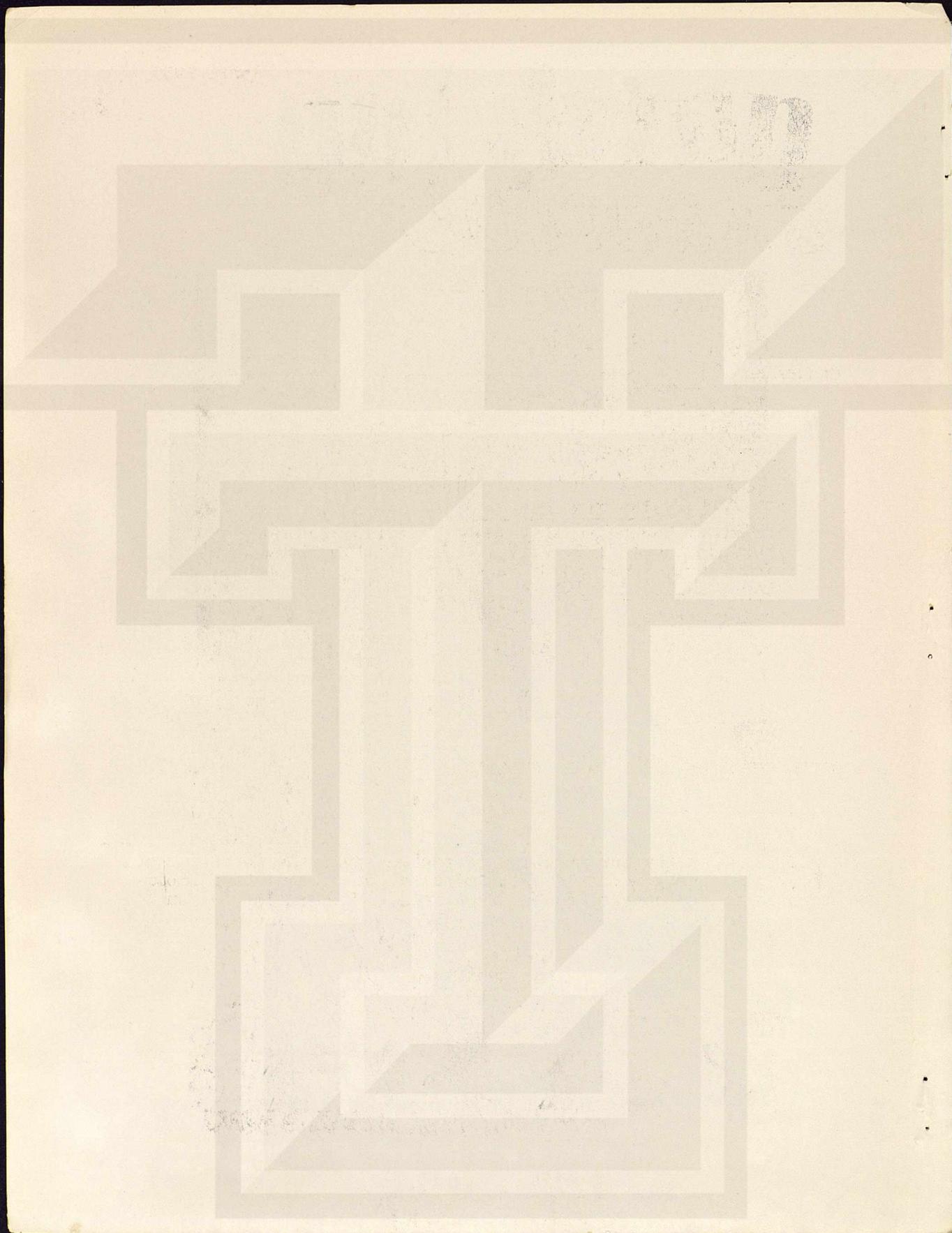


gardylou

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Erik Darling



#1
April 1959

GARDYLOO

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FEATURE: Beginning this issue, a serialization of the
reknown book, "1001 Witty Sayings To Use While Tuning
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COVER PHOTO by LAWRENCE N. SHUSTAK

GARDYLOO is an amateur magazine edited and published by Lee Shaw,
assisted by Barry Kornfeld, with moral support from staff photo-
graphers Aaron Rennert and Ray Sullivan. Price: 15¢, 7 issues
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EDITOR'S NOTE

In the summer of 1957, a neophyte to the Washington Square scene took typewriter in hand and in a burst of enthusiasm produced a small mimeographed magazine entitled Caravan. Now, almost two years later the same neophyte takes typewriter in hand to produce a small, mimeographed magazine entitled Gardylloo (known also as The Polkniks' Gazette)*.

Caravan, in its less-than-two-years, grew all out of proportion to our original intents and expectations for it. It turned into an almost-full-time proposition requiring an editorial staff. We had the good fortune of finding a man to take over the publishing of Caravan and gather together an editorial staff, so we happily put Caravan into his hands, and now we are free to return to our first enthusiasm -- a small magazine of news, nattering, and articles about and/or of interest to people on the urban folk music scene, particularly in New York. We hope that you'll enjoy this kind of little magazine as much as we enjoy publishing it.

If you have something to say in print, we invite your contributions in the form of articles, letters, news notes, or what have you. And we particularly welcome letters of comment or rebuttal to the material we present herein. We expect to reach a relatively small, but interested and aware audience.

You may notice that there is no record review column as such in Gardylloo. We do not intend to run the usual kind of staff-written record review column. Instead we will bring you such record news as we have. And if a record comes to our attention that we feel like commenting on, we'll comment. If a record comes to your attention that you feel warrants comment or discussion, we invite you to write about it. Send us a letter, an article, or a paragraph or two about it from your point of view.

We hope to publish Gardylloo at regular and frequent intervals, but we make no promises. Exact dates of publication will be determined by triangulation of (a) the editor's time, (b) material for publication, and (c) funds available. It is necessary that Gardylloo be financially self-sustaining, and photo-covers, mimeo paper, stencils, and ink run into money.

Because of the necessity of paying the cover printer, the paper dealer, etc., we are offering advertising space at a price: \$10 for a full page, \$5 for a half, and \$2.50 for a quarter. We will also be delighted to accept cash donations of any size. For further information contact the editor. We will be most happy if you buy ad space. Even if you have nothing to sell, you can have the unparalleled joy of seeing your name in large print in these pages for a mere pittance.

(continued on page 9)

*also known as The New Lost City Ramblers Appreciation Magazine

Barry Kornfeld

ERIK DARLING

I trust that the readers of Gardyloo have all heard at least some of Erik Darling's music. If you have, then you know that it is not a journalistic exaggeration to say that his playing and singing have a great deal of sensitivity and technique -- in short -- artistry. More bluntly and more personally, Erik's music moves me as that of few others can.

Erik's playing and singing could not be described as ethnic or traditional because, among other reasons, he doesn't come from a traditional folk background. He was born 25 years ago in Baltimore, Md., and moved to Canandaigua in upstate New York at an early age. He spent most of his early years living variously in Canandaigua and in New York City.

He always liked to tinker around with musical instruments, and his family listened to a lot of music--classical music and Negro music (Spirituals and Gospels). He cut his folkmusic teeth on a bunch of Burl Ives records he heard at a friend's house. (Erik still loves Burl Ives' singing.)

When he was about 15, give or take a year, he spied a guitar at the house of this friend. After tinkering with it and asking a few questions, he wound up going home with a few new chord positions in his fingers and the guitar. He played the guitar a great deal, trying to play and sing the songs he heard on the Burl Ives and on Richard Dyer-Bennet and Josh White records.

"When he sang a song he had learned from Josh White," someone observed, "it came out sounding like Josh White; when he sang a song he learned from Burl Ives, it came out sounding like Burl Ives."

During all this time, this incubating stage, Erik had no contact with the folknik element. It was strictly between him and his records. He didn't know political folk music, nor group folk music, nor any of the non-musical aspects of the field. You might say that his occupation with folk music was (and still is) purely musically oriented.

Some years later, in New York City, Erik was directed by a friend, who knew of his interest in folk music, to one of the Washington Square Sunday afternoon sessions. Through the people he met there, he was introduced to a wider range of folkstyles and folk-singers.

His first contact with the 5-string banjo excited him to begin this instrument as well. From then on came the nebulous and hard to describe process of technical development, individual stylistic assertion, and general artistic formation.

After leaving high school and spending six months at NYU, Erik went from one job and trade to another. None was particularly to his liking. He more or less dates the beginning of his professional career as a folk musician as 1954, when he spent 6 months touring with MUSICAL AMERICANA, a folkish music, dance, and drama, variety show. During these many weeks of one-night stands, Erik learned a lot from a jazz guitar-man who was in the show. "It was rough going," he says, "but I really learned a lot in both performing and playing."

Since that time, he has been working as a folksinger and instrumentalist. The number of records with "Erik Darling - accompanist - guitar and banjo" on the sleeve are legion. His own record, ERIK DARLING (Elektra 154) is a fine example of good folk art.

To the dismay of many, Erik has been doing primarily group work, going back to the Villagers of years gone by, the Folksingers (a group gotten together by Erik out of a Broadway show), his current work with the Weavers, his primary interest - The Tarriers (a group which is a direct descendant of the Tunetellers), and a number of other groups. He works with groups because the elation in a successful group performance is one of his great esthetic pleasures.

It has been theorized that he submerges himself in groups because he has a "thin voice". While there may be a germ of truth in this, I feel that there are many untrue implications in this statement, primarily the inference that a thin voice is not a good voice. A good voice, like good instrumentation, is that which effectively and appropriately communicates the music. To apply the criteria of a concert voice (for which music is composed with certain standard criteria in mind) to a jazz or a folk voice (for which the music is almost performer-composed) is absurd. In terms of effective communication in his idiom, Erik's voice displays great sensitivity and beauty in the opinion on many (myself included).

His essential musical philosophy is to play the music as he feels it, rather than according to some set of rules. He studies and listens to a lot of traditional and ethnic folk music because (a) it's good music, and (b) this is one of the conscious bases of his own music. But it would be impossible for him to play overly ethnic-sounding music, because he is not a member of an ethnic culture producing such music. It is axiomatic that your culture, generation, and environment determine your artistic expression; even though some try to deny their own backgrounds. Erik's more cosmopolitan cultural psyche produces a more cosmopolitan art, borrowing from classical music, jazz, and other elements of his background. The result is an art that attempts not to be pure folk music necessarily, but pure expression of Erik Darling.

At present Erik is getting set for a tour with the Weavers, with whom he expects to tour about one month of each year. (The geographical distribution of the members of the group makes more frequent work

Israel G. Young

A MODEST PLEA

to Prevent the Connotations of Folknik in America from becoming a Burden to its Author and for making it Beneficial to the Public.

When I created the expression "folknik" some months after the opening of The Folklore Center in March, 1957, I meant the young city folk singers who picked up songs from anyplace but home and annoyed me with their technical imitations of country music, etc. However, I certainly did not mean all of the city folksingers, as evidenced by such people as Dick Weissman, John Cohen, Tony Saletan, Fred Gerlach, Tom Paley, and others who have been the life-blood of my concerts. I only meant those singers of folksongs who were unaware of the traditions they were taking from, unaware of the Library of Congress recordings, unaware of dignity and persisting in their ignorance.

When the expression "folknik" came into popular use with the advent of the Sputnik in September, 1957, ("-nik" was a well-used suffix before this time but never captured the whole popular imagination until then...."beatnik" being the best example) it soon came to mean all city folksingers, regardless of understanding, integrity, musicianship, et al.

I now wish to recant most of my earlier statements re city folksingers and begin to rise to their defense. Most country folksingers aren't worthy of recording either -- Alan Lomax went through thousands of records to find eight sides for his truly classic THIS IS OUR STORY and the same for MOUNTAIN FROLIC. How many of Ken Goldstein's tape recordings remain on tape?

The city folksinger does not necessarily have to live in the fields to play a guitar, or break his back breaking rocks to sing a worksong. His natural surroundings are the books and recordings available today. Cecil Sharp didn't discover ballads in the Southern Appalachians -- he showed us what was available. His genius lay in his perception and taste and selection. Alan Lomax didn't discover Negro worksongs. His genius made them available to all of us and has made them part of everyone's heritage via his carefully edited books and recordings.

The city folksinger is struggling with his terms -- he is looking for a tradition and he will help to create one. When he does, and it won't be long, a Sharp, a Seeger, or a Lomax will appear to codify this work and make it available for everyone.

Young (2)

Meanwhile: long live Perry Lederman for raptly listening to Blind Blake's recordings and forcing everyone to hear his attempts at recreating his guitar technique; long live Barry Kornfeld for leading Rev. Gary Davis around the city; long live Happy Traum for taking lessons from Brownie McGhee; long live Dick Weissman for his banjo suite, A Day In The Mountains; long live the Folksingers Guild for making it possible for good and bad--but trying to say something--city folksingers to learn from playing before an audience; long live Oscar Brand for giving them air time for more than a dozen years now; long live every kid who is willing to pay twenty dollars and more for Lomax's NEGRO SONGS AS SUNG BY LEADBELLY; long live the kid who paid me ten dollars for Woody Guthrie's BOUND FOR GLORY; long live the seventy people who came to hear Fred Gerlach and Rev. Gary Davis a cold night a year ago.

Long live the struggling city folksinger for refusing to go out of existence and not abiding by earlier "natural" laws, and may he say the same for the succeeding generation.

--Israel G. Young
March 16, 1959

EDITOR'S NOTE
(Con't from page 4)

Gardylloo is being sold at The Folklore Center, 110 MacDougal Street, or by mail at a price of 15¢ per copy. Subscriptions are available at seven issues for \$1.00. Please make all checks payable to Lee Shaw. Also, though we trust our friends (we've even loaned them money on the rare occasions that we've had it), they're a forgetful lot, so we suggest that you contact us directly about financial matters. We can't be responsible for money given to others in the hope that they'll remember to pass it along to us for subs, etc. (The same goes for manuscripts, etc.)

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Please note also that opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the editor-publisher, or of any other persons connected either directly or indirectly with this magazine. (They may not even be the opinions of the authors, for all we know.) Gardylloo is intended as a kind of open forum, and solicits material of opinion, whether we agree with it or not.

--your inevitable editor
Lee Shaw

EXPOSÉ I

Some months ago a satire magazine titled LOCO ran a cartoon-article on the subject of folksingers. Through considerable skull-duggery the editors of Gardyloo have managed to obtain a copy of the original manuscript of this article. Since the original is much broader in scope than the published version (not to mention being an earlier and more authentic version), we have made special arrangements with the author* to bring you here the original uncut, unabridged, unillustrated manuscript.

SIGNIFICANT TRENDS ON THE AMERICAN SCENE SECTION

Introduction: Lately, every magazine you pick up contains an article on the Beat Generation. If you've read them, you probably think that all the kids in New York, Chicago and San Francisco are real cool. That is, sick. After a long-range survey, however (we went all the way to Greenwich Village and back), LOCO is able to report that this is not so. Lots of kids in New York, Chicago and San Francisco are engaged in pre-serving the fine old traditions of American music. Instead of being cool, they're ethnic. That is, sick. For the complete squares in the audience, we take pride in presenting a brief guide to this strange phenomenon...

Title: FOLKSINGERS

Sub-title: How to recognize a Folksinger

1. Picture shows a typical group of folksingers at the fountain in Washington Square. They are all young, unkempt Bohemian types, wearing dirty dungarees, ragged sweaters, moth-eaten beards, etc. Main group in center consists of a trio: guitar, banjo, washtub bass, banging away noisily, not noticing that the fountain has been turned on and they are standing in water to their ankles. A crowd watches from the edge of the fountain, including one guy in a suit and necktie carrying a saxophone and looking bewildered. Another guy with a washtub bass has turned it right side up and is floating around on the waters of the fountain in it. There is a duck, also looking bewildered. Trio is singing: "All night long I held her in my arms, Just to keep her from the foggy, foggy dew."

Caption: The modern American folksinger is not found, as you might expect, in the hills of West Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, and like that. His habitat is the big city -- New York, Chicago, San Francisco, and occasionally Philadelphia. He lives in the slums, dresses glamorous-

ly, and never goes anywhere without his instrument, except when his instrument is in hock. He gets together with his friends to play and sing as often and as loud as the neighbors and police will let him. For this reason, he never stays in one place very long, and one way to recognize him is the fact that his feet hurt.

2. A large auditorium, which could be the one in any high school. The audience is composed of kids of high school age and younger, although many of the girls have very ample figures for their age. General impression is that they are all on the cute, wholesome side. They are well-dressed, girls mainly in jumper-type dresses, boys in suits and ties. Nobody is paying any attention at all to what is happening on stage. Girls are jumping up and down, waving and yelling at each other across the room. Boys who are not holding hands with girls are gathered in clumps, looking at particularly well-stacked chicks and whispering behind their hands. One boy has a toy banjo, which he is exhibiting proudly to his admiring girl-friends. On the stage, a trio very similar to the one in the first panel though slightly less soiled-looking is playing and singing. Guy with banjo is attempting to get the audience to sing with them, to no avail.

Caption: Occasionally, folksingers get together for larger gatherings, called "Hootenannies". Here they play and sing for audiences of high school students, or at least kids who ought to be high school students. The audience always obeys a strict set of rules, one of which is to pay no attention to any folksinger on the stage unless he happens to be Pete Seeger. Instead they neck, tell funny stories about their teachers, steal each other's homework, and make plans to become folksingers themselves. When this happens, they will be able to move away from their good, middle-class homes to the slums--but not so far away they won't be able to go home for a square meal occasionally.

3. A small, rundown theater, smoky and gloomy. Audience, about equally divided between scraggly Bohemian types and sophisticated "uptown" characters who are slumming, is seated on a horrible assortment of rickety kitchen chairs, piano stools, benches, etc. Sign on wall says, "Occupancy by more than 76½ persons is dangerous and unlawful". One feeble spotlight illuminates the stage, although exposed wiring is looped and dangling all over the place. The "stage" itself is actually just the floor at one end of the room. The folksinger is a man in a checked flannel shirt who plays a 12-string guitar and sings "Oh, the E-ri-e was a-risin', the gin was a-gettin' low..."

Caption: Occasionally, a folksinger puts on a regular concert. Borrowing enough money to hire a hall, and selling tickets to all his friends (the same ones from whom he borrowed the money), he sings all the songs he knows, telling funny stories in between if he doesn't know enough songs. His friends loan him the money and buy the tickets so they will have the chance later on to criticize his technique and tell him that he isn't "ready" yet (nobody seems to know what he is supposed to be ready for). If he is really smart, he will give the performance a name like "Boozy Ballads of Blood and Buxom Babes". In this case, lots of "uptown" characters will bring their girlfriends to

show off how sophisticated they are, and the concert may even get out of the red.

4. A high-class type theater, with a well-dressed audience. Entertainer wears a tuxedo, looks well-fed, and plays a fancily inlaid guitar. There is a microphone and all the trimmings. Singer stands with feet wide apart, head thrown back, and sings, "I been workin' on the railroad, all the livelong day..."

Caption: For the sake of completion, we should mention that rare individual, the successful professional folksinger. The fact that he works regularly and makes money at it makes him an object of scorn among the true folkmusic addicts. At his worst, he has even been known to make records with the Andrew Sisters. He almost always has three names, like Bascom Wyer-Bennett. The depth of his degradation is shown by the fact that he carries a spare guitar so he doesn't constantly have to tune up on stage. No genuine folk-type folksinger would touch him with a ten-foot pole, except to ask him for an introduction to the president of the company that releases his records.

Sub-title: How To Be A Folksinger

1. Picture of a banjo (with five strings, not four), a guitar, and a washtub bass (which consists simply of a washtub turned upside down, an upright broom handle attached to the lower edge, and a string running from the top of the broom handle to the middle of the washtub bottom--though the fancier models have a miniature fire hydrant topping the broom handle). The banjo and guitar have broken strings and are held together with Scotch tape and wire; they bear price tags of \$4.95 and \$6.50 respectively. The washtub bass looks new and gleams with paint and chrome; its price tag reads \$35.00.

Caption: By now you are no doubt thoroughly fascinated by this richly rewarding aspect of genuine American culture and want to become a folksinger yourself. Nothing could be easier. Just provide yourself with one of the above instruments and carry it around with you. Or, if you want to be really exotic, get a twelve-string guitar, a banjo with "Scruggs" pegs (extra pegs which, when turned, break the strings at a moment's notice), a mountain dulcimer (which looks something like a wooden Coca-Cola bottle with strings), a recorder, or a washtub bass with non-slip differential and powerglide transmission. After you've established your reputation as a folksinger and been around the field a few years, you may even decide to learn to play the thing.

2. Picture of a folksinger, like unto those in the very first panel. Same dirty dungarees, old sweater full of holes, dirty sneakers also with holes, no socks, scraggly beard, uncut hair, etc.

Caption: The proper costume is important, if you wish to be readily identified by your fellow folksingers and prevent panhandlers from approaching you. Make sure your clothes have that "slept-in" look by sleeping in them. Experienced guitar- and banjo-pickers (never refer to yourself as a guitar- or banjo-player) have calloused hands and long, hard fingernails. If these are unavailable locally, send s

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stamped, self-addressed envelope for our complete price-list.

5. This is not actually a picture, but a representation of a page torn from a dictionary-like book. It contains the following definitions:

FOLK - A necessary evil, to be tolerated but sneered about behind their backs. The chief source of folksongs, which are too good for them.
ETHNIC - (not to be confused with ethic). A method of singing a folksong exactly as it was sung by the folk who invented it. Frequently, the folk have forgotten what the originally is like, and must be taught. Extreme patience is recommended in such cases.
BLUEGRASSING - Playing and singing a song in as corny a manner as possible. Highly recommended.
GREENSLEEVEING - Playing and singing in a somewhat "arty" manner. Tends to reflect on the purity of motive of the singer.
POPULAR MUSIC - Horrors!
CLASSICAL MUSIC - What dat?
COMMERCIALISM - Any deviation from the ethnic, particularly (though not necessarily) if it makes money. There is no such thing as a commercial folksinger, though there are commercial people who sing folksongs.
MONEY - What dat?
BURL IVES - A rank commercialist, whose name is not mentioned in mixed company.
CHORD - A combination of musical notes. Subject for endless conversation.
HAMMERING ON, PULLING OFF, DOUBLE THUMBING, FRAILING, CLAWHAMMER STYLE - Methods of playing the guitar and banjo - but mainly phrases to use to make people think you know what you're talking about when you don't.

Caption: Acquire the proper vocabulary. Above are some useful words and phrases; learn them and toss them around casually. Memorizing a few sentences like, "Through amalgamation of folk material from many cultures, and by a process of constant interchange, facilitated by books, records, and the media of mass communication, the confraternity of amateur and professional folksingers has developed into a new and different sort of folk culture." will also prove useful in impressing your audience.

4. Picture of a typical folksinger tuning up his banjo. He is not looking at the instrument, but is gazing in the direction of the (unseen) audience with a grin which is supposed to be nonchalant but just looks embarrassed. He is twisting the pegs of the banjo frantically with his left hand, and the strings are popping wildly in all directions.

Caption: Many of the best folksingers have carved out long and successful careers for themselves without being able to play a lick. It is important, however, to know how to tune your instrument. It is not necessary to complete the job of getting it in tune, as long as you can keep on tuning it. Do this by constantly twisting the pegs and plucking the strings. If you ever get one string in tune, go on to the next, and when you finish it the first string will be out of

tune with it. Finally, all the strings will break and you can quit... In the meantime, draw on your stock of witty sayings to keep the audience amused and impressed. Experts have found that quips like "Don't leave now--I think I'm finding the lost chord", "There'll be new sounds in the old town tonight", and "I stretched this banjo's head myself, but shrunk mine at the same time" keep an audience in stitches. At worst, you can fall back on complaints about the humidity. In desperate cases, abandon your own instrument and borrow somebody else's. It will be even harder to tune, but at least you'll have a good excuse.

5. Picture of a typical folksinger in front of a record store, rapidly writing down the words of a song being played over the loud-speaker, while taking quick glances over his shoulder to make sure nobody catches him.

Caption: Oh yes, there's one more thing...Folksongs! You'll never succeed at this racket unless you know the words to some folksongs, the more obscure the better. Learn the words to songs like "Blue-Tailed Fly", "Down In The Valley", "Leatherwing Bat", "So Long, It's Been Good To Know You", "I Dreamed I Saw Joe Hill Last Night", and the inevitable (ugh!) "Greensleeves" for practice. Then you can go on to make up your own folksongs, which is the one sure way to the top. Folksongs can be about sex, murder, drinking (or any combination of these elements), gambling, working (on the railroad or on a ship, nowhere else), or goin' down the road feelin' bad. As long as you stick to those subjects, you're safe. Just remember, if anybody asks you whether your version of a song is ethnic or not, say, "I collected it myself". The word "collected" is pure magic. If you wish to develop the theme further, say, "I collected it from Granny (or Grandpa, or occasionally Auntie) Scruggins in the hills of West Virginia (or North Carolina, or Kentucky, or like that). Keep this one simple rule in mind, and you've got it made. The gang down at Washington Square will love you. As for us, we'll take Perry Como any day!

--Anon.

Any similarity between the characters in this study and any actual persons living or dead is purely coincidental.

Footnote to asterisk on page 9: The author of this piece, as with all true folk material, is unknown.

FOLK MUSIC SPECIALISTS

For photographs, audition tapes, actual concert recordings, etc.

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new york notes

Gala event of the season on the NY Scene was WNYC's big show at Cooper Union, in connection with their 20th annual American Music Festival. This two-hour show was under the leadership of Oscar Brand and was taped for broadcast in segments over his radio show, Folksong Festival.

The Cooper Union Hall is a huge crypt in which Abraham Lincoln once spoke. It has been described as one of the few halls in America in which every seat is behind a pillar. Despite this, the representatives of Gardyloo managed to get relatively good seats, thanks to Barry Kornfeld and Manny Greenhill, who arrived early and held a small bloc of places for us. Our group, which included Barry, Manny, Ray Sullivan and Aaron Rennert, and Roger and Jaime Lass, settled down to await the show. We were among the lucky hundreds who arrived well before the starting time of 8 PM.

The house filled rapidly to overflowing. Tickets had been distributed free on request and WNYC, judging by the fact that about one-third of the tickets requested for their free classical music events are never used, had sent out a number more tickets than there were seats. They discovered to their chagrin that folkmusic enthusiasts are more enthusiastic than classical music buffs. The seats were filled and people jammed the aisles and pit. More, we understand, banged at the closed doors.

An array of microphones decked the stage. People wandered about, among them a number of folkniks who carried instruments and strove to look like they "belonged". Several of the latter found their ways backstage.

A group of men with drums, saxophones and such were visible backstage and set many of the audience to speculating. Oscar Brand and Mike Cohen came onto the stage, confronted the microphones and compared guitar strings. Then they moved the piano. The men with saxes, drums, etc., came out and played a fraction of a number. Then Oscar came on and opened the show, with the Shanty Boys backing him on his theme, New York Girls. (Instead of his traditional dark blue, Oscar wore a light suit.)

They were followed by Hally Wood, who borrowed the Shanty Boys to back her on her first number. Then Andrew Rowan Summers sang with his dulcimer. He was followed by Cynthia Gooding. After her, the

Shanty Boys came back and whomped it up. They included an interesting version of Devilish Mary which has the same chorus as Jimmie Driftwood's I'm Too Young To Marry. Roger Sprung's fiddling on this number brought a roar of approval from the audience.

We were again reminded of Jimmie Driftwood when Peter Seeger sang the Battle Of New Orleans, which has the melody of 3th of January. Jean Ritchie called on Oscar to join her in a courting song and then sang solo. She was followed by Frank Warner, who included in his selections Raccoon Got A Bushy Tail with some whiz-bang banjo breaks. After that the men with the saxes came back and we discovered that they were the MacBeth The Great Calypso Orchestra. They performed and backed The Lord Invader. And then the Tarrriers rounded off the program.

A high point of the evening was an event which unfortunately was missed by those in the audience who couldn't see backstage through the gap in the curtains. It took place during the calypso music and consisted of a dance in file by the Tarrriers, John Cohen and Roger Sprung.

Scheduled for the program but unable to make it was Paul Clayton, whose absence was much lamented.

Among the 1700-odd people who packed the auditorium were many many folkmusic notables, among them Cisco Houston and Woody Guthrie. And as noted above, John Cohen was among the people backstage, though in his capacity as a photographer rather than as a folksinger.

As a formal concert the program might have had shortcomings under Robert's Revised Rules of Concert Production. But it wasn't a formal concert; it was a radio broadcast. And as an evening of folkmusic it was excellent.

There've been a lot of interesting and exciting concerts in NY in the past year. Too many for us to begin to list, nonetheless go into detail. However, we'd like to arbitrarily mention a few of them.

One which we found very interesting but hardly exciting at all we shall refrain from mentioning by name for obvious reasons. This was a Gargantuan affair that began well after its scheduled curtain time of 12 PM and ran hours into the morning. It contained many many examples of what not to do when you're putting on a folkmusic concert. High point was during the last half of the show, when all of its cast of (seemingly) thousands were assembled around tables on stage, supposedly listening while each other took turns performing. Even to those seated as far from the stage as we were, it was apparent that some of the seated singers had succumbed to the general boredom and were asleep. It was also interesting to note the members of the audience slipping furtively out of the house in groups of twos, threes and sixes during the show. We stuck it out to the bitter end through academic curiosity.

Another concert we'd like to comment on is the AYH presentation of Andrew Rowan Summers and The New Lost City Ramblers, on Feb 23th past. Gardyloo's eager representatives arrived early and entrenched in the front row in hopes of seeing all, hearing all, and --perhaps-- telling all.

Mr Summers was the first performer in evidence, followed shortly by Tom Paley, John Cohen and their instrument-bearers. They disappeared backstage and were soon joined by Mike Seeger. Tom reappeared long enough to tell us that at last count they had a minimum of nine instruments with them, all to be kept in tune with each other. Soon the soft sounds o plink-plunk could be heard from backstage.

A choir and three microphones were set up onstage. Mike Cohen appeared briefly to tape one mike into position on its stand with pink bandaids.

Soon, the houselights went out, and Mike (Cohen, not Seeger) introduced Andrew Rowan Summers. Mr Summers seated himself with his 4-string mountain dulcimer on his lap and began telling us about himself and his background.

He is an extremely entertaining speaker who captures and holds his audience. But his introductory material to the songs and ballads he sings is frequently at odds with the majority of folkmusic scholars, and he does have the habit common to many urban folksingers of giving a highly detailed synopsis of the story told by a ballad before he sings it. If a ballad is in a foreign language this translating of it beforehand makes sense, or if it is too fragmentary in the version to be sung to be understood, or if it is sung in a dialect such as the Scots, a story-synopsis might be needed. But Mr Summers' ballads are complete and understandable in themselves and tell their own stories quite well, and his singing is too clean and clear to need "translating".

His singing voice is pleasant and cultured. His dulcimer accompaniments are very simple. He explained to the audience that the accompaniments were a concession to them, based on the theory that a modern audience will be displeased with a capella singing. He, himself, feels that folksinging is not accompanied in tradition and ideally would prefer to perform unaccompanied.

It is apparent to the listener that his accompaniments do enforce limitations and restrictions on his singing. Perhaps an audience completely unaccustomed to folk music done in the folk idiom would prefer the dulcimer in the background, but with a folk music-oriented audience Mr Summers might do well to lay aside his dulcimer on at least a few of his numbers.

The New Lost City Ramblers came onstage laden with chairs and instruments. These were portioned out among them, and they launched quickly into their first number, The Dallas Rag. Their music, as you probably know by now, is primarily the hillbilly music of the 1920's-'30's, and they do it magnificently. They are three fine musicians and their emphasis is on their instruments. (They employed a number of banjos and guitars, a 12-stringer, fiddle and autoharp in their various numbers.)

It was apparent to those familiar with the New Lost that they'd put quite a bit of work and effort in presenting a good performance. There was less horseplay and tuning than is usual at a New Lost concert.

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Their charm and humor were much in evidence. Mike Seeger is one of the most entertaining people I've ever seen on stage. He seems to have a tremendous natural instinct for performance. He postures and grimaces, but without the feeling of affectation. Tom Paley is always himself on stage, though not necessarily always at ease. Both he and John seemed to feel somewhat at a disadvantage on the stage of the auditorium.

After their New York concert last summer, the New Lost were severely criticised for the disorganized quality of their performance -- the wandering, onstage switching of instruments, tuning up, etc. It is evident that they've taken these criticisms to heart and put a great deal of effort into presenting a concert that would be as acceptable to the audience staging-wise as musically. But it seems to me that something, perhaps their overawareness of staging, tended to inhibit them slightly. They seemed a little tense, uncertain of themselves and of the audience's reaction to them. When they made comments other than those directly relating to their material, or cracked jokes, it was almost apologetically. And there were moments during their music when they seemed almost grim with tension, particularly during their opening number.

Even so, they were excellent. They are three good men, each a fine musician and folksinger in his own right. Together they are a superb group. Their vitality, sensitivity and mutual enthusiasm for their material, combined with their musical ability and personal charm makes them tops on my list.

I look forward to seeing them on the stage again. Next time, I hope they will be in a format wherein they'll be more comfortable and freer to make the performer-audience contact that is so vital to a concert of this kind.

- - -

The Folksingers Guild presented another excellent concert on the 14th of March, in the Mills College Theater. The performers were Tony Saletan of Boston, Frank Hamilton of Chicago, and New York's Winnie Winston. Before the concert I heard a member of the audience comment that, although he'd never heard Tony or Winnie, he questioned the wisdom of putting these three performers together.

In my opinion the combination proved an excellent one. These three are all urban folksingers, similar enough in their approaches that they might well all appeal to the same general audience, but different enough -- and performers enough -- to give their concert the needed variety.

Tony is primarily a singer and song-leader who accompanies himself on guitar or banjo. He has a repertory of highly entertaining material, such as his Jamaican Street Cry song. His style is gentle and easy-going, and his voice very listenable. He led the audience in several numbers, sang quite a bit solo, and joined Frank Hamilton in several duets.

Shaw (5)

Frank is best known as an instrumentalist, but he has an excellent voice, and has proven himself to be a fine performer. He alternated guitar and banjo, and even gave us an a capella number, Old Woman All Skin And Bones, which he did with flair. (It was noted by several members of the audience that Frank has won away a crown long held by Roy Berkeley, as folkmusic's foremost foot-tapper. Employing the two-foot system, Frank out-tapped Roy both in volume and rhythmic complexity.)

Winnie Winston is a young and relatively inexperienced performer, but he is a performer of considerable promise. He does a good job of accompanying himself on guitar, and on banjo, but his voice is weak. If he can develop his voice, he should turn into one of New York's better urban folk musicians. He has talent and skill, and some stage experience should take the rough edges off his showmanship.

I understand that Lee Haring is reviewing both of these concerts (Saletan-Hamilton-Winston and Summers-New Lost) for Caravan. So for a more acute examination of them, I suggest you see the April-May issue of Caravan Folk Music Magazine.

SOME RECORD NEWS AND NOTES: DOWN BEAT, which has long included reviews of folk records in its pages, has divided its review column into sections for Pop, Folk, and Classical, as well as Jazz. The first entry in their Folk Record Reviews in the March 19th issue is, somehow, INSIDE SHEILLY BERMAN. An item we consider quote-worthy from this same column is under their review of THE KINGSTON TRIO FROM THE HUNGRY I: "The threesome...partially compensate for a lack of authenticity with considerable enthusiasm." Further along they tell us: "Other folk records of value released recently include: THE NEW LOST CITY RAMBLERS (Folkways 2396), Mike Seeger, Tom Paley and John Cohen, singin south-eastern mountain songs of the 1925-35 period."

The NEW LOST, by the way, have cut a second record, this time of Children's Songs. And rumor has it that they're preparing material for two more discs. We eagerly await them.

A record worthy of more than this passing mention is GALLOWS POLE (A-V 102) by Fred Gerlach with 12-string guitar. If you haven't heard it yet, make a point of giving it a listen.

A disc that isn't what we call folk music, but which is one of the most entertaining records that your editor has heard in a long, long time, is Oscar Brand's GIVE 'IM THE HOOK - Songs That Killed Vaudeville (Riverside 12-832 - Speciality Series). A real rowser, this is Oscar at his best, giving free rein to his sense of humor and parody. The material is, of course, taken from the vaudeville stage and rendered to perfection by Oscar and The Eveready Syncopators (Oscar on guitar, Michael Cohen on banjo, Brandford Spiny on brassy

Shaw (6)

percussion and the leader, Robert Abramson, on appropriately tinny piano). Included are such items as Oh Don't Go Near The Lion's Cage Tonight, The Bowery, and the magnificent There Once Was A Poor Young Man. Highly recommended to anyone with a sense of humor.

Elektra Records announces (a) the birth of a son, Reed Karen, to Susan Reed and her actor-husband, James Karen, and (b) the release of SONGS FOR WEE FOLK, an album of folk songs for children sung by Susan Reed.

A-V Records has made a 45 rpm disc of Unemployment Compensation Blues and Everything Is Higher, by Jerry Silverman backed by the Empire City Six. A bid for the pop market?

Obscure Records announces the first in a new series of living sound on records: LIONEL KILBERG PLAYS BROWNIE BASS.

Roger Sprung tells us that two discs by Gid Tanner and His Skillet Lickers are currently available on 45 rpm: SOLDIER'S JOY and FLOP-EARED MULE (RCA 447-0570) and DOWN YONDER and BACK UP AND PUSH (RCA 447-0569).

The last time we were in the RECORD HAVEN (1125 Sixth Avenue) they had several interesting DISC 78's in stock, including some sides by Hobart Smith and Texas Gladden.

A new listening and sales center for folk records is announced as carrying the largest assortment of recorded folk music of any record shop in New York City (including the complete Folkways catalogue). This is RECORD, BOOK & FILM SALES at 121 West 47th St, New York 36. Hours are daily from 9 to 5:30, and Saturday from 10 to 4:00.

ODDS AND ENDS: If the reports of our spies are correct, the next issue of SING OUT should be a particularly exciting one.

Shortly after the humor magazine, LOCO, published their version of the article on Folksingers which appears on page 10 of this issue of Gardylou, Tom Paley posted the following notice on the bulletin board in the Folklore Center: "Attention--banjoists, guitarists and teachers of banjo and guitar! Tom Paley will be in N.Y., and will be available for lessons in the tuning of the above instruments -- Dec 2 - Jan 1 (approx)."

The long-awaited second edition of THE BOSSES' SONGBOOK is now out. This is a 5½x8½ booklet, bound in stiff paper covers, and contains the words to 31 songs of satire, plus two poems, a series of hints for the beginning guitarist, and a group of unique basic chord positions. This edition contains almost all of the songs from the first edition, plus a number of new ones. Priced at 50¢, it is available at the Folklore Center, or from the publisher, Dick Ellington, P O Box 104, Cooper Station, New York 3.

SOCIAL NOTES FROM ALL OVER: Isreal G Young and his Folklore Center are both celebrating birthdays right about now...Pete Stevens is now Business Manager of the Folksingers Guild...Mark Morris is working two evenings a week at The Folklore Center...What ever happened to that philosophical treatis entitled "Why Tune?" that John Cohen was preparing last year?...Paul Clayton and beard have arrived on the New York scene and are expected to remain indefinitely...Is it true that Ben Rifkin is trying to corner the used banjo market?...Barry Kornfeld found his capo...Word has it that a West Coast manufacturer is planning a line of plastic banjo skins with popular dirt patterns stained into them with indelible dye. These will be available in three patterns: frailing, up-picking, and Scruggs-style...Ray Sullivan is looking for a living loft in downtown Manhattan...Rumor has it that Roger Abrahams has taken a wife...The Folksingers Guild has instituted minimum guarantees to the performers in their regular concert series...Barry Kornfeld is buying a new 12-stringer...heard on the George Burns TV show: the Tom Dooley Cha-Cha...Tony Saletan is being sent by the State Dept on a year-and-a-half long trip around the world...Recently, because of sudden developments in Theo's plans, AYH had to reschedule their proposed Theo-Bikel-Ray Boguslav concert so they presented Cynthia Gooding and the Shanty Boys in its place. After the concert, it is reported, a gentleman from the audience approached Lionel Kilberg in all seriousness and asked, "Which one of you is Theo Bikel?"...George Lorrie's folk music radio show has switched to Monday nights, 8 to 10 PM on WNCN...Jaime and Roger Lass announce the birth of three kittens to their joyous cat, Charles Atlas. The father is a full-blood Siamese, so if you're in the market for half-siamese kittens, contact the Lasses c/o this magazine...At their recent AYH concert, The New Lost City Ramblers announced that they were going to do a song they'd just learned from Caravan. They proceeded to sing Battleship of Maine...DOWN BEAT has done it again: the first disc reviewed under "Folk Records" in their April 2 issue is MORT SAHL 1960. This is folk music?...We have been asked to announce that the Shanty Boys buttons look white under a yellow light...Israel Young tells us that Odetta is being married on April 3rd...Note: an error on page 20 of this issue, caught too late for correction there -- under Obscure Records, that title should read LIONEL KILBERG PLAYS BROWNIE BASS SOLOS IN FULL STEREO...our spies report that Ray Boguslav has a gorgeous new banjo, but refuses to divulge where he got it...There's a rumor going around to the effect that Tom Paley is getting married.. articles about the Folk Music scene coming up in at least two magazines: MADEMOISELLE and KNAVE... "so I took my banjo and went to see Stravinsky"...Helene Kafka is carrying a large cotter pin everywhere she goes...The AYH informal concert featuring Jaime and Roger Lass proved to be an outstanding success...No news from Pooky...Lionel Kilberg expects to be completing Brownie Bass # 40 in the near future...Too late for detailed coverage but well worthy of high praise: Frank Warner's AYH concert on March 21st was one of the most exciting and interesting folk music events I've ever attended...Before the Frank Warner concert, Mike Cohen (who is the Executive Director of the Municipal Council of AYH) was on stage adjusting microphones when a girl came around checking season tickets and asked him if he had one. "No", Mike answered, "I'm just here stealing the microphones."...Terri Thal has asked us to

SOCIAL NOTES (2)

announce that she is not in California...Artie Traum has aquired a really handsome Paramount 5-stringer...it has been suggested that the Folksingers Guild merge with the Folklore Division of the Library of Congress; each member of the Guild receiving a complete set of the Library's records, in return for which each performing member of the Guild will record his full repertory for the Library's files... there's a rumor going around to the effect that Gina Glaser has wed while in England...Page Stegner has turned up in New York for a visit...one of the busiest men on the folkmusic scene is Mike Cohen who is probably responsible for producing more concerts this past season, than any other individual in New York...The New Lost City Ramblers, whose alternate names for themselves include The New Lost City Leasebreakers, The Lightfooted Clodhoppers, Doc Smith's Second Rate Horsehair Pullers, and The Weevil Brothers (Bill, Bole, and Bull -- also known as Hear No, Speak No and See No Weevil) have suggested an alternate name for Gardyloo: The Daily Dirt (an idea taken from one of the old records in their collection). When your editor advised their spokesman that this implied a publishing schedule that we couldn't quite handle, he suggested, "Then call it the Monthly Daily Dirt"...Winnie Winston is researching on banjos and would like any information on odd instruments, innovations, unusual methods of changing tone of a particular instrument, etc... Tom Paley is preparing a collection of "1001 Witty Comments For The Audience To Make While Tom Paley Is Tuning His Banjo".....LS

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Coming Events

APRIL 3rd

ALAN LOMAX and LOUIS GORDON present FOLKSONG '59 with JIMMY DRIFTWOOD, MEMPHIS SLIM, MUDDY WATERS, A BLUEGRASS BAND, A GOSPEL CHOIR, ALAN LOMAX, PETE SEEGER, MIKE SEEGER, and A ROCK 'N' ROLL QUARTETTE at Carnegie Hall, 8:pm. Tickets from \$1.50 to \$3.00 at the box office or at The Folklore Center.

MAHALIA JACKSON at Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave, Brooklyn, at 8:40 PM. Tickets from \$1.90 to \$3.50 at the box office or at The Village Gate.

THE SHANTY BOYS at AYH headquarters - 14 W 8th St - 11:15 PM. Admission \$1.00 at the door.

APRIL 4th

RICHARD DYER-BENNET at Kauffman Concert Hall, 8:30 PM. Tickets \$2.50

APRIL 5th

Washington Square opens to folksingers.

THEO BIKEL at Town Hall, 8:30 PM. Tickets from \$2.50 to \$3.50.

APRIL 10th

EPHRAIM SEGERMAN & WALT McKIBBEN, a symposium on the popular music of Elizabethan times, at The Old Chelsea School, 13 W 17th St., 8:30 PM. Tickets 75¢ from The Folksingers Guild, 13 W 17th St., NY 11. (Enclose stamped self-addressed envelope and make checks payable to The Folksingers Guild).

BILLY FAHER at AYH Headquarters - 14 W 8th St., 11:15 PM. \$1.00 at the door.

APRIL 24th

HARRY & JEANIE WEST, ROY BERKELEY, and THE GREENBRIAR BOYS at Mills College Theater, 66 Fifth Ave. 8:30 PM. Tickets at the Folklore Center, or from The Folksingers Guild (13 W 17th St)

ODETTA at Town Hall (rumored, but as yet unconfirmed)

Coming Events - 2

Here's the AYH informal concert schedule for the next few weeks (including the concerts listed on the previous page):

April

- 3 -- The Shanty Boys
- 10 - Billy Faier
- 17 - Doris Stone and Pat Foster
- 21 - (tentative) Jerry Silverman

May

- 1 - The Shanty Boys
- 8 - Neila Miller
- 15 - Ann Adler and Lillian Binder
- 22 - The City Folk

All of these are at 11:15 pm, at AYH Headquarters, 14 W 8th St., admission \$1.00 at the door (discounts to AYH'ers.)

- - -

The Folksingers Guild Symposia scheduled are as follows:

- April 10th - Ephraim & Walt McKibben (Popular Music of Elizabethan Times)
- May 15th - Jean Ritchie (Folksong in England and America)
- June 5th - Margot Mayo (Collecting in the Southern Mountains)

All of these are at 8:30 PM at Old Chelsea School, 13 W 17th St. Admission 75¢

- - -

MAY 9th A FOLK SONG FORUM at The Hofstra Playhouse, Hempstead, L.I., 10:30 AM to 12 noon. Panel: BILLY FAIER, ALAN LOMAX, JEAN RITCHIE, FRANK WARNER.

Luncheon available in the college cafeteria in Memorial Hall.

FOLK SONG CONCERT - The Hofstra Playhouse - 1:30 to 3:00 PM.

Folksongs of The Eastern Seaboard	Frank Warner
Folksongs, Coast to Coast	Billy Faier
Folksongs of The Southern Appalachians	Jean Ritchie
Folksongs of The Deep South and Southwest	Alan Lomax

For more news and details of coming events, we suggest you read CARAVAN Folkmusic Magazine, available at The Folklore Center.

Please send any news of coming folk music events in and around NYC to Gardyloo for listing in this department. There is no charge for these listings. Address: Lee Shaw

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