Fifteen Years Ago
Bulletin 16.3 (July 1982). This issue featured "Focus on Festivals", with some geographic reports, articles on specific events and thoughts on festivals in general, from a plethora of authors. Articles unrelated to festivals were "Multiculturalism in Music" by Phil Thomas, "Songs at the Stanley Cup Playoffs" by Tim Rogers, and a piece on "The Feller from Fortune" by Rogers and Edith Fowke. Columnists Alistair Brown, Lois Choksy and David Spalding held forth, and the song "Le Chômage à la Baie des Chaleurs" and reviews of three books (Georges Arsenault’s La Chanson du pays, Narcien Ferland’s Chansons à répondre d’antan and Noëls anciens de la Nouvelle-France, and events including the Regina Folk Festival, the Islands Folk Festival and Carpenter’s A Bibliography of Canadian Folklore in English) rounded out the issue.

Bulletin 16.4 (October 1982). A couple of features this time: "Noël au Canada/Christmas in Canada" (by Donald Deschênes and Tim Rogers), and "Canadian Railroad Songs: Part 2." The latter featured a number of songs sent in in response to Part 1, six months earlier, as well as, once again, writings from several authors. Also, The New Balladeers included three songs on the "Ocean Ranger" tragedy (remember it?). Stan Rogers’s column joined Lois Choksy’s, and the issue included reviews of a number of Newfoundland recordings, Quebec recordings Noëls d’antan and Noëls anciens de la Nouvelle-France, and events including Folk Notes and Queries completed the issue.

Ten Years Ago
Bulletin 21.3 (September 1987) included Part 1 of "The Big Squeeze: Button Accordions in Canada," by Ian Bell, and Lisa Ornstein’s description of the Centre de valorisation du patrimoine vivant’s travelling exhibition on the accordion in Quebec. Jacythe Legros described the Compagnie de danse Les Sortilèges’ recasting of itself as the Centre de documentation Marius Barbeau. A couple of accordion tunes ("Clog de William Durette" and "Clog de Champagne") and a couple of songs ("Sick and Tired" and "The Saskatchewan Alphabet"), reviews of the Regina Folk Festival, the Islands Folk Festival and recordings Underground Freedom (Oliver Schroer) and Just a Minuet (Chirsty and Fred Cook), and Murray Shoolbraid’s column "Folk Notes and Queries" completed the issue.

Bulletin 21.4 (December 1987). Lisa Ornstein’s paper (originally presented at the 1987 AGM), "Toward a Unified Voice and a Clear Song/Pour une voix unie et une chanson claire," pointed out new directions for CFMS, reopening the debate on the meaning of "folk music," which eventually led to a name change for the Society. A photo-essay by Bill Sarjeant evoked memories of that Quebec City meeting. Part 2 of "The Big Squeeze" comprised a regional survey of Canada’s button accordion music and recordings available at that time. For the rest, there were two more accordion tunes ("Larry O’Gaff" and "La Guenille," transcribed by instrumental music editor Anne Lederman), songs "Pissin’ in the Snow" and "Where the Ghost River Flows", Murray Shoolbraid’s column, and reviews of recordings Prince Edward Isle Adieu (Teresa Doyle) and Horst Pohle’s Folk Record Source Book.

Five Years Ago
 Bulletin 26.3 (Autumn 1992). Accordion music again! Len Wallace wrote about "The Accordion: The People’s Instrument." The other feature article was from Vladimir Simosko, "Ethnomusicology and Education in the 1990s." Judith Cohen’s Ethnofolk Letters column made its first appearance, as did the then-unnamed magazine column. The still-unnamed radio column showed up for the second time. Then there were reviews of Sid Holt and George Lyon’s book A Toast to Baldy Red and recordings Pint Pot and Plough (Mike Ballantyne) and Clawhammer Your Way to the Top (Daniel Koulack). Joe Adams’s song "Harvest Time" filled the back page of this "newsletter-style" issue.

Bulletin 26.4 (Winter 1992). The radio column had a name (Over the Waves), but the magazine column was still seeking one, and the magazine was still photocopied and corner-stapled. Bill Gallaher’s song "Three Dollar Dreams" and reviews of Len Wallace’s recording Winds of Change and Ed Whitcomb’s book Canadian Fiddle Music accompanied the feature article, George Lyon’s profile of fiddler Roy Logan.

[Check your Mail Order Service catalogue for information on obtaining these and other back issues.]

News, Views, & Stuff

Something cool from the Net, to start with. I think I’ve got an entry—anybody else want to give it a shot? [GWL]

"This message came from the ballad-l list; maybe some people on this list have suggestions. What about mini-ballads in other languages? Apologies for cross-posting to members of both lists. From: Paul J. Stamler <pstamler@crl.com>

"Hi folks:

"I am looking for very short songs. For a while, the shortest song I knew was Robin Williamson’s ‘The Son of Noah’s Brother’ (19 words). A few years later, Art Thieme taught me what he called the world’s shortest ballad (14 words):

Papa loved mama
Mama loved men
Mama’s in the graveyard
Papa’s in the pen.

"A few days ago, I came across Barry Louis Polisar’s ‘My Name is Hiram Lipschitz (Oh, to be a Smith or Jones),’ which at ten words holds the record so far (note that the title is longer..."
than the song):

My name is Hiram Lipschultz and my problem's pretty clear.

"Anyone know anything shorter? I don't count 'Peter Sellers Sings George Gershwin' or its descendant, 'Mississippi John Hurt Sings Gilbert and Sullivan.' And it should be noted that none of these songs repeats; hence, 'Wimoweh' is right out. Peace, Paul"

(The ballad listserv is a scholarly product of T. Cheesman at the University of Wales. If you think you might be interested in it, contact <ballads@mailbase.ac.uk>.)

The Canadian Society of Children's Authors, Illustrators and Performers will hold its 20th conference on Saturday, October 18, 1997, at Victoria College, University of Toronto. Entrance fee is $95.00, and a full day is offered, including sessions by Robert Munsch, Julie Lawson, and eight other authors and artists. For more information, contact CANSCAIP, in care of K.O Willing, 434 Wlnona Drive, Toronto, Ontario M6C 3T7, or phone (416) 515-1559.

An international conference to celebrate the centenary of the founding of the Folksong Society will be held July 10-12, 1998, in Sheffield, England. An evening of traditional singing is planned with guest performers, the Copper Family from Sussex, plus local traditional singers. The conference fee with be about £25 (with concessions) plus £88 for full bed and board.

Abstracts of up to 350 words are invited for papers lasting no more than twenty minutes. The themes for the conference are: Revival of Folksong (United Kingdom or other), History of Folksong Scholarship, Women Collectors, Studies of Individual Songs or Singers, Melodic Traditional, Group Traditions, Folksong in the Modern World, the Future of Folksong Research.

If you plan to submit a paper (or to attend), let the conveners know by February 1, 1998 (deadline for firm proposals, with abstracts, is May 1): Ian Russell, Bridge House, Unstone, Sheffield S18 5AF, UK, phone 01246-417315, fax 01909-568466, <ian.russell@dial.pipex.com>, or Anthony Bennett, Department of Music, University of Sheffield, Sheffield S10 2TN, UK, phone 0114-222-2000; <af.bennett@sheffield.ac.uk>.

The conference is cosponsored by the Department of Music, University of Sheffield, the National Centre for English Cultural Tradition and the English Folk Dance and Song Society.

See the conference Website at: <http://www.shef.ac.uk/uni/projects/cectal/folksong.html>.

Invitation and Call for Papers: The Ballad Commission of the SIEF (Société internationale d'ethnologie et de folklore) invites you to the 28th International Ballad Conference in Hildesheim (Germany) 19 to 24 July 1998. Proposed Themes:

1. Literary Translation of Folk Ballads
2. Migration of Ballads across Language Barriers
3. Song and Iconography
4. Classification

Hildesheim is in the south of the state of Lower Saxony, 40 km south of Hanover, 90 km north of Goettingen. The nearest airport is Hanover. Intercity express trains (ICE) at two hour intervals. Change in Hanover if coming from the north.

The conference venue is the Parkhotel Bergerhoelzchen, an attractive countryside overlooking the town. The owners have offered a very good package: double rooms at 100 DM per person, single rooms at 130 DM, including breakfast, lunch and dinner. We can also arrange cheaper accommodation in the vicinity, not including meals, e.g., for students. Conference fee: 100 DM per person, 70 DM for students and for partners.

Proposals for papers should be in by 30 May 1998. Abstracts should be no longer than 250 words, in German, English, or French. If sending text of disk, please use Word for Windows if possible, and include hard copy.

Contact address:

Dr Helga Stein
Roemer-Museum
Am Stein 1-2
D-31134 Hildesheim

The IBC also has an Internet newsletter. You can get to it from the Fife Folklore Archives homepage at http://www.usu.edu/~folklo/food.htm.

You can get to the newsletter by clicking on International Ballad Commission in the list of Folklore Hotlinks. The Fall 1997 Newsletter has been divided into several different sections which you'll find listed in the Table of Contents. You'll also be able to view previous newsletters going as far back as 1994.

The 10th Anniversary Conference of the North American Folk Music and Dance Alliance will be in Memphis at the Cook Convention Centre, February 12 to 15, 1998. The theme is "Rich at the Roots." As always, artist showcases will be a major feature, with a big display area and lots of workshops and discussion groups, and the after-hours sessions are legendary! Registration fees for the weekend for non-members range from $270 to $490 Cdn, depending on how early you register; members' rates are lower, and single-day rates are available as well. The address for registration is: Folk Alliance, 1001 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 501, Washington, DC 20036, USA. Best write for specifics on registration, exhibitors' rates. &c.