

*Contributions to this opinion page are most welcome.*

*Send to  
Lorne Brown  
44 Wentworth Avenue  
Toronto ON M2N 1T7  
fax: 416/225-6891  
e-mail: lorbro@home.com*

*This issue's Back Page is written by Lorne Brown.*

**W**e Canadians are a diffident lot. Where other countries celebrate their traditional songs, we carry on blissfully unaware of some treasures. One such gem is the Prince Edward Island song "The O'Halloran Road", printed on page 20 in this issue.

The song is about a family's westward trek in the late winter of 1857. Of course, a westward trek in PEI is not very long; in this case some sixty miles from Malpeque to the present-day Campbellton.

Composer and life-long bachelor 'Uncle' Dan Riley was eight years old when he made this journey; his niece Mary Cousins sings it in the NFB film *Passage West*. I learned it from the singing of her son John, a well-known PEI school teacher, folklorist and singer, now retired. John is a second-cousin of our new Design Editor, Meryl Arbing.

It is, as storyteller David Weale says, "a gorgeous song", and I sing it everywhere I go in Canada to try to get it better known.

As stated earlier, it is a song about one family's westward journey. But I think it's a song for all of us. We all make a westward journey in our lives. For example, my family made their westward journey when the potato famine drove them out of Ireland in 1842 and they sailed to this new land in a little sailing ship which had brought square timbers from the Ottawa valley to Liverpool, eventually ending up in the Ottawa valley in a little place called Carp.

The journey does not have to be a westward one. Our First Nations people made their trek eastward, probably over the Bering Sea.

Joseph Campbell pointed out that the the first journey for all of us is the exciting one down the birth canal and out into the world.

In fact, it need not be a physical journey at all. We all take inner journeys, spiritual journeys, if you will, journeys of the soul, inner quests.

And we all have dark moments in our lives, those times when we feel lost, and "a great dense forest" stands in front of us.

That's when it's nice to know that the O'Halloran Road is just a few short miles away.

May we all find our own O'Halloran Road

## The Back Page

**The Canadian Society for Musical Traditions** (formerly the **Canadian Folk Music Society**, established 1957) is dedicated to the study and promotion of musical traditions of all communities and cultures, in all their aspects. The scope of the society's activities is intended to reflect the interests both of members who are ethnomusicologists and of members whose interests are mainly with traditional music and its contemporary counterparts, especially in Canada.

The **Canadian Folk Music Bulletin** is published quarterly by the Canadian Society for Musical Traditions, and contains articles, notices, reviews and commentary on all aspects of Canadian folk music.

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Subscriptions are included with memberships, which run with the calendar year. Annual membership fees are: \$16.00 for students and seniors, \$20.00 for other individuals and organizations. Please make cheques payable to the society. Membership entitles the holder to one-year subscriptions to the **CANADIAN FOLK MUSIC BULLETIN** and the annual **CANADIAN FOLK MUSIC JOURNAL**, discounts from the CSMT Mail Order Service, and a voice in the society's affairs.

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Please write for details concerning submissions, reviews and advertising.

**La Société canadienne pour les traditions musicales** (autrefois la **Société canadienne de musique folklorique**, fondée 1957) existe au Canada pour l'étude et l'avancement des traditions musicales de toutes les cultures et communautés, sous tous leurs aspects. L'ensemble de ses activités reflètera les intérêts des membres qui sont ethnomusicologues ainsi que ceux des membres qui s'occupent surtout de la musique traditionnelle et des ses équivalents contemporains, surtout au Canada.

Le **Bulletin De Musique Folklorique Canadienne**, publié quatre fois l'an par la Société canadienne pour les traditions musicales, comprend des articles, des informations, des comptes-rendus et des commentaires sur tous les aspects de la musique folklorique canadienne.

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L'adhésion à la société comprend: l'abonnement au **BULLETIN** et à l'annuaire **Revue De Musique Folklorique Canadienne**; les rabais du Service de commandes postales; la possibilité de prendre part aux affaires de la Société, le tout pour une durée d'un an. La cotisation annuelle est de 15 \$ pour toute personne n'ayant pas d'emploi à temps complet (étudiants, retraités et chômeurs); de 25 \$ pour particuliers; et de 35 \$ pour institutions. Faire parvenir votre chèque ou mandat-poste à la SCTM.

Les lecteurs sont invités à soumettre articles, chansons, informations, dessins et compte rendus de livres et enregistrements s'intéressant particulièrement à la musique folklorique canadienne. A moins d'avis contraire, tout matériel publié (articles, traductions, transcriptions musicales ou arrangements qui ne sont pas du domaine public) est soumis à la loi des droits d'auteur.

Pour plus de renseignements concernant soumissions, comptes-rendus et annonces de publicité, prière d'écrire à la Société.

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