



# MONADNOCK FOLKLORE SOCIETY

October

1982

Volume 2  
Number 10

## NEWSLETTER

THE JOURNAL FOR FOLK CULTURE IN SOUTHWESTERN NEW HAMPSHIRE



The events of this month are particularly exciting. Coming right up on Thursday, October 7th, we have the privilege of presenting a concert with Windham Hill Recording artists George Winston, Alex de Grassi, and Scott Cossu.

Pianist/flutist/composer/arranger Scott Cossu was born in West Virginia in 1951. He moved from the Midwest to Seattle, Washington in 1974 and received his formal musical training at the University of Ohio and the University of Washington. He also studied with several illustrious musicians from India, Romania, and Southeast Asia, including Hamza El Din.

In 1977 Scott took an extensive trip to South America to study and record Indian music in the Andes. This experience resulted in an influx of Indian and Latin rhythms and themes in Scott's unique compositions. Whether he is performing solo or with his own Scott Cossu Ensemble (which ranges in size from various duets to seven pieces and appears around the Pacific Northwest), Cossu's original music reveals a seamless blend of jazz, classical and ethnic influences. It is melodic and lyrical while at the same time powerful and percussive.

Few artists fit the category of "folk-jazz" better than guitarist Alex de Grassi. Over the course of his three Windham Hill albums, de Grassi has evolved from fingerstyle folk guitarist to jazz composer to one of the leading figures in the new school of American acoustic guitar.

Born in Yokosuka, Japan, in February of 1952, Alex has spent most of his life in the San Francisco Bay Area, where he now resides. He began playing guitar at 13, inspired by the folk and blues styles of the British fingerpickers John Renbourn and Bert Jansch. Since that time he has been greatly influenced by jazz, classical, and various types of folk music, and has incorporated these influences into his unique compositions for the acoustic guitar.

Since releasing his first album in 1978, de Grassi has toured North America several times (including a concert at New York's Carnegie Recital Hall) as well as Europe. In Frets Magazine's 1980 Readers Poll Alex placed third in the category of Best Folk and Blues Guitarist, preceded only by Doc Watson and Chet Atkins. His albums have been issued in Germany, France and Italy.

While his impressive debut LP Turning:Turning Back clearly displayed de Grassi's fondness for the British folk guitarists, Slow Circle, released a year later, demonstrated that Alex was a serious jazz composer and musician as well. One critic referred to his style as "guitar impressionism."

Born in 1949 in Michigan, George Winston was raised in Montana and has also lived in Mississippi, Louisiana, Florida, and California. He began playing electric keyboards in 1967 and switched to acoustic piano in 1971. A year later he recorded his first album, originally entitled Piano Solos, for the Takoma label. Produced by the legendary folk guitarist John Fahey, the LP was reissued in 1981 on the Lost Lake Arts label, a subsidiary of Windham Hill Records, under the title Ballads and Blues, 1972.

Winston's most recent album of solo piano compositions, Autumn, was recorded in June of 1980. Produced by another reknown acoustic guitarist, Windham Hill chief William Ackerman, the LP's beautiful melodies have been praised by such noted music journals as Rolling Stone, Downbeat, and Billboard. The album has received heavy airplay on both jazz and progressive rock radio stations, and has become one of the biggest selling acoustic LPs ever on an independent label, in only a year's time.

Since the release of Autumn, Winston has been steadily touring the club and festival circuit, exhibiting the full range of what he calls "folk piano". George also occassionally performs on steel-string guitar, slide guitar, and solo harmonica.

Having these outstanding musicians together at Keene State's acoustically exquisite Recital Hall is going to be incredible evening, and I hope many of you will be there to share it with us.

↑

An equally extraordinary concert, in a much different genre, is coming up on October 30th with Na Cabarfeidh, performing in the Dublin Community Church.

Na Cabarfeidh is the work of five Canadian musicians to create a new musical expression founded in their Celtic heritage. It is an evolution originating from the traditional music of Scotland, Brittany and Ireland.

Four of the five members have been involved in the Scottish piping scene for over ten years. After studying and performing in various individual and pipeband environments, these four musicians were drawn together in the Cabar Feidh/ City of Toronto Pipeband, the first foreign band to achieve top honours within the competition system of Pipeband music in Scotland.

In 1979 Na Cabarfeidh lived and worked in Brittany (a Celtic area of France) in order to study the oral traditions there. To evolve a music of many dimensions, the members of Na Cabarfeidh study the principles and instrumental techniques of different ancient and contemporary musics in an effort to understand the infinitely varied searches of other musicians committed to sincere musical expression.

The instrumentation of Na Cabarfeidh (see our cover) consists of Highland bagpipes, Breton bombardes and biniou-koz, guitars, cittern, Irish flute and whistle, Highland snare drum, long drum, cylinder drums, peaucloches and tabla.

Na Cabarfeidh is possibly the most exciting Celtic group in existence, and they certainly should not be missed.

Speaking of Celtic, I am grateful to novelist Morgan Llywelyn for her contribution to this month's newsletter. Her article lends some insight into what the Celtic phenomenon is all about, and has certainly inspired me to read further on the subject.

It is certainly one of the goals of the Monadnock Folklore Society to bring about a continual flow of different cultural information and experiences. There are so many cultures and so many different kinds of people in the world, and it is through offering opportunities to experience the diversity of humankind that we hope to make a contribution towards peace in the world. To this end we invite you to join us.

Gordon Peery



A DELICATE  
BALANCE  
with  
Mary DesRosiers

SUNDAY EVENINGS 6:00-Midnight  
WMDK - 92 FM

Steve Jones & Carl Jacobs  
at the  
GAP MOUNTAIN BAKERY  
Troy, NH

Sunday, October 10th, 7:30 PM

Fine music in a very cozy atmosphere and excellent refreshments. Sponsored by MFS.

by Morgan Llywelyn

Celts. Celtic. Of Celtic origin. Words and phrases about these people turn up again and again in any in-depth study of European folklore. The haunting ballads of the Great Smoky Mountains go back in an unbroken line to Celtic laments sung over littered battlefields and beside fragrant peat fires many centuries ago. Celtic art in all its interlaced complexity is exciting a new generation of artists; Celtic mythology continues to inspire novelists, poets and historians; Celtic battle tactics are even studied vis-a-vis their application in the Civil War, a controversial new study of that American event. The Celts are always with us, but who were they?

To begin with, the accepted classical pronunciation is Kelt, not Selt - unless you are a diehard Boston Celtic fan, of course. The Greeks were the first literate people to write of the keltoi, a name they spelled phonetically based upon the name these tribes used for themselves. A loose confederation united by similar language and customs, the Celts were an ancient people clearly recognizable as far back in time as the early Bronze Age. Those first, or proto-Celts, were to be called by anthropologists Bell-beaker people, Urnfield people, Battle-axe people. But they were all Celts, an offshoot of the great Indo-European migration of the white skinned, nomadic folk who came up through the Caucasus and fanned out over eastern Europe and Asia before the dawn of recorded history.

Those who settled originally in the rich river valleys of the Rhineland, and then moved down into the Austrian Alps, would be known as Celts to the Greek traders making their way north in search of amber - and salt. For the Alpine Celts controlled the Salzburg, mining it and selling its inexhaustible wealth to Mediterranean traders in exchange for all the trappings of luxury dear to Celtic hearts - gold and wine and olive oil, lapis lazuli and carnelian dyes, cinnamon and silk and Phoenician glass. Early in their tribal history, the Celts were a wealthy and influential people, mining and raising stock, growing more powerful and more energetic with each passing generation.

In the eighth century before Christ, the Celts learned to forge a superior quality of iron that brought Europe's Bronze Age clashing to a close. From their eastern neighbors, the Scythians, they also learned to ride horses rather than use them only as draft animals - and incidently learned to wear trousers and take the heads of their enemies in battle as trophies.

Suddenly mobile and with superior weaponry, the Celts came bursting out of their pastoral life as a fully-developed heroic warrior culture in the same pattern as the Mycenaean and the Trojans. Energetic, passionate to excess, they were meticulous craftsmen and ardent individualists. The Greeks called them barbarians, but that was just a term the Greeks applied to anyone who did not speak the Greek mother-tongue. These Celts were not savages. They had already developed one of the earliest known systems of codified law, one that would become famous in Ireland before the coming of Christianity as Brehon Law. So fair and so all encompassing was this legal structure that it would later be used as a model upon which British Parliamentary law was constructed, and hints of its passion for individual freedom still ring through the Magna Carta, that great shout against tyranny.

continued next page

**FINE CRAFTED MUSIC**  
Featuring four artists who create music  
for your taste.

- Lui Collins: Baptism of Fire
- Stan Rogers: Northwest Passage
- Cindy Kallet: Working on Wings to Fly
- The Chieftains: 10

... send check or money order  
for \$7.98 ea. item payable to:

Ken Wilson's  
**Yankee Lady Records**  
7 Main St. #11 Keene, N.H. 03431



603 827-3726



**hal grant associates**  
real estate

116 Hancock Road  
Harrisville, NH 03450

The Celts had, since the dawn of the culture, elected their chieftains rather than entrusting tribal leadership to the chancy genetic gamble of dynastic succession. They granted women equal rights under law, including the matter of personal property and of inheritance, and they placed a high premium upon honor. A Celt who gave his word was bound by that vow to the death, if necessary.

The Celts created a stratified social order with a warrior nobility, for it was the conquest and defense of land that made their agricultural prosperity possible. They also developed a lateral, co-equal and in many cases superior social system based on the professional class. This consisted of those trained in poetry, history, divination, music, and the entire spectrum of natural science. Supported by the tribe as a whole, this professional class in turn gave their arts back to the people unstintingly, as well as functioning as healers, judges, and arbitrators, and educating the young who would succeed them. In time they developed actual colleges of learning with full curriculae, in which the most advanced study could take as long as twenty years, all of it learned by rote memory, as the Celts did not trust the written word.

Music, which was to become one of the longest lasting of Celtic influences, consisted of string, wind, and percussion instruments. Armies advanced in their painted chariots to the beat of war drums, while the common folk played the pipes, forerunner to the bagpipe. The harp was reserved for nobles, and its study was a Druid discipline, as were all the studies of the professional class - the Druids.

The mention of Druids evokes the romantic in all of us, but Celtic Druidry was not really a cult of white-robed sun worshippers. It appears to have been an all-embracing rule of life in which the continuation of life itself was the sacred and motive force. The Celts understood natural science better than anyone of their time. There is sufficient evidence now to believe that they were aware of the true shape and general size of the earth, and had accurately charted its position in the heavens in relation to other celestial bodies. They planned their rituals and guided the lives of their people to conform with the natural harmony of nature, to encourage an abundance of crops, a healthy symbiosis of man and planet.

To the Celts, the tangible world was just an external manifestation of a greater reality, the unseen but powerful world of spirits. Every living thing has its own spirit, its own share of the one life force that was the true object of their worship. In addition, the Druids attempted to manipulate other aspects of invisible power, perhaps making use of the older attempts to understand the magnetic force fields of the earth, and their relation to celestial events.

To the Celt, death had little meaning. He saw it as only a temporary inconvenience, a transition between states of existence, for was not life itself immortal? He could enter battle without fear, for death had no power to hold him; he believed in something similar to the eastern concepts of reincarnation, of life as a condition without beginning or end, only a changing of faces.

When the Celts encountered the Greeks, and later the Romans, these literate societies did not understand what they were seeing. As man has ever been wont to do, they denigrated the Celt because his ways were so different from their own. Druid activities such as the study of astronomy, healing the sick, and making propitiatory sacrifices to the earth were not really that different from the Greek and Roman customs, but were ascribed to "savagery" by the Mediterranean peoples in an attempt to justify their own warfare against the Celts, the "barbarians" who threatened "civilized" societies.

Although at one time geographers might have written of a Celtic empire in Europe, referring to the far-flung Celtic trading network, the Celts were never a nation. Their laws were designed for the protection of the individual; it was not in their natures to submit to hierarchial organization and regimentation. So, although the giant Celts were supreme in single combat - and it was said that a Celt could defeat a whole troop of Roman legionnaires, if his wife fought at his side - the Celtic warriors finally went down in defeat before the might of the highly organized and regimented Roman empire.



As the Romans tightened their grip on the known world, they encountered stiff Celtic resistance in many regions, for it is the Celts who formed the foundation stock of southern Germany, of northern Italy, of France and Belgium and Switzerland, as well as having sizeable settlements in Iberia and distant Anatolia, and also throughout what is now central and even eastern Europe. In time, the Celtic world was submerged under the tidal wave of Roman expansion, though the Celtic spirit was never extinguished, and its fierce love of independence surfaces again and again, even today.

Only Ireland never came under Roman domination, and the bronze-bright world of the princely Gael kept Celtic culture alive in Erin long after the coming of Christianity. The Irish Celts embraced the new religion easily, because its concept of a god of love and life, and of triumph over death, was not incompatible with Druidic teaching.

Because of their long history of respect for knowledge, the Celtic Irish soon accepted the literacy that came with the Christian missionaries. Irish men - and some Irish women - were studying Latin and Greek when natives on the larger island just east of the Irish Sea were still painting themselves blue with woad. When the Dark Ages destroyed European civilization, the light of literacy continued to burn in Ireland. In time, Irish missionaries took the wisdom of the classic cultures back to the ravaged continent, restoring the works of Homer and Euripides and Thucydides, Caesar and Livy and Pliny, to a world that would have been much poorer without them.

Then Ireland, in her turn, was subject to a systematic attempt at Celtic genocide by a newer, more Empire-minded state, the brutally repressive and basically ignorant society of the Anglo-Normans. In their determination to destroy every trace of an older culture they suspected might have been well superior to their own, the English devoted eight hundred years to denigrating everything Irish - and therefore, Celtic. Today many Irish people have no knowledge of the ancient and noble history, and yet the essentially Celtic characteristics still burn brightly in them. Passionate, proud, loving poetry and music and nature, highly resistant to organization, always thirsty for freedom, the quintessential Celt endures. In Ireland, in Wales, in Scotland and Brittany and among the Basques of the Pyrenees as well as in remoted mountainous areas of Yugoslavia . . . and triumphantly, in the New World, the Celt survives.

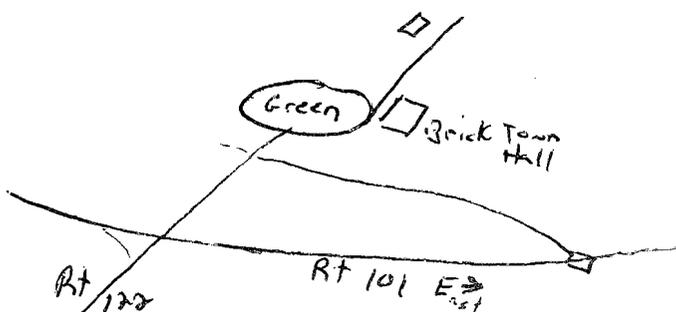
Friday October 15  
6:00 PM On ....

**POT LUCK DINNER**

Bring instruments  
Slide shows of-

- \*Climb on Mt McKinley in Alaska
- \*Canoe trip on the S. Nahanni River  
Canadian Northwest Territories

at the home of  
RICHARD HART  
2 Mack Hill Rd  
Amherst, NH  
673-5128



**Fall Workshops in Creative Clothing**

*Fine Fabrics  
for*

*Creative Folkwear &  
Custom-Tailored Clothing  
Imported velveteen, pimas,  
woolens, and Select Silks  
Workshops in quilting,  
smocking, and clothing  
design. Call for schedule.*



*Cloth of Many Colors*

**JOSEPH'S COAT**

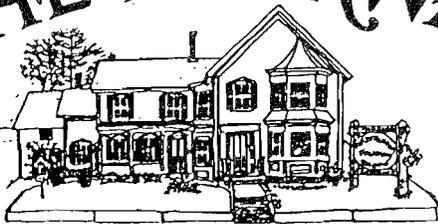
26 Main St., Peterborough 924-6683

**BENEFIT CONCERT for NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT**  
SUNDAY, October 3, 7:30 PM  
Recital Hall - Keene State College

Featuring  
Fritzie Bernstein \* Mike Wakefield  
Monadnock Classical Guitar Duo  
Purley Gates \* Dick Nevell  
Andy Davis & Rod Miller

Admission \$3.00 Sponsored by Citizens for  
Peace 603/835-6583 or 352-0603

# THE FOLKWAY



RESTAURANT GARDEN • CAFÉ CRAFT SHOP  
 Favorite Food Selected Spirits Entertainment  
 85 Grove Street ♥ 924-7484 ♥ Peterborough



**The Pastry Studio & Herbal Gallery**  
 Country Baking at its best from the Kitchen of  
 Donna Louzier Helmers  
 Call Today 924-9902



new and used, guitars • banjos • mandolins  
 fiddles • dulcimers • ukes  
 "we buy, sell and trade"

**fiddler's choice music store**  
 "Bluegrass our Specialty"  
 88 Main St.  
 Jaffrey, N.H. 03452/603-532-8440

Complete stringed instrument repair & restoration.  
 Records\*Books\*Accessories

In the wake of *LION OF IRELAND*,  
 and sure to be another bestseller . . .

## THE HORSE GODDESS

MORGAN LLYWELYN

"A royal read," said the *Washington Post* of Morgan Llywelyn's 1980 national bestseller, *Lion of Ireland*, which was hailed for the author's brilliant storytelling and authentic rendering of Celtic history. Now with *The Horse Goddess*, Llywelyn brings us a vivid and stormy love story that sweeps across the ancient world of the eighth century B.C., from the German mountains to the Sea of Grass in Asia Minor, and captures the ferment of a time when the Celts in Europe brought the Bronze Age to an end.

**THE TOADSTOOL BOOKSHOP**  
 3 MAIN STREET  
 PETERBOROUGH, N. H. 03458

Houghton Mifflin

**UPCOMING MFS EVENTS**

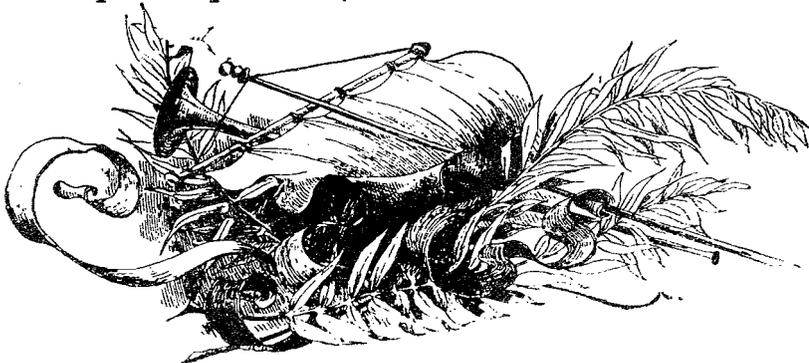
DO'A - November 13th, Dublin Church

Tommy Byrnes - November 14th, Gap Mountain

ContraDance in the Greefield, NH Town Hall  
 Saturday, November 20th

MFS First Second Annual Christmas Party  
 and Contra Dance - Nelson Town Hall,  
 Saturday December 18th

Jean Redpath- April 9th, 1983



Membership in the Monadnock Folklore Society brings you this newsletter every month, a discount on our concerts, and invitations to our social/cultural gatherings. It also places you among the growing number of people who are supporting and participating in the wide range of activities in the Monadnock region associated with the folk arts. Membership fees are modest, and the rewards are great. The form below is easy to fill out. You'll be glad you did.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Regular Membership \$10.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Student/Senior Cit. \$8.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Newsletter only \$5.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to Monadnock Folklore Society  
 PO Box 43  
 Peterborough, NH 03458

Performer Listing ... OCTOBER

- 1-Orrin Starr/ Gary Mehalik - Folkway  
1-Nancy Beaven & Michael Hurley -  
Welcome Table  
7-Alex De Grassi  
Scott Cossu  
George Winston  
Keene State Recital Hall  
MFS  
8-Fiddle Fever - PVFS  
8-Tom Paley - Welcome Table  
9-Paul Geremia - Folkway  
9-Tom Paley-Norwich Congregational Church  
Norwich, VT - Muskeg Music  
10-Carl Jacobs/ Steve Jones  
Gap Mountain Bakery, Troy  
MFS  
12-Jesse Winchester-Iron Horse  
15,16 - Tom Dundee - Folkway  
16-Silly Wizard- Champlain Folklore Coop  
Burlington, Vt  
16-Chieftains - Springfield (MA)  
Cathedral High School  
WRSI  
29-James Lee - Folkway  
30-NA CABARFEIDH  
Dublin Community Church  
MFS  
30-Jane Voss/ Hoyle Osborne - Folkway  
31-Benefit Concert for English singer  
Nic Jones, featuring Kim Wallach Eric  
Schoenberg Blackbird  
at the Village Coach House  
Brookline, MA (info 492-8341)

Contra Dances - OCTOBER

- 1-Northfield, MA - Town Hall  
8-Henniker, Congregational Church  
9-Francestown-Town Hall  
15-Northfield-Town Hall  
15-Ashby, MA-Unitarian Church

Weekly Dances

Monday - Nelson Town Hall 8:00 - 10:30  
Admission \$1.50

Sunday- Brattleboro - Green St. School

Most dances start at 8:30 and run til  
midnight. Admission is \$2.50 or \$3.00.

Folkway - 85 Grove St, Peterborough, NH  
603/924-7484

Welcome Table - Concerts at the  
College St. Congregational Church  
Burlington, VT 802/425-3435  
Muskeg Music -603/448-2950  
Champlain Folklore  
Coop-802/425-3435

MONADNOCK FOLKLORE SOCIETY

PO BOX 43, PETERBOROUGH, NH 03458  
603/ 525-4904

*The Monadnock Folklore Society Newsletter is published  
monthly. We welcome submissions of articles or information  
pertinent to our cause. We reserve the right to determine  
the appropriateness of the material.*

*Subscription to the newsletter is included as part of member-  
ship, or may be obtained separately for \$5.00 annually.*

