted to record reviews. This augurs well for the expansion to 90 minutes that accompanies the switch to Wednesday nights on April 9th. The first of the additional regular programmes to follow it at the new time will be a series from Scotland with the MacCalmans.

To whet your appetite for folk on Wednesdays, Mike Harding is being rather more serious than the facetious title 'Yer Roots Are Showing' might suggest. It is an interesting balance of speech and music, a sort of personal account of the folk revival, with the music allowed to speak for itself at length. This 6 week series of 45 minute programmes is from the network production centre in Manchester, and produced by John Leonard. Look out for further series from his Popular Music department.

Our BBC local stations continue to provide good fare. Radio Merseyside's Folk Scene maintains it's high standard from both presenters, Stan Ambrose and Geoff Speed. Mike Billington's Folk Like Us on Radio Manchester continues to improve from it's previous high standard. Radio Lancashire's monthly pittance (Lancashire Drift) keeps being hi-jacked by speech items but their early afternoon sequence, Through Till Three, has had some interesting interviews with visiting bands. Bob Pegg paid a visit to push the Kendal Songsearch and played last year's winning song.

BROADFOLK (from P. 8)

The prize for the most unexpected use of a piece of folk music, contemporary in this case, goes to the Food Programme (R4). Their programme on coffee opened with a reference to Nicaragua, where western volunteers are helping with the harvest. The presenter said: 'They took a little time off from picking to sing us a song of solidarity'. A few notes on the guitar, and a ragged chorus of voices faded up with 'In 1649, on St Georges Hill,!' The programme ran out with the same voices singing triumphantly '...Ye diggers all stand up for glory, stand up now', with me singing along, waving my mug of Traidcraft Nicaraguan coffee. FOLKEAR

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23, 24, 25, 26 MAY 1986

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10th YEAR

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What's all this Dancing about?

The Name of the Gig!

"Hello Alan!" A familiar voice from a local charity. "Can you do some calling for us? We've booked a band, but they don't have a caller." The date was free. "O.K., who's the band?" "Bandage!"

"Never heard of them! Who are they and where are they from?" "Oh! I believe they are a group of nurses."

Alarm bells rang in my head, the last time it was a group of firemen. I was around to his house shortly after, with a copy of 'Folk in Lancs' to try to explain that Country and Western was not really quite the same thing as Country Dancing. Bandage understood. We had a very good evening with Cat Island dressed 'Western Style' to please the punters.

So what's in a name? What do we call the sort of social dance function many of us enjoy? I have recently been sent a poster which declares:

- + Square Dance
- + Hoe Down
- + Barn Dance
- + Contra Dance
- + Country Dance
- + Folk Dance
- = Enjoyment and Friendship.

I think it's great. But no it doesn't mention Ceildh, well it was sent from Cornwall, so perhaps they don't have Ceildhs down there.

We all know what a Ceildh is, don't we? I always thought it was Gaelic, and was a party with singing and dancing. I remember going to a Ceildh on the Isle of Aran, it was a nice homely village concert, yes there was dancing - two small girls performed a tap dance routine. Quite a lot of people other than Folkies haven't a clue. It seems to have come to mean in 'Folk' Circles a particular type of dance full of energy and mainly stepping to a slow polka. One caller recently complained to me of one 'Ceildh Band', "They only play jigs and reels, they can't play any folk dance music." Well, if jigs and reels aren't folk dance music, I don't know what is.

P.T.A.s generally plump for a 'Hoe-Down' or Barn Dance without any real idea of what they want, but are

invariably pleased with the outcome. Square Dance can be misleading since most so-called Square Dances do not have a lot of Square Dance content. Folk Dance or Country Dance smacks back to Primary School days, and I don't think teacher thought of it as fun.

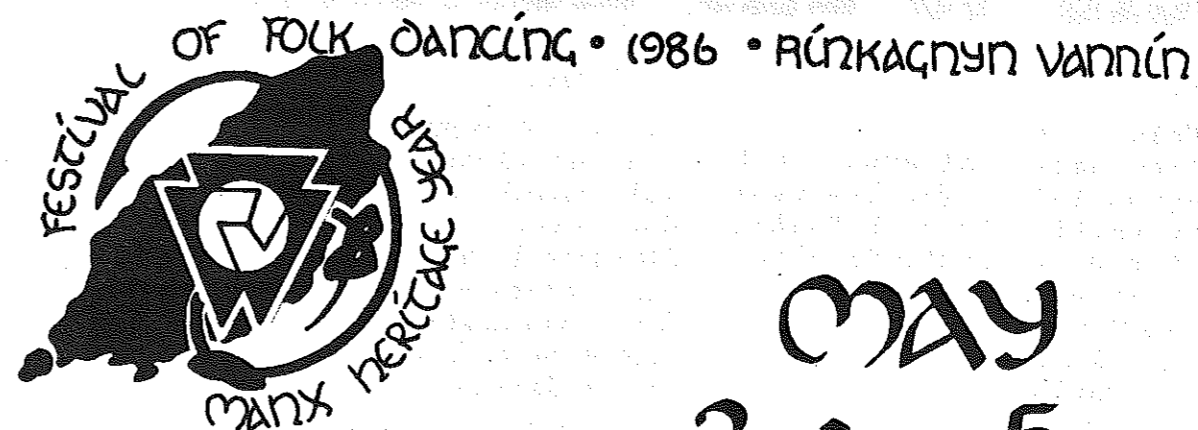
Roy Smith, writing in 'Lancashire Wakes' mentions 'Cow House Hop'. That reminds me of a dance I called in a barn in April a couple of years back. I phoned to check final details a few days before the date and was told "Yes, everything is O.K., I think. But the farmer says (I do hope he's joking) it's too cold to put the cows out yet, but yes, all right, he'll make some arrangement." The farmer wasn't joking - we arrived to find some of the cows still penned in the centre of the barn. "They're O.K." the farmer said "We've had Radio One on all day, they were a bit frisky at first but they've calmed down now they've gotten used to the music." There was a U-shaped space round three sides of the cows' pen, ankle deep in straw, we did not investigate beneath the straw.

Jack Hamilton, for many years organiser of the Broadstairs Folk Week, advocates using the term 'Junket'. He says "Everybody knows what a Junket is." I don't know about you, but I thought it was a sloppy blancmange.

I've spotted several attempts at playing safe recently, advertising the event as Ceildh/Barn Dance. After all, what's in a name? Or as old Bill Shakespeare said "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet." Enjoy your dancing.

Alan Barber

NOTES: *'Folk in Lancs' a useful little leaflet listing Folk Song Clubs, Folk Dance Clubs, Morris Sides, Bands and Callers, it's under threat of extinction through lack of funds. e-'Lancashire Wakes' district magazine of the EFDSS. 20p if you're lucky enough to buy it at your Club, or by Annual Subscription: two issues 80p from Doris Shaw, 25 Lyndale Avenue, Lostock Hall, Preston, PR5 5UU.



MAY
2nd to 5th

FOLK DANCE

1986

PORT ERÍN ISLE OF MAN

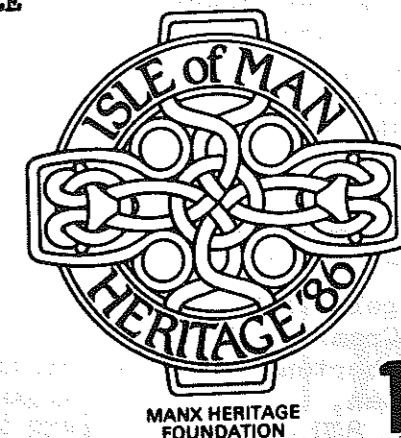
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Letters to The Editor...

Dear Editor,

The Fylde Folk Festival is being held over the weekend of 29th, 30th and 31st August 1986. The Festival Committee is writing to Folk Clubs throughout the North West, to find out if any folk club members would like to volunteer as stewards at the Festival. In return for stewarding at various sessions, we can offer Free Passes to events. If, for instance, a person can do some stewarding each day, then they would qualify for a Weekend Pass. If they steward for a particular event only, they would then receive a Free Pass to an event of their choice.

We are looking for people who are regular folk club attenders and who would be reliable. As a steward you have to check all Weekend Tickets and Session Tickets and other relevant Passes, as people go into events. As in Folk Clubs we don't like people wandering in and out during a song spot or dance spot.

If your Folk Club can provide some stewards we would like to hear from you. Please send names, addresses and phone numbers to the address below and the Chief Steward will get in touch with you in the summer with all the relevant details.

Thanking you for your assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Christine Bell,
Festival Secretary.

Alan Bell,
Festival Director,
55 The Strand,
Rossall,
Fleetwood,
FY7 8NP

Dear Editor,

It is with regret that I have to tell you that Fleetwood Folk Club has, after 16½ years, been forced to close. This is due to continuing low audiences. Financially, we could have carried on for another couple of months, but with less than 10, all told, over the last month as an average audience, there seemed little point.

"Onward!", the Folk Club's musical will however be going on, on Thursday 5th June to Saturday 7th June. If this is financially a success we will hope to reopen the club in midsummer or after the Fylde Festival.

Ron Baxter

(For more information about the musical, write, with SAE please, to
13, Elm St.,
Fleetwood,
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North West Folkaid presents

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A new compilation tape from NW folk artistes in aid of famine relief

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- Scrawhead
- Stanley Accrington
- Pat Ryan
- Jolly Jack
- Hobson & Lees
- Gregson & Collister
- Gentleman Soldier
- Fiona Simpson
- Curragh
- Caught on the Hop
- Bernard Wrigley

Club Dates - April

Tuesday	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th
HINDLEY BLACKPOOL CLAYTON ARMS MAWDESLEY	singers' night singers' night singers' night singers' night	HOLLERIN' POT singers' night singers' night	guest t.b.a. singers' night ROBERTSON & McCOMBE	singers' night singers' night singers' night	PARLOUR TRICKS singers' night singers' night
Wednesday	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th
WHITEHAVEN HOW CROFT WHITE SWAN FOLK AT THE TUTE THE STAR OLD SHIP	HOKUM HOTSHOTS BEVERLEY BROS. singers' night JOHN McATEE singers' night	HEATHER WHITTAKER t.b.a. DICK MILES ABERJABER PAUL METSERS	HOUSE BAND singers' night JANE CASSIDY guest t.b.a. singers' night	SHEP WOOLLEY t.b.a. THE KIPPER FAMILY MIKE SILVER DOWNHAM & NUDGER	local artists GREGSON & COLLISTER DAN AR BRAS PETE MORTON singers' night
Thursday	3rd	10th	17th	24th	
DARWEN POYNTON WIGAN MAGAZINE BUCK I' TH' VINE	singers' night singers' night singers' night GREY & ELLIS singers' night	singers' night singers' night singers' night singers' night	singers' night singers' night singers' night singers' night	singers' night singers' night featured resident singers' night	
Friday	4th	11th	18th	25th	
BEE NEWCASTLE NORTHWICH PORKIES CUT ABOVE	singers' night RICHARD GRAINGER JOHNNY HANDLE	singers' night singers' night singers' night PETE HUGHES	singers' night guest t.b.a. locals' night	singers' night singers' night PHIL & JOHN CUNNINGHAM ALLAN TAYLOR local singers	
Saturday	5th	12th	19th	26th	
BURY BREWERY SOUTHPORT POYNTON	RON GRAINGER	TONY ROSE BILBO BAGGINS BOB	GEOFF HIGGINBOTTOM	club closed PAUL BRADY & BAND	
Sunday	6th	13th	20th	27th	
CROWN BOTHY EAGLE & CHILD LEIGH POYNTON RAINFORD RAVE ON WIDNES LLANDUDNO	singers' night GREY & ELLIS singers' night guest t.b.a. PETE MORTON COPPIN & BEER guest t.b.a. singers' night	singers' night singers' night G & E PRATT NEW BRACKEN BAND KNOWE O' DEIL singers' night guest t.b.a. singers' night	singers' night GERRY HALLOM singers' night FIONA SIMPSON TWILIGHT TRUBSHAW'S HAWAIIANS singers' night guest t.b.a. guest t.b.a.	singers' night 21ST BIRTHDAY VOLUNTEERS THE WASSAILERS THE KIPPER FAMILY STEPHENS & LENNOX-MARTIN guest t.b.a. singers' night	
Monday	7th	14th	21st	28th	
HORWICH PRESTON POYNTON BREWERY THE TRITON	singers' night singers' night singaround singers' night THE SPINNERS	singers' night singers' night singaround singers' night MUSIC HALL	singers' night singers' night singaround singers' night RAY FISHER	singers' night singers' night singaround singers' night singaround	

Residents

Bury - various
Bothy - Ken Dunlop, Clive Pownceby, Pete Rimmer, Paul Reid
Eagle & Child - Caught On The Hop, Quartz, Bric-a-Brac
Leigh - Trevor & Joan Hunt, Calico
Rave On - Volunteers
Llandudno - Stuart King, The Rambling Boys
Poynton (Mon.) - Rick Harrup
Triton - Jenny Wright & Colin Wilson
Brewery (Mon.) - Mountain Road
Hindley - Pennygate, Pocheon
Whitehaven - Krotted Cord
How Croft - Under-a-Fiver

White Swan - Geoff Higginbottom, John O'Hagan, Dave & Helen Howard, Pete Moreton, Andy & Alison Whittaker, Hollerin' Pot

Mawdesley - Derek Gifford
Poynton (Thurs.) - Arthur Wakefield
Wigan - Joan Blackburn
Magazine - Black Dog, Brass Tacks, Arthur Marshall, Dave Locke
Bee - Various
Northwich - Sean & Sandy Boyle, Iain Bowley, Tony Howard, Rod McDermot, Paul Taylor

12 NEWSLETTER ADDRESSES:

EDITORIAL:

Nigel Firth,
3, Cromford Drive,
Pemberton,
Wigan,
WN5 8JU
Tel: Wigan 215621

ADVERTISING:

Bill Holden,
7, Sunleigh Road,
Hindley,
Wigan,
WN2 2RE
Tel: Wigan 58459

CLUB DATES:

Ian Wells,
62, Sidney Ave.,
Heaketh Bank,
Preston,
Tel: 077473 3267

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Pete Rimmer,
6, Burlington Road,
Southport,
Merseyside,
PR8 4RX
Tel: 0704 67852

Club Dates - May

	6th	13th	20th	27th	Tuesday	
	singers' night singers' night singers' night FIONA SIMPSON	singers' night singers' night singers' night	SONG CONTEST singers' night singers' night	GEOFF HIGGNSBOTTOM singers' night singers' night	HINDLEY BLACKPOOL CLAYTON ARMS MAWDESLEY	
	7th	14th	21st	28th	Wednesday	
	MARTIN CARTHY t.b.a. VIN GARBUTT PAUL METSERS guest t.b.a.	WOOD & FISHER ⁽³⁾ COE & COPPIN ⁽⁴⁾ MARTIN SIMPSON guest t.b.a. singers' night	EDDIE WALKER t.b.a. singers' night singers' night guest t.b.a.	RALPH McTELL SPECIAL ⁽⁷⁾ ALLAN TAYLOR guest t.b.a. singers' night	WHITEHAVEN HOW CROFT WHITE SWAN FOLK AT THE TUTE THE STAR OLD SHIP	
	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th	Thursday
	singers' night singers' night singers' night t.b.a. singers' night	singers' night singers' night singers' night t.b.a. singers' night	singers' night singers' night singers' night t.b.a. singers' night	singers' night singers' night singers' night t.b.a. singers' night	DARWEN POYNTON WIGAN MAGAZINE BUCK I' TH' VINE	
	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th	Friday
	singers' night SHEPHERD & BOWDEN singers' night	singers' night COE & ADAMS ⁽¹⁾ GILL BURNS FIONA SIMPSON	singers' night singers' night singers' night	singers' night guest t.b.a. DOUGIE MACLEAN ⁽⁵⁾ GARY & VERA ASPEY MARTIN WHITTAKER TOM TOPPING BAND	BEE NEWCASTLE NORTHWICH PORKIES CUT ABOVE	
	3rd	10th	17th	24th	31st	Saturday
	HARRY BOARDMAN	KNOWE O'DEIL BOYS OF THE LOUGH ⁽²⁾ BILBO BAGGINS BOB	KASHMIR	guest t.b.a. MOVING HEARTS ⁽⁶⁾	guest t.b.a. RALPH McTELL PYEWACKETT ⁽¹⁷⁾	BURY BREWERY SOUTHPORT POYNTON
	4th	11th	18th	25th		Sunday
	singers' night singers' night guest t.b.a. singers' night guest t.b.a. DENNY MACLEAN singers' night	singers' night PARLOUR TRICKS singers' night GARY & VERA ASPEY QUARE BUNGLE RYE PAUL METSERS guest t.b.a. singers' night	singers' night PEG LEG FERRET VIN GARBUTT BRYONY SHEP WOOLLEY guest t.b.a. guest t.b.a. guest t.b.a. singers' night	singers' night club closed singers' night BRAM TAYLOR BILL CADDICK guest t.b.a. guest t.b.a. singers' night	CROWN BOTHY EAGLE & CHILD LEIGH POYNTON RAINFORD RAVE ON WIONES LLANDUDNO	
	5th	12th	19th	26th		Monday
	singers' night VIN GARBUTT singeraround singers' night club closed	ROSIE HARDMAN singers' night singeraround singers' night THE SPINNERS	singers' night DAB HAND singeraround singers' night singeraround	singers' night singers' night singeraround singers' night club closed	HORWICH PRESTON POYNTON BREWERY THE TRITON	

Notes

1 - Sara Grey & Ellie Ellis - Bothy	10 - Newcastle - Vic Shepherd & John Bowden
2 - Rave On - Johnny Coppin & Phil Beer	11 - Newcastle - Chris Coe & John Adams
3 - Northwich - at The Wheatsheaf, Weaverham	12 - Boys Of The Lough on Wed. 7th - Derby Hall, Bury
4 - Eagle & Child - Graham & Eileen Pratt	13 - Whitehaven - Tim Wood & Wendy Fisher
5 - Triton - with Cosmotheke & Sam Sherry	14 - White Swan - Chris Coe & Johnny Coppin
6 - Southport Arts Centre - Paul Brady Monday 28th	15 - Northwich - at The Wheatsheaf, Weaverham
7 - Bothy - 21st Birthday - see publicity	16 - Southport - Moving Hearts provisional for Mon. 28th
8 - Rave On - Sam Stephens & Anne Lennox-Martin	17 - White Swan - Johnny Collins, Jim Mageean, Ian Woods and Cherley Yarwood
9 - White Swan - Clive Gregson & Christine Collister	18 - Pyewackett on Thurs. 29th - Southport Arts Centre

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from NW folk artistes
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**Folk
for
Food**

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Strawhead
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CHAIRMAN'S RANT by Ian Wells

Nigel Chippendale is dead. The vigorous 27 year old died in hospital on March 3rd and his funeral was a week later. Nigel, a multi-instrumentalist known for his work with The Hop and Eric, first went into hospital during last November with viral pneumonia. Surgery to remove fluid from round his heart showed a large tumour and he was started on a programme of radiation and chemo-therapy - itself a difficult and depressing process. He got out of hospital at the beginning of December, but went back in at the beginning of this year. Nigel will be greatly missed. The White Swan was doing a fundraiser for him, but this will now be the first event on behalf of the Nigel Chippendale Memorial fund. This fund will be used for instant help for professional performers and their families when problems come up. The people to contact are Anne Morris (061 881 8294) or Roger Watson (0273 698329). The fund is being properly set up with trustees and will ultimately issue records, books etc, and hold annual fundraisers in various parts of the country. The intention is to provide a very rapid response to help over the first couple of days. Club news is almost as depressing. Fleetwood closed abruptly at the end of February, although the folk/theatre piece, Onward!, definitely continues. The Old Ship in Southport has also retired hurt, but will be back for the Southport Summer Folk season. In Blackpool,

Mally Dow has turned the club into a singers club, cancelling all booked paid artists, following very poor attendances. To return to an old, old problem: money. Our new treasurer, Kath Holden, is banging out the invoices very promptly but not everyone is returning them with the cash owed. If you disagree about how much you owe, ring her and explain, but please don't just ignore it. We are trying to make sure she gets the correct information about who has had how many of each issue, but no-one is infallible. Thank you for paying your membership fees: now lets get the newsletter solvent. We hope to hold the AGM in May in the Merseyside Arts area. It will again be in the seminar format, with anyone welcome. Club organisers will be circulated with full details nearer the time.

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- TOMMY CHASE QUARTET - Thursday 22 May
- HUMPHREY LYTTTELTON - Friday 23 May
- RONNIE SCOTT - Saturday 24 May
- JAZZ COLLEGE "ALL STARS" - Friday 30 May
- BOBBY WELLIN/JIM MULLEN - Friday 6 June

BOX OFFICE
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 40011

MANX Folk Dancing

In 1928 the English Folk Dance Society decided to hold a vacation school in Douglas in the Isle of Man the following Easter (1929), and Mona Douglas, a collector of Manx Folk Music, was asked to give a lecture to the members of the school on Manx Music. It was not on dance, for at that time none of the people interested in folk dancing realised that there were any distinctive Manx Dances, though Morris and some English country dances were being taught in some schools.

Mona Douglas had at that time been working for a number of years on the collection and notation of dances as well as songs. She knew from what she had been able to gather piecemeal through description and step figure demonstration, mainly by elderly fishermen and farm workers, that there was actually a still living though almost defunct Manx Folk Dance tradition. This had been sternly repressed for at least two generations by a rather puritanical Methodism, and at least some of the dances were remembered as "games".

Mona Douglas had been reared (and therefore stimulated) by her maternal grandmother who had been taught to dance as a child by her father, a well known singer and dancer. It was from her that Mona learnt many of the steps and figures as well as the characteristic arm extension of the Manx Dances and later she was given great-grandfather Quayle's precious MS book where others had been noted. He was born in 1824 and died in 1900.

Mona Douglas decided to give the E.F.D.S school a surprise by getting a team of school children to demonstrate some Manx dances as an illustration to her lecture. She met Leighton Stowell at Albert Road School in Ramsey who was at that time teaching Morris Dancing.

This was the beginning of a long and fruitful collaboration which was to prove the start of the Manx Folk Dance revival, and later the Manx Folk Dance Society.

The dancing of this team soon became

popular, and they were followed by other school groups and a few adults who practised the dances in order to teach them to children. But these groups were regarded as entertainers for concerts and so on, and the dances themselves as museum exhibits. In the last twenty years, however, this prevailing attitude has altered, Manx traditional music and dancing has become part of the curriculum in our schools and both traditional and modern instruments played under school tuition. There are also an ever increasing number of adult groups, mainly of young people, who are practising and performing Manx Dances all over the Island, inviting and gaining community participation, and taking them to folk festivals in other countries.

The Manx dance revival is not confining itself to dances already noted for as all living art must, it is becoming creative. From the very start of the revival, Leighton Stowell composed dances in the Manx tradition, and by slow degrees the dancers of today are beginning to create new dances. The distinctive character of Manx traditional dancing is now well established and recognised internationally.

Malcolm Hannan.

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RECORD REVIEWS

SANDY DENNY "Who knows where the time goes" Island SDSP 100

Was Sandy Denny the best female singer and writer these islands have produced? This boxed set of four, chock full of her best and unreleased gems, surely goes ninety percent of the way to answering that question. There is no doubt, this is superb, and in the short space I have here, I cannot do it justice.

All I really need to tell you is that uncovered Fairport from their "Liege & Lief" sessions is mixed alongside forgotten Fotheringay, and you get some idea of the relevance of this release to an electric folkie like me. Pats on the back all round, here at last is a fitting tribute to Sandy Denny's short but significant career. Put together by her husband Trevor Lucas and Fairport producer Joe Boyd, you couldn't have more sensitive yet sensible handling.

Really I have only one small niggle, and that is the literature while resplendent in superb photos, gave no biographical details of Sandy at all. Anyone coming to this new, will be left cold as to what she was like in life. But then again, maybe they won't, for if any release ever had character, then this does. It oozes a warm, friendly self assurance, which you want to sit down and listen to.

She once wrote a tune included here, "It'll take a long, long time"; it has, but "Who knows where the time goes" is worth every penny of the sixteen notes you'll have to part with. Beautiful and timeless, it is already my album of the year.

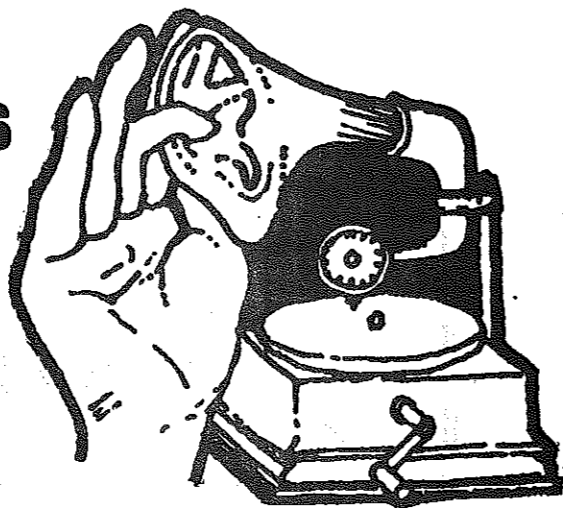
Simon Jones

JEZ LOWE
'GALLOWAYS'

Fellside FE 049

Jez Lowe has the sort of talent that must be the envy of many of the folk world's singer-songwriters. Not only does he write smashing songs but he can perform them with an equal panache. It is to my great chagrin that I have yet to see him at a live performance - I always seem to be somewhere else when he's locally!

20



This is a varied showcase of his songs and although the album title is taken from one of them, I actually liked 'The Galloway Lad' best of all. The Galloways, by the way, were the pit-ponies of the old coal mining days.

The songs are full of 20th century social comment on the well tried themes of lost youth and loves and the changes to communities that "progress" has wrought on them. The lines in 'Shipper-sea Bay' which is about the death of a fishing village say it all.

'But when you hear the old mens stories
They'll frighten you white with worry
But only believe what you see,
not what people say.....'

'The Honest Working Way' is another leaving the shores of England - type song but totally different and original in its execution. It is in this way that Jez can exploit the hackneyed themes and still give us fresh insights into them with intelligently written lyrics and eminently 'listenable to' tunes. His chorus songs are filled with the voices of Anne Marie Flanagan, Gerry Hallom and Jake Walton and his multifarious instrumental talents are shown to good effect by subtle multi-tracking by Paul Adams who always seems to get the right balance between singer and accompaniment in his productions. A super record - buy it - now!

DEREK GIFFORD.

RECORDREVIEWSRECORDREVIEWSRECO

GIN AND ALE AND WHISKEY
Collected by Nick and Mally Dow

This collection of songs from Dorset was made in Beaminster and Charminster during 1984-5. Most of them are from the singing of Bill House. When the Hammond brothers visited Beaminster in 1906, they collected songs from 14 singers and Bill's father, George, was one of them. Bill sings 15 songs and among the most interesting are "One night as I lay on my bed" and "Once to the line". For the complex history of the previous collected and published versions of the former, you need to read Nick and Mally's careful notes. The latter fragment is a version of "13 pence a day", previously known only as a broadsheet. Some well known songs in his repertoire are "The Life of a Man", "A Nutting We Will Go", and "The Man You Meet Every Day", not to mention a version of "The German Clockmender".

There is one song from Norman Grey, also of Beaminster, and a short extract from the melodeon playing of Fred Chubb of Charminster. These are all field recordings of fairly elderly performers and no-one is going to play the cassette for performance quality. It is of genuine interest to anyone conscious of the real roots of our music: reviewers normally restrict themselves to the polished performances of quality voices and instrumentalists. It is good to be reminded that these beautiful flowers grow out of agricultural mud and industrial grime. I look forward to seeing the book on the Dorset collecting and, even more, to the results of Nick and Mally's current work in the Fylde, due out before you read this.
Ian Wells

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Richard Grainger; HERBS ON THE HEART; Fellside FE038.

1. Whitby Whaler; Princess to a Beggarmen; Death of Nelson; Weaver & the Factory Maid; The Isles of Shetland.

2. Teeside & Yorkshire; Faithful Sailor Boy; Everytime; Willie O'Reilly; Days at an End.

Richard Grainger is another of the many folk artists who have emerged from the North East, and as a singer/songwriter he is inevitably compared to Graeme Miles or Jez Lowe. This could be to his disadvantage. His voice is good, but not as attractive as Jez Lowe, on the basis of this sample of his writing, he writes adequately rather than outstandingly.

Since this is on Fellside, and engineered by Paul Adams, the technical quality is excellent. Indeed, Paul and Linda are among the backing musicians, as are other members of The Red Hot Polka Band. The arrangements are all appropriate and well performed. So why am I underwhelmed by this record? For whatever reason, there is nothing that grabs me, nothing comes off the vinyl or out of the speakers that demands to be heard. At this point, I wondered if I was being unfair, so I turned off the PC and put the record on again. Back at the keyboard, I think I've identified the major problem.

Richard's singing style is just a little too laidback, marginally too slow and even. More variation in tempi, and even some rubato occasionally, would give more liveliness and a greater impression of vigour. Another negative element is the 'retrospective contemporary' nature of some of the self-penned songs. This style has to be very well written indeed to be successful.

However, there is nothing positively wrong with the record and I may be being unfair to an artist that I have never heard live.

ISW

Stanley Accrington: A Game Of Two Halves.

Side 2 of this cassette only release is well up to Stan's standard, which means that it is, by turns, sharp, witty, incisive and as funny as anything you're likely to hear this year.

Side 1 isn't up to his usual standard at all. It's up to Richard Thompson Thompson's, or Eric Bogle's. In other words, to use the footballing analogies he loves so much, he has rolled up his sleeves, given 110%, put his back to the wall and pulled out the big one, Brian. And no-one is further over the moon than I, because, during a laudatory review of his second cassette in these very pages, your correspondent suggested that he might profitably devote an entire cassette to matters of moment. I should be monstrously arrogant to suggest cause and effect and would not dream of doing so, had Stan himself not acknowledged that it was *een so*.

Enough! This cassette sees Stanley being true to himself and his art, and bidding fair to join the elite

This nation has been plagued enough with bland, ego-preening candidates for pseudos corner posing as writers - a certain percentage may still be blind but the king is no longer one-eyed. Roll over Allan Taylor (and tell Rosie Hardman the news).

Bernie Forkin.

small ads

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RECORDREVIEWSRECORDREVIEWSRECO

The Birds of Rhiannon FE046 Rhiannon are a Sheffield based semi-electric five-piece band who play entirely traditional material. As well as listening to this record I went to see them at the Eagle & Child. Does my good impression of them from Fylde festival still stand?

First, the good news: in Linda Hurcombe they have a superb lead singer, with a pure, high voice. Stella Davies plays a mean whistle. Michael Thorpe is a competent alternate lead singer who plays a range of guitars and mandolins. The rhythm section consists of bass guitarist Myke Barritt (whose performing style is as extrovertly idiosyncratic as the spelling of his forename) and multi-keyboard and guitarist Craig Booker. On record, the most effective tracks are those where Linda's voice is featured (especially 'The Maid of Coolmoor') while the least effective are the tune sets. On several tracks she doubles Michaels's voice an octave above, an arrangement that is difficult to sustain well and could get boring if less well handled. I found some of the arrangements a little laboured with too long instrumental insertions into the songs. The tune sets seemed rather more derivative than the songs and some of the joins creaked. On record they seem to have lost the raw edge I admired at Fylde. After my recent criticisms of some of Paul Adams' productions, I'm happy to say that this is almost back to his previous very high standard. My only reservation is that he has not quite captured the quality of Linda's voice. Do they hold their recorded standard in live performance? Yes and no. At the Eagle & Child, their programme was based very closely on the record. The first half was marred by a balance in favour of the separate bass and synth speakers rather than the mikes for voices, whistles and lead guitar. (The front mikes were held down by feedback problems.) This was corrected for the second half and Linda's voice given full rein. They

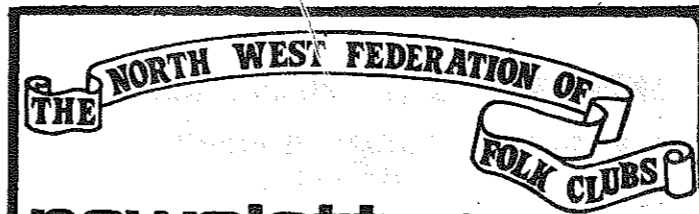
did seem to be enjoying themselves. In the long term, they need to rethink their arrangements to favour the meaning of the songs rather than flash playing. In the medium term they should expand their repertoire. In the short term, there is only one thing to say: keep it up!
Ian Wells

RORY McLEOD "Angry Love"
Sounds Forward. 004

Terrible cover, super album. Rory McLeod is basically a busker who has found great favour on the folk scene, and it isn't hard to see why. This is chock full of some of the wittiest social comment writing I've heard. With titles like "Stop the Apartheid Fascists", you'll be close if you guess it's political in places. However, as is the trick with all good music with a point, it is so melodic and singalong, you don't realise he's making a political point until you find yourself singing the catchy tunes.

Very subtle, with more than a touch of the calypso about it. My favourite was "The wind is getting stronger", because it's a song about an old lady and how she views modern Britain; it reminded me of my own recently departed Gran. Stirring stuff, buy it. Buskers revival starts here!

Simon Jones



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RECORDREVIEWSRECORDREVIEWSRECO

BRIAN PETERS Fellside FEO51
'Persistence of Memory'

Brian Peters is well known to North-West folkies being based in Glossop and therefore making frequent sorties into the area. This is his first album and illustrates the professionalism in his work. Brian is a talented musician playing Anglo-concertina, Melodeon, guitar, hammered dulcimer, and Appalachian dulcimer (which accounts for much of the multi-tracking!) and has employed the services of the equally talented Steve Wilson, Bridget MacGregor (Mrs. Wilson!), Sean Healey and Russell Clegg to back him and thereby enhance many of the tracks.

His singing reminds me of a cross between Bert Lloyd and Harry Boardman the latter of whom has obviously been a great influence in his choice of material. Although not as tonally rounded as many other singers his voice is well suited to the type of songs he performs.

He kicks off with a rousing rendition of 'The Miners' Lockout' which was originally a broadside as also is the amusing 'Bring The Sea To Manchester' which I liked particularly the takes a diversion in style with 'No Dough Blues' which again proves Roger Watson's premise that the Melodian is really a frustrated Blues instrument! I liked too his arrangement of miserable Pete Coe's miserable song of his home town Northwich, 'Farewell to the Brine' in which Bridget is let loose on the piano (I still think her harmonium would have sounded better)

There are only 10 tracks on this album which when compared quantitatively with other albums is short on measure but the low number of songs reflects their length and complexity notably 'Larkin' and 'The Demon Lover.' Amongst the 10 tracks are 4 tunes which are certainly new to me.

The sleeve notes are comprehensively penned by Brian complementing a competent and well produced first record which will stand playings over the next few months.

DEREK GIFFORD.

THE WATERSONS "Bright Phoebus"
Trailer (Topic Reissue)

Here's a long-departed rave from the grave back for another try. When first released I understand it caused quite a stir, something like "Trad. family go all rock". Well it isn't quite that, but these are certainly contemporary songs, rather than the more traditional fare the Watersons are better known for.

It's also true that it features most of the burgeoning Folk rock scene of the time. The sleeve reads like a "Who's who" of Fairport/Steeleye/Albion. It is strange that some fourteen years on the Watersons have made yet another move guaranteed to win them acceptance, by hanging around with Billy Bragg and the like and singing at alternate rock venues. "Bright Phoebus" now sounds strange and a little dated to my cloth like ears, still it is a timely and welcome reissue. No doubt the Watersons' groupies will swallow it wholesale.

Simon Jones

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