



MONADNOCK FOLKLORE SOCIETY



Volume I
Number 1

NEWSLETTER

November - December 1981

MFS PRESENTS

MALCOLM DALGLISH and GREY LARSEN

DUBLIN COMMUNITY CHURCH

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 29

8:30 P. M.

A host of superlatives always accompanies any description of Malcolm Dalglish and Grey Larsen, but they retain their enthusiasm and exuberance ... and an almost boyish charm throughout it all. Malcolm is certainly one of the best hammer dulcimer players in the country. His album, *Banish Misfortune* brought the dulcimer to the attention of many musicians, and significantly expanded the musical possibilities for that instrument.

With their second L.P., *The First of Autumn*, Dalglish and Larsen demonstrated their tremendous musical versatility as well. An evening with these two is sure to feature dreamy Celtic airs, lively old time American tunes, and lots of singing. As a matter of fact, it was a song, a Dalglish composition called *Shake These Bones* that first endeared their music to us here in the North.

Joining them in this performance will be Tom Sparks, fiddler and guitarist. Tom played in the Dry and Dusty Stringband from 1969 through 1978. In April of 1981 he took first prize in the Midwest Fleadh Cheoil in Chicago, one of the two major Irish music competitions in the U.S.

There will be an opening set by Neison folksinger Aliouette Iselin. Aliouette has played at a number of coffeehouses in New England and has been very active in the musical aspects of many energy fairs and benefit concerts.

Tickets for this concert (\$5 advance, \$6 at the door) are available at Yankee Lady Records, 7 Main St in Keene, and the Toadstool Bookshop in Peterborough, or send a SASE to MFS, Box 43, Peterborough, N.H. 03458. For more information call 878-3239.

AND IT CAME TO PASS

In the summer of 1979 Mary Desrosiers and myself returned from an enchanting and inspiring week of dancing and general good timing at the Augusta Heritage Arts Workshop in Elkins, West Virginia. We had the privilege of meeting and hearing some rather outstanding musicians and dance callers, including the dynamic Sandy Bradley.

Full of enthusiasm, we set about figuring how we could have such an event up this way. We began to investigate a number of possibilities but eventually put the project aside because of practical considerations at the time. However we had come up with the name Monadnock Folklore Society, and we knew that if and when such an organization got off the ground, we'd have Sandy Bradley to thank for some initial inspiration.

Some time has passed, and many things have come and gone. One of the things that is gone from the Monadnock area is WSLE (though we joyfully note that the ball has been picked up down at the other end of the court - thanks WRSI and more about you later). I remember a conversation I had with Dick Nevel after the Folks' Station had bit the dust (to put it politely). He encouraged my disheartened soul by suggesting that the absence of broadcasted folk music would encourage more live music. I believe his words have proven true.

(continued next page)

Now folk music is a rather big term and I'm not going to try to define it, but I do think that whatever it is, more people are getting into it on both the listening and performing ends. For some time now I have wanted to do something about making more opportunities for people and music to get together.

So when I heard last summer that Sandy Bradley was coming through from Seattle, and that she was available to do a dance up this way, the only sensible thing to do was to take the Monadnock Folkore Society off the back burner and start it cooking.

I'll spare you the account of the organizational details- hours of meetings, phone calls, tax forms, etc. I must mention however that it is a privilege to work with Mary DesRosiers, Ken Wilson, Jennifer Price and Gary Heald as my cohorts in this project. Together we form the board of directors for MFS.

Our goal in some ways is quite simple -- more music and more dancing more often. However there is the aspect of making it all work out comfortably and economically and artfully (everything should be done artfully). That is our purpose. In the coming months you will see us explore the broad spectrum of folk music and lore through a variety of situations. There will be big concerts in big halls. There will be small concerts in living rooms. There will be opportunities for local folk to share their songs and stories and art, and there will be folks coming from far away. There will be workshops, ceilis and festivals, and there will be a dance every month in the Nelson Town Hall because when our foreparents danced in that hall one hundred years ago and two hundred years ago, they intended that people should not stop dancing, 'cept to tend to business.

TENDING TO BUSINESS

MFS will be open for membership starting January 1st, 1982. The membership fee is \$10 (\$8 for senior citizens and students) which entitles you to a fifty cent discount on our monthly concerts, subscription to our newsletter, and free admission to a spring ball held especially for MFS members. The January issue of our newsletter will be sent free to everyone who has signed up on our mailing list. In that issue will be appropriate forms to send in if you wish to become a member, or just receive the newsletter (\$5).

We look forward to many good times together.

Gordon Peery
October 1981

SANDY BRADLEY at KSC

As this issue goes to press we are anticipating a marvelous evening with Sandy Bradley and the Small Wonder String Band. Sandy is a dance caller from Seattle whose inspiration to us has been mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter. This is, significantly, our opening event as an organization (presented in coordination with the Keene State College Social Activities Council). This event (Friday, October 30th, Mabel Brown Room, KSC.) will have already happened by the time most of you read this. Everyone who was there no doubt now shares our appreciation for Sandy's calling.

I expect it is safe to say in advance, it was an excellent night.

We are grateful to the many good souls who, through enthusiasm, advice, and efforts have made it possible for MFS to come into being.

The MFS Newsletter will be published monthly starting January, 1982. Subscription is included in membership, or may be obtained separately for \$5 annually. As the format and style of this newsletter becomes evident, we invite appropriate submissions. Any articles published will be considered donations, and will be acknowledged as such.

MFS. P.O. Box 43 Peterborough, N.H. 03458

The Monadnock Folklore Society is a non-profit organization for the co-ordination, promotion, and enhancement of folk arts.



"For it is Halloween night, lady,
And the elfin court will ride,
Through England, and through a' Scotland
And through the world wide."

Tam Lin (Child 39)

Bonfires, trick or treating, ducking for apples, carving pumpkins: all are popular North American observances of the night before All Saints Day, commonly known as Halloween. But, amid the parties and costumes and the sweets in the trick or treat bag, we're celebrating one of the most ancient and holy of holidays.

Samas. That was his name according to the ancient Babylonians. He was the god of the sun, who made his yearly transit through the seasons, bringing light and fertility. His festival was called Samhain -- as it still is in some parts of the Celtic world. Now, how Samas got from Babylonia to the North Sea peninsula is open to conjecture, but we find the early Celts celebrating Samhain (pronounced SA-WAIN) in his honor. Sir James Frazer in The Golden Bough, says that October thirty first was, in the northern European countries, celebrated as the festival separating the light half of the year from the dark. We bid farewell to summer, and get ready for the onslaught of winter.

The notion of getting dressed up in scary costumes on All-Hallows Eve stems from the idea that on this night, all the fairy folk - both benign and malevolent - and all the spirits of the dead, were "hosting", that is, getting together. If one were unlucky enough to be out on Halloween night, believed our forefathers and foremothers, the best course of action would be to appear frightening enough to ward off whatever was out there going bump in the night. British Isles folklore, particularly that of Ireland and the Scottish highlands, abounds with stories of meetings between mortals and the fairy folk. Ballads such as "Tam Lin", "Alison Gross", and "Thomas the Rhymer", chronicle such meetings for the world of folk-song. Even fiddle tunes, like "The Trowie Burn", "Lady of the Lake", and "Sidhebeg Sidhemor" are named after the various families of the People of Peace.

All Hallows was an important and solemn festival among the followers of the old religions. Witches and druids would hold solemn services in honor of the Lady of the Moon, the Horned One, or whatever local deity seemed appropriate. Modeste Mussorgsky's A Night on Bald Mountain gives a vivid symphonic presentation of how we have come to imagine those revels.

How far we've come from the divining, the Fairy Rade, and the solemn festivities of the night before the feast of All Saints (which, by the way, is another attempt by the Church to "clean up" and old pagan holiday and replace it with a Christian one). Yet, if you listen carefully in the stillness of a Halloween night, you may just hear the moaning on the wind, or the tinkling of the tiny bells on the bridle of the horse of the fairy queen. Good Samhain to you!

Mary DesRosiers

Selected Bibliography

- Briggs, Katherine. Encyclopedia of Fairies. (Pantheon), 1976.
The Vanishing People. (Pantheon), 1978.
Child, Francis James. The English and Scottish Popular Ballads. (orig., 1882) Dover, 1975.
Frazer, Sir James. The Golden Bough. (Macmillan), 1922.
Graves, Robert. The White Goddess. (International Authors) 1948.



Performer Listings

November

- 1 Lisa Brande and Kevin Parry - Deacon Brodies, Dublin
- 3 Martin Carthy - Folkway, Peterborough
- 6 Kendell Kardt - Folkway
- 7 Smith, Struthers, and Terri Berry - Folkway
- 8 Alan Block and Arthur Lemieux - Deacon Brodies
- 13 Mason Daring and Jeanie Stahl - Folkway
- 14 Orrin Starr and Gary Mehalick - Folkway
- 15 Chis Morgan - Deacon Brodies
- 20,21 Doa - Folkway
- 22 Andy Avery - Deacon Brodies
- 29 Malcolm Dalglish and Grey Larsen - Dublin Community Church

December

- 4 Noel Sing We Clear - Dublin Church
- 10,11,12 Stan Rogers - Folkway
- 12 Gordon Bok - Nelson Town Hall

The Performer Listing will be a regular feature of this newsletter. It is open to all New Hampshire performances, and exceptional out of state performances. Information must be received by the 15th of the previous month. Send to MFS, Box 43, Peterborough, 03458, or call 878-3239

NOEL SING WE CLEAR

John Roberts, Tony Barrand, Steve Woodruff and Fred Bruenig join together to present this pageant of mid-winter carols and the delightfull Mummings Play. Tickets will be available at Deacon Brodies Tavern and other locations - check your local papers and bulletin board for more info and starting time.

Gordon Bok in Nelson

Gordon Bok will be giving his fifth annual concert in the Nelson Town Hall on Saturday, December 12. As with his previous concerts, the proceeds will benefit the Tomte Gubben School.

Boks rich and rolling guitar style backs up a voice that can only be compared with the ocean depths which provide the inspiration for many of his songs. While he may be singing a song he wrote yesterday, the feeling is conveyed that it's been around for a long time -- and there's a certain truth to that.

Tickets are \$5 advance, \$6 at the door. Available from Josephs Coat, Peterborough, Yankee Lady Records, Keene, or SASE to Alouette Iselin, Nelson Star Rt. Munsonville, N.H. 03457. The concert begins at 8:00 P.M.

MFS CHRISTMAS COTILION

There will be a special Christmas Cotilion in Nelson on Friday, December 18th, instead of the usual Saturday night dance. There will be a number of musicians donating their services for the benefit of Monadnock Folklore Society. The illustrious lineup includes Bob McQuillen, April Limber, Peter Colby, Gordon Peery, Betsy Church, and more. It promises to be a delightfull evening, being more festive than your average contra dance. Formal attire, or rather, elegant attire, is requested. There will be an excellent variety of refreshments on hand. Mary DesRosiers will be calling. Don't miss it. Admission \$3.50.

Our thanks to Coni Porter of New Ipswich who designed our posters and logo, and whose advise has been indispensable.