

Third Princeton Traditional Music Festival, 2010



Shanty Singing under the Gazebo

The Third Festival, held in August 2010, retained the same format as the previous two. The list of performer was, if anything, even longer, and there were again many artists returning for their second, third or fourth appearance at Princeton. These were the returning performers:

Eric & Betty Armstrong
Alex Atamanenko & Lawrence Halisheff
Mike Ballantyne
Banquo Folk Ensemble
Jon Bartlett & Rika Ruebsaat
Bob Doucet
Joseph Dubé
Fiddle Frazzle
Flip & Zeke (Flip Breskin & Zeke Hoskin)
Fraser Union
John Gothard

Rosaleen Gregory
Grist To The Mill Ceilidh Band
Judith Heather
Irish Wakers
Jill King
King's Shilling
Mike & Nakos Marker
Lyn Melnechenko
Morgan & Graves
Lyn Pinkerton
Psycho Acoustic Ceili Band
The Rabbleberries
Tom Rawson
Doug Reid
Brian Robertson
Chris Roe
Skweez
Soft Focus
Simon Trevelyan & Steve Quattrocchi

Barry Truter (from Fraser Union)
The Van Lidth de Jeude Family

New performers were legion. This is the list:

Alyssa (from Orkestar)
Danielle Arcand
Sue Averill
Charlie Baum
Blackthorn
Maggie Desbiens
Ex Pirata International Company
Gaoler's Muse
Great Big Sing!
Tom Hawken
Stewart Hendrickson
Debi Johnson
Larry & Elaine
Barry Luft
The Malarkeys
Rod Miller
Lisa Null
Orkestar Slivovica
Kate Gibson Oswald
David Parkin
Ed Peekeekoot
David Perasso
Larry Saidman & Elaine Rutherford
Oliver Schneider
Slack Key Slim
Lucas Thebault
Paddy Tutty
Without A Net

And these were the 2010 workshops:

Blues
Celtic Jam
Four Harps
Free Reeds
Protest Songs of the '60s
Railway Songs
Shanty Session
Songs and Tunes of La Francophonie
Songs from the Mines
Spoken Word
Traditional Ballads

As in previous years, the 2010 Festival began with an evening street dance. On this occasion the dance music was provided by Ex Pirata International Company, a trio of two fiddles and a button accordion. The accordionist was a traditional folk musician from central France. The two Canadian fiddlers play different fiddle styles from the French Canadian and Ottawa Valley traditions. It was Ex Pirata's first ap-

pearance at the Princeton Festival although the group has toured Europe, teaching dance workshops and sharing different styles of French and Canadian traditional music.



The Friday Evening Street Dance



Annie Brown Fiddling for the Street Dance

The 2010 Festival took place on two covered stages over two days, with music in each tent from 10am to 5pm, with Saturday evening left free for an informal party and jam in the garden of Jon Bartlett and Rika Ruebsaat's house. The Museum Stage on Saturday opened with a series of performers known to audience members who had attended the previous years' festivals.



**MUSEUM STAGE, SATURDAY 21
AUGUST 2010**

sessions in CAPITALS are panels with 4-10 participants

10 am Steve Quattrocchi & Simon Trevelyan
traditional Appalachian and southern songs

10.30 am Rosaleen Gregory
traditional English song

11 am Alex Atamanenko
Canadian & Russian songs from our own MP

11.30 am Sue Averill
songs to delight the ear & touch the heart

12 noon THE TRADITIONAL BALLADS
ancient songs of love, marriage & murder

1 pm Mike Ballantyne
blues from the 1920's & 1930's

1.30 pm John Gothard
traditional songs from the British Isles

2 pm SONGS AND TUNES OF LA FRANCOPHONIE
from France, Acadia, Quebec, and Louisiana

3 pm Jon Bartlett & Rika Ruebsaat
songs of Princeton, B.C. and Canada

3.30 pm Charlie Baum
strong songs sung a capella

4 pm The Van Lidth de Jeude Family
Appalachian songs shared in the family

4.30 pm Larry Saidman & Elaine Rutherford
songs from many traditions

5 pm FOUR HARPS
Celtic harps making angelic music

Steve Quattrocchi and Simon Trevelyan opened the proceedings, playing and singing their characteristic mix of Canadian and American traditional songs. Rosaleen Gregory then sang traditional ballads from the Child collection, interspersed with the occasional broadside ballad, folk lyric, and contemporary song written by her partner Dave. And Princeton's singing Member of Parliament, Alex Atamanenko, performed a mix of English-language Canadian songs and songs from his parents' East European heritage in the Russian language.



A Singing Politician: Alex Atamanenko

The first newcomer was Sue Averill. A former member of the group Virgo Rising, Sue has a history of over forty years as a singer, performer and music teacher. She has long family roots in the province, so

many of her songs have historical content. Asked why music has been so important to her over the years, Sue replied that it is a form of universal communication that breaks down barriers between people.



Sue Averill

The first workshop of the day was devoted to traditional balladry, and participants included Rosaleen Gregory from Alberta, Saskatchewan ballad singer Paddy Tutty, and Lisa Null from Maryland in the eastern USA. Rosaleen was making her second appearance at Princeton, while Paddy and Lisa were newcomers.



Rosaleen listening thoughtfully at the Ballad Workshop

After the Traditional Ballad Workshop, Mike Ballantyne brought a change of pace and genre with his renditions of party blues and jug-band tunes from the 1920s and 1930s. Mike's upbeat performance was followed by a characteristic one from John Gothard, who first joined the ranks of Princeton performers in 2009. Originally from Liverpool, John performed a mix of English traditional songs, sea songs, and instrumentals on guitar or concertina. As in the previous year, he also had a hand in organizing the Friday evening street dance.

John Gothard's set was followed by the Franco-phonie workshop, a particular love of festival organizer Rika Ruebsaat, who was one of the participants.

The workshop showcased the talents of Danielle Arcand and Maggie Desbiens. Originally from Quebec, Maggie later made her home in Princeton, speaking and singing (with great enthusiasm) in three languages and playing recorder and percussion. [Festival-goers in 2012 would be distressed to learn that Maggie had passed away, leaving a legacy of memories of her vibrant performances in previous years.]

Also with roots in Quebec, Danielle, accompanied on this occasion by the guitar of Brian Robertson, has an extensive repertoire which includes many traditional songs, some of them depicting women's tales of love, life and adventure. Active in B.C.'s francophone community for over 25 years, she has been a passionate advocate for French language education and culture. Rika Ruebsaat then remained on stage to accompany and sing with her partner Jon Bartlett, performing a variety of songs collected in the Princeton area and elsewhere in B.C. (mainly by Phil Thomas).

The audience was then treated to a performance by Charlie Baum. His background includes singing in choirs specializing in Russian, Georgian and Jewish music. Charlie has collected songs from all over America. He tells us that "some are mined from archives in West Virginia, some are trolled for in New England collections, others have been picked from southern plantation regions".



Charlie Baum

The next concert on the Museum Stage was given by the Van Lidth de Jeude Family, a trio that included both Emily and Lyn, already familiar to Princeton audiences from previous years' festivals. Then came the duo of Larry Saidman and Elaine Rutherford. Larry is a founder of the Edmonton Folk Club, the Frostbite Music Festival in Whitehorse, and the Dawson City Music Festival. Elaine loves to sing, espe-

cially harmony, and has been a vocalist with the band The Interlocking Pieces for the past five years. Their music is an eclectic mixture of folksongs from various traditions, Canadian and non-Canadian, often with the flavour of the Canadian north. The final performance on the Museum Stage was a Celtic Harp workshop, featuring the Debi Johnson Harp Band and guests.



The Van Lidth de Jeude Family

VERMILION STAGE, SATURDAY 21 AUGUST 2010

sessions in CAPITALS are panels with 4-10 participants

10 am Grist to the Mill Ceilidh Band
dance tunes & songs from the British Isles

10.30 am David Perasso
serious & silly songs from many traditions

11 am CELTIC JAM
*fiddles, flutes, fiddles, bouzoukis, fiddles, tin whistles, fiddles,
harps, bodhrans, fiddles, guitars
– did we mention fiddles?*

12 noon Kings Shilling
songs of love, lust & loose women

12.30 pm Soft Focus
vocal/strings duo, UK/US trad songs

1 pm Gaoler's Muse
Trad dance tunes on fiddle and concertina

1.30 pm PROTEST SONGS OF THE 60's
*Songs that defined the era, from "Blowin' in the Wind" to the anti-
Bomb songs of the CND*

2.45 pm Blackthorn
high energy traditional Celtic music

3.30 pm Eric & Betty Armstrong
old-time country duets

4 pm Irish Wakers
jigs, reels, songs and shanties

4.30 pm SPOKEN WORD WORKSHOP

Lyn Melnechenko: *cowboy poetry & stories*
David Parkin: *stories from a well-lived life*

5.15 pm Orkestar Slivovica

Balkan brass band in the Roma (gypsy) tradition

Meanwhile, the morning's music on the Vermilion Stage had been started by the Grist to the Mill Ceilidh Band, an audience favourite from the 2008 festival. They entertained with their familiar mix of jigs, reels and hornpipes interspersed with traditional songs from England, Scotland and Ireland. David Perasso from Seattle was then joined on stage by Chris Roe. David occasionally sang *a cappella* but mainly accompanied himself on guitar or played fiddle tunes to Chris's melodeon accompaniment.



David Perasso

After the crowd-pleasing Celtic Jam, King's Shilling (Simon Trevelyan & Mary Armitage) took over, reinforcing the favourable impression they had created at the previous year's festival. Soft Focus (Marian Buechert and Steve Britten) also repeated their successful debut in 2009. The next act, on the other hand, was (partially) a new one for Princeton. Gaoler's Muse consists of Peter Kratoska and newcomer Jennifer White. Peter and Jenny met at an Irish session several years ago and have been musical partners ever since. When together they play traditional dance tunes from Ireland and from Quebec and other parts of Canada on fiddle and concertina. This instrumental music was brought to Canada by immigrants and was kept alive in the kitchens and parish halls of the new country.

One of the most original ideas for a workshop—to revisit the protest songs of the sixties including those created by demonstrators against nuclear weapons—provided the theme for the next forty

minutes of song. Then it was back to Celtic music, with Blackthorn's first appearance at the Festival. This group is from Vancouver and was formed in 1989, which makes it one of the longest-running Celtic groups in the province. Several members of the group are multi-instrumentalists, but they also sing folk lyrics and ballads.

Before the next workshop it was the turn of a duo that has been a mainstay of every incarnation of the Princeton Festival from 2007 onwards: Eric and Betty Armstrong. Their focus was on English and Anglo-American traditions, but the Celtic thrust was resumed immediately after their concert by the Irish Wakers, also regular performers in Princeton, led by the dependable Brian Robertson. The next workshop was dedicated to the spoken word and included cow-girl poet Lyn Melnechenko, Joseph Dubé, and newcomer David Parkin. David is from Bowen Island and has been writing for years about his rich life and work experiences. He began reading for audiences only about five years ago because of his participation in musical parties. He says, "I wanted to contribute but I wasn't musical", so he began sharing his stories instead.



David Parkin



Joseph Dubé

The last act of the afternoon brought a change of pace. Orkestar Slivovica from Vancouver is a Balkan brass band that follows the Roma tradition of turning folk and dance tunes into frantic party music. They perform traditional wedding music and songs from Serbia, Macedonia and other Balkan countries. Their music is a combination of Turkish rhythms and scales and complex western melodic lines, packaged with a strong Roma ("Gypsy") influence. Saxophone, accordion, trumpet, tubas, percussion and vocals combine to create a high-energy, infectious and very danceable music.

MUSEUM STAGE, SUNDAY 22 AUGUST 2010

sessions in CAPITALS are panels with 4-10 participants

10 am Flip & Zeke
heartfelt songs & tunes

10.30 am Danielle Arcand
traditional songs in French

11 am Bob Doucet
songs from the land that time forgot

11.30 am Morgan & Graves
old & new songs with fiddle and guitar

12 noon Ed Peekeekoot
a journey through North American traditions

12.30 pm THE BLUES
Songs, guitar riffs and wailing dobro to make you cry

1.30 pm Lisa Null
a capella ballads and work songs with choruses

2 pm Debi Johnson, Harp Bard
traditional harp music and funny songs

2.30 pm RAILWAY SONGS
songs of the steel rail

3 pm The Malarkeys
contemporary and traditional Celtic

3.30 pm Chris Roe
ballads, airs and box tunes

4 pm SONGS FROM THE MINES
from the mines of Britain, Canada and the US

5 pm Ex Pirata International Company
dance music from Canada & France

5.30 pm Doug Reid
mainly humorous UK songs

Still suffering the after-effects of the Saturday night party at the Bartlett/Ruebsaat house, a handful of musicians staggered out to face their audiences at

10am on Sunday morning. At the Museum Stage were two ‘old faithfuls’ dating back to the 2007 trial run, the duo of Flip & Zeke (Flip Breskin and Zeke Hoskin). Their set was followed by a solo performance by one of the stars of Saturday’s Francophonie workshop: Danielle Arcand, who sang traditional French songs from France, Quebec and Acadie. Danielle gave way to an equally vigorous performer from Boston and, more recently, Bowen Island: Bob Doucet, whose concert featured traditional songs, mainly collected in the eastern mountains of the U.S.A.

Morgan and Graves (singer-guitarist Bob Morgan and fiddler Lynn Graves) performed songs and fiddle tunes that were played on the Oregon Trail, based on research by folklorists and musicians Phil and Vivian Williams. They were known to the audience from their performance the previous year, but Ed Peekeekoot was making his first appearance at the Festival. Ed comes from the Ahtahkahoop Cree First Nation of Saskatchewan but now makes his home on Saltspring Island. He sings, plays Métis style jigs and reels on his fiddle and is also proficient on the banjo, native flute and drum. Ed has performed from coast to coast and from Texas to the Yukon. He has been featured on nationwide television and radio broadcasts and his music has been used in films. Ed is also an artist and was chosen as one of eight Aboriginal Artists to show his work at the Calgary Stampede.

The Blues workshop—already becoming as much a tradition at the festival as the Celtic Jam—preceded a concert by powerful *a cappella* ballad singer Lisa Null, who sings traditional songs ranging from old ballads to cowboy songs. Much of her material comes from New England and the Maritimes. She is a founder of the Irish-American record company Green Linnet, and has done folklore fieldwork in Newfoundland.

If Lisa’s repertoire explored a too often neglected aspect of traditional music, so also did Debi Johnson’s focus on music suitable for the Celtic harp.



Debi Johnson and other harpists.

Debi’s affair with the harp began 15 years ago, when a friend introduced her to the instrument. She began to explore the rich history of Celtic and traditional instrumental music. Her recent musical experiences have led her into the realm of therapeutic music, as she works in hospices and Alzheimer units.

The fascinating Railway Songs workshop, which found singers frequently drawing on the Phil Thomas collection, left one feeling that half an hour was much too short a time for this topic, and, like the Blues workshop before it, an hour could easily have been allocated. Thankfully the next workshop, “Songs from the Mines”, had been scheduled for an hour, and the participants found no difficulty in regaling the audience with songs about gold mining and hard rock mining, mainly Canadian in origin and some of them also derived from the Thomas collection.

Between these two workshops, in both of which Jon Bartlett was an active participant, there were sets by The Malarkeys and by Chris Roe. Chris, of course, was a veteran of all the previous Princeton festivals. The Malarkeys, however, were newcomers. A Kelowna group, they perform what they call “Celtic pop folk”, blending well-known pop and rock songs into their medleys of Irish music and claiming that “almost any song can be considered a Celtic song at heart”. The group has played together for over three years and has performed throughout southwestern B.C., and their music has been heard on campus and community radio stations from B.C. to Ontario.

Sunday on this stage concluded with two more acts: first a concert by the group that provided the music for the Friday evening dance, Ex Pirata International Company, followed by the return of one of the most popular of Princeton’s local musicians, retired family doctor Doug Reid, who again delighted the audience with his wry humour, versions of ‘classic’ folksongs from the 1960s and traditional Scottish songs, including some attributed to Robert Burns.

The Sunday session on the Vermilion stage kicked off with Without A Net, a duo composed of David Lowther (who “sings and plays things you strum”) and his wife Mary (who “sings and plays things you blow into”). They performed a mixture of traditional klezmer music and original songs with a recurring political bias. Then Mike Marker, a veteran of Princeton festivals since 2007, returned to play his characteristic mix of old-timey country music and blues, with son Nakos playing dobro. After the Shanty Songs workshop, Fiddle Frazzle entertained with their brand of mainly Celtic dance music. Great Big Sing! turned out to be not a new group performing for the first time at the Festival but a reincarnation of Jill King and Pam Jeffrey, accompanied by some friends on choruses.

VERMILION STAGE, SUNDAY 22 AUGUST 2010

sessions in CAPITALS are panels with 4-10 participants

10 am Without A Net

Klezmer music from Eastern Europe

10.30 am Mike & Nakos Marker

old-timey songs with banjo, dobro & guitar

11 am SHANTY SESSION

the work songs of the sea sung by a shantyman and you, the crew!

11.45 am Fiddle Frazzle

jigs, reels hornpipes & more

12.30 pm Great Big Sing!

a capella 2-part harmony

1 pm Kate Gibson Oswald

handcrafted Celtic harp and songs

1.30 pm Tom Hawken

songs with guitar and banjo

2 pm FREE REEDS

piano accordions, button accordions & concertinas

3 pm Fraser Union

songs that tell stories past & present

3.30 pm Skweez

traditional French music

4 pm Stewart Hendrickson

maritime songs and fiddle tunes

4.30 pm Paddy Tutty

ancient ballads & seasonal pageants

5 pm Barry Luft

songs to uplift hearts and tickle funnybones

5.30 pm The Rabbleberries

Canadian folkloric and labour songs

Kate Gibson Oswald and Tom Hawken, the next two acts, were both newcomers to Princeton. Kate, who plays (and teaches) Celtic harp, is from Lake Country in the Okanagan Valley. For the past twelve years she has performed solo and with the Anam Cara trio. Tom Hawken from Vancouver is a veteran of the 1960s Hootenanny scene. From there he went on to perform in Frank Dowie's touring Barkerville show. He has a large repertoire of labour and union songs.

After the Free Reeds workshop, in which accordions and melodeons ruled, some familiar faces took the stage: Fraser Union, followed by Skweeze. Then came Seattle fiddler and singer Stewart Hendrickson. Stewart played mainly Irish fiddle tunes, including several slow airs, and sang traditional songs from both the British Isles and the USA.



The Free Reeds Workshop

Although familiar to *aficionados* of the traditional ballad as one of Canada's finest ballad singers, Paddy Tutty was a new face to Princeton audiences. Her repertoire included ancient ballads, songs from a woman's perspective, songs with a twist, and songs about the world around us. She accompanied herself on guitar, concertina and fretted dulcimer, also playing tunes on these instruments.



Paddy Tutty

The afternoon's music on this stage concluded with performances by newcomer Barry Luft from Alberta, and by the more familiar Rabbleberries. Their enthusiastic and energetic set, somewhat reminiscent of fifties skiffle music, brought almost to an end another successful Princeton Festival. The finale, as usual, was shanty-singing under (and around) the Gazebo.