The Folk Festival

This morning is a curtain
of bird wing and song
of fish fins skimming
the light at dawn.
I'll wrap myself in it
and dance and enjoy
all the music the day will bring
the day the Festival begins.

K.R. Pickel
Drummondville, Québec
Welcome to the Festival issue of the Canadian Folk Music Bulletin. Everyone's perspective of a folk festival is different, depending on where they live and what they've experienced. You will find out, as you read ahead, that all festivals have their own unique characteristics.

When we started this project in January, we decided to divide the country into two. Murray opted for the west and northern areas of Canada including Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, the Yukon and the North West Territories. I had the pleasure of covering the eastern provinces including Ontario, Québec, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and last but not least (as you will see later in this issue) Newfoundland.

To help us create an interesting and informative journal, we asked each festival to write a short article or story on their festival. What better way of finding out about a festival than from the inside angle. Thank you to all those out there who contributed to the festival issue. If we missed your festival, please let us know, so we can include you next time.

Unfortunately due to time, space and $, we could not publish a complete list of festivals. This would seem an endless undertaking. There are so many musical events in Canada, it is overwhelming. We tried to concentrate our efforts on folk festivals. As Murray has already indicated, we had many conversations on "what is a Folk Festival" and where do you draw the line?

In our travels, we covered a lot of ground, from coast to coast, but only by telephone. Many times I said to myself (and to others around me) - "wow... would it ever be great to take the summer off and travel to some of these wonderful music festivals". Canada's cultural diversity is reflected in its music. The festivals give us a sense of union and celebration throughout the country, where folks - musicians, organizers and folkies alike - come together in the spirit of music.

At this time I would like to acknowledge the many people and organizations that were helpful in putting this list together. First of all I would like to thank Linda Carreiro for her help in calling the Quebec festivals and Avenue Four Graphics for the use of their fax machine. It was well used, especially near deadline time. Thanks to all those who sent us lists of festivals in their area: Bridget Noonan and the St. John's Folk Arts Council, John Saunders of New Brunswick Tourism Department, Diane Myers and the Ontario Council of Folk Festivals, Marie-Elaine Rochan of the Société des fêtes et Festivals du Québec. Thanks to Noella J. LeBrun of the New Brunswick Folk Arts Council for the article on New Brunswick Folk Festivals. Thanks to the Provincial Tourism departments for their help. And most of all, thanks to the editor, Lynn Whidden and the Canadian Society for Musical Traditions for initiating and publishing this special festival issue.

For those of you interested in multicultural events we would suggest you write to: Folklore Canada International, C.P. 9, succursale de Lomeric, Montréal, Québec, H2N 2N6. I would also like to thank Folklore Canada International for sending us their directory. It did, indeed, help us to compile our list.

Good luck to all the folk festivals across Canada. Have a fun summer. And to those crazy, dedicated folk festival goers - take the journal along and enjoy. Support Live Music!

Cheers to Canadian Folk Festivals!
Lei Anne Sharratt
Brandon