Folk song/music in the southwest of B.C. as found in the various folk clubs and societies has maintained itself fairly solidly through 1983. The following jottings, presented in support of this claim, may be of practical value to newcomers, visitors, etc. to our region.

**The Vancouver Folk Song Society:** keeps it regular Folk Song Circle at False Creek Community Centre at 8 pm on 1st and 3rd Wednesdays; presents special workshops/programs for 5th Wednesdays (such as the November Anti-Carol Workshop); sponsors occasional house concerts (Larry Hanks, Jim Payne, etc.); sponsors a summer “folk weekend” at a sea-side camp (a real family affair with lots of kids, music, games, etc.); and circulates a monthly newsletter *Three-Quarter Times* under the spirited hand of Nola Johnston. (In addition to much local news, Nola has given us a song a month: words and music.)

**The Victoria Folk Music Society:** welcomes all to its regular “coffee house” at 8 p.m. on 2nd and 4th Sundays, at Norway House, 1110 Hillside Ave.; produces a newsy, chatty and instructive newsletter monthly (Sue Postans, editor; circulation about 100).

**The Pacific Bluegrass and Heritage Society:** two groups under that name have regular activities in Vancouver and Victoria. Their Victoria “coffee house” meets regularly at 7:30 p.m. on 1st and 3rd Sundays at Norway House. In Vancouver the PBHS’s Friday night get-togethers vary from open stage nights to concerts and dances, all starting at 8 p.m. at Oddfellows’ Hall, 1720 Gravely Street.

**Vancouver’s new COFFEE HOUSES:** La Quena on Commercial Drive features folk music on Friday and Saturday nights (emphasis is Latin American/Canadian/working class). There is also a regular program at Douglas Park Community Centre.

**Vancouver’s COMHALTAS CEOLTOIRI:** has its home in the Irish Centre on Prior Street (Ph: 253-9512). Open House on Friday nights (songs, tunes, open stage) is but one of many musical activities.
The Seventh Annual Folk Festival at Strathcona Park Lodge: (on the road west from Campbell River, Vancouver Island) took place on the first weekend in November with workshops for songwriters and classical guitarists; juggling; clay; dancing (international folk, Morris and belly!); a concert; song swapping; and, as always, good food and comfortable accommodation. Also on Vancouver Island on the last weekend in July was the annual Bluegrass Festival at Coombs, a community 9KM west of Parksville.

I readily admit these B.C. notes are incomplete, especially for the situation and events away from what we call "the Island and the Lower Mainland." There does not exist as yet any province-wide "folk" information network. Recently, however, we were given a peep at what is happening around Smithers, which is about 750 KM northwest of Vancouver. Marion Rose has written telling of grassroots musical sharing: a monthly "coffee house," a women's a capella group, an annual Bluegrass Festival, and a Folk Music Festival in Terrace with groups coming from all the small communities from the Fraser River to the mouth of the Skeena River on the Pacific (That is, from Prince George to Prince Rupert). I'd like to hear from other places!

The Vancouver Folk Music Festival Society maintains its sway over the international folk/pop scene. Under the hand of the Society's self-styled-socialist impresario Gary Cristall ("impressario? I'm more an Arts Administrator - for good or ill."). the Sixth Annual Vancouver Folk Music Festival came off in good weather for three nights and two days in mid-July at Jericho Beach Park. The crowd - some 20,000 for the weekend - had the usual broad program to select from, and with five "workshop" stages (and the diversion of the crafts, records, and food concessions) audiences sampled some 20% of the musical offering. (My fifth was mostly made up of Jim Payne, Rufus Guinchard, Anita Best and Len Snow (Nfld.); Jean Ritchie and Barbara Dane (U.S.A.); and Leon Rosselson, Frankie Armstrong and Roy Bailey (U.K.).) The Festival Society brings back a number of its performers for its concert series. Financially the VFMFS still carries its debt of $100,000 from year to year.

And now for SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT!

Many people from the various "folk" societies mentioned above go each spring from southwestern B.C. to Seattle's Northwest Folklife Festival. This year's event, the 12th annual, ran through the weekend of May 27-30, and boasted 2500 participants with an attendance of more than 100,000 - the largest of any kind of folk festival in the U.S. The program schedule covers events on 12 stages with "Folk/Traditional Music and Dance from the U.S. and more than 30 Countries," and much, much more than can be described here. All this takes place in the spaces in and around Seattle Center, a complex of buildings and facilities in the heart of the city, the legacy from Seattle World's Fair some twenty years ago. The festival is a remarkable phenomenon, building each year on the shared experience and open interchange between volunteers, including performers, and the audience who attend without admission charge. Three distinctive aspects of Seattle's Festival are that it is regional, broadly participatory, and free. The wide ethnic representation is domiciled in the continental northwest, which includes B.C. The low budget makes funding simple. Participants are remunerated only for the cost of transportation if they request it. Such a festival is truly near to the grassroots, and contrasts freshly with the personality-dominated international-type festivals. Although such an event could not be replicated in another situation, it is certainly worth close study. It is challenging - "food for thought."

I will conclude with notice that several songs from my B.C. collection, including one in the Haida language from the Queen Charlotte Islands, have been set for choir by Dr. Stephen Chatman, Faculty of Music, U.B.C., and will be performed by The Vancouver Chamber Choir in a program called "The Canadian Tradition" on Feb. 17, 1984. (I hesitate to say more.)