

Letters

I'm sorry, but I don't wish to renew my membership at this point in time. I'm afraid that much of what is printed in the Bulletin is aimed more at true ethnomusicologists rather than the simple folk music fan. Really, the reviews are what catch my interest for the most part, and that's not enough to justify continuing with membership.

Bev Walkling
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[We strive to provide something for all of our readers, both scholars and non-scholars, but it's not always easy. We're constantly seeking authors to redress underrepresentation in any area, but sometimes our searches have not yet borne fruit. We're sad that, for you at least, the imbalance is a major one. But thanks for identifying a problem for us. —JL]

Many thanks for the great review of On That Christmas Day [28:4, p. 27]. I had a lot of fun working with Richard Harrow in the studio, and also Pat Keenan, my co-writer on many of the songs. We're all happy to have contributed new songs for the festive season.

Dave Foster
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[I was remiss in leaving out the fact that Pat Keenan contributed to the writing of a number of the songs. My apologies to Pat. —JL]

I am undertaking research into Acadian music and dancing from 1605 to 1755. Consequently, I would be very grateful if you could provide me with details of any authorities known to you, as well as any books and journal articles on the subject.

John Desmond
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Wales

I'm studying the accordion at the Lemmensinstitute, a

music school at Leuven, Belgium. I'm looking for all kinds of information for my thesis, whose subject is "The Acadians (Cajuns)." I received your address from the Canadian embassy. Could you, if it's possible, send me some information about the Cajuns in Canada?

Wendy Remans
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Belgium

I'd like to add a small observation to the discussion about the origins of Morris dancing. I had spent some years in England, and seen a number of Morris dances, and learned a bit about dancing them myself. I was familiar with the folk etymology of the origin of the dance, or at least of the name of the dance, as being derived from "Moorish." I had paid it little mind. What possible mechanism could have brought Moorish dancing, or even just the name, to England? It did not seem likely. I put it to the back of my mind.

That is, until a number of years later (about ten years ago), at the University of Calgary, at a performance of North African dancing. There was nothing of particular note until a dance described as a "Moroccan tribal dance." I sat up straight in my seat, because if what we were seeing wasn't related to Morris dancing in some way, the coincidence of styles was remarkable!

I think that a proper choreometric comparison between English Morris dancing and Moroccan tribal dancing would be most interesting. I hope to read the results one day.

James Prescott
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The British Columbia Folklore Society was newly formed here, this November, in large part thanks to a generous donation from Mrs. Dorothea Savory of Duncan.

Part of the purpose of Mrs. Savory's donation was to establish her late husband's folk dance and song collection as a memorial to him. This collection, "The Kenneth C. Savory Collection," consists of books, records, correspondence, memorabilia and his morris dance ribbons as well as his

concertina which is being restored, again in part, thanks to Mrs. Savory's donation.

Kenneth Savory (1908-1984), a civil engineer, was an accomplished Morris Dancer who also included the solo "Broom Dance" and "'Bacca Pipes Jig" in his repertoire. Due to his work, supervising one project or another, he was of necessity something of a freelance dancer, performing with whichever local Morris side he happened to be working near. In consequence although he was with the Cambridge Men from 1944 to 1947 he also danced with St. Albans, with Bampton New Men and with the EFDSS side in London during the war, amongst others. Among his intimates at this time were Ralph Vaughn Williams, Douglas Kennedy, Maud Karpeles, Dr. Kenworthy Schofield, Nan Fleming-Williams, Jinky (or Jingley) Wells and Billy Kimber.

Billy (1872-1961), formerly a dancer with the Headington Quarry Men (Oxford), was by then the concertina player for the side and Kenneth and Billy's friendship continued through their correspondence following Kenneth's emigration to Canada with Dorothea, his Canadian wife, in 1947.

Billy Kimber was one of Cecil Sharp's major informants. What evolved from Sharp's writings, recordings and Society was very much a middle-class hobby of social country dance that included male-oriented Morris as well as country and square dancing.

Following Cecil Sharp's enthusiastic efforts to promote English traditional dance and song, various towns and cities started Cecil Sharp Clubs that generated new Morris sides among its programmes.

Billy's "class" of Morris, however, of and by the working man, including Billy's own side, continues, and continued, to exist at the same time—though on a quite separate level.

Bill Kimber's Morris, commonly spelt Morrice even up to the middle of this century (and also known in other parts of England as Molly Dancing), having little visible connection to Moors of any ilk was, in its later years, a working man's, agrarian tradition. By the late 19th Century this had become a traditional craft with little remaining from its earlier, pagan roots and practices other than a continuation of its calendrical traditions and execution.

In one of Bill Kimber's letters to Kenneth Savory (January 22nd, 1958) he writes,

We are very strong here at Quarry in the Morris Dances we can put on three sides at a time, and I still go and teach at the Secondary School. That keeps our strength

up, they come to us at 15 when they leave school so we are keeping on.

The reader here in Canada should be aware of the "eleven-plus" examination in the English school system of old, whereby those who passed the exam went to Grammar Schools and, in theory, on to University. Those who failed the "eleven-plus," however, were sent to Secondary Schools and usually either left school at 15 to take up employment or went on to Technical Colleges, etc.

Morris Dancing in North America is, with very few exceptions, essentially a product of Cecil Sharp's middle-class efforts and has little or nothing to do with the social structure of the craft lived by Billy Kimber within the parallel systems that exist in Britain.

With regard to Greenhill's arguments concerning the Englishness of Morris it should be pointed out that Morris and Morris-like dances are common not just in England but throughout Europe and have been for very many hundreds of years.

Mike Ballantyne
Cobble Hill, BC

Had a delightful follow-up to the mummings article. I mentioned Paul Smith, who started us in the area and had gone on to become an academic folklorist in the UK but had not been in touch with since we left for Canada in '67. A couple of weeks after it appeared I had a phone call from Paul, who to my surprise and delight is now chair of the Folklore Department at Memorial!

Would appreciate a few more copies of the issue with the mummings article for myself—all the kids want one as they were involved. Would also like, say, 10 each of last couple issues on consignment to try and sell at our house concerts. Do we have any membership forms that I can push?

David A.E. Spalding
Pender Island, BC

[We're always glad to help members who want to help the Society. Anyone else think that they can sell the Bulletin in their areas? We're also glad to have helped you reconnect with an old friend. You won't be billed for a Finder's Fee, since the first one comes free, but please note that if this had been a romantic entanglement, our charge is double—plus we hope to kiss the bride....GWL]

If funds were to be raised for such a cause, instead of the free lunch gratuitously provided the ladies, you purchased the privilege of eating the lunch supplied by the lady who brought a box or pie to be auctioned. To add variety, the ladies would be concealed behind a curtain, and the men bid on visible ankles or an eye peeping through that slit in the curtain. The ladies employed a little deception, such as changing shoes, so many a time pappa went home in the dog house because he'd failed to recognize mamma's leg. Once, to aid the Red Cross, every female brought baskets. Two little girls, one six and one eight, floated on romantic pink clouds for days. They were cruelly crashlanded when two of the oldest gentlemen present purchased their baskets. The gallantry of these two men did little to allay the disappointment which had ensued. There was even perpetual sport when some young swain particularly desired one maiden's basket. Someone could be depended upon to tip the bidders off. Then the bidding began in earnest, usually resulting in the young beau having a slimmer pocket but basking in the smile of the fair one whose basket had brought the highest price. The bachelors were adept at estimating the heaviest basket. That denoted ample home cooked goodies, and of course the bidder took home all that had not been consumed at lunch.