

## Letters to the Editors

Dear CSTM members:

It is with great regret that I am writing to inform members that my term as President of the CSTM will end at the AGM in November. I do not plan to run again and am not planning to attend the meeting. As I stated in one of my earlier missives, I became President kind of under false pretenses, that is, I ran for office under the impression that our previous articles of incorporation — *to encourage the study, appreciation and enjoyment of the folk music of Canada in all its aspects; and to promote publication and performance of Canadian folk music* — were still in place. I am embarrassed to admit that I did not pay sufficient attention over the years to know that our articles had changed. I discovered my mistake a few weeks after being elected.

I originally became involved in the CSTM (then called The Canadian Folk Music Society) in the 1970s because of my passion for Canadian traditional song and my fears for its disappearance as a vital part of our ongoing musical culture. At the time, Canadian traditional music was much more front and centre in the Society's activities. Over the years this has become less and less the case. The "Whither the CSTM?" piece that Jon Bartlett and I sent out earlier this year was a *cri de coeur*. Our commitment to proselytizing on behalf of Canadian traditional music continues unabated and we hoped the piece would cause like-minded members to contact us.

Unfortunately this didn't happen. Very few of our members responded, and those that did didn't seem to share our worries. This is not to say that they or the Society are wrong. The CSTM has changed. It contains a much larger proportion of ethno-musicological academic activity than it used to. With new people involved, its focus has shifted. This is natural and healthy in an organization—it keeps things from getting stagnant. But this shift has made it, in my opinion, unable to focus strongly on the job I care so passionately about.

I am not angry or bitter about this situation. I just feel a bit awkward being leader of an organization that isn't what I thought it was. It's kind of like getting on the wrong train—you think you're on your way to Frankfurt, and then you realize you're bound for Paris. I can't in good conscience run again as President when I don't represent what the members of the Society are actually doing.

I apologize for any disruption caused by my decision, but there seems to be so much positive

energy being put into this year's Conference that I know everything will go well.

*Rika Ruebsaat, CSTM President,  
New Westminster, British Columbia*

Dear Editors;

I was deeply moved in reading Lorne Brown's poetic and thoughtful piece on the passing of Merrick Jarrett [40.1, p. 32]. It is very ironic that, given how the language can be beautifully employed, the most memorable words are often found when eulogies are written to mourn the passing of one whose life and work deserved such remembrances in thought and word. I was very fortunate to have once met Merrick Jarrett; in fact, it was a number of years ago, when I was lucky enough to travel up to Baden, Ontario, to attend one of Mary Eileen McClear's Friday night story swaps in her barn. Merrick was there, and we talked much about traditional Canadian music and other fascinating subjects, and it seemed that here was a fellow worth the knowing just on general principle. The world is a sadder, emptier and more uncertain place without his presence to bring it joy and goodness and the love of good traditional music, which will be his true legacy for a very very long time to come.

I eagerly await each new issue, and where does yours truly go first to read, but Rosaleen's *Singing the Child Ballads* column? Each new column is a musical treat and delight for us ballad buffs and lovers. I was especially pleased that in recent issues she included versions of several of my favorite ballads, including "The Two Magicians" [39.4, p. 17], "Young Hunting" [40.1, p. 30] and "Fair Annie" [40.1, p. 29]. This is without a doubt one of the best regular features *CFM* has had in a very long time. Rosaleen, please keep this going into the foreseeable future and far beyond. We lovers of good stories through songs cannot get enough.

Last but not least, thanks for publishing the two songs from the War of 1812 [40.1, p. 22], a conflict concerning which folks down here in Yankeeland, at least most of them, could not even tell you in which year it occurred. A waggish historian once remarked that a war is often remembered by both its songs and its jokes and anecdotes. I have been a professional historian for well over 30 years, and I still have not unearthed any jokes about this conflict, and while there are indeed some songs dealing with the war, one could probably count them on the fingers of both hands with a few digits to spare. The only major and

well known land battle, that fought near New Orleans on January 8, 1915, was fought two weeks after the Treaty of Ghent was signed.

What else did the conflict give us? Our national anthem, of course, plus the burning of the nation's capital, and had it not been for a freakish summer hurricane and rain deluge, the disaster that surrounded this event might have been infinitely more devastating to the country and the cause of the war itself. Had the war not ended when it did, it might have seen the actual breakup of the nation, for the five states that made up New England probably would have left the Union and gone their own separate ways—that is how unpopular the war was in the northeastern United States. All in all, a truly forgotten and misunderstood conflict all the way round, but at least with a few good songs to make it somewhat palatable.

*Robert Rodriguez, New York, New York*

Dear Editors,

In the Winter 2005-6 issue of *Canadian Folk Music*, Rosaleen Gregory gave us two versions of the traditional ballad "Tam Lin" (Child #39) in her regular feature *Singing the Child Ballads*. The words of the second version, "Tomlin", derived originally from the collection of J. Maidment (*A New Book of Old Ballads*, 1844), and, though consisting of 26 stanzas, stopped in the middle of the narrative, just as the heroine is about to attempt the rescue of her lover from the fairies. To complete the story when singing this ballad, Rosaleen noted that she extrapolates the remaining verses from the preceding ones (in which Tomlin tells Margaret how to free him from the power of the Elfin Queen) and from her alternate version, "Tam Lin".

Looking up this ballad in Francis Child's *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads, Volume I* (1884), I was interested to notice that Rosaleen's second version ("Tomlin") corresponds to Child's version D. Child gives three sources for this version: Maidment's *New Book of Old Ballads* (1844), and the manuscript collections of Pitcairn (1817-25) and Motherwell (no date given, but presumably the 1820s). In his footnotes, Child indicates that, of the three, only Motherwell's version included all 34 stanzas. So we can now supply the missing original concluding stanzas of "Tomlin", as quoted by Child (Dover edition, p. 347) from Motherwell's manuscript (p. 532). And indeed, they are very similar to Rosaleen's, but with a different assertion by the Queen as to what she would have done to Tomlin had she known of his imminent escape:

The first court that came along,  
She let them all pass by;

The next court that came along  
Saluted reverently.

The next court that came along  
Were clad in robes of green,  
When Tomlin, on a milk-white steed,  
She saw ride with the Queen.

She seized him in her arms two,  
He to the ground did fa',  
And then she heard a ruefull cry  
"Tomlin is now awa'."

He grew into her arms two  
Like to a savage wild;  
She held him fast, let him not go,  
The father of her child.

He grew into her arms two  
Like an adder or a snake;  
She held him fast, let him not go,  
He was her earthly maick.

He grew into her arms two  
Like iron in hot fire;  
She held him fast, let him not go,  
He was her heart's desire.

Then sounded out through elphin court,  
With a loud shout and a cry,  
That the pretty maid of Chaster's wood  
That day had caught her prey.

"O stay, Tomlin," cried Elphin Queen,  
"Till I pay you your fee:"  
"His father has lands and rents enough,  
He wants no fee from thee."

"O had I known at early morn  
Tomlin would from me gone,  
I would have taken out his heart of flesh  
Put in a heart of stone."

*Fiona Gregory, Athabasca, Alberta*

## Corrigenda

In my review of *'Barely' Seen 'Butt' Often Heard* in the last issue (40.1, p. 40), I misspelled photographer Lawrence Christmas's name not once but twice! We also misspelled Alister MacGillivray's name in the last issue, 40.1, p. 33, and in two other issues in the past, 39.2, p. 13, and 26.2, p. 7! Our apologies to both for our errors.

Also, the correct address for Andy Northrup, whose two CDs were reviewed last issue (40.1, p. 38) is: 9516 95A St., Edmonton, Alta. T5E 0N8; Andy's website (including an obsolete address) is at [www.anorthrup.com](http://www.anorthrup.com). — JL