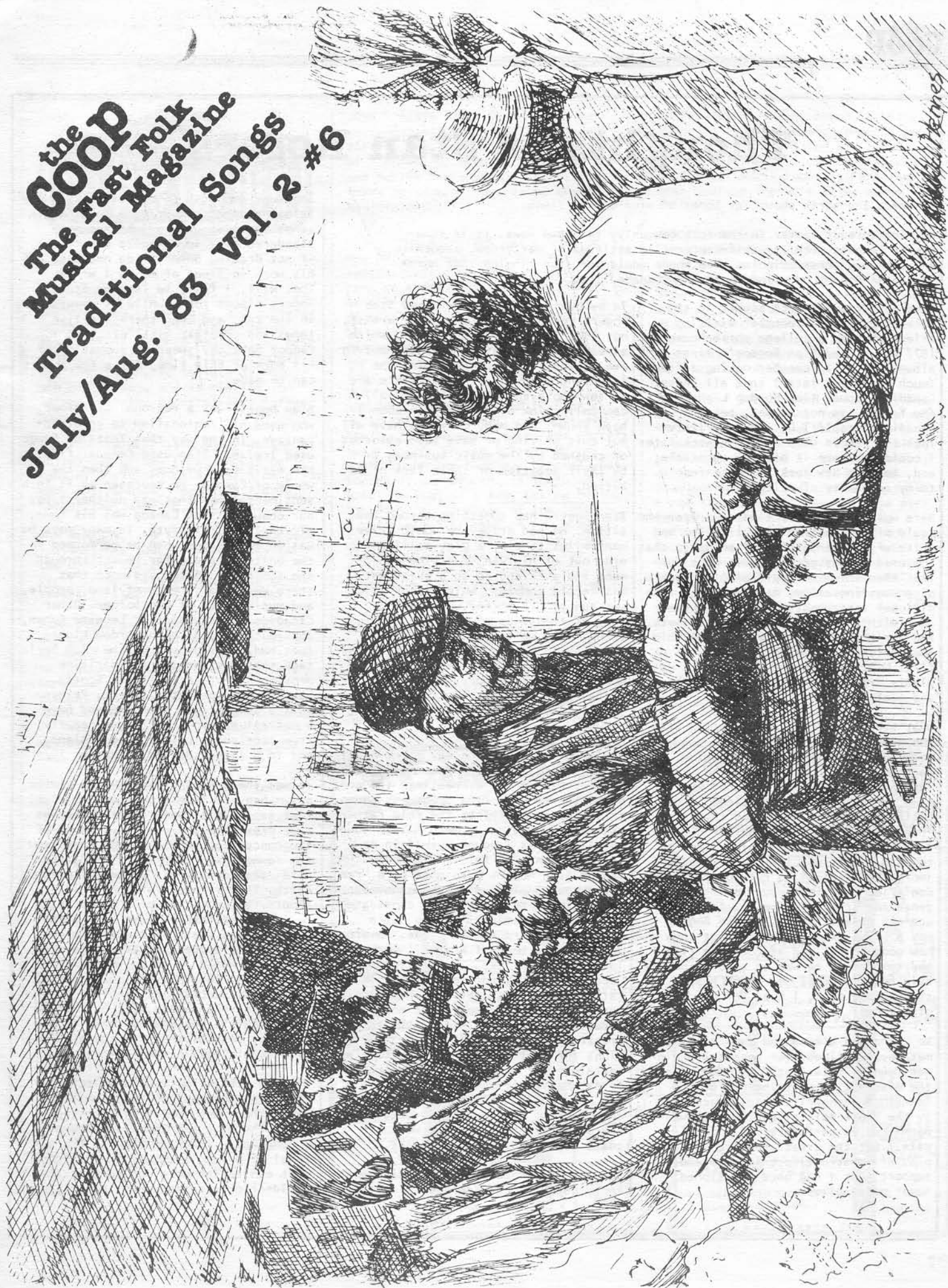


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COOP**  
The Fast Folk  
Musical Magazine  
Traditional Songs  
July/Aug. '83 Vol. 2 #6



W. H. P. Jones

# Thoughts on Stan Rogers

Where the earth shows its bones of wind-broken stone.

Nothing spreads faster in the folk community than bad news. It is somehow in keeping with its self-deprecating attitude of martyrdom, masochism, and paranoid persecutionism. The phone would not stop ringing that morning. Stan Rogers had died in the Air Canada fire.

Good news travels much slower in the folk community. I remember visiting a friend who ran a college coffeehouse in 1977 who played Stan Rogers's first album for me. I remember making a crack (much regretted later) that all those Canadians sound like Gordon Lightfoot. (My friend was not amused, being a Canadian herself.) On repeated listenings the record grew on me. A week later I could not take it off the turntable, and, back in New York, I force-fed it to my community of writers.

Here was an important find: a writer who could mimic the traditional styles and write with a sense of craftsmanship that conjured images of Yeats. It went further than this: he could also produce a nice sounding album, making use of traditional instruments as well as newer ones with a sense of harmony, subtlety, and variety. When I heard that my college friend had booked Stan for his first U.S. performance, several of us gladly traveled the four hours to hear and meet him.

What struck me first upon meeting Stan was a sense of insecurity that was masked in joviality and chauvinism. Much of this I could understand, knowing how hard it is for someone who is good creatively to get noticed in our business-oriented world and the callouses one must grow to buffer oneself from the yahoos who are always trying to push themselves into your parade (more than willing to rain on it if you don't let them into your inner confidence and drinking circle). It is an age-old paradox of which Stan Rogers was a prime example: He did not know how good he was and at the same time had to pretend he was as good as people said he was. I for one never broke through the mask. I hope for his sake others did.

We exchanged albums and over the years met several times over hospitable dinners and at folk festivals. (Stan had the distinction of being one of the few singer-songwriters to be accepted by the "folk police" and thereby was permitted to perform at folk festivals.) But the great creative interplay of constructive criticism and support that I had once envisioned never materialized.

In my own heart I had expected Stan Rogers to develop into a great artist, not just in the folk community, which already recognized him as such, but in the vision I had of developing the folk song into an art form. There are so few who even have the potential. I can only think of five or six whom I have known. And many of these have all but quit writing or have been absorbed or crushed by the music business or by their ambition or their lack of ambition.

Stan Rogers had something beyond ambition. He had drive. He would drive many miles to play a gig, selling records out of his van, carrying equipment and a friend to do a guest set. His record company, which rumor said was run by his mother, was selling tens of thousands of records, many through the mail. His songs were starting to crop up as often as he did. In short, Stan Rogers was a real all-American success story. He had all the ingredients for an artistic success story except one: he didn't live long enough.

As I look around me on any given night of carousing in the folk community--the over-drinking, the overeating, the poor diet, the smoking, the drugs--it seems that martyrdom will be the rule rather than the exception. I mean not to sound moralistic, as I count myself in on several counts of this indictment. Though Stan Rogers died more of a "real world" death along with the anonymous businessmen, he was a prime candidate for an early demise. This is not a necessary hazard of the trade. To produce a major body of artistic work, longevity is a must. In a field where "second album" syndrome is the rule rather than the exception, where one has ten years to prepare for one's first album and only ten months to prepare for the second, no one mentions the tenth or twentieth album, and certainly not an album of "greatest hits." Making it to the twentieth album, and making it impossible for anyone to pick "greatest hits" because of the overall quality of the work are goals to which we should aspire.

But now Stan Rogers is a definitive known quantity. He represents no threat

to those who wish to compete. It is now safe for other songwriters to sing his songs and club owners (who recently slandered him) to eulogize his talent if not drawing power. I do not have all his work in front of me as I write. They will, I fear, be issuing Stan Rogers albums for a while as several are in the can, and then there are live tapes and greatest hits, etc., so I cannot make any sweeping summation of his work at this time. But a few points can be made.

Stan Rogers was a regional performer who used his regionalism to great advantage. In the way that Yeats or Synge used Ireland, Stan used Canada: first the maritime provinces and then the whole of Canada. He represented it in a sentimental way that was neither sappy nor chauvinistic. Canada was his home, his heritage, his myth. In many ways he was an ambassador when he performed in the United States, for he cut through the ignorance of the audience that there was a large mass of land, people, and music north of our border. Other Canadian "stars" such as Leonard Cohen, Joni Mitchell, or even Gordon Lightfoot had not made use of the rich heritage that was Canada. The maritime provinces that include Nova Scotia, Labrador, Cape Breton Island, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland have a musical culture that draws heavily from Scotland, Ireland, and England, and to a lesser degree, France.

It was the senses of melody and rhythm, drawn heavily from traditional styles, that set Stan's songs apart. Melodies that drew from the plaintive sound of the concertina, rhythms that drew from the raucous sound of the fiddle, and words that drew their imagery from the earth. This is what folk music is about: the character of the people, a musical trademark of a certain area. In many ways these distinctive areas have been disappearing at an alarming rate. The world is being homogenized. Beyond Stan Rogers's musical success, commercial success, or poetical success, his true legacy will be that he preserved the music of an area in the best way possible: not in the archives of academia but in the living song.

It is a pitfall of many a writer to revere the process of their writing, as if there was something important about the time and the place where a song was written. A song is the sum-total of a long accumulation of input that can be far more varied than the incident or circumstances that kicked



off the writing machinery. This insecure awe towards the artistic process is perhaps one of the things that separates the artist from the craftsman. The artist doesn't question. But usually the line between artist and craftsman is so vague as to be indeterminate and is crossed and recrossed many times in one's career.

I think that Stan Rogers crossed this line many times: Some of his best work and some of his worst work was done under commission for government committees. When it worked was when he relied on metaphor that could be reinterpreted under other circumstances such as in "Second Effort" written for the Montreal Olympics. But in other ways Stan Rogers had become a Canadian institution, and this penchant for government patronization can't help but breed mediocrity.

There are other questions brought up by Stan's ability to mirror his culture. In "Harris and the Mare" his stance is so chauvinistic as to come close to ruining a beautiful song, but still it can be argued that it is the culture about which Stan was writing that is chauvinistic. One recalls that Synge was condemned for accurately portraying the Irish culture at a time when national interests wanted a more rosy picture painted. Stan's work, like much of art, is suspended somewhere between the real and the ideal. For much of Stan's career I feel that he was insecure of his artistic abilities and relied too heavily on the craft. But, ironically, because of his awe of his own artistic power, many of his brilliant images were not honed the way they should have been: A song such as "Song of the Candle" has some beautiful images contrasting religion and coffeehouses, but as an early piece could have stood much rewriting and didn't hold up to later efforts.

Tonight I have burned all my candles  
Leaving only ashes in their wake.

The paradox that was Stan Rogers will never be resolved. It is too early for any definitive criticism of his work. That longevity is a key ingredient to greatness is due to the artist's ability in later years to rewrite, edit, and select his own work with increasing experience. That Stan Rogers will not have this opportunity is a true tragedy for the artistic songwriting community. The natural selection of the folk process will still go far to immortalize him.

- Jack Hardy

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Editors:

A song of mine appeared on the June "Love Songs" issue. I noticed a couple of minor mistakes in the lyrics of the first two verses of "Downtown Tonight." I should have sent you a copy of the lyrics to avoid any problem with transcription. I apologize for that. For the record, the first two verses are as follows:

Dodging the blues  
But the blues were gainin' fast  
Riding the news  
Knowing news just doesn't last  
Heaven come seven  
With the rollin' of the bones  
But winning never feels like going home

He's thick at the bottom  
Thin at the top  
Like a bottle shaken  
With a cork that wouldn't pop...

Thank you for the chance to be a part of The Coop.

Sincerely,

John Gorka  
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

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# Timebombs

## Thoughts on Words and the Power of Songs

by Richard Meyer

Some songs lie in wait for you. They go to the same parties, cheer you up on the radio, and follow you from infancy. They can be like the friends of friends that you don't really know until one day a chance meeting occurs and, finally, you hear them. These moments don't have to be intellectualized examinations of the songs, however. They can run you through the core at the right time and place, no matter what your opinion might have been before.

Each word has scores of meanings, from the primary dictionary definition to those associations each of us brings to a word and its context. We have cultural values that we place on words, their status, acceptability, and position in the current vogue. Consequently, the use of certain words is both a self-definition on the part of the user and a social casting on the part of the listener. Each person, because of his or her different social and emotional background, reacts and relates to a given set of words differently.

When I put my guitar to my ear I try to get the strangest sounds possible out of my familiar guitar. When I turn my head the sound changes. When I listen to a whole chord I can pick out the sound of single notes. We do the same thing in conversation and in song. We are affected by our choice in listening, and we are affected by the tangled centuries of use that certain words have survived and the spoken and unspoken connotations they carry. There is more in our language than we are aware of. The more we become aware of the cultural resonances of words, the more interesting our communication can be.

Phrases that linger from the recent past such as "going off half cocked" remain in modern conversation. This phrase comes down to us from the time when firearms were being developed. A flint hammer had to be fully set in order to strike a pile of powder, which would fire the musket. If one was half cocked, i.e., did not have his gun prepared, the gun would not fire fully. This could be a life-threatening mistake if one was going off to war or hunting aggressive game.

Phrases like this and others--many moons (from the time when the moon was

a timepiece), if looks could kill (from the time when witches were a real part of growing societies), and red sky at morning, sailor take warning--are the conversational remains of ideas that were once a vital part of language. They carry over into the present day on a less conscious level. We know instinctively that "half cocked" is not a lighthearted description, but we use it flippantly so the sarcasm and real meaning of the phrase remains.

Single words like Moon, Water, Air, and Earth carry with them whole cultures worth of associated meanings so deeply ingrained in us as a species that even if we live out of touch with the thing, we retain a connection with it in some unspoken human/animal way. The thing is not the word; the word is a symbol for the thing and as such we don't have to have the thing in order to retain the idea.

In the city we don't see the moon much; we see pictures of it and movies of men walking on it. It has been mapped and we know scientifically that it is a big rock out there. But the moon is still the romantic/mystical analogy, and even city dwellers respond to it. I think it is more than a learned response. The moon is part of our rhythm as a species. The moon affects our bodies and the tides of the world. It changes, and at night even if we pay no attention to it, the light of the moon changes the way we see the world. It is an ancient and still present reminder that some things can be touched and mapped and still remain mysterious.

Moon. Perhaps the word came from some initial groan of wonder. Other languages have a similar word for the same object. Even if it is a relationship drawn after the fact, the word somehow sounds like the object. The word is not the thing, and we have become suffused with a sound/object relationship that permeates our whole being. Water with its Ah-T sound is smooth and crisp. Think of other words and their impact on the ear. Excruciating, sinewy, balloon, one. Words are often used in association with printed or electronic images that remove much of the thinking from the reading or listening process. As you speak, listen to the words you use and the impact they have coming one after another.

All around us are the names of places and events, in the logos and signposts. These things keep our history and culture in the common language after the



events have fallen from the common memory. Culturally we drag bits of the past with us. In songs we react not only to the story told but to the words themselves with and without regard for context, magnified by the focus and context a song provides.

Thelonius Monk's "'Round Midnight" opens:

It begins to tell 'round midnight  
I do pretty well till after sundown  
Supertime I'm feeling sad  
But it really gets bad 'round  
midnight.

"It begins to tell;" we don't have to know what "it" is. We begin to tell. Who and what do we tell? What is telling us? There is a mysterious internal/external communication from the words "it" and "tell" so that we are immediately laced in a nondescriptive frame of mind yet we know all is not normal. "'Round midnight"--we admit a fear of the dark, we admit we cannot control the night. Midnight, midnight, midnight. The word itself says that it has been dark for a while and it's midnight. There is a while to go before there is daylight and we can see naturally. Without help. There is no safety from what is factually midnight but metaphorically our midnight. I think we bring to this word a cultural memory of a world where fires were set and kept going to keep the forces of the night away, be they animal or spiritual. The thousands of years that this activity must have gone on lingers (great word--lingers) in our beings when we hear the word. Perhaps it's an image of cold, distance, fear,



loneliness, or hunger. The word carries us to a place where we are vulnerable.

We go to songs without the question of whether they are or are not art and come away from the good ones with the effects of art. The old songs about death and murder live on and on. We are fragile creatures, and we have fears of death and longings for love. When pretty Polly is murdered we know somehow it could be us. Love is dangerous. And death is unavoidable. We fear oblivion. "See that my grave is kept clean" is a phrase that jumps out of the folk blues to crystalize the hope that we will not be forgotten. "Will the circle be unbroken" is a cry for some relief, as is "Nine pound hammer." The main words in these old songs are much older than the songs. Love, murder, grave, sight, circle/cycle, nine pound hammer/heaviness of life.

In daily life our relationship to the world around us changes at every turn. Places we go stir memories, and colors or scents can instantly send us to places and times we have apparently forgotten. When we hear a strong song, the same thing happens because of our connections with language and the sound of words that are tied to their

meanings. Love songs are some of the most effective songs because when we are in an emotional state we have less guards up before our feelings, our older sensory selves, than we usually do. It is our primitive sensory memory that reacts to art. The intellectual is the mental calculated appreciating part that may or may not have anything to do with the effectiveness of art. The intellect may judge on the basis of financial value while the sense, soul, and feeling part of a person connects with the humanly related parts of art.

Language originated in response to the need to communicate desires and information. Great songs tap into this continuing need to communicate just as great songwriters tap into their own pan cultural connections in order to produce a piece that is at once a product and an artistic form. I think that once you can train yourself to be more open to the depth in words and their values, you can find the levels of meaning and resonances that go beyond the meaning of a particular line and a particular instance. Next time you find yourself humming a tune, stop and think about the words that go with it. You may be surprised to find that there is a reason, for you, why you picked that song to hum.



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# Clearwater Revival

by Ned Treanor

Claudio Buchwald, Giovanni Cofarelli, Elizabeth Cotten, the DeFranco Family, Jean Marie Denney, Gregory Dormani, Eclectricity, Eritage, Carmine Ferraro, the Fiddle Puppets, Cathy Fink, Ronnie Gilbert, Arlo Guthrie, Lyn Hardy, Jay Ungar, and Molly Mason, the Hudson River Sloop Singers, Sharon Leahy, Angelo and Bambina Luzzi, Debby McClatchy, Walt Michael, John Kirk and Mark Murphy, the New Song Quintet, Nella and Dino Papallardi, Fellippo Pascia, Larry Penn, Guy and Candie Carawan and their Highlander Center Troupe, Faith Petric, Frankie and Doug Quimby, Larry Cole and Bill Ochs, Charlie Sayles, Mike and Pete Seeger, Dan Smith, the Sojourner Singers, Harry Stamper, Sweet Honey in the Rock, Bill and Livia Drapkin Vanaver and the Vanaver Caravan, and the Women of the Calabash--these traditional performers, as well as a host of the finest in contemporary music, such as Shenandoah, Fred Small, Holly Near, Dave Mallet, Toshi Reagon, John Hall, and The Thunderbird Sisters; and mime, puppetry, dancing, and crafts of all kinds, again brought nearly 20,000 people together June 18 and 19 on the banks of the beautiful Hudson River to celebrate Clearwater's 6th annual Great Hudson River Revival.

The dozen or so volunteer committee members, who in turn direct another 1200 or so volunteers in a variety of tasks such as litter pickup, recycling, parking, peacekeeping, tickets, reception, medical, information, press relations, programs, stage interpreting for the hearing-impaired, crafts, food vending, site preparation, traffic, transportation, communications, stage management, sound, and staging, see to it that the atmosphere is like a big family picnic, rather than a commercial folk festival, largely due to the overall guidance and expertise of Toshi Seeger, who's been perfecting this sort of event for more years than she cares to reflect upon. Whatever the reasons, it works!

In addition to the traditional music of North America, Italy, Latin America, Africa, the British Isles, Europe, the Caribbean, and practically everywhere in between, there are demonstrations of spinning, weaving, pottery making, storytelling, woodworking, puppetry, sculpture, various homemade musical instruments, and children's games. There are hard-to-find books and records, open-air massage, Braille and large-print site maps and performance

schedules, lift-equipped shuttle vehicles, sign-language interpreters, a lost-and-found area, a valuables lock-up, wheelchair-accessible restrooms, and extra wheelchairs, creating a barrier-free environment to maximize the comfort of those in attendance.

As the Festival program states, "The Revival, more than just a fundraiser, is a place where we can meet face-to-face with folks from all over, tying our local effort to save the River to broader efforts to save the World, recharging our energies for the difficult year-round struggle." The music of the United States is as varied as its communities, people, and their concerns. It's impossible for Clearwater to cover this broad spectrum in a two-day Revival, so the emphasis varies each year. This year highlighted the music of Italy, but each year over an extended period, the Revival expects to "represent a small segment of the musical and community resources of our Hudson River Valley, our state, our country, and our globe." ■



A South Sea Island Singer talks with Elizabeth Cotton (seated).



Hudson River Sloop Singers on the banks of the Hudson River.

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# The Pinewoods Folk Music Club

by Suzanne Szasz

Like many a good thing, the Pinewoods Folk Music Club (PFMC) started out small. About 16 years ago a few of us folk music enthusiasts were saying goodbye to our campmates at the yearly, week-long session at the Country Dance and Song Society's camp at Long Pond, Massachusetts.

I said, "We just have to continue to meet in New York too!" And so we did, all five of us. We sang and laughed and talked of Pinewoods. Before we knew it, there were at least 30 of us, and we put on our first concert: Jack Langstaff at the Y. He was wonderful as usual, and stayed after his program to listen to our songs.

We really got on our way when Don and Estelle Wade joined the club. They never doubted that there were many people out there who were interested in our organizing concerts, house concerts, sings, appearances at New York City functions, concerts at the South Street Seaport, and even radio appearances. Don started a newsletter to tell our members about all the folk music in the country; it has remained the central point of our club ever since. I think that a lot of people who cannot participate in many events, vicariously do so by reading about all

the activities they could attend in The Pinewoods Folk Music Club Newsletter.

We started our concert series by featuring some Pinewoods favorites: Jean Ritchie, Frank Warner, and Jack Langstaff. They sang for us even though we didn't have much money. The list of our current favorites is long and distinguished: Sandy and Caroline Paton, Michael Cooney, Margaret MacArthur, Gordon Bok, Ed Trickett, Utah Phillips, Hedy West, and from across the ocean, DeDanaan, The Watsons, and Martin Carthy, just to name a few.

Many of the performers the club engages share one characteristic above and beyond their art: they care about the club and its members and are always ready to advise, help raise money, listen. Much like The Coop.

We have found homes for Pinewoods in churches and, recently, in the auditorium of Public School 41 in Greenwich Village.

But this is still not the heart and soul of the PFMC. Our two yearly weekends do feature "performers," but also numerous workshops led by our member-musicians like Jerry Epstein and Sonja Savig, and our own members. There is also lots of time in the schedule to

get together to jam or sing gospel songs or learn to play an instrument. Yes, we want to do it ourselves; I think folk music is like chamber music: nice in a big hall, but nicest in a living room or a garden, done for our own enjoyment.

And you would be surprised by all the talent that surfaces. Every once in a while one of our members shows us her first record (Lucy Simpson and Marion Wade); or a singing group that met at PFMC gets numerous bookings (Soldier's Fancy). Or Jack Langstaff and Jerry Epstein use a lot of our members in the chorus of the annual Christmas Revels.

One can find willing listeners for just about any kind of folk music; our camper concerts at the weekends are proof of that. Some of us even love to sing Balkan songs.

Our members are a special group of people. Very little, if any, drinking and smoking, lots of good gossip, dancing, and singing. It's enough to lift anyone's spirits.

(Suzanne Szasz is a well-known photographer, one of the founders of the club. She has served on its executive board every year, including several as president. She is vice-president now.)



- Wed., August 24: **Steve Cormier** (cowboy singer) House Concert, 8 p.m. at the home of Don Wade and Eileen Pentel, 35-41 72nd Street, Jackson Heights, NY 11372. Admission: \$4. Information: 672-6399.
- Tues., August 30: **Mike Seeger** (American folk music) at the Eagle Tavern, 8 p.m., 924-0275.
- Tues., September 6: **Dougie MacLean** (Scottish music) at the Eagle Tavern, 8 p.m., 924-0275.
- Fri., September 30: Party at Lil Appels, 9 p.m.
- October 14-16: Fall Folk Music Weekend at Camp Freedman with Roy Harris and more: workshops, dance, and concerts.
- Sun., October 23: Sacred Harp/Gospel sing, 2 p.m. Information: 898-3436.
- Fri., November 25: Singing Party with the Brooklyn Balladers; bring instruments.

**Fall Concert Series** at PS-41 Auditorium, 116 West 11th Street (just west of Avenue of the Americas). Information: (212) 594-8833. Admission is \$6 (or TDF + \$1.50); \$4 (or TDF) for NYPFMC and reciprocal club members; and \$3 for children and senior citizens.

- Fri., October 21: **The Balkanizers**—Balkan music par excellence.
- Fri., November 18: **Dick Gaughan**—the famous Scottish/Irish balladeer.
- Fri., January 20: **Huxtable, Christiansen & Hood**—women's trio, fine songs.
- Fri., April 13: **Friends of Fiddler's Green**—British Isles music.
- Fri., May 18: **Margaret MacArthur**—American folk, zither, dulcimer.

**Folk-Fone:** (212) 594-6876—Call anytime for a recorded listing of folk music in New York City.

For a free sample newsletter, call (212) 594-8833.

# Joni Mitchell:

## Yesterday

by Ned Treanor

It's 1965. Detroit folksinger/Wayne State University professor Chuck Mitchell, probably the best interpreter/performer of Bertolt Brecht/Kurt Weill/Maxwell Anderson anywhere on "the circuit" at the time, and just beginning to come into his own as a songwriter, is in Toronto for one of his rare out-of-town gigs. In the audience is Roberta Joan Anderson, a young Canadian poet, painter, and singer, also just beginning to try her hand at writing her own music. They meet; exchange songs, ideas, and vows; and return to Motown as the Midwest Jim and Jean/Ian and Sylvia... Chuck and Joni Mitchell!

Detroit in 1965 was the "folk cross-roads"—a smorgasbord of the entire singer/songwriter spectrum that was just starting to take shape, replacing the glut of Kingston Trio clones that had until then all but dominated the "industrial folk music" scene, as Oscar Brand refers to the medium.

A couple of years earlier, we had opened one of the best folk presentation rooms in the country, the Living End, a name brazenly stolen from New York's then Bitter End. Along with the Raven Gallery, the Chessmate, the Poison Apple, the Retort, and the zillion or so church coffeehouses that sprang up like mushrooms, folk music was alive and well in Detroit... and, therefore, Chuck and Joni had an immediate strong "home" following. They also did extremely well on the Eastern "Circuit," composed of major clubs in Cleveland, Chicago, Philly, Port Huron (Michigan), Charleston, Fayetteville, Miami, Toronto, and numerous cities along the way. Remember, too, that in those fertile days of the "folk craze," it was common to be booked for anywhere from three to ten days at a time, in each of these cities, so just cultivating one of these regional circuits could provide one with a comfortable income, while the steady work helped to maintain and sharpen one's skills—earn while you learn.

It was on one of these junkets that a young couple in Jacksonville, Florida, saw our dynamic duo perform, and offered to back them in the making of a demo tape, to get them recorded, almost guaranteeing national exposure. Judging from the number of bad to

mediocre "folksingers" already immortalized in vinyl, we figured that the world would beat a path to our door, once we got the family Mitchell transferred to disc. If groups like the Bi-Folk's could do it, why not Chuck and Joni? Yep, Bi-Folk's!

So we borrowed ten grand from our southern benefactors, and since neither Chuck nor Joni nor I (Chuck's former fellow warbler and insurance agent) nor Armand Kunz (Chuck's college roommate and attorney) could read or transcribe music, we luckily ran across Corky Siegel and Jim Schwall, who were with the Chicago Symphony, playing occasionally at Chicago's Mother Blues as the Siegel-Schwall Blues Band. They were the only relatively "local" people willing to commit Joni's weird tunings and key changes to paper. The only other musician we'd ever been able to convince to tackle Joni's lead sheet needs was a Floridian named Ron Kickasola, who'd performed with Mike ("Dutchman") Smith, before Mike resettled in Chicago. To complicate matters further, Joni had the bad habit of writing a ton of new music while on these road trips, performing these goodies "naked"—without benefit of copyright. It was only after one of her better songs, "My Favorite Color, Love," was stolen by one less gifted than she listened to the advice of her compadres and protected her music prior to performing it to death.

Since we were now all set to handle the tremendous responsibility of the great wealth that was soon to be ours, we formed a trio of corporations—Strider, Gandalf, and Lorian—that would be our publishing, production, and management divisions—to handle all of the money, you understand.

Now, the plot thickens. We do demos for six of Joni's "original" tunes, and two of Chuck's, utilizing Siegel-Schwall arrangements and musicians. The stuff was good, really good. So, knowing it was meant to be heard right away, while we were still so excited by what we'd just committed to plastic, we spent the few bucks that we hadn't squandered on the arrangements and demo production on trips to the Big Apple and the City of the Angels to hand-deliver our gem to the record companies personally. Without exception, they told us that we'd wasted their time and our money. As Trini Lopez's mentor, Herb Alpert, put it, "The girl has no present day commercial value." Now, here's a guy who'd

know: Trini Lopez? To add insult to injury, even though Vanguard couldn't stand Joni or Chuck, they signed Siegel-Schwall to a megabuck contract because they liked the "backup band and arrangements." Maynard Solomon, eat your heart out!

A funny thing suddenly began to happen almost as soon as we returned to Detroit, having snatched defeat from the jaws of victory. Other performers, even those who were writing their own material, such as Tom Rush, Buffy Sainte-Marie, Judy Collins, Dave Van Ronk, and George Hamilton IV, to name only a few, began to ask if they could perform this or that song of Joni's. She was writing more and more, and about this time, she also decided that the duo was passe—musically at first and then totally. During this transition phase, largely due to the success of Judy Collins's version of "Both Sides Now," Joni's popularity continued to grow, and she'd gone far beyond "the Circuit" to the Mariposa Folk Festival, Toronto's "Riverboat," Oscar Brand's national Canadian television show, and the new "attention" went to her head. Joni had spent several of her first dozen or so years as a victim of infantile paralysis, so she was just now beginning to have a delayed childhood at the same time as she was being "discovered" by her peers. Frankly, she handled it rather poorly and nearly wound up blowing it before it even got started. Too much too soon.

Because we were "friends," she found it very hard to accept our constructive criticism in the spirit in which it was offered. Therefore, she'd get defensive and belligerent, and do irresponsible and erratic things to give us something to really bug her about with regard to her attitude, taking the heat off her performing problems. In fact, she refers to our badgering in "Both Sides Now," when she writes, "And now old friends are acting strange/They shake their heads, they say I've changed." We did, and she had! With the dissolution of their marriage, gone, too, were the 4:00 a.m. roquefort salads at the Big Ben Diner, the sense of "family," our "kid sister, J." (as we called Joni), and the fun.

After the "Black Day in July" 1967, when the Detroit riots claimed the "Living End" and a good portion of the rest of the town as well, we decided that we'd done all we could for Joni. What she needed now was full-time

(Continued on page 18.)



# Yesterday and Today

## Today

by Pat Cambouris

It's hard to describe what it was like being at The Garden State Arts Center (Holmdel, New Jersey) when Joni Mitchell graced the stage on July 16. She is more than a professional musician. More than an artist or a poet. Even the title elusive Earth Mother does her no justice.

Once touted as a delicate but solid folksinger, Mitchell, since her debut LP in 1968 (Song for a Seagull), has hoisted many sails in her career, letting the winds of change carry her through pop recognition ("Big Yellow Taxi" from Ladies of the Canyon and "Help Me" from Court and Spark), jazz idioms (Hissing of Summer Lawns, Hejira, Don Juan's Reckless Daughter, and Mingus) and waves of rock and reggae (Wild Things Run Fast).

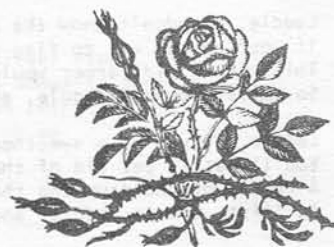
Accompanied by a very capable four-piece backing band consisting of Vinnie Colaiuta on drums, Russell Ferrante on keyboards, guitarist Michael Landau, and Larry Klein (whom Mitchell wed last year) on electric bass, the poised singer/composer performed two lengthy sets that were salt and peppered with material from her early years through the present and her current LP for Geffen Records (Wild Things Run Fast). She has lost her girlish giggle and in its place is a sophisticated candor worth envying. Even the clothes she wore were simple yet striking. As part of the stage setting, Mitchell created seven black hanging panels with brightly colored lines and figures suggesting the ocean and the city—one source indicates this reflects her two residences, Los Angeles and Vancouver.

Of the 24 songs performed, encores included, Mitchell dished out ample portions from the new album. All seven were well-received, but most ap-

pealing were "Chinese Cafe/Unchained Melody," showing off beautiful piano work intertwining her own melancholy composition with the tender standard; "Love," a reworking of the love chapter from II Corinthians, which was particularly engrossing because of the conviction in Mitchell's expressive voice and gestures; and "Underneath the Streetlights," played as an encore, just because it's so playful and bouncy and a nice contrast to the last song of the evening, "Woodstock," which Joni performed dramatically on electric guitar. The anthem of the late '60s hauntingly crept out into the audience like a beckoning hand, but too late, as Joni disappeared mystically into the wings.

The East Coast rarely has the opportunity to attend a Joni Mitchell concert, but she took good care of everyone at this show, satisfying the folk, jazz, rock, and pop fans among us. Highlights included "Song for Sharon," a happy/sad reading of "For Free" that Joni achieved by interspersing humorous colloquialisms into the lines ("They knew he had never been on MTV"), "Raised on Robbery," which came out of nowhere from a frantic piano solo by Ferrante, and a surprise in Marvin Gaye's "I Heard It Through the Grapevine," the first of three encores. Everyone was on his/her feet, clapping, dancing, and singing, and turning the stately Arts Center into a "swingin'" hot spot.

But the piece de resistance had to be the lovely, heartfelt rendition of "A Case of You," from Blue, her fourth album. Mitchell jokingly introduced it as her version of Pat Benatar's "Hit Me with Your Best Shot," her bragging song. It's unfortunate that this was the only dulcimer song offered during the show. A hush fell over the patrons, including those in the distant lawn seats. A few of the artist's well-chosen lyrics are worth a thousand images, especially in such an intimate song as this. Ferrante added subtle piano accompaniment toward the end.



# ALYRICIS

## side 1

### THE LAMBS ON THE GREEN HILLS

The lambs on the green hills they sport and they play  
And many strawberries grow 'round the salt sea  
Many strawberries grow 'round the salt sea  
And many's the ship sails the ocean.

The bride and bride's party to the church they did go  
The bride she rode foremost, she bore the best show  
And I followed after with my heart full of woe  
To see my love wed to another.

The first place I saw her was on the church stand  
Gold rings on her fingers and her love by the hand  
Says I, "My wee lassie, I will be your man  
Although you are wed to another."

The next place I saw her was on the way home  
I ran on before her, not knowing where to roam  
Says I, "My wee lassie, I'll be by your side  
Although you are wed to another."

"Stop, stop!" says the groom's man, "till I speak a word.  
Would you venture your life on the point of my sword?  
For courting too slowly you've lost this fair maid  
So begone, for you'll never enjoy her."

So make now my grave both large, wide and deep  
And sprinkle it over with flowers so sweet  
Then lay me down in it to take my last sleep  
For that's the best way to forget her.

Repeat first verse.

Traditional

### ENLIST, BONNIE LADDIE

Two recruiting sergeants came from Black Watch  
Through markets and fairs, some recruits for to catch.  
All that they enlisted were 30 and 3,  
So enlist, bonnie laddie, and come away with me.

Chorus:  
It's over the mountains and over the Main  
Through Gibraltar to France and Spain.  
Put a feather in your bonnet and a kilt above your knee.  
Enlist, bonnie laddie, and come away with me.

It's out by the barn and in by the byre  
This old farmer thinks you'll never tire.  
It's a slavery job of low degree,  
So enlist, bonnie laddie, and come away with me.

Laddie, you don't know the danger that you're in.  
If your horses was to flag or your sheep was to run,  
This wicked old farmer wouldn't pay your fee,  
So enlist, bonnie laddie, and come away with me.

Laddie, if you've a sweetheart and bairn  
You'll easily get rid of that ill-spun yarn.  
A rattle of the drum and that'll pay it all,  
So 'list, bonnie laddie, and heed the bugle call.

Traditional

### DO YOU LOVE AN APPLE

Do you love an apple, do you love a pear  
Do you love a laddie with curly brown hair  
Oh yes I love him, I can't deny him  
I will be with him where e'er he goes.

Before I got married I wore a black shawl  
But since I got married I wear coveralls.  
But still I love him, I can't deny him  
I will be with him where e'er he goes.

He stood at the corner, a fag in his mouth  
Two hands in his pockets, he whistled me out  
But still I love him, I can't deny him  
I will be with him where e'er he goes.

He works at the pier for 9 bob a week  
Come Saturday night he comes rolling home drunk  
But still I love him, I can't deny him  
I will be with him where e'er he goes.

Before I got married I'd sport and I'd play  
But now the cradle it gets in me way  
But still I love him, I can't deny him  
I will be with him where e'er he goes.

Repeat first verse

Traditional

### ANOTHER WAY TO FIND YOU

Baby died this morning, now she's underground,  
Oozing self-confidence, her feet are turning brown,  
What do you have to say,  
Tomorrow's another day, another way to find you.

I can hardly see you, I could try  
To tell you all the reasons,  
but I think I'd probably paralyze your mind,  
What do you have to say,  
Tomorrow's another day, another way to find you.

I've got a feeling I've done something wrong,  
Tell me when you're leaving,  
I can't tell how long I've been gone,  
What do you have to say,  
Tomorrow's another day, another way to find you.

© 1972 by Chris Smither, Poppy Music/Homunculus  
Music ASCAP



# BON AN, MAL AN

La première fois tu t'en souviens pas  
On s'est caressé les cheveux  
Toute une nuit, du bonheur pour la vie,  
Puis c'était le Printemps  
Je dis toujours que c'est l'instant  
Ou tout s'arrange et bien souvent  
On a vu des bourgeons sur tous les balcons.

## Chorus:

Bon An, Mal An on s'en sortait bien tous les deux,  
Bon An, Mal An, l'un dans l'autre  
On aurait pu être heureux (Repeat twice)

La deuxième fois, c'est toi ou c'est moi  
Mensonge d'une nuit d'été,  
Bonjour ciel bleu, t'en fais pas pour si peu,  
Regarde ce soleil,  
Bourdonnement d'abeilles,  
Et si tu te réveilles  
Et que tu m'aimes toujours, On ira faire un tour.

## Chorus

La fois d'après, j'oublierai jamais  
On a passé une heure ou deux  
Sans rien dire, la peur de mourir  
T'écoutes pas les vent d'Automne  
Tu t'étonnes et tu tatonnes,  
Tu fais comme s'ils n'existaient pas,  
Et cet enfant de lait qu'on a jamais fait.

## Chorus

La dernière fois on tremblait de froid,  
On s'est caressé les cheveux,  
Il gelait blanc sur nos rêves d'enfant  
Cruelle comme l'Hiver,  
L'habitude, la manière  
De changer un coeur en désert  
Ne pas lire la pâleur d'un sourire en pleurs

## Chorus

© 1983 by Gabriel Yacoub

# FOUR SILVER RINGS

My baby's gone away,  
I sleep in the day,  
And I'm out on the town at night.  
I don't sleep well alone,  
So until she comes home,  
I guess that it will be alright.

It was cold out today.  
She's so far away.  
I can hear her voice but I can't  
see her light.  
I dream of yesterday,  
And places so far away.  
I can hear her say in my ear it's  
alright.

## Translation:

GOOD YEAR, BAD YEAR

The first time, do you remember,  
We caressed each other's hair  
For a whole night  
T'was a happiness for a whole lifetime,  
And it was Springtime  
I always say that it is the time  
When everything settles, and one  
Often sees buds on balconies.

## Chorus:

Good Year, Bad Year, We used to get along fine,  
Good Year, Bad Year, One within the other,  
We could have been happy (Repeat twice)

The second time around, it is you or me,  
A lie on a summer night,  
Hello blue skies, don't worry about it,  
Watch the sun,  
Bees buzzing,  
And if you wake up and you still love me,  
We'll go for a walk.

## Chorus

The time after, I won't forget it,  
We spent an hour or two  
Without saying anything, fear of dying,  
You don't listen to the autumn winds  
You are surprised, and you feel about,  
You act as if they did not exist,  
And what about this child we never made.

## Chorus

The last time, we were shivering,  
We touched each other's hair,  
There was white frost on our childish dreams  
Cruel as winter,  
The habit and the way  
To change a heart into a desert,  
And not to be able to read the  
paleness of a tearful smile.

## Chorus

© 1983 by Gabriel Yacoub

## Bridge:

I held a memory today,  
Oh what a precious thing,  
Of a morning when she held me and  
she took my hand,  
And she gave me four silver rings.

## Chorus:

Four silver rings, four silver rings,  
One empty bottle, and two songs to sing.  
My, oh my, what a glorious thing.  
And in the morning she gave me  
Four silver rings.

© 1983 by Peter Wilson.

# LYRICIS

## side 2

### WONDROUS LOVE

What wondrous love is this, oh my soul! oh my soul!  
What wondrous love is this, oh my soul!  
What wondrous love is this that caused the lord of bliss  
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul,  
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul.

When I was sinking down,  
Beneath God's righteous frown  
Christ laid aside his crown  
For my soul.

To God and to the lamb, I will sing,  
Who is the great I am  
While millions join the theme  
I will sing.

And when from death I'm free,  
I'll sing on,  
I'll sing and joyful be  
And through eternity  
I will sing.

Traditional

### THE WINGS OF A GULL

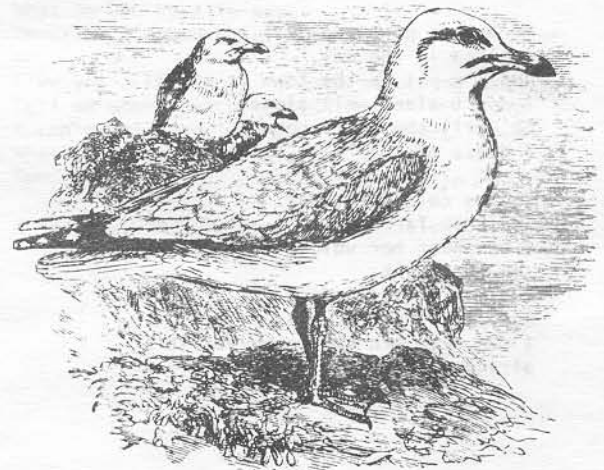
Oh, if I had the wings of a gull, me boys,  
I would spread 'em and fly home.  
I would leave old Greenland's icy grounds,  
For the right whale here is none.  
The weather's rough and the winds do blow.  
There's little comfort here  
And I'd sooner be snug in a Deptford pub  
A-drinking of strong beer.

Oh, a man must be mad or he's wanting  
money bad  
To venture catching whales,  
For he may be drown when the fish  
turns around  
Or his head smashed in with its tail.  
Though the work seems grand to a young  
green hand  
And his heart is high when he goes,  
In a very short burst he'd as soon as  
hear a curse  
As the cry of: "There she blows!"

"All hand on deck now, for God's sake!  
Move briskly if you can."  
And he stumbles on deck so dizzy and so sick,  
For his life he don't give a damn.  
High overhead the great flukes spread  
And the mate gives the whale the iron  
And soon the blood in a purple flood  
From his spout all comes a flyin'.

These trials we bear for nigh on four years  
Till our flying jib points to home.  
We're supposed for our toil to get a bonus  
on the oil  
And an equal share of the bone.  
We go to the agent to settle for the trip  
And there we've cause to repent  
For we've slaved away four years of our lives  
And we've earned about three pounds ten.

Traditional; Source: David Jones





# ELEGY EARLY ON

There's a stream running through you  
Its water's icy cold.  
There's another hand squeezing  
the hand you used to hold.  
And the way that you've been throwing  
I can tell you're growing older than your dreams.

There have been five stores on the corner  
and it seems like yesterday  
You went down to Miami,  
You were hoping you could play,  
But the Dolphins turned against you  
and maybe that made you mad.

The winters in New York City  
Drive you right out of your mind  
But in the springtime the girls  
look so pretty  
They keep you up at night  
Fill you with delight

You never thought about tomorrow  
When you were in your prime  
Life was one big party for you, baby  
Smoking and joking with your women so fine

I just saw your old friend Sally  
And he said "It's going slow"  
He had a list a yard long of the  
guys that got let go.  
He still believes in Reagan and  
Sally had to sell his mother's car.

Sometimes the notion hits you  
To grab a bus and ride.  
The wind blows hard at Atlantic City  
And your money's gone with the tide.

Now you will never be a lawyer,  
You won't go far.  
You will never be a doctor  
With a brand new shiny car.  
You will never be the owner of  
Your very own vacant lot.  
You will never be an athlete or an astronaut.

© 1983 by Robert Zaidman

# LOVE IS KIND (HAUL AWAY)

Love is kind to the least of men  
Haul away, haul away  
Though he be but a drunken tar  
Haul away

Far from man or the sight of land  
Haul away, haul away  
Who will love the sailor man  
Haul away

Take me back to that star-eyed maid  
Haul away, haul away  
I was contented with her then  
Haul away

In the comfort of her bed  
Haul away, haul away  
Let me lie there until I'm dead  
Haul away

Repeat first verse

Traditional

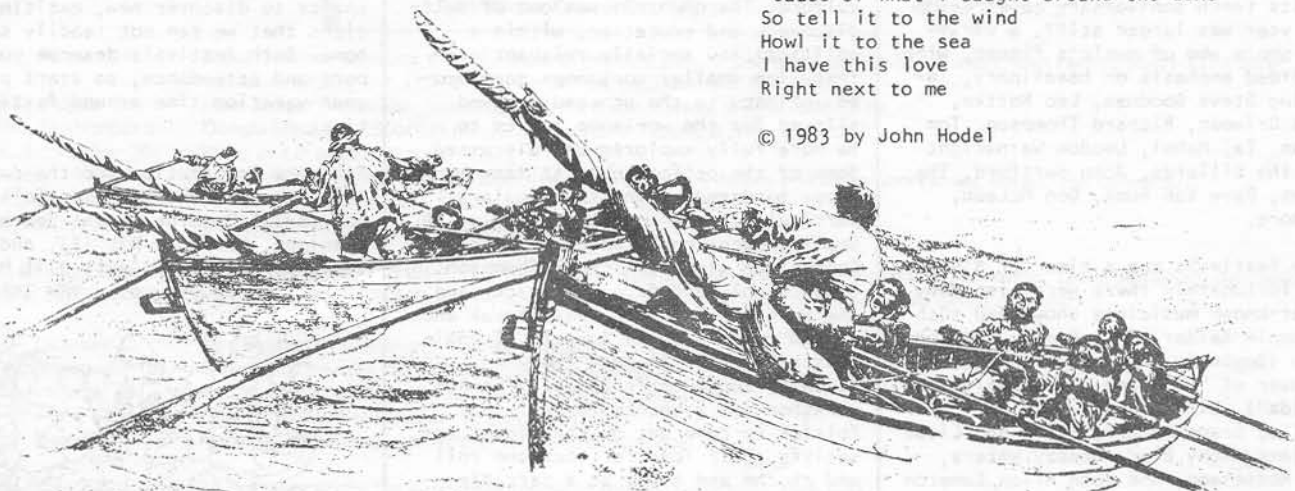
# I HAVE THIS LOVE (TELL IT TO THE WIND)

I saw your love in the envious wind  
And it was obvious that I needed a friend  
So I gave this hand to the nighttime air  
And when I came up I found you there  
So tell it to the wind  
Howl it to the sea  
I have this love  
Right next to me

Oh the way she's swift unto the dawn  
Is like the slow scattered progress of the swan  
And a joy is in the guitars that play  
The sound of this girl and what she does say  
So tell it to the wind  
Howl it to the sea  
I have this love  
Right next to me

So I'm proud of the way that my life runs now  
And that shouldn't surprise none of you nohow  
And the night stands flattered once again  
'Cause of what I caught around the bend  
So tell it to the wind  
Howl it to the sea  
I have this love  
Right next to me

© 1983 by John Hodel



# Canadian Folk Festivals '83

by Marsha Necheles

Folk music lovers will be glad to know that folk music is alive and well and enthusiastically supported, not in our own country, but in Canada. Two Canadian festivals in particular are eagerly anticipated each July and garner community encouragement and volunteer help: the Vancouver Folk Festival, in its sixth year, and the Winnipeg Folk Festival, which celebrated its tenth anniversary this year.

Both festivals, although quite different conceptually and operated independently from the other, present a great diversity of music--folk, country, blues, cajun, international, contemporary songwriters, bluegrass--in their three-day formats. The amount of music one hears during this marathon experience is staggering, beginning each day with informal workshops on various topics or themes taking place concurrently at six stages from morning until early evening, and the larger evening concert continuing until all hours.

The festival sites are worth mentioning: Winnipeg's site is Bird's Hill Park, a provincial park of immense size and an hour away from the city, complete with camping facilities. Vancouver's event takes place at Jericho Beach Park, a smaller park full of sloping hills and ponds, located right next to the beach. The beauty of the surroundings makes listening to the music a visual as well as an aural delight for the senses.

## WINNIPEG FOLK FESTIVAL

Winnipeg is the larger event, attracting over 30,000 people in years past, and its tenth anniversary celebration this year was larger still, a veritable who's who of music's finest, with a decided emphasis on headliners, including Steve Goodman, Leo Kottke, David Grisman, Richard Thompson, Tom Paxton, Taj Mahal, Loudon Wainwright III, the Dillards, John Hartford, The Roches, Dave Van Ronk, Don McLean, and more.

Since festivals are a time for discovery, fortunately there were also many lesser-known musicians showcased such as Connie Kaldor, Eric Bogle, and John Munro (Bogle is the Australian-based composer of "The Band Played Waltzing Matilda"), Bim, Claudia Schmidt, Blowzabella, Grupo Aymara, Robin and Linda Williams, Tony Bird, Sneezy Waters, Leon Rosselson, and John Allan Cameron among hundreds of others.

Songwriters in particular were allowed time to illustrate their craft and share their experiences at workshops entitled "What's a Good Song," "Song-writing: Inspiration and Hard Work," "Songs I'd Love to Steal--And Do!", "Songs to Rock the Boat."

For me and for many others, however, the highlight event of the entire festival was a workshop celebrating the late Canadian songwriter Stan Rogers, to whom the festival (and the Vancouver Festival) was dedicated. For over ninety minutes, musicians (Garnet Rogers and Jim Morrison, John Allan Cameron, Jim Post, David Essig, Carly Boy Stubbs, Tim Harrison, Connie Kaldor, and writers Emily Friedman and Bill Howell) and audience gloried in the work and exploits of this intensely talented man who wrote songs about Canada that were songs about Everyman and Every Country. Stan Rogers will be sorely missed by all who care about music and its capacity to affect the human spirit on its deepest level.

Winnipeg is always special and was again this year, despite the heat and hungry mosquitos. The festival is getting too large, however, and may need to re-evaluate its goals for future years. A definite suggestion for next year would be to limit the number of performers at workshops and on main-stage, and instead of all the big-name acts, take the opportunity to hire more lesser known performers, especially those native to Canada.

## VANCOUVER FOLK FESTIVAL

Vancouver, smaller in scope than Winnipeg, had a more international flavor this year, with artists from all over the globe presenting their indigenous music and sharing their culture. The emphasis was one of self-discovery and education, within a political and socially relevant context. The smaller workshops gave added intimacy to the proceedings and allowed for the workshop topics to be more fully explored and discussed. Some of the performances at many workshops bordered on the spectacular, particularly the workshop entitled "A Small Convention," featuring Fairport Convention alumnus Richard Thompson, Simon Nicol, and Dave Swarbrick, and the workshop entitled "Heartbreak and Sorrow" with Rosalie Sorrels, Frankie Armstrong, Bim, Richard Thompson, Lydia Mendoza, and Quentic Badoux. The R&B workshop was a chance for all the folkies to come out of the closet and satisfy their love for rock and roll and rhythm and blues at a terrific

electric blowout ending in the traditional folk classic sung by all, "Satisfaction!"

Two songwriters in particular shared their hearts and souls as well as their music--Connie Kaldor from Saskatchewan and Bim, hailing from British Columbia. Bim may be one of the most unique musicians in the folk field, with a distinctive voice and appearance that allows one to become totally enraptured by his strengths as a writer, singer, and guitarist. His tenor voice can do it all--from George Jones country to Elvis rockers to rhythm and blues to his own finely crafted compositions that seethe with energy and rhythm. He is a man whose integrity and commitment shine forth in all he says and sings.

Connie Kaldor is simply one of the most personable and talented songwriters to come along in years, her artistry full of wit and humor and compassion. She deserves to reach a worldwide audience, and as she closed the festival on Sunday night and thousands were spellbound by her music, she led the finale along with other musicians with Stan Rogers's "Mary Ellen Carter," a most fitting way to end the event. (Winnipeg ended the festival in the same manner.)

It is a real travesty and an indictment of the U.S. immigration laws affecting Canadian musicians that one must travel to Canada to see many of these artists, as it is extremely difficult for them to get legal clearance to perform in the States. At least these yearly Canadian folk festivals (and others such as Edmonton Folk Festival and the Owen Sound Summerfolk Festival) give one the chance to discover new, exciting musicians that we can not readily see at home. Both festivals deserve your support and attendance, so start planning your vacation time around festival time.

For more information and the dates for 1984, contact the Winnipeg Folk Festival, 8-222 Osborne Street South, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3L 1Z3, and the Vancouver Folk Festival, 3271 Main Street, Vancouver, B.C. V5V 3M6.





# Jesse Winchester

## By the Sweat of Your Brow

by Rod MacDonald

It was all dark out there. Nothing could be seen beyond the brilliant spotlights, and the only sound was the Am7 chord stretching out into the distance of echoes. By the time I heard applause, the promoter already had me backstage.

"Great set! All right! We're off to a good start now. Do you know there's 500 people out there?"

But before I had time to say anything, the show, running late (and, being live radio, every second has to be accounted for), was moving on, and another thin white male adult with a guitar, Jesse Winchester, author of "Yankee Lady" and "Rhumba," walked out on the stage.

Upstairs waiting for his own set was Jerry Jeff Walker of "Mr. Bojangles" fame, clad in head-to-toe blue denim with handsewn emblems on every spare inch of cloth. Another white male adult with a guitar, I thought, spinning his yarns of lonesome times and hard-learned lessons. Which comes first, the lonesome song or the lonesome times? Or do they keep winding themselves together until one chain of events starts a song that starts another chain of events?

Now Jerry Jeff, the man who said "I can't get loose without my juice," is a longtime favorite. I've seen at least ten of his shows, including one or two where the boozy baritone ground to a soggy stop mid-set. But I couldn't forget the night at the old Kenny's Castaways uptown in New York City that he sang for three and a half hours and the crowd nearly tore the place apart when he quit, holding up a guitar down to three strings.

"I'm out of strings, folks," he said. "You should've got here earlier."

But Jesse Winchester in person, thin, intense, sometimes bursting into a laugh as suddenly as a telephone rings, was a first for me. A beautiful tenor voice, classy songs, good stylish nylon-string guitar playing. We said hello and soon ended up by ourselves with a trashcan full of ice cold beer when Jerry Jeff went on-stage.

R: Hey Jesse, I'd like to interview you for The Coop magazine.

J: Well, I don't know. (The speech slows down, gets careful; the trace of a southern drawl sneaks in.)

R: I think people might like to read about you, myself.

J: Why don't we just talk?

R: O.K. if I write it down?

J: Oh, I guess.

R: Fair enough. How about some background? Where were you born, college, first guitar, all that.

J: (Pause) Memphis. May 1944. When I was 18 I went to Williams College. I'm not from a very musical family, I guess. I first picked up a guitar when I was twelve...played a ukelele when I was little...but my guitar was a Silvertone with a silver bar pickup. Never had an acoustic til 10 years later.

R: Hey, I had one of those.

J: Yeah, it was a good first guitar.

R: Now Jesse, one of the things that's well known about you is you went to Canada during the Vietnam war. How'd that come about?

J: (Long pause) We had some bands in college, and I graduated in 1966, then hung out and played in some piano bars --I had piano lessons--for a few months. Then I got my draft notice and left for Canada.

So I came to Canada in 1967. I loved it right away--my first thought I had was on the bus from the airport, listening to two women chatting first in English, then slipping right into French like it was no big deal at all. I remember it was snowing.

R: Do you think that going to Canada has surfaced in your music?

J: What do you mean?

R: Do you find yourself going back to this choice you made, or drawing on it, in creating your music?

J: I have given in to the temptation, I know. I'm not proud of that. I'm sorry for every reference to it. I'm not sorry for doing it, but I'm sorry for being so personal. What it amounts to is bragging and I regret that.

R: You really feel that way?

J: I feel that referring to it...trying to inject myself into the song...is not the idea.

R: So you try to keep away from personal statements?

J: Yeah. I'd rather it be so personal that it was universal. Not everybody in this world is a draft dodger, so any discussion of it is not universal.

R: Well, not everyone is a musician or a male or a female either. You think there's no way to deal with it as a universal theme?

J: There is, but you want to talk about things much more basic. I want to hear a song about a guy and his girl or a guy and his god. The rest of it--let's say a guy and his government --I don't want to hear it. That kind of stuff is gonna die in five years. Songs are supposed to last longer and be truer than that. It's important to say things you really mean, and political things are of the lowest order. I like songs that are commercial--tin pan alley, Harlan Howard, Dallas Frazier. Those are the greatest songwriters--by my standards--in the world.

R: Excuse me, but can you give me some titles?

J: Dallas Frazier wrote "Tell It Like It Is," "Alley Oop." Hit songs, songs everybody understands.

R: A few years ago you were touring with a band, then you went solo. Was that for business or musical reasons, do you think?

J: Both of those. I can't afford to pay a band. But there were lots of other reasons. I don't have the personality of a leader, I can't lead a band. And what I want to do doesn't have anything to do with notes.

R: I feel like asking you what you want to do.

J: (Long pause) I hate to answer that when someone's writing it down. It sounds so jive. But you want magic, you want time to stop for everybody... You don't need equipment or any material thing to make that happen...In fact, the less baggage you've got, the

better chance you've got of making that happen.

R: Magic is an elusive concept. Do you need any personal discipline to have that?

J: Yeah, it involves having it not happen for you. You've got to be completely aware. You've got to make it happen for them, but for you it's work. That's the price you pay. You can't party.

(There's a chorus of cheers from the crowd below as Jerry Jeff yells out a huge "Yahoo.")

R: You don't like to get drunk when you play?

J: In the past it was terrible. Not now. I was havin' all the fun but nobody else was. It's by the sweat of your brow now, you've got to get it. You can have a good time with your baby when it's Saturday night.

R: Is that an ascetic attitude?

J: No, it's realistic. It's the truth. I've seen a lot of people in the music business try to have it the other way...try to party along with the audience...and it never seems to work. You've got to be aware and sing the notes in tune. You've got to have the magic yourself, but it's got to be good. They won't let you be bad, won't let you misbehave.

R: What songs last for you over the years?

J: The ones I really get a kick out of are the new ones. The old ones, well, I make myself live them again. You have to mean it when you sing a song you've sung 1000 times, you've got to listen and mean it. It's got to be real.

R: What's your situation with recording?

J: I'm still with Bearsville, though my last record was a couple of years ago.

R: Anything in the works?

J: Yeah, for a few months now I've built a studio in my attic, did all the electrical work, and it's done. I'm real proud of it. I'll be starting an album soon.

R: Mostly solo?

J: No, kind of country pop. I'm into commercial music myself.

R: Are you writing songs about a man and his god?

J: Yeah, I write some spiritual stuff. I don't know if they'd play it, but to me it's spiritual. If I say I believe in God but I'm not totally sure...I've never seen God...I want to say I believe but...maybe that doesn't make me a true Christian if I stick the but in, but that's the way it is for me. I'm right there with the whole thing 'bout Jesus, but Jesus never talked to me.

R: Do you pray?

J: Yeah, I guess so. I'm like you, I really don't know...when the shit comes down, your baby gets sick, you say, Dear Lord please, and that's prayer. But what does that make me? The next minute I'll be cursin' and misbehavin'...I really don't know what category that puts me in.

R: Do you try to get there in music?

J: The ultimate for me would be to sing gospel...to mean it and believe it. There's something about it that makes me want to get down on my knees. Maybe some day....

\* \* \*

Jerry Jeff has wound the crowd into a suitable frenzy and sent them packing as the backstage crew puts an end to our conversation. Then Jerry Jeff, Jesse, and I are out of the hall, waiting for rides, three adult white males with their yarns and their songs. Jerry Jeff, the upstate New Yorker-turned-Texan, stands by his convertible, strumming his guitar and humming to the bright New Hampshire stars, having touched none of the trashcan full of beers in his dressing room. Well-paid for my fifteen minutes of singing, I grab a ride out into the countryside for a late-night reunion with some longtime friends.

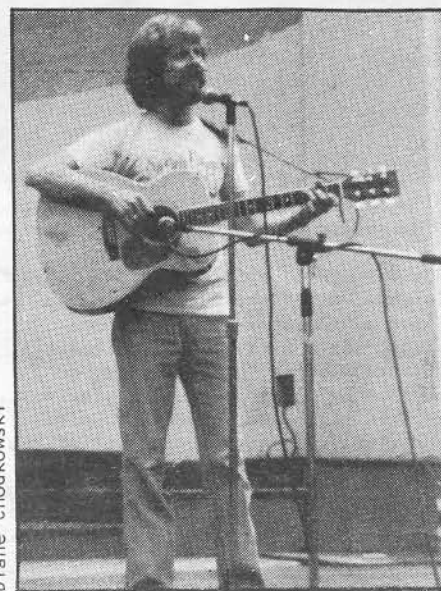
And Jesse Winchester, slowly and softly, says goodnight to us all, then puts the pedal down for Montreal, somewhere at the far end of a long and lonesome stretch of interstate highway.

## Second Annual Free



Diane Chodkowski

Lisi Tribble, David Massengill, and Mark Dann.



Diane Chodkowski

Paul Kaplan.



## Coffeehouse Conference '83

by Grant Orenstein

The National Association of Campus Activities (NACA) East Coast Regional Conference was held in June in Geneseo, New York, 30 miles south of Rochester, 70 miles east of Buffalo. Geneseo is a small, nice college town, or so it seemed in June. The campus overlooks the Genesee Valley. The sunsets are a real highlight. But a conference of musicians? They have them all the time.

I must confess this was my first, so I had a slightly idealistic idea of what would take place. Since musicians aren't generally the follow-schedules-to-the-minute types, and since so much was crammed into three days, things tended to be late.

What is this all about? Making music, money, and getting gigs on the college circuit. How? Well, you play your stuff. Everyone participates in Round Robins. This is a group of five or six acts in a smallish room taking turns doing a song or two. This goes on for an hour and a half. The coffeehouse people come around and listen, hopefully.

Also, if you are lucky enough to be drawn for a showcase, you get a 20-minute set scheduled during a "main-stage" presentation. If you showcase

one year, you cannot showcase the next. Should you not be picked the first time, your name will be entered into the lottery twice the second year; three times the third year. It's a fair system.

There are also educational sessions on topics such as: how to run a coffeehouse, how to get your gig publicized, what to expect on the road, and tour planning.

I was lucky and got to do a 20 minute set at the Mojo Coffeehouse. Mojo has been doing its thing since 1977. I was happy to see pictures of Rod MacDonald, Paul Kaplan, and Frank Christian (other musicians currently living in New York City) on the wall.

The talent this year was very good. The types of acts varied from TV entertainment satire comedy with guitar playing types, to hard core folkies, to bluegrass, to singer/songwriter, and even a fusion jazz-rock band. Though the talent was good, the technical difficulties sometimes were a hindrance.

The hardest part for me was the selling of my self. Since I lived in the same dorm and ate at the same cafeteria as the people who might hire me, I always felt like I should be "on." On the last day there is the buying

where people interested will come talk to you at your table. Promo is very heavy even at this small conference. Posters, albums, tapes, slick brochures, etc., abounded. I felt a bit unprepared for all that. A professional front is very important at these things, and the college circuit veterans were ready.

Attending this conference was a good opportunity for me to see what other performers do, and to make friends, even in the air of subdued competition. I got to meet contacts for possible gigs, and if I get any it will all have been worth it. So I recommend this conference to anyone interested in expanding their gigging possibilities.

For information, write: National Association of Campus Activities, P.O. Box 11489, Columbia, South Carolina 29211. Or call: (803) 799-0768.



## Central Park Concert



Rod MacDonald (center, with guitar), aided by most of the Central Park Concert performers.

Diane Chodkowski

(Continued from page 8.)

effort on her behalf, by someone with the right contacts--someone who could be more objective. To Joni, friends were friends, managers were managers, and the two shouldn't be combined. Therefore, we returned to New York and met with Arthur Gorson, who'd been referred to us by Joni-supporter, Tom Rush. Gorson was handling the blossoming careers of Phil Ochs, Jim and Jean, David Blue, and Eric Andersen, as well as Tom, and we all felt pretty good about his reaction to Joni. We tentatively agreed that Arthur would

add Joni to his stable of stars, but by the time we'd returned to Detroit, he'd been convinced that he didn't need another "girl act," and the deal was off.

This is where Elliot Roberts came into the picture. He had managed a group called "The Happenings" ("See You in September") and made them moderately successful. We knew that Joni, with songs recorded by Buffy Sainte-Marie, Tom Rush, Dave Van Ronk, George Hamilton IV, and Judy Collins, would be what Roberts needed at this stage in his career, and vice versa. We arranged a meeting between the Saskatoon songbird and Roberts at the Canterbury House in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and the two "hit it off" like old roommates. Joni moved to California (fer sure!) and discarded most of what she'd done to that point. Strider/Gandalf/Lorien became Siquomb; she kept a couple of her demo cuts for her initial album, and scrapped the rest; hired David Crosby as her producer and Stephen Stills on bass backup; penned her own cover artwork; and formed her own production and management companies, patterned after those we'd designed in Detroit. One of her first "discoveries" was Crosby, Stills and Nash, to whom she then added former neighbor and polio patient Neil Young. Soon

after, remembering how she'd been received by the pros in the media, and afraid that she'd wind up like other good writers she'd known--loved by her peers, but unknown by the public at large, she cofounded Asylum Records, later to merge with Elektra/Nonesuch, to far surpass all of the traditional "folk" labels that had shunned her a year earlier--A&M, Vanguard, Folkways...and Elektra.

Joni was on her way. From chronologically-autobiographical ballads of a shy Canadian girl, "hanging her laundry on the line," as she'd say, to folk/rock/jazz writer-performer-mogul in a little more than two years. Joni made it happen. At this point in her life, she never looked back to see what "the other guy" was doing. She worked at being Joni Mitchell 24 hours a day, and before long, the "other guy" was copying Joni. Even now, when she reflects upon her past, she doesn't brood about what might have been; she simply continues to grow beyond where she's been to date, never satisfied with the status quo. It's a good lesson for all of us--learn from the past, but don't dwell in it. You can't change what happened yesterday, but if tomorrow only repeats yesterday, so much for growth, or discovery, or success.

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# on the record

MIKE AGRANOFF has been performing at coffeehouses, festivals, and colleges in the Northeast for six or seven years. He is a board member (and past president) of both the Folk Project and the Folk Music Society of Northern New Jersey, and is heavily involved with the Minstrel Show Coffeehouse.

RICHARD FEWTRELL is a musician and sailor out of New York, though he remains a citizen of Britain. He plays many instruments, including fiddle, concertina, ukelele, and lute.

JAN HENSHAW, who lives in Bloomington, Indiana, has toured extensively in the United States and Europe. Her first album, *Pirate Ships*, was released in 1982 on Redbud Records.

JOHN HODEL's influences are everyone, everywhere. From Bob Dylan to Wallace Stevens. From Rod MacDonald's rhythms to Jack Hardy's "Sparrow." From a lonesome pin drop's fall to Edna St. Vincent Millay's drenched and dripping apple trees. With a chord progression of Pete's and a visit to the Carmel Valley. Once all over and ten times back again.

DAVID JONES, originally from London's Isle of Dogs, is known as a fine performer of many types of music, ranging from traditional English ballads to the London music hall. His solo album, *Easy and Slow*, is on the Minstrel label.

PAUL KAPLAN performs solo and with the folk group, The Gallant Poachers. He is coauthor with Dan Milner of *A Bonnie Bunch of Roses*, Songs of England, Ireland and Scotland, published by Oak Publications. Paul's solo album, *Life on This Planet*, was released in 1982.

KEN PERLMAN teaches guitar and banjo and has written several instruction books for both instruments. The song he recorded for this month's Coop, "Return from Fingal," is included in his book, *Fingerpicking Fiddle Tunes*, on Chapel Press. His album, recently released on Folkways, is called *Ken Perlman Clawhammer Banjo and Fingerstyle Guitar Solos*.

JOHN ROBERTS lives in Vermont. He performs solo, and also with Tony Barrand. He is also a leading member of a number of other, larger musical and Morris Dance groups. He can be heard on several records on the Front Hall label.

Though CHRIS SMITHER was raised in New Orleans, and sings in what is suggestively a New Orleans style, he came to prominence in Boston, where he still lives. His shows usually consist of about half blues and songs by people like Randy Newman, Chuck Berry, and Danny O'Keefe--and half his own material. Of Smither's own songs, probably the best known are "Love You Like A Man" and "I Feel The Same"--also recorded by Bonnie Raitt and Esther Phillips. Smither has toured the major clubs and concert halls in the United States. He has appeared on the *Midnight Special*, has toured in Europe, and is included in *Eric Von Schmidt's Baby Let Me Follow You Down*, a chronicle of the 1960s Cambridge music scene. A new album, *Footloose*, on Adelphi Records, is planned for release by fall. For further information, contact Judy Keyserling, 3622 Whitehaven Parkway N.W., Washington, D.C. 20007.

THE SOLDIER'S FANCY is Marie Mularczyk, Hazel Pilcher, Debra Cerruti, Jane Przybysz, and Doreen D'Amico. They sing and play traditional and contemporary music in tightly woven harmonies with guitar, dulcimer, banjo, mandolin, spoons, and limberjack.

PETER WILSON is from North Carolina, Vermont, and California, among other places. After releasing his first album, *Folk Music*, last Thanksgiving on Bennett House Records, Peter has been touring. Peter's phone number is (916) 265-6014.

GABRIEL YACOB, who lives in Paris, was the founder and leader of Malicorne, a French folk/rock group that stayed together for ten years from 1971 to 1981 and released nine albums, two of which received Gold Album Awards. Gabriel has also recorded a solo album entitled *Trad. Arr.* His American discovery this year was Rod MacDonald.

Of himself BOB ZAIDMAN writes, "I was born in Brooklyn, New York, a few days before Hiroshima and Nagasaki were holocausted. My mother wasn't feeling well that day, and I suppose I wasn't either." Bob has been living and playing music in and around New York since the early sixties. For the past ten years, Bob has been teaching guitar courses at the Guitar Study Center, now a division of The New School for Social Research. He occasionally hosts radio shows on WBAI in New York and also works as a photographer and industrial designer. Bob claims to have long ago given up the active practice of voodoo, but several of his neighbors deny this.

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JULY 1983

FRIDAY SATURDAY

SUNDAY	TUESDAY	WED.	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
3 Carrie Debbie Watson	5 Joe Heukerott Susan Firing	7 8-11 \$3 Jeff + Matt OF CEST WHAT 11PM-LATE SHOW	14 Woody Guthrie's Birthday Party	1 rod macdonald THE HUDSON RIVER SLOOP SINGERS	2 christine lavin
10 Gordon Swift and group Mary Ellen McCabe	12 Karl Williams Judith and Carol Fickman	21 TOM MITCHELL	15 BOB ZAIDMAN (CAN.)	8 ROBIN RUSSELL	9 danny kalb
17 KRUTH with MATT BALITSARIS Guy Davis	19 BEN SILVER & JUDY ZWEIMAN Lydia Davis	28 Gabriel Yacoub Paul Kovit	16 CLIFF EBERHARDT (SAT)	15 BOB ZAIDMAN (CAN.)	16 BOB ZAIDMAN (CAN.)
24 Marion Wade Matt Jones 8:00 P.M.	26 D.A. JONES The Shadyside Jewels	28 Gabriel Yacoub Paul Kovit	22 The Washington Squares	22 SQUARERS	23 DAVID MASSENGILL
31 Constance Taylor Hugh Blumenfeld	7 AUGUST 27 Marilyn J. Thorn Morlan	28 Gabriel Yacoub Paul Kovit	29 JOSH JOFFEN DAVID ROTH	29 JOSH JOFFEN DAVID ROTH	30 MIDSUMMER NIGHTS

**MONDAYS OPEN MIC SIGN UP**

**WEDNESDAYS SHOWCASE**

**THURSDAYS POETRY**

**FRIDAY SLOOP SINGERS**

**SATURDAY POETRY**

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ALL SHOWS 9 PM		MIDSUMMER NIGHTS FESTIVAL		JACK HARDY SUZANNE VEGA		HUDSON RIVER SLOOP SINGERS	
SUNDAY		TOM INTONDI		6		13	
HOUSE BAND WITH MARK DANN & GUESTS \$1		DOLLAR NIGHT WITH Roger Manning and Darryl Cherney		BIG FUN!! 2ND ANNUAL BOB DYLAN IMITATOR'S CONTEST 8 PM (ADVANCE) \$5		N.Y. FOLK FESTIVAL Presents rod macdonald	
MUSICIANS OPEN MIKE SIGN UP 7:30 PM		PAUL KAPLAN MIKE MELDRUM PEGGY ATWOOD DAVID INDIAN 10 \$1		THE COOP RADIO PILOT w/ Jack Hardy Erik Frandsen, M.C.		WASHINGTON SQUARES	
SOME OF THE SINGERS: SHAWN COLVIN Cliff Eberhardt George Gerdes LUCY KAPLANSKI Ilene Weiss Josh Toffen & OTHERS		C'est What \$3		JOEY MISERABLE and the WORMS PETE WARD \$3		PAUL GEREMIA LINDA RUSSELL	
Marilyn J. Thom 2 Morlan		TOM INTONDI FRANK ROSSINI POEZ IRVING LATTIN 24 \$1		ERIC WOOD RICHARD MEYER 25 \$3		JOHN GUTH GOOD SOUP 20	
D.A. JONES Bob Foti 9 \$2		DAVID MASSENGILL DIANA JONES GRANT ORENSTEIN 31 \$1		STHE Hudson River Sloop Singers \$1		LEFT FIELD MARCIE BOYD 26 27	
Carolyn McCombs TOM WACHUMAS CARTER CASTLE 16 \$1		Ilene Weiss Susan Brewster 23		CONCERT FOR THE COOP SEPT. 2, 3, 4 (SUN)		RITA FALBEL YASMIN 30 FRIED	

## credits

### side one

1. The Lambs on the Green Hills (Traditional)  
Paul Kaplan/Vocal, Guitar & Harmonica  
Mark Dann/Guitar
2. Enlist, Bonnie Laddie (Traditional)  
John Roberts/Vocal & Guitar  
Mark Dann/Guitar
3. Do You Love an Apple (Traditional)  
Jan Henshaw/Vocals & Guitar  
Paul Kaplan/Cuatro
4. Another Way To Find You (Chris Smither)  
Chris Smither/Vocal & Guitar
5. Return from Fingal (Traditional)  
Ken Perlman/Guitar
6. Bon An, Mal An (Gabriel Yacoub)  
Gabriel Yacoub/Vocal & Guitar  
Mark Dann/Guitar & Bass
7. Four Silver Rings (Peter Wilson)  
Peter Wilson/Vocal & Guitar  
Mark Dann/Bass

### side two

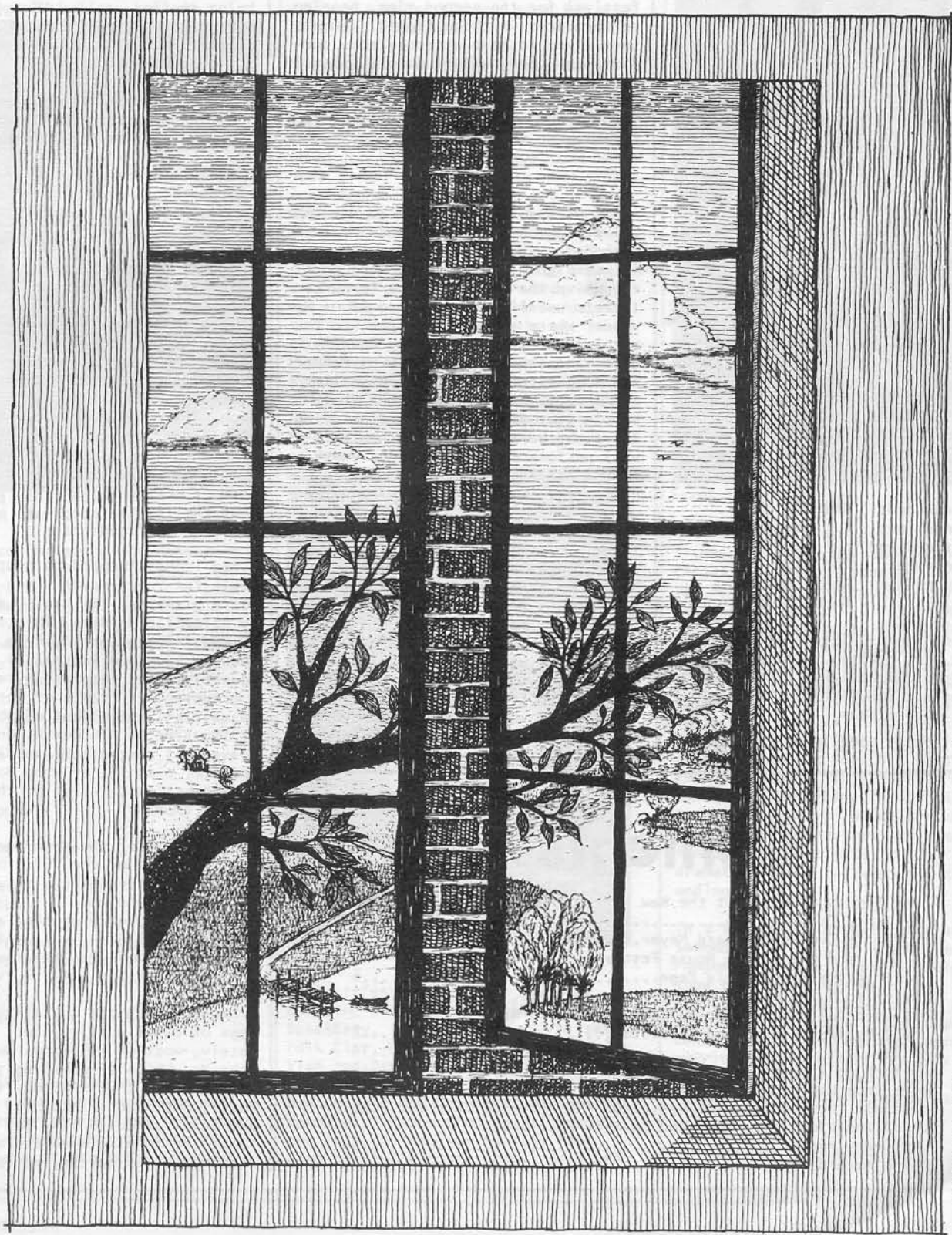
1. Wondrous Love (Traditional)  
The Soldier's Fancy:  
Marie Mularczyk/Vocal  
Hazel Pilcher/Vocal  
Debra Cerruti/Vocal  
Jane Przybysz/Vocal  
Doreen D'Amico/Vocal
2. Sí Bheag, Sí Mhór (Turloch O'Carolan)  
Mike Agranoff/Guitar
3. The Wings of a Gull (Traditional)  
David Jones/Vocal
4. Elegy Early On (Robert Zaidman)  
Bob Zaidman/Vocal & Guitar  
Mark Dann/Bass
5. Love Is Kind (Traditional)  
Richard Fewtrell/Vocal & Concertina
6. I Have This Love (John Hodel)  
John Hodel/Vocal & Guitar  
Mark Dann/Guitar & Bass



THE  
**COOP**  
THE FAST FOLK MUSICAL MAGAZINE

September 1983

Vol. 2 No. 7



Jeff Schneider