

Mosh D

THE NORTH WEST FEDERATION OF FOLK CLUBS



DEC 86

JAN 87

# Newsletter

35p

# Page 2 Comment:

Just when you thought it was safe to open the mag again, you find I'm still in charge. Ain't life hard!

What's worse is we're asking you to pay extra for the privilege (?) of perusing these pages. Reason mainly being increased printing, distribution and postage rates which we've done our best to absorb. Even now, it's barely covering it's production costs. So, please bear with us - it's still good value and still cheaper than it's nearest rival. Thankyou.

So now you've bought it, what's in it? Well, there's all the usual features plus Simon Jones' report on his Canadian Field Trip; A masterly exhibition of defensive batting from Ian Wells against some hostile bowling from Dave Day, who's asked all those unpleasant questions we were

hoping nobody would ask in his "Whither Fed" article. So, with all that, plus the Kendal punters and organisers having the best of three falls as well, there's precious little Christmas Spirit about.

In which case, I might as well add my twopenn'orth. Nobody, not one of you organisers, had their dates to Phil, Ian or me by the advertised deadline. So buck up!

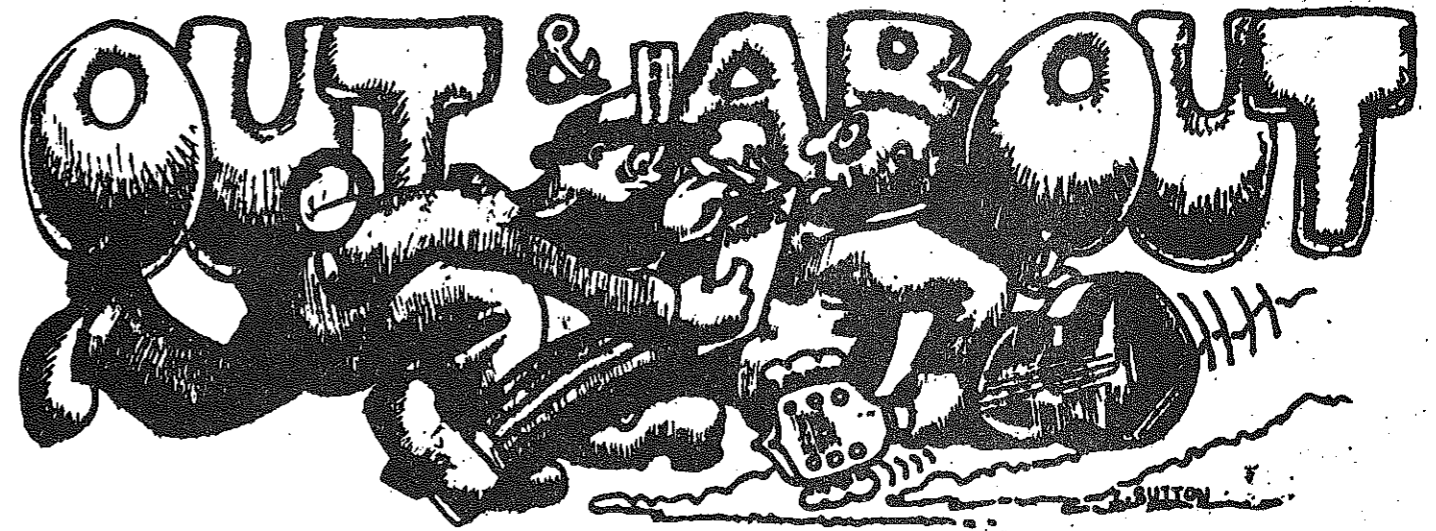
And A Merry Christmas to you too!

This diatribe could not have appeared without the help of: Margaret Marsden; Mick Burrows and Angela Forkin for typing; Irene Allen for the cover; Phil Capper for the calender and Ian Wells for distribution.

Thank you all for your support. Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year!



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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 one actually have a folk music programme. Write at once the their respective Programme Controllers and protest. It is only by constant pressure that we may eventually get a programme of our own.

On Saturday, December 13th commencing at 8pm. The Albion Band Christmas Show is at Southport Arts Centre for the third successive year. Tickets are £3.50.

To start, a quick word of congratulation to Fellside Records who celebrated their 10th Anniversary a few weeks ago.

Podium, a multi-clutural organisation based in Belgium, include the promotion of "Roots Music" amongst their activities. They would like to hear from artists who would like to be brought to the attention of their members, who include festival organisers. If you're interested, contact R. Reynaert, Podium, D. Dehaene-laan 18A, B-8480 Veurne, Belgium.

The 1987 Edinburgh Folk Festival will be held from Friday April 10th to Sunday April 19th, the latter being Easter Sunday.

"Since Time Immoral" - The Kipper Family Songbook has been published by the English Folk Dance and Song Society and is available (price £4.50) from The Folk Shop, Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regents Park Road, London, NW1 7AY.

Sound Management And Promotions has recently moved. Any club wanting to book singer/songwriter Mike Silver should phine Dave Tong

Mike Silver should phone Dave Tong on Richmond (0748) 832447.

John Barrow has now become the UK agent for "The Easy Club" and is trying to arrange a tour for them during late February/early March 1987. He is also interested to hear from Festival Organisers interested in booking The Easy Club or Dick Gaughan for 1987 (or 1988). You can contact John for further information on 031-443-5947.

Dance enthusiasts may be interested in the following events. February 20th-22nd sees the Lancashire Wallowers' Clog Weekend at Wellfield High School, Yewlands Drive, Leyland. For details telephone Melanie Barber (0772) 742690. Also a series of Folk North West Dance Workshops are being held at Samlesbury Memorial Hall near Preston on Dec. 14th, Jan. 18th, Feb. 1st & 22nd and March 8th & 22nd. Details Geoff Thomas (0257) 791323.

BBC Radio have a couple of folk based childrens music programmes during term time. "The Music Box" with Sandra Kerr and guests is on Radio 4 VHF/FM Mondays from 10.40-11.50am. And Hilary Jones and Simon Mayer, with Pyewackett, present The Song Tree, Thursdays 2.05-2.20pm.

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

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



Some good news!  
The Federation can welcome two new members.

One is The North-West Pioneer Co-Op Rochdale Heritage Folk Club who meet at the Spread-Eagle, Cheetham Street, Rochdale. They claim to be collectively a committed audience (though they don't say what they should be committed to) and, more to the point, have procured themselves a grant off North West Arts. All those who want to know how they swung that one should form an orderly queue behind me. The organiser is Elizabeth Andrews. See dates section and addresses page for other details.

Our other new member has a less unweildy handle, calling themselves Folk At The Nest. Organised by Steve Chatterly and featuring Northern Comfort and Phil Clayton as residents, they meet at the Allison Arms, Coppull. See date sheet etc., for further info.

Good Luck to both of you!

The Darwen Club now has a new organiser, namely Jean Molloy. Any enquiries should be directed to her on 0706 220611.

The Newcastle Folk Club has changed it's name and location. It is now The Potteries Folk Song Club and is situated at The Crown and Anchor, Tower Square, Tunstall. All other details remain the same.

## CLUB OF THE MONTH: EAGLE & CHILD, BILLINGE

Three and a half years ago the long established Travellers Rest Folk Club in St. Helens packed it's bags and began two years of peripatetic wanderings, firstly to the George and Dragon, then to NALGO and finally, 21 months ago, the landlady of the Brid and Babby opened her doors to us and so was born the best club in the North West - if not Britain (he said modestly!).

Working on a basic format of a guest night alternating with a singers night, our organiser - the Blessed Bernie - has somehow managed to ensure that we have a nucleus of 40 or so people who are regular regulars and a similar number who are regulars, thus enabling him to book guests up to 12 months in advance. And what a guest list it is too, in 1986 we have had Whippersnapper, Jake Thackery, Pyewackett, Maxie & Mitch, Vin Garbutt, Cosmotheke etc., as well as local artists such as Geoff Higginbottom, Gentleman Soldier et al. Having 3 resident groups of differing styles means that we are usually able to contrast with any of our guests and hopefully give a well balanced night to our audiences.

Singers nights regularly fill the room to capacity and 14 different acts for 50pence is not uncommon. We really are lucky in that so many of our loyal supporters are very talented as well so that the resident bands of Caught On The Hop, Bric-a-Brac and Quartz can share the stage with poets, virtuoso guitarists, operatic tenors and Carol ("songs to slit your throat by") when she is not forcibly extracting money from your pockets at the door. Carol, by the way, started her singing in the summer sing-arounds. These informal sessions replace guest nights and singers nights during the school summer holiday period and have been enthusiastically supported at all times, 60 plus people not being uncommon, and it is in this relaxed atmosphere that several

talents have flourished. I recommend sing-arounds to all clubs, not only from the undiscovered talent point of view but also because it helps people maintain the habit of coming to the club.

It is a cry often heard in the folk world that we keep our music in our clubs; this the Eagle and Child can't be accused of. On at least seven occasions this year we have gone out to sample beer and at the same time to sing to the locals. These trips have been to the Lake District, the Yorkshire Dales and to Scarborough. On our last weekend, to Ribbleshead, which was open to anyone who fancied coming along, the party was made up of 55 adults and 11 children - not bad numbers by any stretch of the imagination. These weekends help in no small way to generate the super atmosphere which people often comment upon when visiting the Eagle - there is no 'them and us' when you are trying to shove a caravan out of 12 inches of mud, or fold up a soggy tent, we are all in it together. Let us hope we can keep it that way.

Upcoming for '87 are:- The McCalmans, Oyster Band, Martin Simpson & June Tabor, Easy Club, Kipper Family and Simon Nicol & Ric Sanders. Plus the 2nd Billinge Folk Day (AAAARGH!)

Pete Gleave.

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# FOLK: CANADIAN STYLE

## COLONIAL ROOTS

The newsletter goes west to the land of maple syrup and the Rockies. Blazing the pioneer trail in a covered wagon, Simon Jones.

"This is Portage Avenue, you can get anywhere in the city off this road" smiles Theresa, a Canadian nurse I first met on board a cross channel ferry. Now she was giving me a guided tour of her home city, Winnipeg. The glass, concrete and steel that rose out of the Manitoba plains had the air of an overgrown cowboy town. Winnipeg it was that was to give me my first encounter with the Cannuck folk scene.

The offices of the Winnipeg Folk festival were just off Portage on Osborne Street South. Mounting a couple of flights the oak door bore the organisation's name in bold black and white. It was here I'd arranged to meet one Rosalie Goldstein the director of the festival and a real live wire.

"God" she exclaims as she arrives, "look at the time, you'll have to come with me to the Sun, you ever been to a Canadian newspaper before?"

I hadn't and as the day unfolded so did Rosalie's tale. A native New Yorker, she'd been working at the Winnipeg offices for a number of years and had gradually risen to her present pinnacle. This introduces neatly the first of several vast chasms between the two folk scenes. In Canada, each city has it's own folk festival. So? Well each is a fulltime outfit which employs six or seven people, working all year round in a variety of ways to promote folk music. Imagine that over here. The nearest I suppose is the EFDSS, but over there each major city has one of these, attracting funding that we only dream about - but I digress.

Rosalie's cohorts, to help balance the books, run a folk shop with records, instruments, books and music, as well stocked as, say, Collet's in London, which served as the only folk reference point for hundreds of miles.

"We get people from all over coming here for folk records etc. The fact they keep coming back must mean we're doing our job right" she reckons.

But, at present the Winnipeg Folk festival is in debt. A debt that would cause most British organisers to slit their wrists. A mere \$170,000, that's roughly £80,000 but are Rosalie and troops daunted? Nope. Cocky as you please, her talk is all of expansion and promoting the festival to run over a whole week next year, not just three days. The papers which serve the Winnipeg population of several hundred thousand are running free ads which plead for every red cent people can cough up. The radio stations are doing the same, and the reason for this massive figure was, would you believe, it rained.

"We expect about 40,000 people to turn up to the festival and this year the heavens opened" she says, "and we only got half that". Still a figure unheard of on our circuit and more than most Division One clubs as well. Why such numbers?

"You have to remember that Winnipeg is one of the biggest folk festivals in the whole of North America, and one of the best. People book their holidays to come to our event and while they're down were they can take in Vancouver and any smaller festival in between."

The festival site is stupefying. It's set in a National Park about forty minutes outside the city. It's ninety acres in size and for the festival it gets turned into a city of tents, with electricity, water, and all mod cons imported. There's a plethora of stages and workshop tents. The rent for the site is nothing, the Parks' authority are pleased to let it for community use. They've put in power supply points, cleared ground, and installed tarmac paths so that festival goers don't have too hard

a time of it. "They come in tents, cars, caravans and recreation vehicles. People generally don't go to bed much during the festival. They sit up all night round the fires singing and talking."

It's on a scale beyond the Albion experience, but when I mention that in England most festivals have now come indoors to comfy arts centre venues, Rosalie looks aghast. "Where would we put all that lot?" she enquires. She has a point. But all this camp fire bonhomie reminds me too much of Woodstock and aging hippies. Here at least the Brits have progressed beyond the time warp. Rain no longer threatens the vast majority of our folk gatherings. [WHAAAT? Ed]. But back to the debt. On the final visit of the hectic day we call at the Winnipeg Foundation which looks to me like a bank. It's not far out.

"We're a fund of charitable monies donated by Winnipeg for help with community events," says director Alan Howison, with his still visible English accent before launching into Foundation history. What it amounts to is that people with a bit of spare cash leave money to the Foundation, who invest it and generally come up with mammoth profits. They use the money for projects that which forward the lot of the residents. Their assets are considerable, since 1971 their total lay out has been £2.5 million. Rosalie is here to see what they can do about the outstanding cash. Howison smiles, gives us coffee, and asks for a structured plan of how the Festival intend to work off the debt. They'll get something, he isn't committing himself how much, but Rosalie seems pleased.

Vancouver do things differently. In their early years they relied a lot on on ties with other festivals such as Winnipeg, but these days, in their ninth year as a full time operation, they actually employ more people. Brent Gibson, from their staff: "Our capacity is about 25,000 and we hold the festival in a large park down on Jericho Beach. To fund ourselves we run a record mail order centre." For that read Celtic Music, except a little bigger.

On the day I call by they're having a sale of what the Canadians refer to as "record albums." It's a day when they clear all the back stock

that has accumulated over the past months. The place is heaving. Dollars, cheques, and plastic credit cards are being waved like mad. "We're kinda busy", sweats a girl on the cash till. The Festival Records catalogue 50 pages thick has one or two familiar labels, Flying Fish, and Kicking Mule, but the vast majority are unfamiliar Canadian and American labels demonstrating a wide selection of music unheard over this side of the pond. The Festival also has its own label, Aural Tradition, which issues country, political and folk music. Their own third festival being captured in vinyl as ATR 102 illustrates the two points which further show the difference between us and our colonial cousins. The sheer range of music which gets presented is mind boggling. As wide as our definition is, their's needs a bridge to span it. Take a glance at the programme, more like a magazine, then you get some idea. Here goes: blues, country, ragtime, celtic, feminist, Indian, Andean, Ethnic French, Finnish, gospel, rock, cajun, rhythm and blues ..... This isn't so much a folk festival as a total music experience. Names familiar to us included Stefan Grossman, John Renbourn, and celtic harpists, Sileas.

Why such a mindboggling variety? Brent: "You have to remember that while we're all Canadians, we have a variety of ethnic backgrounds and that's reflected here. Also we just don't like one folk music, we love it all, and want to bring it to people's attention if we can, so we make a policy of getting as many foreign acts to come as possible." And the political function, all the women's music? We don't get that concentration back home, where much of the folk scene seems scared to admit it's left wing origins and is only now beginning to shake off over-conservatism with the likes of Billy Bragg and Dick Gaughan putting some fire back into the songs.

"That's a shame", Brent concedes, "folk music sprang from working class roots in many cases and is still the only music which champions the common man. We still hold to the left beliefs of the music and so the edge is bound to come out in our booking policy. Linked to that is the number of feminist performers. We go out of the way to book at least 50/50, and you're going to get a wide variation of styles if you book that ratio of men to women."

Are all their Folk Societies as enterprising? Surely somewhere, I thought, there must be a club like those back home run on a shoe string, had awful floor singers who you felt embarrassed for, an organiser who didn't give a toss about who he booked, in a drafty back room bar. Well, Victoria Folk Song Society looked a good bet. They put on concerts in a pub. Victoria, ideally situated on an island a couple of hours east of Vancouver, revels in it's Britishness. There's Union Jacks everywhere. You can ride in red buses, drink tea at three, and walk along the prom. It made me quite homesick. Surely here I could find a folk club. But no, the Vics were twice as efficient as I expected. Their funds were drawn partly from the Victoria Folk Centre, an instrument shop and repair service which published it's own small but superb little newsletter.

"Simon, we don't have folk clubs like those back home, and things seem far looser out here, folk are prepared to take a chance" says Steve Edge, ex of Newcastle under Lyme, and now folk DJ on CITR Vancouver. How many does the show reach, Steve? "Well, it's only a small station, so we get about 55,000 listeners." And how did he come to be doing a folk show, all those miles from Stoke on Trent? "Well, I was after a show with the station, but the only vacancy was for the folk slot. I knew bugger

all about folk music. I had the first Pogues album, Richard Thompson's 'Shoot Out the Lights' and the first Spirit of the West

album, so I did the show with just that." Steve hasn't looked back since. He's also eager to learn and listen, and to broadcast. "Any bands who want stuff played over here tell them to send tapes, records, whatever, I'll play it." Okay bands, send him your stuff.

"There's so much potential that no one gets to hear back in England. I'd like to see British festival organisers taking a chance on booking Canadian folk acts like we book the British."

Well, there's hope yet. Spirit of the West have been booked by Robin Morton for Edinburgh 1987 and if present plans come off then they will also give those of us in the north west a chance to hear some Cannuck roots.

The potential is there, waiting to be tapped. What's for sure is the folk in Canada have a healthy roots scene which is varied and rich. They have no regular body like the EFDSS to preserve their musics, they all work in a network of co-operation and you'll find the officials from each festival at one another's events, co-operating to bring about a tour for visiting artists. Donovan was pulling them in during the time I was there, and closed the Saturday night at the Edmonton festival.

The Canadians do have two things which, sadly, are often lacking in our own folk circuit.

Professionalism and commitment. I sat down on a chair and reflected about all that I'd seen and heard, I'm still reflecting. When I've reached some conclusions I'll let you know. Have a nice day now.

Thanks to: Rosalie Goldstein, Steve Edge, Brent Gibson, and the girls at Winnipeg for the coffee and donuts.

These people are waiting to hear from you:  
 Winnipeg Folk Festival, 8-222 Osborne St. South, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3L 1Z3  
 Vancouver Folk Festival, 3271, Main Street, Vancouver, V5V3M6  
 Victoria Folklore Centre, 539, Pandora Street, Victoria, BC V8W 1N5  
 Steve Edge, 203-170 East 5th Street, North Vancouver, BC, V7L 4L4  
 Next: the artists, the records, and the music.

# Man makes plans and God laughs.

OLD SAYING



This year we got rained on for 3-1/2 days... last year it was a two day downpour. We are now faced with an accumulated deficit of \$170,000. That's pretty scary. The Winnipeg Folk Festival belongs to you; it's a big part of our culture, it's fun and

it's great entertainment. Please help keep the Festival alive by sending your tax-deductible contribution. And please, send it today!

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## HINDLEY FOLK CLUB

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- DEC 2<sup>nd</sup> — REDMAYNE
- 9<sup>th</sup> — singer's night
- 16<sup>th</sup> — KNOWE O' THE DE'IL
- 23<sup>rd</sup> — closed
- 30<sup>th</sup> — closed
- JAN 6<sup>th</sup> — singer's night
- 13<sup>th</sup> — STEVE TURNER
- 20<sup>th</sup> — singer's night
- 27<sup>th</sup> — DEREK GIFFORD
- FEB 3<sup>rd</sup> — singer's night
- 10<sup>th</sup> — singer's night
- 17<sup>th</sup> — RICHARD GRANGER
- 24<sup>th</sup> — singer's night

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## EAGLE & CHILD FOLK CLUB

- DEC 7<sup>th</sup> — NIC DOW
- 14<sup>th</sup> — CHRISTMAS SINGERS NIGHT
- 21<sup>st</sup> — CHRISTMAS PARTY COSMOTHEKA
- JAN 4<sup>th</sup> — SINGERS NIGHT
- 11<sup>th</sup> — THE McCALMANS (TBC)
- 18<sup>th</sup> — SINGERS NIGHT
- 25<sup>th</sup> — HOBSON & LEES
- FEB 1<sup>st</sup> — SINGERS NIGHT
- 8<sup>th</sup> — BRYONY
- 15<sup>th</sup> — SINGERS NIGHT
- 22<sup>nd</sup> — OYSTER BAND
- RESIDENTS: — BRIC-A-BRAC  
 CAUGHT ON THE HOP  
 QUARTZ

# Kendal Folk Festival

Friday 22nd August 1986 heralded the start of our first visit to Kendal Folk Festival. First impressions, goes the cliché, mean a lot, unfortunately these were not good.

The semi-official campsite is a large, commercial site containing every facility, including bar, but this is reflected in the fees, and with a minimum booking of 3 nights at Bank Holidays, the cost of 19 for 2 adults and 2 children cleaned us out before we actually reached the festival proper. A free mini-bus service was available between campsite and Arts Centre, and this was available at all popular times, so on we hopped for the Friday evening session.

We purchased 2 weekend 'discount tickets' which were not the cheapest ever encountered - especially considering these don't cover camp fees - and we were astounded when asked full price for our 7 yr-old daughter's ticket. The Festival publicity said children were free of charge, (it didn't say when a child became an adult), but after a little reasoning she was let in free, on condition she didn't occupy a seat. Once into the Arts Centre, we were very impressed with it but less impressed with the event programme. Friday evening's choice was a concert or a ceilidh, but we fancied a sing. The advance publicity had led us to believe that sing-arounds would abound. However it became apparent that the only singing space available for the weekend was on the stairs landing and in the studio on the top floor. These were do it yourself affairs, and even these weren't available on Friday. We didn't fancy dancing, so we made for the concert in the Malt Room. Even considering that we weren't in the mood for a concert we still found it very disappointing. Only John Kirkpatrick & Sue Harris and Sileas did anything at all for us, and the noise from the bar area and audience in general made listening difficult.

Indeed only Sileas gained any respect at all from the audience.

On Saturday we awoke to a sunny morning and spent a few hours walking about and watching the dance displays in the best of this summer's sunshine. Again there were no organised sing-arounds or sessions so it looked like another afternoon in the concert. Margaret particularly wanted to see Dab Hand, and I wanted to see June Tabor & Martin Simpson so neither of us were disappointed. Dab Hand explored every corner of the entertainment envelope, they bombarded the appreciative audience with a raucous set of racy reels, hypnotised with slow multi-harmonised airs, songs and ballads, and amused with wit and anecdotes. The audience would not let them go at the end of an excellent set. A similarly superb, and nowadays all too rare, set by June Tabor & Martin Simpson, had the appreciative majority of the audience spell-bound, however by this stage of the afternoon the noise level had once again begun to rise, detracting from an otherwise perfectly precise and skilful partnership.

We had a look around the gallery area in search of a sing-around only to find a self appointed resident 'pop group'; and after several unsuccessful attempts to interject with a folk song we retired for tea.

We decided in advance to try the singers night on Saturday evening, we might even get a chance to sing! Arriving at the centre at 7.30pm we were an hour early for the singers night so we thought we'd give the concert a try. This was just beginning, so we were very surprised when we were told that the event was full and no more 'Weekend Tickets' were allowed in. Slightly annoyed by this attitude to weekend ticket holders, we whiled away an hour in the bar and then went to the singers night. This took the form of 3 guest spots, interspersed by 2 singer spots.

The format worked reasonably well, but with 3 half hour guest spots there was only sufficient time for 4 singer slots, each of about 10 minutes duration, all of which had been 'booked' in advance - so we still didn't get a sing and retired at night still rather disappointed.

On Sunday morning, had we not felt that now we'd spent up we'd try to make the best of it, we would probably have gone away very disgruntled. Fortunately we stayed and Sunday was a good day. The afternoon concert saw excellent acts by the eccentric Stanley Accrington and the brilliant Dab Hand. A songwriting workshop by Dave Goulder had been so successful on Saturday that it was repeated on Sunday, but was rather thinly attended though excellently presented. The 'pop group' were still dominating the gallery area late Sunday afternoon, but by this stage frustration had led various singers to forcefully interject into their sets and a sing-around of sorts had developed - we got a sing at last - what a good afternoon we'd had.

The Comedy & Brass event was to be our objective on Sunday Evening, and with the Great Franco introducing Stanley Accrington and Loose Chippings a great night was in store, and so it proved. The Great Franco, the folk version of Tommy Cooper, blended neatly into the thoroughly hilarious evening with Stanley Accrington and Loose Chippings, leaving not a dry leg in the house.

The Finale was held on Bowling Fell. A torchlit procession left the Arts Centre at 11.30pm for an artistic Presentation of 'Burning Times', written by Roy Bailey, which utilised huge puppets and masks, static and mobile firework displays and was set to a backing of witches chants. It lasted about half an hour and, although brief, was a spectacular and suitable finale.

We have tried to be as unbiased as possible in this review, it is, however, tainted by our dislikes and preferences (though other people and friends expressed similar views.) One particular aspect in which

Kendal Festival excels, however, is in the area of child care. Our children were well looked after by a dedicated band of helpers and entertainers and enjoyed every session, lasting until 11.30 each night.

In conclusion we can only say that, for us, this was one of the least enjoyable festivals we have attended, mainly due to the lack of sing-arounds. We would hope for a re-thinking of the mechanics and pricing of weekend tickets or alternatively we would buy event tickets in preference.

Alan & Margaret Marsden.

Dear Editor,

I have been invited by Alan Marsden to reply to the review of the Kendal Festival which he and Margaret Marsden submitted to your magazine, and I am pleased to do so. Not to beat about the bush, the review is so full of inaccuracies and prejudice that to answer it point by point would half fill the magazine. I hope the following general remarks cover most of the points raised.

1) Cost of tickets: If you scan the list of guests and work out what the bill for fees, expenses and accommodation comes to, then add in the cost of the extras - all free to festival goers - and publicity, you would see that the Festival would operate at a loss were it not for the generosity of our sponsors. (Complaining about the cost after you have bought something sounds like wanting to have your cake and eat it)

2) Quality of Events: If Mr & Mrs Marsden were disappointed by the quality of the concerts, I have no doubt whatsoever that they were in a minority. 'You can't please all the people all the time...etc'.

3) Weekend Discount Tickets: If Mr & Mrs Marsden had read the tickets, they would have discovered that the weekend Discount ticket does not guarantee a seat unless you are there early, and is already a discount of over 20 per head on event tickets. Our venues are small, and we could

# Chairman's Rant

## CHAIRMAN'S RANT

not afford to offer a further discount to children purchasing those tickets. We did, however, offer a discount of 1 per child off all events tickets. If Mr. Marsden felt he was being treated as 'second class' he should have read his ticket and got organised earlier.

4) Singers Spots: The main comp, complaint seems to be that Mr & Mrs Marsden did not get to sing. Nowhere did our publicity say that 'sing-arounds would abound'. The remark that the only space available was the stairs landing and the studio on the top floor is a distortion of the truth. "The stairs landing" as he calls it, is a photographic gallery, 30' x 20' which has been the location for some of the finest singing and session playing you are likely to hear. The fact that the style of music being played at the time did not appeal to Mr. Marsden and that he failed to make an impression with his own offering, is hardly the fault of the Festival.

The sing-arounds at Kendal have always been informal events or 'do it yourself' affairs as Mr. Marsden calls them, and that has never stopped them happening. This year, I confess, the weather was so good that the session players in the studio moved outside, leaving that large room empty.

As for the half hour finale - (no charge by the way) - being somewhat brief - aaaaaaaarggggh!!!

Bill Lloyd.  
Festival Director.

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First, a welcome to our new member clubs. We all hope you enjoy your association with the rest of us. Second, thank you for the flood (well, vigorous trickle) of articles from people other than the hard core of regulars. Naturally, this included one Fed basher, but if you want to see real hate mail, read the December issue of Folk Roots.

Third, we will have an AGM this year: a low key event sometime in early December. Then at the correct time in spring next year, we will hold another seminar with the 87 AGM. (That is, unless you've voted in a set of new, keen activists in December, and got rid of me.)

Fourth, I don't apologise for the necessary price rises in the cover price and the subscriptions. I don't apologise, because it is partly due to clubs not paying their bills. More positively, we hope to use some of this to revamp the look of the magazine.

Finally, I wish all our readers a very happy Christmas and a merry and song filled New Year.

Ian Wells

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# Gossip John's RAMBLINGS



Gossip John fails to keep a promise! Sorry, there's no review of "Bingo Bones and the 'Furry Cube'" by Keith Roberts. Unfortunately, publication was slightly delayed and I didn't receive my copy in time. However, the book is now available, published by Hodder and Stoughton in their Brock Red Series.



I recently discovered that one of my colleagues at work is none other than Peter Connell of Redmayne (pictured above). It's more or less twelve months since the group re-formed after a break of eleven years and their varied repertoire is now getting them work in Folk Clubs, P.T.A.'s Sports and Social Clubs and the like. The group were unlucky to lose the chance of exposure to another audience, as stand in support to Steeleye Span, when the original support, The Wild Geese, reappeared in time for the concert, after apparently vanishing off the face of the earth!

Future plans include the recording of a new album, available on cassette before Christmas, and possibly on record later. For further information contact either:  
John Cartain 061 477 2288 (Day) or  
Bill Smethurst 061 796 0698 (Evenings).

The indefatigable Clive Pownceby thinks he's pulled one of the North West's scoops of 1987,

having booked the great Irish traditional singer, Paddy Tunney for the Bothy Folk Club. April 5th. is the date to enter in your diary.

At the other end of the Bothy spectrum, January 17th. sees one of the club's Saturday Night Specials when Clive Gregson and Christine Collister are the guests.

Ian Mackintosh makes one of his rare forays south of the border to appear at the Red Lion, Westhoughton on January 16th. and the Black Horse, Salford on the 18th. Also lined up for an appearance at Westhoughton are the Oyster Band on February 27th. Mentioning Westhoughton Folk Club reminds me to include a word of congratulation to Eileen Ball (one of the un-sung heroes of the Folk Scene) who will have been married by the time this appears in print.

A few days ago, stopping for a meal at the Little Chef at Clayton-Le-Dale, I bumped into singer/songwriter and former 'Newsletter' typist Chris Roach. She was pleased to tell me that the Irish group Chisel, who play at Jury's in Dublin, have included one of her songs, "Nature's Day" on their latest album for W.E.A. (Ireland). The album may be released in Britain at a later date, especially since Chisel are to tour in the U.K. early in the New Year. I've no details at the time of writing, but Chris will be pleased to pass information on to anyone ringing her on Penketh 8055.

One of the joys of writing for a magazine is deadlines. What you write in October, appears in print in December, when it's no longer topical - as illustrated by the following. My mate, Gary, has just been entering into the spirit of Trick or Treat with manic enthusiasm; spending hours painstakingly hiding razor blades in apples and coating barleysugar sticks with strychnine. He also tells me that his collection of Guy Fawkes' now totals 87, all bought off little boys for one penny. All in the garden is not, however, roses. "The cost of parafin don't half take the fun out of burnin' witches," he complained before borrowing a box of matches and disappearing into the mist over Pendle Hill.

# Club Dates

# DECEMBER

Monday	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th
HORWICH PRESTON POYNTON BREWERY * TRITON	THE McCALMANS singaround singaround	singers' night DAVE WALTERS BAND singaround	MELLIE CRITCHLOW * singaround singaround	singers'night singaround singaround	singers' night singaround singaround
Tuesday	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th
MAWDESLEY HINDLEY MAGHULL BLACKPOOL	HOLLERIN' POT REDMAYNE DAVE GOLDEN MUSIC HALL BRIAN OSBORNE	closed singers'night BIG PETE RODGER	closed THE KNOWE O'DEIL ROSTIE HARDMAN	closed closed Xmas Special Guest	closed closed ROD & JIM
Wednesday	3rd	10th	17th	24th	31st
WHITEHAVEN HOW CROFT FOLK AT THE TUTE WHITE SWAN FOLK AT THE NEST	BUCKLEY & NEWMAN * GREGSON & COLLISTER * KEITH HAMCOCK singers' night	WHIPPERSNAPPER DAVE WALTERS BAND THE WATERSONS singers' night	Folk Aid Special RED SHIFT * JOLLY JACK	closed closed	closed closed
Thursday	4th	11th	18th	25th	
DARWEN POYNTON WIGAN MAGAZINE BURNLEY	closed singaround singaround singaround	closed singaround singaround singaround	closed singaround singaround singaround	closed closed	
Friday	5th	12th	19th	26th	
BEE NORTHWICH NEWCASTLE PORKIES CUT ABOVE BLACKBURN	singers' night MARTIN CARHY COSMOTHEKA BRILLIG	CHESHIRE WAITS singers' night closed THE WASSALLERS	Xmas Party GARY & VERA ASPEY Xmas Party	closed singers' night closed closed	
Saturday	6th	13th	20th	27th	
BURY BREWERY POYNTON SOUTHPORT	JIM ELDON	KASHMIR COTH CEILIDH BAND Bothy Ceilidh-12th *	Seasonal Event	Ceilidh at Derby Hall	
Sunday	7th	14th	21st	28th	
CROWN BOTHY EAGLE & CHILD LEIGH POYNTON RAVE ON WIDNES LLANDUDNO ROCHDALE HERITAGE	t.b.a. STRANHEAD'S XMAS DO! NICK DOW singers' night CAUGHT ON THE HOP RED HOT SHIVERS	t.b.a. singers' night Xmas Panic INCLOGNITO guest t.b.a. GINNEY RUN	t.b.a. Xmas Tomfoolery COSMOTHEKA Xmas Party guest t.b.a. Xmas Party	t.b.a. closed closed closed guest t.b.a. closed	

## Residents

BURY - various BOTHY - Clive Pownceby, Pete Rimmer, Paul Reid EAGLE & CHILD - Caught On The Hop, Quartz, Bric-a-Brac LEIGH - Trevor & Joan Hunt, Calico RAVE ON - Volunteers LLANDUDNO - Stuart King, The Rambling Boys POYNTON (Mon.) - Rick Harrop and friends (Tues.) - Vic Hassal and friends TRITON - Jenny Wright, Ages Apart BREWERY (Mon.) - Mountain Road HINDLEY - Penrygate, Pochean WHITEHAVEN - Knotted Cord	WHITE SWAN - Geoff Higginbottom, John O'Hagan, Dave & Helen Howard, Pete Morton, Andy & Alison Whittaker, Hollerin' Pot MAWDESLEY - Derek Gifford + Phil Hartley WIGAN - Joan Blackburn MAGAZINE - Black Dog, Arthur Marshall, Brass Tacks, Dave Locke BEE - various NORTHWICH - Sean & Sandy Boyle, Iain Bowley, Tony Howard, Rod McDermott, Paul Taylor COFFULL - Northern Comfort, Phil Clayton MAGHULL - hundreds of 'em BLACKPOOL - John Gibney (resident heckler)
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# Club Dates

# JANUARY

Thursday	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th
DARWEN POYNTON WIGAN MAGAZINE BURNLEY	closed singaround singaround singaround	singers' night singaround singaround singaround	closed singaround singaround singaround	singers' night singaround singaround singaround	closed singaround singaround singaround
Friday	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th
BEE NORTHWICH NEWCASTLE PORKIES CUT ABOVE BLACKBURN	singers' night singers' night	ROY HARRIS (t.b.c.) JOHN KIRKPATRICK	singers' night STEVE TURNER	BRVONY singers' night	WHIPPERSNAPPER HARVEY ANDREWS
Saturday	3rd	10th	17th	24th	31st
BURY BREWERY SOUTHPORT POYNTON	HOLLERIN' POT	WHISKY BEFORE BREAKFAST Barn Dance	BRIAN PETERS GREGSON & COLLISTER *	guest t.b.a.	BLACK SPOT CHAMPIONS Bothy Ceilidh, 30th *
Sunday	4th	11th	18th	25th	1st Feb.
CROWN BOTHY EAGLE & CHILD LEIGH POYNTON RAVE ON WIDNES LLANDUDNO ROCHDALE	t.b.a. Free Social Night singers' night closed g.t.b.a.	t.b.a. singers' night THE McCALMANS singers' night g.t.b.a.	t.b.a. singers' night singers' night GEOFF HIGGINBOTTOM g.t.b.a.	t.b.a. MIKE SILVER HOBBSON & LEES TED EDWARDS g.t.b.a. Residents/Guests	t.b.a. singers' night RANTING SLEAZOG g.t.b.a. JONATHAN GIBBONS
Monday	5th	12th	19th	26th	2nd Feb.
HORWICH PRESTON POYNTON BREWERY * TRITON	singers' night singaround singaround closed	singers' night SEAN CANNON singaround singers' night	REDMAYNE singaround singaround MERSEYSIDE BARBERSHIP	singers' night singaround singaround singers' night	singers' night MARTIN CARHY singaround
Tuesday	6th	13th	20th	27th	3rd Feb.
MAWDESLEY HINDLEY MAGHULL BLACKPOOL	singers' night singers' night SEAN CANNON ROY HILTON	closed STEVE TURNER THE INCREDIBLE LARRY THREE IN A ROW	closed singers' night NEAL HIGGINS MICK STEWART	closed DEREK GIFFORD Club Swap/Triton J.I.M.S.	CHARLEY YARWOOD SINGERS CLOVER PHIL CAPPER
Wednesday	7th	14th	21st	28th	4th Feb.
WHITEHAVEN HOW CROFT FOLK AT THE TUTE WHITE SWAN FOLK AT THE NEST	singers' night singers' night singers' night	BRIAN PETERS JEZ LOWE CAUGHT ON THE HOP	REDMAYNE COCKERSDALE singers' night	GARY & VERA ASPEY PETER BELLAMY singers' night	STEVE TURNER

## Notes

Brewery - Mondays - Mountain Road plus guests  
Crown - Sundays - see local press for details  
**December**  
3rd - Whitehaven - Paul Buckley and Chris Neenan  
3rd - Folk At The Tute - Clive Gregson and Christine Collister  
13th - Bothy Ceilidh - at St. John's Hall  
15th - Horwich - Xmas Party with Mellie Crutchlow  
17th - White Swan - Red Shift with Xmas show "Snowshift"  
**January**  
17th - Southport - Bothy Saturday Special with Clive Gregson and Christine Collister  
30th - Bothy Ceilidh at St. John's Hall

*Are your club's dates missing?*

*Feb./Mar. in by end Dec. please*



# PERSONAL VIEW:

## QUO VADIS "FED"??

In April 1982, a Folk Club started at the "Hare & Hounds" in Maghull. More than four years later we finally decided to join the "NW Fed". WHY??

Weel, at our half-yearly meeting in June, we decided that 4 for a year's entries in "Club Dates" wasn't a bad deal, bearing in mind that we pay that for our weekly press advert.

The meeting also decided that we didn't really want to get involved in attending the 'Fed' meetings, certain members of our residency having bad memories of past assorted "FED GABFESTS" and "BREIFCASEMAN" officials they had encountered when associated with other clubs. Not very positive reasons, were they??

That led me on to cogitate (now legal if done in private) on the 'FED' as an entity, remembering it as a member about eight years ago and as a reasonably regular reader of the "NIGELNEWS" over the intervening years. What has it achieved over the period since it was formed? More pertinently, has it lived up to the laudable "AIMS" so proudly displayed in each edition of the official organ!!

Let's examine those "AIMS" individually.

### 1) The Block Booking Of Artists For Tours

Would anyone claim that this "Aim" has been successfully achieved?? What were the last six tours so organised and when did they occur? Are any currently planned? Has any officer of the 'Fed' got this as their responsibility? Talking to friends in the South and to various 'national' artists, such 'mini-tours' have become a successful feature in other parts of the country. Why not in the North West? Are our clubs utterly unable to co-operate or is it just that no-one is trying?

### 2) Joint Publicity Of Member Clubs

Step forward Ian "Media-Man" Wells. Apart from the newsletter, what really goes on, who is approached, what data is disseminated to the

media, etc.. Most importantly, how do you plan to improve matters? The major publicity vehicle is the Newsletter, yet when does it ever appear on time? Tardiness in publication and distribution has been a feature of it since the early days. WHY? The 'Editor' (God Bless His little cotton socks) has regularly claimed that it is because Club's do not give him their dates on time. HOGWASH, Nigel! All organisers know the rules. If their information is not with you by the required date, enter the name of the Club, the "Information not received" across the "Club Dates" and send it to the printers. Let the Clubgoers then berate the relevant organiser, but - Publish On Time. The current situation merely penalises the innocent who do work to the rules, because some of their attractions may be over and done with by the time the Newsletter is distributed.

### 3) The General Support Of Member Clubs

The most monumental failure of all! Over the years, member clubs have been allowed to fail without anyone from the 'FED' lifting a finger to help them. Should it be that 'FED' member clubs (as a condition of membership) have to agree to help any fellow member club in difficulty? Should the 'FED' not be in a position to organise a "Support Package" for any member club in trouble? That "Package" could be designed to try and ensure that the Club in difficulty would survive that particular crisis and stay alive. Certainly our club would be ready and willing to go to the assistance of any other member - I'm pretty sure most others would do the same if it was organised properly.

### 4) Joint Organisation of Concerts and Ceilidhs within the area.

Give the dates of the last three!!!

### 5) Support of Festival Organisers Within the area.

SO - there's been the odd mention in the Newsletter and you've allowed them to buy advertising space. What

actual SUPPORT has the 'Fed' given??

### 6) The organisation of events to attract 'Under 18's' to Folk Music.

Any contestant that entered the last such event would now probably be married with teenage children!!

So - Officers and members of the 'NW FED' Folk Clubs - you haven't made much of a success of achieving your Aims over the years, have you? Is anyone bothered? Does anyone really want a Federation with 'Aims' or just an advertising Newsletter that is published on time so everyone knows what's happening at your Club each week.

In truth, hasn't the "FED" atrophied into one thing - the quarterly "Nigel News" with repetitive contributions from Ubiquitous Ian, Niggling Nigel, Dissertating Derek, Babbling Bernie, Sophoritic Simon, et al.

Seriously though - should we all try and resuscitate this moribund miscellany of disparate Clubs or should we all leave it to the "Briefcase Man" to arrange the eventual but inevitable funeral?

Dave Day.

P.S. Who the hell IS Simon Jones?

Thank you, Dave, for your witty and penetrating analysis, but we already knew the Emperor had no clothes. No excuses, but brief reasons are as follows:-

Touring: try it and see! The last person to try was Sean Boyle - with club booking patterns varying from 18 months to 18 hours in advance, it isn't easy. Publicity: newsletters to, and personal contacts with, local radio and other journalists (additional contact names always welcome). I always feature Fed clubs in any general stuff I put out. Lot's of coverage for last year's AGM/seminar. Newsletter: the last edition already followed Dave's advice. Support: interesting thoughts - response from other members, please.

People who read my Rants (both of you) already know why aims 4-6 are not being pursued actively - no one would offer to put in the time to bring these about.

That brings us to the crunch: who is there prepared to take on a few interesting and important tasks? How about it, Dave? Your resident list is nearly as big as some club audiences, so can we look to you to find several keen, diligent volunteers? Most of our meetings take place by phone!

Ian (Ubique) Wells  
ps Love the ps.

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# CAN YOU WRITE A DANCE?

Maybe it's a special occasion - a wedding of two folk-dance friends, or a club's 25th anniversary - and people want a special dance written to celebrate the event. Suppose someone asks you to write a dance. Would you refuse on the spot, or say "yes" and then go away and panic afterwards? Above all, what makes a good dance?

I don't think writing a dance is as daunting a prospect as writing a piece of music, for instance. Both are creative processes, and some people assume that you have to possess a "gift" for that sort of thing, and either inspiration descends on you or it doesn't. This isn't the way it works at all; any composer will tell you that writing music consists of small dashes of inspiration interspersed by a lot of hard slog. In many ways writing a dance is easier; there are fewer possibilities at each point. Of course, you may want to write a dance and a tune to go with it. Sometimes the two more or less go together, but in this article I'm more interested in how you put the figures of the dance together.

First of all, what style and format of dance do you want to write? Is it to be a square, a circle, longways for a fixed number of couples, duple minor, triple minor... or an unusual formation of your own? Is it to be a Playford style, American, traditional... or a style of your own invention? I recommend you to choose a style and stick to it; I don't like dances which suddenly switch from Playford style to American square style. As with anything first of all you need to know the rules; later you can decide when you want to break them.

A dance is not just a random selection of figures. Each figure should lead into the next; there should be a flow to the movements. The dance should fit the music, whether it has its own tune or not. A standard 32-bar reel or jig consists of an "A" music or 8 bars played twice ("A1" and "A2"), followed by a "B" music of 8 bars, which is 16 steps. Most of the figures dancers are familiar with take 4 bars or 8 steps: turns for two people, stars and circles for

three or four people, half right and left through, half ladies chain and so on. Normally these are paired together to form one 8-bar phrase. I'm not suggesting that you always have to do this, but it's what the dancers expect, so you need a definite reason for breaking the rule. If your dance starts with circle right followed by a left-hand star the dancers are likely to condemn the dance as illogical. It is traditional to circle to the left first (because the man has his lady on his right hand, and when they start to move he expects to lead her). Having adjusted to the unusual direction, the dancers expect to move back the other way in the second half of the phrase, but the left-hand star keeps them moving the same way. A second example is a right-hand star followed by a reel of four. This flows perfectly well but doesn't fit the music properly; a right-hand star is 4-bars but a complete reel of four is 8 bars, so the reel will take the second half of A1 and the first half of A2.

But the best dance in the world isn't much use if no-one knows about it. Unless you are prepared to take the financial risk of publishing your own book of dances, what chance do you have of spreading your dance around? The answer is that at the moment you have quite a good chance. The Beckenham and Croydon Folk Dance Club in South London is holding a Folk Dance Competition, and they've asked me to be the adjudicator. Entries are open to all, and you have a choice of calling your own dance, getting someone else to call it for you, or accepting a caller provided by the club. If we have enough good entries we will publish a book of them, which will be on sale at folk shops up and down the country. In case fame isn't a sufficient incentive, there's a first prize of £30 to be spent at a folk shop or on a ticket to a Folk Festival.

The judging takes place on Saturday March 7th 1987. Music will be provided by Kafnozalum, so you can write your own tune (if you wish) and be confident that it will be well played. We hope to have a room full of dancers to try out the dances and give some feedback

on what they think of them, and there will be certificates for all those dances reach the judging stage.

For a set of rules and an entry form send a stamped addressed envelope to: Derek Jones, 62 Beechwood Road, Sandhurst, Surrey, CR2 0AA - telephone; 01-657-2813.

Colin Hume.

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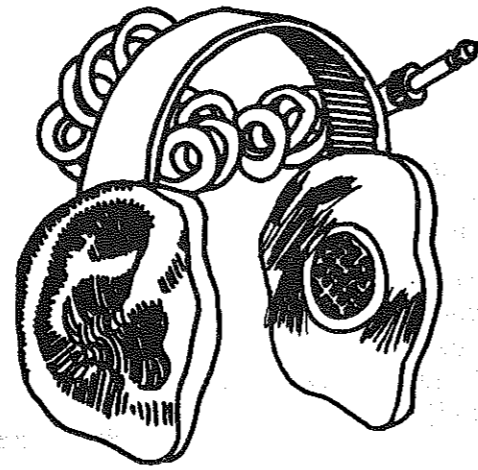
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# Broadfolk

Folk on 2 has continued to improve even on its excellent standard. The BBC Manchester recording team visited both Kendal and Fylde festivals in support of producer Geoffrey Hewitt and very rapidly produced marvellous programmes. The Kendal coverage naturally concentrated on Songsearch, and broadcast the best song (King of Rome) as well as the formal winner (Hunting the Buffalo). They also included comments from Mike Harding and June Tabor. Best of all, they put out much of the superb Tabor/Simpson set that had enthralled an afternoon audience. Fylde coverage included good length extracts from Scold's Bridle and Hobson & Lees. Later programmes included an interesting interview with Paul (Fellside) Adams. Barry Gavin's long documentary on Percy Grainger (Central) may have told us more than we wanted to know about this complex and curious musician and musicologist. We saw archive shots of Joseph Taylor and heard archive recordings of 'Brigg Fair' and 'Poachers Bold'. The film was punctuated with increasingly odd arrangements of 'Country Gardens' - did you know the title page of the first version of this original composition subtitled it 'An English Morris Tune'? They ran a vigorous but polite choral version of 'Shallow Brown' under the final credits. This wasn't a patch on the version used for a R4 play some time ago. Meanwhile on Radio 4, The Saturday Feature leapt into binaural/stereo to go Hopping Down in Kent. This was a well produced piece of oral history, cross cutting former hoppers and local people, and opened and closed with the obvious song sung by Sandra Kerr. There was only slightly more music in each of the Mike Harding 'Rambles in Ireland': Mike had clearly enjoyed the pub sessions rather more than the producer. Still on R4, the formidable duo of Dave and Al Sealy both related and illustrated the tragic story of music hall singer



Fred Barnes. Fred's best known song - Mother Kelly's Doorstep - is rather better known than the one's they normally perform as Cosmotheke. With minimum publicity, C 4 reran How to be Celtic during the day. I managed to pick up the Scottish one, in which Dick Gaughan was subtitled(!), but the most interesting sequence was not in Scotland at all but in Boston. There we saw Jean Redpath leading a postgraduate seminar - and getting them to sing along. Also on repeat, in the rather artificial BBC1 In At The Deep End, Paul Heiney failed to learn to control a sheepdog, but along the way we peeped in at a Cumbrian shepherds' song session. I refrain from any comment on our chairman's appearance with Geoff Speed on Folkscene (he's ubiquitous enough) and close with two folk appearances on quiz shows. In the R4 music quiz chaired by Ned Sherrin, a lady rather reluctantly accepted Folk Music as a topic (she had come third in the first round and was reduced to that or Elvis Presley). 'Where is the HQ of the EFDSS?' chirped Ned: 'pass', she said. Presumably she was even less likely to have known Gracelands. More recently, the Micklebarrow Morris Team brightened our screens briefly in Masterteam. Brightened, because they appeared in costume. Briefly, for they sank without trace, recording almost the lowest score ever - even lower than last years MP's team. Now, how about a team of club organisers? Still, they might not perform too well fully sober, either.

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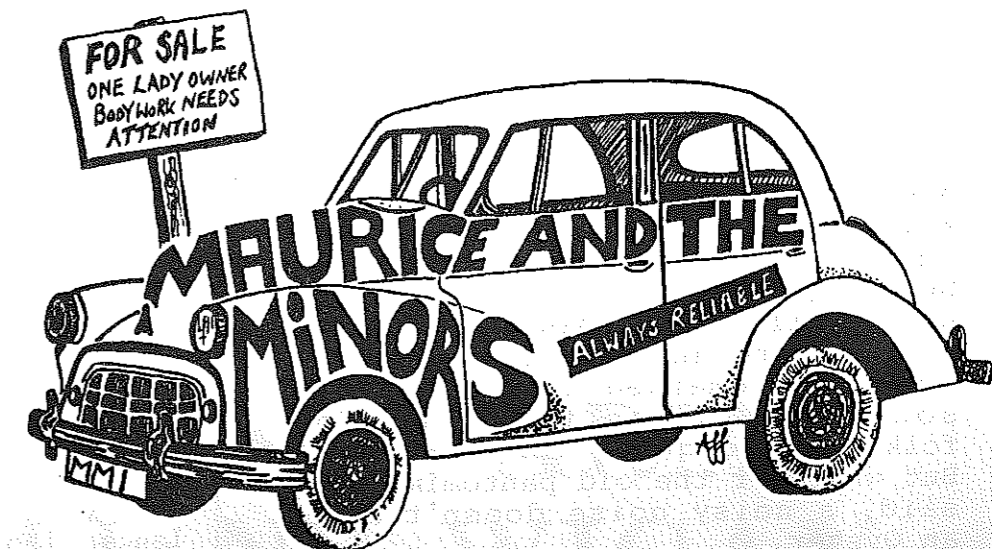
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In an interview with Geoff Speed, when asked what made them different from other electric folk bands, they said 'no drummer'. When I arrived at the Howard Arms in deepest Whittle-le-Woods to catch the second of their five night tour sponsored by North west Arts, what was the first thing I saw? - a drum kit.

The first result of this was that in a small room, playing in concert, they were louder than as a dance band in the spacious North Euston ballroom. Also, in the first half, the sound man seemed to have something against John Jones - I could scarcely hear the melodeon and lost the whole of his vocal lead on the ironically entitled 'Just another quiet night in England'. Indeed, from where I was sitting the whole sound was a mishmash - like bunging a meal of steak, onions and jacket potatoes into a food processor and getting a sort of hamburger - the separate instrumental strands were lost. In spite of this, I did enjoy their tune sets, their own song 'Ashes to Ashes', and 'How can a poor man stand such times and live'.

In the second half, after several people had spoken to the sound man, and we had retreated to the rear of the hall, things seemed to improve. One tune set had an excellent melodeon lead, an idiosyncratic version of 'Treadmill' had the bar staff singing along, and 'Welcome in the Day-O' (billed as their next single) was aggressively drum driven. The second encore was a superb version of Bragg's 'Between the Wars'.

Ian Telfer's playing of fiddle, sax and electric keyboard impressed as ever, and the driving guitar pulse of Ian and Alan seemed enough to me without the addition of Russell on the drums. However, they feel the need to match folk-rock and rock bands on mixed bills in big halls and have a drum on their new record. I understand they're not bringing the drummer to club dates so you will get a chance to compare them before and after. One neutral observer remarked to me that the sound level was too loud for folkies, too quiet for rock fans. But whatever the old pantomime song said, a noisy noise doesn't annoy an Oyster.

Ian Wells

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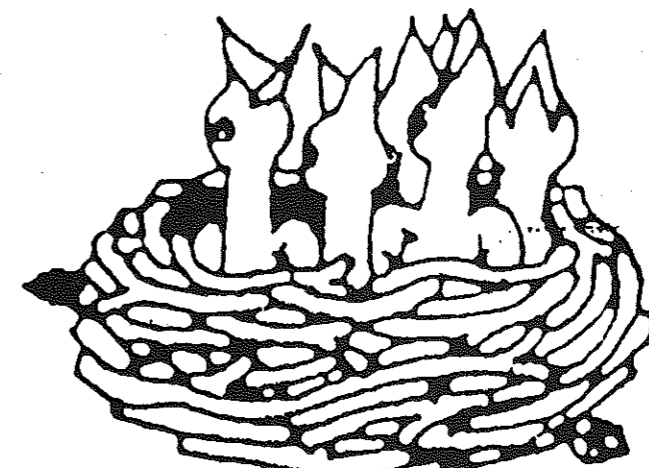
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# FOLK AT THE NEST



## "GUEST LIST"

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**BRYONY: "Last Of The Great Whales"**  
Dragon, DRGN 862

It is more than likely that the title track of this record will be enough to sell it to the majority of folkies who are not especially Bryony devotees. However, this is not to undervalue the other fine songs to be found on it.

Particularly pleasing, for example, are the arrangements of Graeme Miles' "The Shores Of Old Blighty" and James Oppenheim's "Bread And Roses".

Those who have seen Bryony's live performances, either at the many festivals they have appeared in this

year or in the folk clubs, will find a good cross-section of their repertoire rendered in the group's idiosyncratic style. Those who haven't seen them yet will find as true a sound-picture of their material as possible in this record.

This is probably because they have resisted the temptation to add session musicians or singers to any of the tracks with the exception of Chris Pollington on synthesiser in "Bread And Roses" (and our Janet reckons a real trumpet would have sounded better, anyway!).

Criticisms are but a trifling few, (apart from the fact that being attacked by three feminists isn't a particularly pleasant thought... on the other hand, though...?), one being that the lively songs like "Geordie Black" and "Gilliver" appear rather rushed, especially in the phrasing, and the other being a purely personal antipathy to madrigals, two of which, ("Sweet Kate" and "Though My Carriage Be But Careless" - I think it should be "car - less") are included.

Overall, Chris Pollington's excellent sound engineering, which brings-out the best in the instrumental sounds - especially the hammered dulcimer- and the rich harmonies makes this a little cracker from three pieces of crackling! (Yes, that was a sexist remark, so knickers!)

Derek Gifford.

**PAUL SIMON: "Graceland"**  
Warners, WX52 925 447-1

Ladies and gentlemen - I present the album of the year. Forget "Bridge Over Troubled Water" and "Still Crazy After All These Years", here's Paul Simon with his head out of the clouds and back with roots of a sort. Okay, it's taken Simon long enough to wake up to the forceful message of African tribal music, but who thought he'd go and record an

album full of it, and give it such potential credibility? What's more, he's made a darn good job of it, too, and allows the supporting Soweto musicians just as much elbow as he allows himself. Just listen to the hit single, "You can call me Al" for the whirring hypnotic rock of Chikapa Phiri, Baghibi Khumalo and Isaac Mtshali and it's the Africanisms, not the tired old American musos, which are such a revelation. "Homeless", recorded here in Abbey Road, London, with the ten part harmony group Ladysmith Black Mambazo is a breath-taking piece of acapella singing. I don't have the space here to list all the wonderful musicians Simon uses, but besides African ethnics, he also has a shot at the Cajun with Rockin' Dopsie, and the Hispanic with the excellent Mexican-influenced rock band Los Lobos, neither of which are as successful as the Dark Continent - influenced tracks. And somewhere in there are the Everly Brothers and Linda Ronstat to boot. I've rabbitied long enough about this corking record; all I ask is that you promise me you'll buy it. A sit-down and listen/ get-up and dance record all in one. Certainly Paul Simon's finest album, a long way from, and a long time since "Homeward Bound" on Warrington Station. All sane beings should own this inspiring black plastic disc entitled "Graceland".

Simon Jones.

**FAIRPORT CONVENTION: "House Full"**  
Hannibal HNBL 1319  
"Expletive Delighted"  
Woodworm records WRO09  
Cassette WRC004

Listening to both these records shows just how much the band has matured and its style changed. There is a 15-year gap between the recordings during which time the personnel has changed many times; on "Expletive", the rhythm section of Simon Nicol (guitar), Dave Pegg (bass) and Dave Mattacks (drums) remains the same, but Ric Sanders plays fiddle instead of Dave Swarbrick and Martin Allcock replaces Richard Thompson.

The "House Full" LP is in effect a re-issue of an earlier Island LP, "Live At The L.A. Troubadour" which was notable for its poor quality and terrible cover. The recordings used on this LP are from

the same sessions, but using different takes, modern mixing techniques have slightly improved the quality, but it falls short of the standards of other "live" recordings produced by the band. Of interest to fans are two completely new tracks never released before, namely "Staines Morris" and "Battle Of The Somme".

"Expletive Delighted" on the other hand, lives up to its title, the two new members being allowed full rein on the LP with the result that the new line-up has a tighter and rejuvenated feel to it, building and fulfilling the promise shown on "Gladys' Leap" and the exhaustive tour earlier this year. A totally instrumental LP, it allows further comparisons with previous line-ups with reworkings of "Jams O'Donnell's Jig" and "Bankruptured" and the Nicol/Swarbrick recording of "Sigh Beg Sigh Mor", in each case the reworkings are an improvement on the original versions. Other tracks enable the composition skills of Ric Sanders and Martin Allcock to shine through, except for the last track, "Hank For The Memory", when the band is joined by ex-Fairporters Jerry Donahue and Richard Thompson in a medley of "Shadows" tunes, thus retaining the sense of fun prevalent at all Fairport concerts. Overall, a well produced and balanced LP worthy of inclusion in most record collections.

"Expletive Delighted" is available from Woodworm Records Ltd., P.O.Box 37, Banbury, Oxon., OX 15 4 BH, price £5.50 (including postage).

Nigel E. Pollard.

'A Selection from the Penguin Book of English Folk Songs'  
Fellside  
FEO 47.

What can I say about a record containing 12 of the finest English Folk Songs performed by some of the best singers & musicians in the country. The book all the songs are taken from was compiled by Allroyd & R.V. Williams and contained some 70 songs from the journals of the EPDSS. It was one of the first collections to come out of the revival & most of the songs will be familiar to readers.

The songs are here performed by Linda Adams, John Bowden, Martin Carthy, Ray Harris & Jaz Lowe in various combination. There is a good selection of material from ballads to chorus songs and even humorous songs ("The Basket of Eggs").

I couldn't say that I liked all the arrangements on the album, but the majority are excellent. Favourite Tracks? They must be 'The False Bride' sang by John Bowden & 'One Night as I lay on my bed' sang

by Ray Harris.

What more can I say, except that if you like traditional songs go out and buy it at once!

Nigel Firth.

**CAUGHT ON THE HOP: "Frozen Flames"**  
Dragon, DRGN 863

Being a fairly normal seventeen-year-old, when approached by a certain megastar and part-time editor to review COTH's first record... well, how could I refuse? Trying to push to the back of my mind memories of being in a pram surrounded by men with beards, pints and fingers in their ears, I listened - and enjoyed.

I loved the opening track, "Admiral Benbow", which was followed by a superb version of "Icy Acres" - completely different from the way I'm used to hearing it sung. Although I liked the idea of the acapella section in the middle of "Chase The Buffalo", I wasn't quite sure that it worked. I found "Erin's Loveley Lee" somewhat disjointed thereby losing my attention. All the tunes on the album were lively enough to make me want to get-up and dance about. The final track, "The New York Trader", contained more scandal than a double episode of "Dallas"!

Overall, I found this a well balanced album which was well recorded and engineered, and was a good reflection of COTH's style, versatility and ability. I think this would appeal to my non-folkie friends, but we're not exactly Wham! aficionados - more Sade freaks. When my parents buy COTH's next disc, I'll be happy to give it a spin.

Bev Gleave.

**JILL AND BERNARD BLACKWELL** Fellside  
"Adventures of Notion". FEO56.

"Adventures huh? Well Indiana Jones this aint, but much more akin to the 'Rub-a-Dub Mystery.' I must declare an interest here in having seen the Blackwells live in 1984's Bromyard Festival and finding them incredibly twee and cosy. On this, their first

album the sound is beefed up somewhat by the addition of various chums on percussion and a touch of multi-tracking helps, but it's still all rather bland to these ears.

Having said that, there are assuredly some plus points. Jill and Bernard both sing pleasantly, either taking solo vocal or harmonising, and the cuts where Bernard's Small Pipes blend with Jill's Flute are very listenable. I'm thinking of the 'Hesleyside Reel' and 'Sweet Hesleyside/Bonnie Cragside' sets which open sides 1 and 2 respectively in this context.

In addition to the Pipes, Bernard's accompaniments also feature variously his Guitar, Melodeon and Concertina skills whilst Jill uses Harmonium and other keyboards from time to time.

I found a song new to me in 'Hunting A Loaf' - a Roy Harris discovery from a broadside in Derby Public Library, and there's a variety of material here that shows a lot of thought has gone into this record. I can hear every word too. Paul Adams' production is crystal clear, and the Blackwells' diction is faultless. Unfortunately a sense of Bromyard deja-vu overwhelms me - its all so squeaky clean. Jill's singing on 'Too Much Of a Good Thing' is frankly feeble - surely this song demands the Frankie Armstrong approach? - strident and triumphant. Here the lyric seems to be apologising for itself.

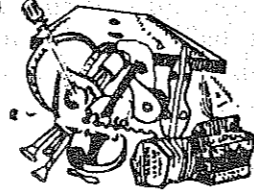
Similarly emasculated is their reading of 'Sitting On Top Of The World' - dismiss all thoughts of Howling Wolf and Cream from your minds. This is strictly Radio 2 territory.

Now I'll warrant Jill and Bernard Blackwell are small club residents then this is the record for you. Its intentions are honourable and I hope it pays for itself, but this is categorically not the L.P. to tilt the world on its axis. Existing fans of these two will snap this offering up. It's certainly representative of what the Blackwells are all about, but if you yearn for raw ramp emotion and an excitement in your aural input, - forget it. This is the stuff of limp lettuce.

Clive Pownceby.

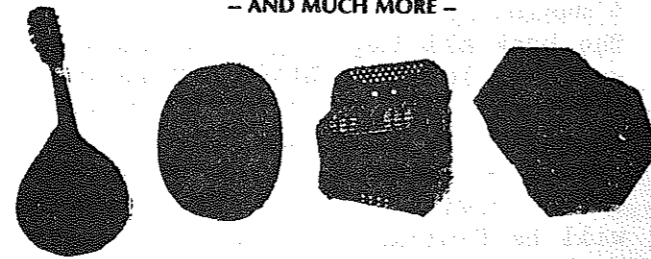
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THE AIM OF THE FEDERATION shall be the promotion of Folk Music in the North-West by:-

1. The "block booking" of artists for tours
2. Joint publicity of the member clubs
3. The general support of member clubs
4. Joint organisation of concerts and ceilidhs within the area
5. The support of festival organisers within the area
6. The organisation of events to attract the "under 18s" to Folk Music

The Member Clubs

Day	Club Name	Time	Address	Member Name	Telephone
Sunday	CROWN	8.15 pm	The Crown, Conway St., Birkenhead	Phil Hare	051 342 4145
	BOTHY	8.00 pm	Blundell Arms, Upper Aughton St., Birkdale, Southport	Clive Pownceby	051 942 5078
	EAGLE & CHILD	8.30 pm	Eagle & Child, Main St., Billinge, nr. Wigan	Bernie Forkin	0744 53058
	LEIGH	8.00 pm	Oddfellows Arms, Twiss Lane, Leigh	Steve Eckersley	0942 677955
	POYNTON	8.00 pm	Poynton Folk Centre, Park Lane, Poynton	David Brock	061 483 6521
	RAVE ON	8.30 pm	Grosvenor Rowing Club, The Groves, Chester	Nick Mitchell	0244 315094
	WIDNES (ST. MARIE'S)	8.30 pm	St. Marie's Am. R.L. Club, Brentfields, Widnes	Patrick Lindley	051 423 3775
Monday	LLANDUDNO	8.30 pm	The London Hotel, Upper Mostyn St., Llandudno	Arthur Bowman	0492 622049
	ROCHDALE HERITAGE	8.00 pm	The Spread Eagle Hotel, Cheetham St., Rochdale	Elisabeth Andrews	0706 55122
	HORWICH	8.15 pm	Crown Hotel, Horwich	Sue Grills	0204 691430
	PRESTON	8.15 pm	Lamb Hotel, Church St., Preston	Mavis Eccles	0254 580383
	POYNTON	8.30 pm	Poynton Folk Centre, Park Lane, Poynton	David Brock	061 483 6521
	BREWERY	8.30 pm	Brewery Arts Centre, 122a, Highgate, Kendal	Bill Lloyd	0539 25133
	TRITON	8.00 pm	The Triton, Paradise St., Liverpool	Doreen Rickart	051 227 3911 (work)
Tuesday	MAWDESLEY	8.30 pm	Black Bull, Mawdesley	Derek Gifford	0704 822574
	HINDLEY	8.15 pm	Worthington Hotel, Market St., Hindley	Kath Holden	0942 58459
	MAGHULL	8.30 pm	Hare & Hounds, Maghull	Dave Day	051 526 6661
	BLACKPOOL	8.30 pm	Kings Arms, Talbot Rd., Blackpool	Mick Read	0772 684756 (work)
Wednesday	WHITEHAVEN	8.15 pm	Rosehill Theatre Bar, Moresby, Whitehaven	c/o theatre	0900 2422
	HOW CROFT	8.30 pm	How Croft, off St. George's Rd., Bolton	John Cole	0204 33209
	FOLK AT THE TUBE	9.00 pm	Wrea Green Institute, Station Rd., Wrea Green, Kirkham	Phil Capper	0772 684537
	WHITE SWAN	8.00 pm	White Swan, Fallowfield, Manchester	Anne Morris	061 881 8294
	FOLK AT THE NEST	8.30 pm	The Allison Arms, Coppull	Steve Chatterley	0257 481643
Thursday	DARWEN	8.30 pm	The Kiosk, Sunnyhurst Woods Centre, nr. Darwen	Jan Foster	0254 775860
	POYNTON	8.30 pm	Poynton Folk Centre, Park Lane, Poynton	David Brock	061 483 6521
	WIGAN	8.15 pm	White Horse, Standishgate, Wigan	Joan Blackburn	0942 863389
	MAGAZINE	8.30 pm	Magazine Hotel, Magazine Lane, Wallasey	Arthur Marshall	051 334 7860
	BURNLEY	8.30 pm	Talbot Hotel, Church St., Burnley	Joan McEvoy	0282 38199
Friday	BEE	8.30 pm	Bee Hotel, Bodfer St., Rhyl	Dave Costello	0745 32488
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