

Over the Waves

Folk Routes is broadcast each Sunday afternoon from 3:30-5:30 across Alberta, and to the interiors of Saskatchewan, British Columbia, and Northern Montana. In 1994, the Alberta government relinquished support of the CKUA Radio Network and left the 68 year old station to find its support with the public. The station, which has a listening audience of 92,000, maintains offices and studios in both Edmonton and Calgary, and its programming features Jazz, Blues, Worldbeat, Classical, theatre. **Folk Routes** has been offered since February 1995.

Folk Routes host Tom Coxworth features traditional and contemporary music. The program draws from such contemporary artists as Richard Thompson, Loreena McKennitt, Ashley MacIsaac, Zachary Richard, and Bob Dylan and such pioneers as Wade Hemsworth, Leadbelly, Woody Guthrie, Hank Williams, Ewan MacColl, and the Seeger Family.

The folk scene in Alberta is strong. Supportive patrons of music have assisted in the growth of a vibrant festival circuit, which includes the Edmonton, Calgary, Jasper, and Canmore Folk Festivals, Fort McLeod's South Country Fair, and the North Country Fair, as well as country, bluegrass, and old time music festivals. The program explores the traditions of the British Isles and the journeys the music has taken in the formation of the Acadian, cajun, zydeco, bluegrass, hillbilly, acoustic blues and country music.

Tom, a music reviewer and record collector, is one of the organizers of the Edmonton Folk Festival. From 1985 to 1992 he hosted a Celtic program called **In the Tradition** at the University of Alberta. The popularity of the program led to two trips to the UK to research and interview performers such as

Dick Gaughan, June Tabor, and members of Fairport Convention. **Folk Routes** is a musical extension of **In the Tradition** that explores not only Celtic music but also the various styles that have created a truly unique North American sound.

As a member of the North American Folk Alliance, Tom is a strong supporter of folk music and Canadian artists. "Artists in Canada have so much to offer—and I ensure that their voices, music and stories are heard. At the recent Folk Alliance in Washington, DC (all nationalism aside—really), the Canadian artists were the most sought after because of the originality in tradition—with Mary Jane Lamond, Fred Eaglesmith, Mad Pudding and David Essig leading the charge.... I'm very pleased with audience support for **Folk Routes** and the acceptance of the balance between the variety of styles that may include a program with ornamented singing from the Isle of Barra, hillbilly music of Doc Watson, or the sweet sounds of Loreena McKennitt.

"It all fits together. The program is about connections in folk music and the history that fuels the many artists who are drawing on the traditions of history to create new music. I love turning a Celtic corner in a Bluegrass tune and then playing some early blues ballad, and then going back to an English traditional song.... That's the routes and roots of music."

The program is also available on satellite, and on the Internet. Thanks for listening. If you want to get in touch with **Folk Routes**, the address is 1007, 221 —6th Avenue SE, Calgary, Alberta T2G 4Z9. Voice 403-262-9020 Voice/Fax 403-261-8624 or e-mail to folkrts@cadvision.com

—Tom Coxworth