

# Summary of CFMS Membership Survey

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In October of last year, 550 questionnaires were sent to CFMS members asking their views about various goals and activities of the Society. A follow-up reminder was sent in mid-January of 1985. This report is based on the 130 responses that were received before February 15, 1985.

**REPRESENTATIVENESS OF SAMPLE:** The return rate was 24 percent which is reasonably high for an unsolicited, mail-based questionnaire. The table below presents the percentages of respondents from the various provinces in comparison with the equivalent figures for the entire membership. The latter figures are taken from CFMB, 1984, 18(4), 42.

Region	% of survey respondents	% of total membership
Nfld	2.4	5.2
NS	1.6	2.1
PEI	0.0	0.0
NB	1.6	2.0
PQ	4.7	6.7
Ont	33.1	24.2
Man	3.9	2.3
Sask	7.9	6.0
Alta	22.0	26.8
BC	8.7	9.0
NWT and Yukon	2.4	0.0
USA	10.2	12.6
Other	1.6	1.8

These data show that, roughly speaking, the distribution of survey respondents matches the total membership figures. This observation was confirmed by a statistical test which revealed no meaningful difference between the two sets of percentages. The survey data, then, can be considered a representative sample of the overall membership.

**RATINGS OF CFMS GOALS:** Respondents rated their view of the relative importance of the goals of the Society as put forth in the constitution. They did this using a three point scale defined by "Very LOW Priority" on one end and "Very HIGH Priority" on the other. The ratings were converted to numbers by assigning a "1" to "Very LOW Priority," a "3" to "Very HIGH Priority" and a "2" to the middle, un-named category. A high number, then, is associated with a high priority rating. For each of the goals the average rating was calculated and is presented below. The rank order of these averages is presented in the second column of the table below.

Goal	Average Rating	Rank Order
Viewed as most important:		
To encourage the appreciation and enjoyment of the folk music of Canada	2.85	1
To promote the performance of the folk music of Canada	2.65	2
To promote the publication of . . .	2.63	3
To encourage the study of the folk music of Canada	2.54	4
To stimulate national understanding through a common interest in folk music	2.36	5
To stimulate international understanding . . .	1.96	6
Viewed as least important:		

These data indicate that the goals associated with the enjoyment and performance of Canadian folk music are seen as most important. The use of folk music to promote understanding is seen as less unimportant.

**RATINGS OF CFMS ACTIVITIES:** Respondents rated their view of the importance of present, planned and future CFMS activities using the same rating scale as with the goals. These data are summarized in the table below.

Activity	Average Rating	Rank Order
Present activities:		
Most important:		
Canadian Folk Music Bulletin	2.80	1
Canadian Folk Music Journal	2.57	2
Resource referral	2.51	3
Canadian Folk Festival Directory	2.43	4
Workshops at the AGM	2.09	5
Least important:		

New or planned activities:

Most important:		
Liaison with media to enhance public awareness	2.58	1
Special Projects Fund	2.52	2
Production of recordings	2.42	3
Mail Order Service	2.35	4
Least important:		
Future activities:		
Most important:		
Canadian Folk Directory	2.56	1
Structure to administer grants	2.17	2.5
High profile publicity campaigns	2.17	2.5
Least important:		

Members were also asked if they were aware of present CFMS activities. Responses indicated a very high degree of member awareness (Bulletin: 100%; Journal: 96%; Workshops: 89%; Folk Festival Directory: 99%; Resource referral: 92%). Most instances of non-awareness were new members (e.g. Some new members hadn't received their Journal when they answered the survey in October).

For the most part the activities data indicate members perceive the publications to be very important, with media liaison running a very close second. Media liaison would appear to be an important area for the Society to develop as its present activities do not emphasize this.

**CANADIAN FOLK MUSIC BULLETIN:** Respondents indicated their reactions to 16 different types of articles etc. that occur in the Bulletin. They indicated whether they wanted less, the same or more of the article type. The ratings were transposed to numbers (Less = 1; Same = 2; More = 3) and the average of these values calculated for each article type. These averages (based on 123 completed answers) were then rank ordered and provided the following picture:

Article Type	Average Rating	Rank Order
Most preferred article type:		
Record and book reviews	2.79	1
Cross-Canada article features	2.67	2
Articles on specific people	2.60	3
Traditional songs and variants	2.58	4
Interviews	2.41	5
Articles on festivals	2.41	6
Letters to the Editor	2.39	7
Article series	2.38	8
"State of the Art" features	2.35	9
Classified ads and notices	2.33	10
Regular columns	2.30	11
Recently composed songs	2.29	12
Guitar chords with songs	2.21	13
Canadian fiddle tunes	2.21	14
Photos wth articles	2.20	15
Photo essays	1.97	16
Least preferred:		

Perhaps most surprising in these data is the decided lack of preference for photographic support in the Bulletin. This goes against the norm in the magazine industry, and suggests that the textual content of the Bulletin is seen by members as VERY important. Comparing these results to recent issues of the Bulletin indicates that more effort should be dedicated to personal profiles and features (note the high rankings of "interviews" and "articles on specific people").

**CANADIAN FOLK MUSIC JOURNAL:** As in the table above, members were asked to rate their preference of the various article types found in the Canadian Folk Music Journal. The ranked orders were:

Article Type	Average Rating	Rank Order
Most preferred:		
Features on singers and repertoire	2.66	1
Articles on variations of Canadian folk songs	2.34	2
Review articles	2.32	3
Reference lists	2.20	4
Musicological articles	2.20	5
Survey articles	2.00	6
Least preferred:		

As with the Bulletin, these data suggest a desire for more information about people (e.g. features on singers are most preferred).

A number of written comments suggested that it might be more effective to combine the Journal and Bulletin into one publication. The funding sources for these two publications are quite different, and it is likely that combining the two would result in a decrease in available funding, hence it is recommended that the two publications remain separate until such time as the funding arrangements change.

**THE MAIL ORDER SERVICE:** Viewed in the context of the Mail Order Service being assigned a relatively low priority in the activities data, it is interesting to note that 91 percent of respondents indicated they felt there was a need for such a service. Seventy-three percent of all respondents indicated they definitely would use the Service, with an additional 12 percent indicating "maybe." Fully 90 percent of respondents felt the Service should carry books as well as recordings.

Respondents were asked whether they felt CFMS should "NOT include," "include" or "MUST include" certain types of recordings in the Service. By assigning numerical values to the responses (1=NOT include; 2=include; 3=MUST include) an average rating for each

type was calculated. These averages (based upon 123 completed answers), along with their rank orders are presented below.

Type of Recording	Average Rating	Rank Order
Most preferred:		
Singer-songwriters	1.70	1
Revival singers	1.70	2
Children's recordings	1.43	3
Instrumental music	1.42	4
Traditional singers	1.40	5
From Native communities	1.37	6
From Multicultural communities	1.37	7
Regional country music	1.23	8
Concert music	1.13	9
Least preferred:		

There is a clear preference for song material reflected in these data, as well as what might be termed "passing interest" in Native, Multicultural and Regional Country music.

**OTHER QUESTIONS:** Of those that responded, the average number of years being a member of CFMS was 4.26 (standard deviation = 4.79). While figures are not available, it is likely that this average is a bit high compared to the total membership, suggesting that longer-term CFMS members tended to answer the survey.

When asked if they felt CFMS was serving their specific needs 81 percent said "yes," 9 percent said "no" and 11 percent said "maybe." This represents a high proportion of satisfaction with CFMS.

This latter observation is bolstered by the finding that 60 percent of the respondents indicated a willingness to help with CFMS activities (35 percent said "no" and 5 percent said "maybe"). Most of the "no's" were qualified with an "I'm just too busy right now, try me later" type of message. These results indicate a very positive response to CFMS.

**SUMMARY:** The general picture reflected in these data is that CFMS is seen to be a relative helpful and successful organization. The membership sees the human values of folk music as important (e.g. ranking performance and enjoyment high, preference for articles on people), and seems to be urging the Society on to greater involvement with the promotion of Canadian folk music via the media. To be sure, there is room for improvement, but the survey data suggest that members are generally satisfied with the organization.

As a follow-up to this report, a series of articles will be published in the Bulletin dedicated to discussion of where CFMS should go from here. Watch for these in upcoming issues.