

Accession No. 664/99.2

Correspondence with and/or files on several dozen American, British and Canadian folklorists and singers, including some very well-known names, many of their owners still alive and kicking. Deceased correspondents include Marius Barbeau, Barbara Cass-Beggs, Helen Creighton, Kenny Goldstein, Herbert Halpert, Wade Hemsworth, Hamish Henderson, Richard Johnston, Tom Kines, Alan Mills, Bill Sarjeant and D. K. Wilgus. Other correspondence is with publishers, or to do with the American Folklore Society, the Canadian Society for Traditional Music or the Canadian Folk Music Journal. There is a fair amount of material on children's songs, women's songs and bawdy songs, including some song texts and articles. Other material (including more correspondence) deals with various aspects of Edith's personal life, including financial and family matters. There are not many photographs, but there are a few, including one autographed by Alan Mills. There are also some floppy discs, but whatever word-processing program Edith used was unrecognised by my version of Word for Windows. An attempt has also been made, how successful I do not know, to salvage the contents of the hard-drive of Edith's PC, a 486.

Some of the material in this accession - donated by Frank Fowke - is of a personal nature, unrelated to Edith's work. One set of files, concerning Edith's family in the 1990s, is restricted, but thankfully the restrictions do not apply to journals that Edith kept for the years 1929-33, 1937, 1967-83, and 1985-1996, or even her address book. The earliest items appear to be five autograph books dating from 1927-31. Hidden among the very large number of miscellaneous items are some valuable boxes of index files: the original hand-written records of Edith's field-tapes, sorted according to singers and song-titles. There are also permission forms, and some photocopies of transcriptions of selected songs from the field-tapes. In short, there is a mine of miscellaneous information here about Edith, her work in the later years of her life, and her interactions with other people.

It would take many more than the few days I had available in Calgary to go through this accession alone, but it should prove very useful for Edith's biographer. I spent most of my time on Accession No. 592/96.7, but it was possible to listen to only a very few samples from the field recordings. Perhaps not very surprisingly I came away with the renewed conviction that Edith had recorded some very fine traditional singers. O.J. Abbott and

LaRena Clark I had heard before, but I had no idea how extensive a repertoire was possessed by Grace Macdonald (aka Mrs Arlington Fraser), although the eleven songs from her in *Traditional Singers and Songs from Ontario* should have been a signal. Nor did I realize just how many Ontario singers Edith tracked down between 1957 and 1967. She must have had a very tough time cutting down the wealth of good material she had available for that publication.

Edith was a remarkably energetic and persistent woman, and we are very fortunate to possess the legacy not only of her published work (which is extensive enough!) but also of her field-recordings and other activities. It will take quite a while before researchers exhaust the treasures to be found in this archival collection.

David Gregory

Barry Isaac, 1942-2002

The Calgary folk music community lost a familiar figure as Barry Isaac passed away on July 7. Barry was unofficial photographer of the Calgary folk scene, documenting many of the performances at folk clubs and festivals. His work has appeared in the Bulletin, notably in the Stan Rogers memorial issue, vol. 17, no. 4 (September 1983).

Barry became a professor of English at the University of Calgary after gaining his education under difficult circumstances due to hemophilia. He was active in the Canadian Hemophilia Society, being particularly instrumental in fostering awareness at the national governmental level of issues surrounding the condition. He also chaired several committees for the society and edited its newsletter, and in 2000 received its Frank Schnabel Award for distinguished service as a volunteer.

Barry was taken by an accidental overdose of his pain medication. His life is an example to everyone who struggles to achieve great things despite adversity.

John Leeder
