



Calgary Folk Festival

by Anne Davies

The Calgary Folk Festival goes into its fourth year of operation and will take place August 12th and 13th of this year at Prince's Island Park in Calgary.

The festival is unique in many ways and at present it should be seen as one of the major activities of the Calgary Folk Club representing almost an "open day" in concept. It is an opportunity for the public at large to become involved in the music which can be heard year round at many locations in the city. This festival is a small, high quality event organized around two evening concerts and one afternoon of workshops and family entertainment. Each evening concert features six or seven different acts covering the broad spectrum of folk music. Each act has a 30-40 min. main stage set allowing performers more time to de-

velop their material.

Our workshops are conducted in tents and are designed as educational opportunities for the community. The workshops do not have sound systems and are presented by individual performers rather than groups of performers. In total twenty acts are featured over the two day period including local performers and main guests. At the present time the festival is unable to invite lesser known performers from out of province due to the nature of the budget and the general lack of grant money. Last year's figures show:

TOTAL EXPENSES: \$67,228 of which \$32,000 covered performers fees, travel and accomodation.

A) City of Calgary C.R.A.F. Grant:	\$ 7,500
B) Alberta Culture:	7,500
(grant based on performers fees for the 80 & 81 Festivals - this represents an after the fact grant)	
C) Canada Council - Travel Grant	7,500
for Canadian performers	
	<u>\$22,500</u>

In comparison the Calgary Folk Club generated \$21,856 by initiating its own fund raising activities.

When asked why this festival is unable to do what larger festivals do....the answer is simple! The grants received allow only for a modest, carefully planned festival with a realistic budget. It is hoped that at some point the Calgary Folk Festival may achieve the same civic granting as the Edmonton Folk Festival (i.e., in 1982 \$72,000).

To date the Calgary Folk Festival has operated for three consecutive years in "THE BLACK" with an increased following each year. Despite inclement

weather 7,000 enjoyed last year's event.

It is necessary to make the point that it is difficult for a festival to break even. The various grants available certainly ease the situation but financial considerations are made very apparent to artistic directors, who may often wish for a far different guest list than they finally arrive at. Responsibility to the Board of Directors, to sponsors etc. all have a bearing with the end result being that artistic desires must often be out weighed by financial realism in order to avoid a deficit situation. This particular problem can only be alleviated by more generous grants at the civic, provincial and federal levels.

The Calgary Folk Festival has no full time staff or office facilities. It presently remains very much at the volunteer level but there is the hope that the significance of the event to the cultural life of the community will allow for a more secure status in the future.

This festival is noted for the excellence of all technical and organizational details as well as the warmth generated among performers, volunteers, organizers and the audience at large. The event is strongly supported by all of Calgary's folk clubs and does much to enhance a cooperative spirit year round at the community level.

The tremendous support of the Festival by C.B.C. Radio and T.V. in Calgary must be given special mention and the fine recordings done by Les Siemieniuk have received a great deal of air play both locally and nationally. We look forward to the continuing support of C.B.C. once again this year.