Our Back Pages

Fifteen Years Ago
Bulletin 19.4 (December 1985). Feature articles in this issue included Shelly Posen's "Tracking Down the Chapeau Boys" (pinning down facts concerning the well-known Ottawa Valley song), Billy Hill's "George Cook: Canadian Extraordinaire" (Mr. Cook's claim to fame is being the most prolific songwriter in history), "About Song Writing" by Denise Larson, and my own "Back to the Source." Charlotte Cormier contributed two songs on the 1959 disaster of Baie-Ste-Anne, New Brunswick, in which 35 fishermen died. Monique Jutras's song "La complainte de Julie" was also included. David Spalding's column "Singing Our Dreams" in the "You and I and Nobody Knows" series, the minutes of the 1985 AGM, a photo montage by Bill Sarjeant from that meeting, and reviews of LPs Ma Mie Tant Blanche (Charlotte Cormier), Garnet Rogers, The Great Lobster Boil (Lem Snow) and Woodnight Moon (Gordon Quinton) appeared.

Ten Years Ago
Bulletin 24.4 (Winter 1990). Articles by Vladimir Simosko on "World Music Appreciation: 1990" and by Bill Sarjeant on "The Archives of the Canadian Society for Musical Traditions and the Folk Music Collections of the University of Calgary Library" were featured in this issue; Howard Kaplan's song "The Farmer's Carol" and Ian Robb's "Song for the New Year" struck a seasonal note. Another song, Farrell Boyce's "Penman's Combinations," was included, as was a review of Edward Ives’ book Folksongs of New Brunswick. More somberly, the issue held obituaries of Barbara Cass-Beggs and Helen Creighton.

Five Years Ago
Bulletin 29.4 (December 1995). Pete Seeger's essay "Pop, Rock and Coca-Cola-ization," first published in 1972, led off the issue; Bob Bossin's songs "Sulphur Passage" and "Look What's Become of Me" accompanied an extensive interview with Bob on his musical heritage, current thoughts and former Stringband days. Other songs were Ian Robb's "They're Taking It Away" and a number of political parodies from Alberta's Common Front. Numerous items were reviewed, notably Tall are the Tales: Newfoundland Stories and Recitations, and recordings by Paul Haslem, Tzimmes, Kyp Harness, Tanglefoot, Richard Wood, James Keelaghan, Len Wallace, Stewart McIsaac, Bill Gallaher & Jake Galbraith, Jiggery Pokery, The Immigrants, and The Friends of Fiddler's Green.

These issues are available from CSTM Back Issues, 224 20th Ave. NW, Calgary, Alta. T2M 1C2. See the Mail Order Service catalogue or the website (address on p.1) for pricing. [JL]

News, Views, & Stuff

This issue is just a-bomin' as the first week of Lister Sinclair's series Hands Across Time has finished on Ideas. I got most of the week on tape and will be dubbing the rest. I gather that Sinclair has retired as the show's host and eminence grise, and while Paul Kennedy is certainly doing a fine job, I will miss Sinclair, especially the sort of music/verse/history fantasia of which Hands is but the latest; I don't even remember the titles of all of the series: Humours and Temperaments, Boxing the Compass (we quoted that one in our nueva cancion issue), A is for Aardvark really gave him free rein, and what was the series about the gods and goddesses? Oh, right, Nectar and Ambrosia. I do hope that Hands Across Time will not be the last of 'em. We wish Lister Sinclair as long and profitable a retirement as he's had a working life. He's done a lot to make Canada a livable place for grownups.

Am I going to get into trouble for admitting that I've sometimes dubbed these shows? If so, here's your chance to get in dutch along with me: I failed to get either the program on Demeter from the Nectar and Ambrosia series (my daughter's name happens to be Demeter), or the 2-parter that was done (not by Sinclair) on the Percival/Grai myth. Neither appear likely to be reissued now; neither are available for purchase through the series. Are there any fellow pirates out there who'll share with this poor, forgetful buccaneer? It'd be much appreciated.[GWL]

Don't forget the conference of the North American Folk Music and Dance Alliance—it's being held in Vancouver this time, February 15 to 18, 2001. See the British Columbia section of the Festival Directory for details.

En 2001, l'assemblée générale annuelle de l'Association canadienne d'ethnologie et de folklore, qui se tiendra à Québec, à l'Université Laval, du 26 au 28 mai, prendra la forme d'un atelier visant tant à faire le point sur l'ethnologie au Canada, qu'à identifier des orientations pour l'avenir et à mobiliser des efforts pour renforcer la présence et la visibilité de la discipline. Plus spécifiquement, cette rencontre permettra de discuter de la publication d'un manuel canadien de culture traditionnelle et populaire (un collectif présentant l'ethnologie/le folklore et son étude à un public de niveau secondaire et postsecondaire) et du développement d'une proposition pour au moins un grand travail de recherche concerté (GTRC). Comme convenu lors de l'assemblée générale annuelle de 2000, les communications doivent traiter de ce thème. Elles peuvent prendre la forme d'une animation de discussion, de ta-
ables rônes, d’ateliers, de présentations d’affiches (posters) ou de communications. Les présentations peuvent traiter (sans forcément se limiter à ces thèmes) d’utilisations innovatrices ou interdisciplinaires de la recherche ou de méthodes de l’ethnologie, de nouveaux projets de recherche ou de publication, de sources de financement exploitées et de la mise en place de liens disciplinaires.

Notez qu’un remboursement des frais de transport (au coût le plus bas) sera offert aux participants, grâce au soutien généreux du programme IDR du CRSH (et probablement d’autres). Ceux qui présentent des communications sont toutefois priés, comme d’habitude, de s’adresser en premier lieu à leur propre établissement (afin que le financement puisse être offert à tous ceux qui en ont besoin). Ceux qui ne présentent pas de communication et qui veulent obtenir un remboursement de leurs frais de transport sont priés de donner une brève description de leurs intérêts et de leurs liens en rapport avec la discipline et vis-à-vis de cet atelier.


Les membres actuels de l’ACEF (2000) recevront des formulaires d’inscription avec l’avis de renouvellement de leur adhésion qui leur sera expédié vers le début du mois de novembre prochain. Les résumés des communications et les lettres présentant les intérêts des participants doivent être expédiées au plus tard le 15 janvier 2001, le cachet postal en faisant foi. Faites parvenir un résumé de 100 mots de votre communication ou une présentation de 100 mots de vos intérêts à :

Dr. Pauline Greenhill
Women’s Studies
University of Winnipeg
515 Portage Ave.
Winnipeg, MB R3B 2E9
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Here’s a new song making the rounds of the Raging Grannies. It was written by Rose De Shaw of Kingston. I think it’s one of the coolest of RG hit parade. (It goes to a good ol’ southern tune, "Polly Wolly Doodle," which we used to sing in elementary school in Houston, though I don’t s’pose anyone does any more!)

Talking Doodle, Mr. Day

Oh, I went to see what the candidates said,
Oh, what a lot of doodle, Mr. Day,
You want to end our medicare,
Oh, what a lot of doodle, Mr. Day.
Stockwell Day,
You gotta walk the walk,
Not talk the talk,
And you’re talking so much doodle, Mr. Day.
Stockwell Day,
Stockwell Day,
Says he's walking Jesus' Way,
But Jesus loved the poor folks,
Wouldn't lie or help his friends hoax,
And your record's talking doodle, Mr. Day.

Un numéro spécial de la Revue d'histoire de la culture matérielle (NO 54, automme 2001) sera consacré aux aspects matériels de la culture populaire. En abordant un vaste éventail de disciplines : histoire, anthropologie, folklore, sociologie, et études muséales, le numéro examinera de quelle manière la culture populaire s'est manifestée à l'intérieur et autour de notre vie matérielle.

Les sujets abordés pourraient comprendre notamment l'évolution de la signification contextuelle des artefacts dans la culture populaire; le rôle de la culture populaire dans diverses formes d'activisme social et/ou politique, tel que démontré par des preuves matérielles; des histoires critiques des formes populaires de technologie, d'art et d'architecture; des études d'objets produits en vue d'être commercialisés et dont la signification et/ou la fonction ostensible ont été contestées ou détourées par les consommateurs; l'existence ou la persistence de formes nationales reconnaissables de culture populaire durant une période donnée ou à un moment précis; ainsi que la diffusion et l'évolution de la signification populaire de formes matérielles de la culture de masse lorsque celles-ci franchissent les frontières nationales.

Les collaborateurs sont invités à se concentrer sur la signification des objets dans la culture populaire; sur la façon dont ces significations sont créés et contestées et les changements qui surviennent avec le temps; ils sont également invités à expliquer comment ce processus pourrait élargir notre capacité d'interpréter ces importants témoignages de notre histoire culturelle.

La Revue d'histoire de la culture matérielle est une publication du Musée des sciences et de la technologie du Canada situé à Ottawa, au Canada. Les chercheurs que le sujet intéresse sont encouragés à soumettre un résumé de 250 mots d'ici le 15 novembre 2000, au plus tard, au directeur scientifique invité :
Christopher S. Clarke, Ph.D.
Exhibition Developer and Consulting Historian
110 Greystone Lane # 9
Rochester, NY 14618
USA

Preliminary papers must be submitted by January 31, 2001, and will be subject to peer review. Final submissions are due by April 2, 2001.

Newfoundland Studies was founded in 1985 as an interdisciplinary journal devoted to publishing lively and well-written essays about the society, arts, culture, and science of Newfoundland and Labrador. The journal communicates the discoveries and perceptions of a wide range of scholarly disciplines to a broad audience in universities, government, and the general public, across Canada and internationally. The journal accepts submissions in either English or French. The policy for selection of an article is that it be relevant to Newfoundland and Labrador, that it be excellent, and that it be written in such a way as to have an appeal that transcends its discipline. All manuscripts are assessed by referees in the relevant or a cognate discipline, and then approved by the Editor.

Recent articles have examined such diverse subjects as the fishery, mummering, Newfoundland art, poetry and literature, history and geography. We often publish important original
documents, expertly edited, introduced and annotated. Each issue also includes authoritative reviews of books with a Newfoundland theme, and once a year we publish an extensive bibliography of recent Newfoundlandia. Several special theme issues have been published in the past few years, the most recent a 308-page volume containing eight specially commissioned articles written to commemorate and analyse the first fifty years of Newfoundland's presence in the Canadian confederation. A full list of the Tables of Contents can be found on our website at <http://www.mun.ca/nflds>.

Subscription Rates: Canada (Foreign-Submit in U.S dollars)
Individuals: 1 Year $15 ($18), 2 Years $27 ($32), 5 Years $60 ($72)
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North Atlantic Fiddle Convention
Crossing Boundaries
25-29 July 2001
University of Aberdeen, Scotland

Crossing Boundaries is devoted to traditional fiddlers and fiddle music from countries around the northern seas, combining an international conference with performance events and workshops, as well as opportunities for informal sessions.

The North East of Scotland, famous for its fiddle tradition, is the setting for this event, organised by the Elphinstone Institute in conjunction with other local, national, and international arts and cultural organisations: SCaT (Scottish Culture and Traditions), and the Lemon Tree in Aberdeen; Aberdeenshire Arts; the Irish Centre for World Music, University of Limerick; the Department of Ethnology, University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

The convention will focus on the way the fiddle, fiddle music, and styles of playing cross boundaries of all kinds—geographical, political and personal—creating new styles and fresh musical insights.

The conference will explore the past and future of traditional fiddling in social, ethnological, and musical contexts, with keynote contributions. Themes include transmission, performance, social context, symbolic or religious function, stylistics, material culture, dance, supernatural beliefs, folklore, and iconography.

If you are interested in attending, contributing, performing, or offering an academic paper (abstract of 300 words, deadline 1 April 2001), please E-mail or write to the Elphinstone Institute. (The Institute may present abstracts of papers for peer review and anticipates the publication of the proceedings.)
Convenors: Ian Russell and Mary Anne Alburger
The Elphinstone Institute
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I was recently poking around the University of Calgary Library and noted some of Edith Fowke’s donated books on the shelves. I was sorry to see some of them treated rather cavalierly. Presumably funds are not available to create a Fowke reading room or to have them in closed stacks for short term loan, but it was a shame to see them left on the shelves at the mercy of undergraduates. You can be sure some of them will not be around for very long.

Two that struck me forcibly were pamphlets from the late 50s, early 60s—topical ballads from British songwriters like Dominic Behan and Alex Comfort. These were mere stapled pamphlets, which need to be treated with some care. They were sitting in the middle of a fairly packed shelf, up high, ready to get knocked down or creased. I don’t know whether anything can be done about it; I don’t suppose anything will be done about it. It’s a shame. [GWZ]

Institute of Ethnology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences
European Folklore Institute, Budapest, kindly invite you to the 31st International Ballad Conference (KfV) in Budapest, Hungary April 21 - 23, 2001

The 7th Congress of SIEF will be organized in Budapest during the last week of April (23-28) 2001. The Ballad Commission joins the main Congress as a pre-conference. The tentative topics include 1. The value of traditional ballads in contemporary culture; 2. Ethics and moral issues in ballad tradition; 3. The role of gender in the performance of ballads.

Accommodation is available at the Charles Apartment House at the reduced price of $30 US. Rooms in other hotel categories are also available. Registration fee is $50 US.
Contact person: Dr. Illdiko Kriza
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