The information didn’t get to us in time for the Festival Directory (and we’ll blame the B.C. government for that), but you might want to know about it for next year. The eighth Islands Folk Festival was held July 24 to 26 at Providence Farm, near Duncan, B.C., on Vancouver Island. It was organized by the Cowichan Folk Guild, whose phone number is (604)-748-3975. The festival’s address was: Islands Folk Festival, Box 802, Duncan, B.C. V9L 3Y1.

Letters to the Editor

The festivals listing is a great help, and I’ve particularly enjoyed the cowboy poetry article -- well written and quite interesting. What is available re Charles Badger Clark? I’ve heard three covers of "Spanish is a Loving Tongue" over the years (Ian Tyson, Emmylou Harris and Cindy Church), and figure there must be other gems written by the man. Must comment as well on the heavy, textured cover stock used on the issue -- nice look, nice feel.

Tom Wilson
7355 Silver Springs Rd. NW
Calgary, Alta.
T3B 4L3

[Clark’s 1915 volume, SUN AND SADDLE LEATHER, has been reproduced in facsimile by The Westerners Foundation. In the 1989 Cowboy’s Shopping List, it was offered for $11.00 U.S. (plus postage).

Cowboy’s Shopping List
Cowboy Poetry Gathering
P.O. Box 888
Elko, Nevada
USA 89801

Katie Lee’s idiosyncratic TEN THOUSAND GODDAM CATTLE (Northland Press) includes more information about Clark than any other source I know. For Bill Simon’s original tune to "A Border Affair" (AKA "Spanish is the Loving Tongue") try either John I. White’s GIT ALONG LITTLE DOGIES: SONGS AND SONGMAKERS OF THE AMERICAN WEST (University of Illinois) or Jim Bob Tinsley’s HE WAS SINGIN’ THIS SONG (University of Central Florida; try the Cowboy’s Shopping List for all these titles). --G.L.]

I recently received from one of your contributors, Neil Rosenberg, a copy of your CANADIAN FOLK MUSIC JOURNAL, volume 19. Mr. Rosenberg, who interviewed me three or four years ago, sent the above-mentioned copy to bring my attention the very gratifying article about many of my activities during the years 1950 to the 70s [Omar Blondahl’s Contribution to the Newfoundland Folksong Canon (1991), p. 20].

I have never kept a scrap-book, nor ever collected items pertaining to those activities; in fact, I do not have even a single copy of the 14 LP records I did during those years.

Omar Blondahl
P.O. Box 1539, Postal Station A
Vancouver, B.C.
V6C 2P7

I wrote about a year ago inquiring about Irish bagpipes in Canada. I have since taken an apprenticeship and begun building my own Uilleann pipes. As far as I know, there is only one other maker of Irish pipes in Canada, Chris Langan of Toronto. The Irish pipes are growing in popularity rapidly.

If the Canadian Folk Music Bulletin can be of any assistance to me would be interested in hearing from
you. A bagpipe convention would be great in Canada; they have them in the U.S. and Europe. In Ireland there are about ten tionols (conventions) per year.

Any friends of association members interested in Irish music or Irish pipes, would be interested in hearing from them.

Neil O’Grady
c/o Celtic Music Crafts
P.O. Box 405
Carbonear, Nfld.
AOA 1T0

[I know of one maker of Uilleann pipes in Alberta, John Dorman, whose address is 3602 Caledonia Dr., Leduc, Alta. T9E 6G4. I’m passing Neil’s letter on to John; meanwhile, readers are urged to write directly to Neil or to the Bulletin. -- J.L.]

I have just received my first copy of the CSMT folk music catalogue. WOW!

For the past nine years I have produced and hosted "Mostly Folk", first on our local National Public Radio station (KNPR), and for the past three years on our local University Community Radio station (KUNV).

I wish to order LOTS OF MATERIAL -- in fact, I’ve been developing an "international" portion of my program, and Canada is a logical choice for a number of weekly programs covering three or four months.

After going through the catalog, I’ve identified 19 items that I would like to order. But this poses a problem. I buy almost all of my folk music material from catalogs. During the past nine months to one year I have had terrible luck! E.g., order 20, get 4; order 15, get 3, etc., etc., and the problem is getting worse. Vinyl LPs are being phased out and not being replaced. Or, if they are being replaced, it is with either cassettes or CDs. The former are quite difficult to use on the air because they are almost impossible to cue quickly. The latter are, for my budget, very expensive! I understand that “cassette” is probably the only way a lot of music is available -- and I live with that by taking the time to pre-record those portions of my show that require cassette-only music. That way I can play a sequence of songs by different artists, without the 8-second spread (dead air) between cuts.

David L. Weide
Dept. of Geoscience
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
4505 Maryland Parkway
Las Vegas NV 89154-4010
USA

[All items listed in our Mail Order Service catalogue either are in stock or we can get them by return mail from our wholesalers. -- J.L. By the way, we don’t consider Canadian music to be "international" up here. -- G.L.]

I am a broadcaster and teacher living in New York City; I have a weekly show on radio station CCR, based at City College of New York. The program is dedicated to folk music and storytelling. Musically I lean toward traditional and acoustic music, especially Celtic music and music of the British Isles and North America (although
other cultures are welcome).

Unfortunately we can't yet handle CDs, but any LPs or cassettes will be played on-air in their entirety. In the case of unfamiliar performers, I do on-air reviews as well. Also, musicians and storytellers passing through New York are encouraged to contact me and I'll try to arrange a live interview. Phone (212)-862-3526 (after 10:00 p.m. New York time).

I'm especially interested in music and stories concerning regional and local history and events.

Robert Rodriguez
3647 Broadway
New York
NY 10031
USA

While I appreciated very much the review of our latest album (Gallaher and Galbraith, Home to the Island [25:4, p.46]), a couple of corrections need to be made.

First, "The Ballad of Ginger Goodwin" is in fact set mostly on Vancouver Island. Second, I can't claim credit for the lines "Though life is mostly froth and foam, etc.". I heard or read them (or lines like them) many, many years ago, and they stuck in my mind. I have no idea who wrote them, for no author's name was given.

Bill Gallaher
#4, 1275 Pembroke St.
Victoria, B.C.
V8T 1J7

I am looking for someone who makes jews harps in Canada, either factory made or handmade, preferably handmade. I am also looking for tune books of all sorts of fiddle tunes, Cape Breton, Métis, French Canadian, anything would be good.

Arthur M. Schultz
Box 733
Upton
NY 11973
USA

[Our Mail Order Service carries some tune books for you. As for jews harps, perhaps some readers have knowledge in that area. -- J.L.]

When I become prosperous (hope everlasting) I'm going to buy one of those Resistols you mentioned in your article, "Words From The Range". The shade I wore to Pincher Creek in 91 is a Smith Built "Genuine Shantung Panama". Close relation to a Hong Kong Savage, or what? Real cowboys wear a beaver! (But it's nice to be considered elegant.)

Being a cowboy is something like being a Canadian, seems to cause an identity crisis for some citizens. In either case the fact of being one can only be attributed to a lasting desire. (Talk about options and distinct society.)
There's no room for doubt in my hay-seed, range bred heart, it's partly due to occupation, but being a cowboy is mostly a state of mind.

Loosely interpreting Charlie Russell's sentiments on the subject, I'm sure glad cowboys don't eat grass; Sort of proves we are at least part human. (I'm not so certain about people in general, and politicians in particular.)

Now to the real purpose of this letter. THANKS for including my poem in your worthy publication. "Wendicundo's Vision" is in good company, and I'm sure the old man would have been pleased to smoke the pipe with most of the characters whose works were also included. Perhaps (like myself) he would think of them as brothers.

Also, (I believe this can be said for all the cowboy poets) THANK YOU for your interest in, and appreciation for the cowboy poetry movement. It's always a great feeling to know we have helpful friends.

Until our trails cross again best wishes,

Harvey Mawson
Box 126
Dundurn, Saskatchewan
SOK 1KO

Reviews / Comptes-rendus

Roy Johnstone, Rolling Waves, No. JR001. Roy Johnstone, RR#1, Bonshaw, P.E.I. C0A 1C0. (Also available from CSMT Mail Order Service.)

In reviewing this tape, I fear I may be accused of damning with faint praise, although that is certainly not my intent. Roy Johnstone of P.E.I. is a fine fiddler with a very clean style. The restraint he shows in embellishment is entirely appropriate and allows the listener to concentrate on the beauty of the tunes rather than on Johnstone's obvious technical abilities. The tunes have been selected with some care and provide a very nice mixture of tempos and musical forms. Moderate tempos seem to suit Johnstone best; his playing tends to lose clarity with increased tempo, and (to my ear, at least) his vibrato is not sufficiently broad to make slower tunes as effective as they might otherwise be.

Johnstone is accompanied on all cuts by Grady Poe on guitar. Poe's playing is interesting both rhythmically and harmonically; he both avoids the standard "boom-chuck" guitar accompaniment and ranges far beyond the ordinary in his selection of chords. Lennie Gallant provides competent, if uninspired, bodhran drumming on many of the more up-tempo selections.

I found the two sides of the tape rather unevenly balanced, with the second side being much more to my taste. The tunes here are played in a more relaxed style, transitions in medleys are smoother, and the balance between fiddle and guitar is a bit more controlled. Particularly fine are "Monaghan's Jig" (a bit reminiscent of "Kid on the Mountain", but in 6/8 time), a very pleasant version of "South Wind", and the medley "Ciaran O Raghallagh/Martin Wynn's #2". The final medley on this side begins well, with Skinner's "Hector the Hero", but loses crispness with its transition to faster reels.

The playing on the first side is a bit less assured and lacks some of the lilt and drive of the second side. One cut in particular, a medley beginning with "Lament for Sir Harry Lumsden", has very awkward transitions between the tunes. (Some medleys are made effective by successfully combining tunes in unexpected and unusual ways; in this case, I suspect that the reason the transitions are rather forced is that the tunes just don't go together very well.)

On the whole, this tape contains some very fine fiddle playing, and interesting arrangements of pleasant tunes. I'm sure Roy Johnstone has it in him to produce a terrifically exciting recording. This isn't it, but it certainly augers well for future efforts.

Michael Pollock