

## The 1997 Annual General Meeting

This year's meeting was a bold experiment in several ways; some were successful, some less so. It was held at the edge of the continent (which hadn't been done in some years); it was a month later than usual; and it took place in a resort situation, with all the facilities under one roof. (Well, two roofs, to be exact.)

The meeting took place on Vancouver Island, at Camp Pringle on Shawnigan Lake. This turned out to be a pleasant woodland location on a gorgeous lake in country which reminds me of the Muskoka district of Ontario, part of my formative turf. (I always think of inland Vancouver Island as "Muskoka with Mountains.") One building served for sleeping and one for all our other functions, including meals, dance, coffeehouse, auditorium, ping-pong, tune-swaps, cuddling up to the fire.... Camp Pringle had further facilities which could have handled many times our numbers, and we could have availed ourselves of many sporting and nature opportunities if we hadn't been so damned obsessive about our music! I found the included meals (cooked on-site by a resident chef) fully adequate in quality and quantity for my own tastes, and, with allowances for individual differences, I think most everybody agreed. I'd certainly recommend Camp Pringle to other groups looking for an off-the-beaten-track place to hold an event.

The weekend was hosted by the Cowichan Folk Guild, who put on several events for our entertainment. Friday night was a dance, with live music and caller (always the best way). Music was by Rig-a-Jig, an impressive English-style country dance band, augmented by hot ringers like Murray Shoolbraid on piano and Eric Oscar on concertina and bandoneon. I was having a great time until duty called in the form of back-room politicking; but I did get back to dancing later.

Saturday daytime was devoted to paper sessions, which for us non-academics usually sounds dry and usually turns out to be highly interesting. In fact, we were so fascinated that we went on all afternoon and cancelled a projected winery tour! (If that's not devotion, I don't know what is....) Alan Thrasher offered some good-humouredly postmodern considerations of the fiddle as the devil's instrument; David Gregory vastly expanded my

knowledge of the roots of the English folk revival; George Lyon used the repertoire of one cowboy poet to illuminate Alberta's culture, past and present; Phil Thomas led us in Vancouver Island songs from his wide Pacific Northwest collection; young Eric Oscar astounded us with the breadth of his inborn talent on various types of accordion; and Bill Sarjeant and David Spalding sang and discussed Child ballads, with a few contributions from others (including one from me, perhaps more lurid than the situation called for). Saturday evening, once more Cowichan Folk Guild hosted an event for us, this time a coffeehouse with numerous local performers, followed by a song circle where we out-of-towners got to share songs with the Islanders. We thank the Guild for hosting the weekend and showing us a good time.

Sunday we got down to business. Since the minutes of the Annual General Meeting are reproduced elsewhere in this issue, I won't go into overall specifics here. One small change affecting Bulletin subscribers is that the grace period for renewing is reduced to three months from six, giving us some small potential savings. The challenges facing the Bulletin were of course dwelt on, with no miracle solutions emerging, but everyone is aware of the situation, and people are supportive.

The downside of the meeting was the attendance, in smaller numbers than anticipated. We rather rattled around in the available space; I had a room with six bunks to myself, for example! While we had a quorum for the AGM, and the business was thus conducted properly, it would have been preferable to have had more participation from across the country. I'm told that the weekend that was chosen conflicted with some ethnomusicological events, and that in future we'll have to return to our more usual end-of-October time. (Back to being away from home at Hallowe'en, I guess!) The date, combined with the less central location, deterred many potential participants from Central Canada, is the consensus.

Be that as it may—we had a fun weekend, we got our business done, we raised consciousnesses, we formed and deepened friendships, and we built momentum for the future. We'll keep you posted as plans for next year's meeting are firmed up. [JL]



**Errata:** The dandy photo of Powell River's Enjoyment Band, which accompanied Martin Rossander's letter in the last issue, was taken at the Open Air Market by Rod Innes, the Garlic King of the Sunshine Coast (a sobriquet to which we might all well aspire!).

How could we omit Tam Kearney from the list of members of Friends of Fiddler's Green last issue (p. 34)? That'd be like a list of the world's richest men leaving off Bill Gates! And, of course, Jim Strickland's name isn't "Jom."

For good measure, we misspelled Mryka Hall-Beyer's name at p. 55 last issue, to heap further coals of fire upon our heads. Sorry, all!