

From the Editors

As we write this editorial, we are under a month away from the 2004 conference and AGM of the Canadian Society for Traditional Music, held this year at York University. We've just seen the detailed schedule, and we are looking forward to a great conference. In our editors' report for the AGM we will acknowledge that *Canadian Folk Music* is still a little behind its publishing schedule, but not much. We hope to see this issue printed before the AGM, but at the very least it should reach you in November. And work has begun on 38.4, which we expect to focus on the traditional music of Quebec, courtesy of associate editor Sandria Bouliane.

After our special issue on Helen Creighton (38.2), we thought it time to return to the magazine's more traditional format. Our lead article, on aboriginal band Medicine Dream, derives from a fascinating paper that Janice Tulk presented at last year's CSTM conference in Athabasca. The second fairly lengthy piece takes the form of a review of the 25th Calgary Folk Festival, but Rosaleen has seized the opportunity to reflect on the thorny question of the amount (or lack thereof) of traditional folk music at such events, and we also had the chance to chat with a number of performers about how they perceived their current musical relationship to the folk music with which they grew up. We would welcome letters to the editor on these and related topics. Incidentally, Janice took the photographs that accompany the "Medicine Dream" article, including the one on the front cover, and Dave took those that accompany Rosaleen's piece, including the one of "Po' Girl" on the back cover.

We believe that one of the magazine's roles is to aid and abet the circulation of good songs, either traditional or composed in a folk style. In this issue you will find three excellent songs that each have a connection to the history of Western Canada. "The Last Battle" is Bill Gallagher's evocation of the second Riel Rebellion, and it brought the house down when Robert Rodriguez sang it at the Saturday evening concert in Athabasca last Hallowe'en. "Jerry Potts" is Richard Harrow's song about the first North West Mounted Police expedition to the foothills of Southern Alberta and the Métis guide who saved their bacon. "Know Ye the Land" is a rueful reflection on the Caribou Gold Rush, and it comes from the Phil Thomas Archive, courtesy of Phil and Jon Bartlett, who sang it in the workshop on Western Canadian Songs at the Athabasca conference. We gratefully thank Bill, Richard and Phil for permission to print these songs, and we are indebted to Maureen Chafe for transcribing the melodies of "The Last Battle" and "Jerry Potts". Rosaleen transcribed "Know Ye the Land".

We always seem to have a backlog of books and CDs to review, especially CDs. In this issue we have made a concerted effort to catch up, so you will find a substantial number of reviews of recent folk music recordings. Not all artists and record companies bother to send us their new releases, but we do try to give honest assessments of almost everything that comes our way. There are still a few as yet unprinted reviews that we have 'in hand', and they will have to wait until 38.4, but we are nearly up to date again. Remember that the column titled "A Peak in Darien" provides a listing of new review material. Some of these items you will find reviewed in subsequent issues, but others we regard as somewhat marginal to our main interests and so they will receive only brief recognition in that spot.

The editorial board of *Canadian Folk Music* still has a vacancy for an associate editor from northern Canada. Since the main articles published in the magazine are peer-reviewed, associate editors are expected to evaluate and prioritize submissions as required. They also have the opportunity to prepare (or help prepare) a special issue on their own region or subject of expertise. Anyone interested in joining our team should write to the address below or e-mail us at davidg@athabasca.ca.

David & Rosaleen Gregory

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