

TUCSON FRIENDS OF TRADITIONAL MUSIC

NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 1975

DONATION 10¢

PRESERVATION HALL AT U OF A

"Preservation Hall" conjurs up images of crotchety old men shuffling through a senior citizens' meeting, but when that name is attached to the words "Jazz Band" watch out! Percy Humphrey, 71, on trumpet, 'Sing' Miller, 69, piano, Cie Frazier, 71, on drums, left-handed Narvin Kimball with a gold-plated Epiphone tenor banjo, played with all the polish and skill of professionals with decades of experience doing just what they like best to do. Most of the crowd loved it, despite the atrocious sound system in the big U of A auditorium. We only wish somebody had told us about it sooner, so we could have reminded everybody about it in last month's coming events. **TG**

COMING EVENTS

Basement Cafe (see ad)

- Oct. 10 - John McBriean
- Oct. 11 - Anne Schmitt, guitar
- Oct. 17 - Ron Pandy
- Oct. 18 - Midnite Express (Pete Rolland, bluegrass fiddle)
- Oct. 25 - Lorraine Nelson, orig. cont. folk)

The Cup (715 N. Park)

- Oct. 4 - (at Crowder Hall, School of Music, U of A) 8 PM Lute & Guitar Concert - Liddell & Strizich
- Oct. 11 - Pat & Jeff (cont. folk)
- Oct. 29 - Andy Wallace
- Nov. - Glenn Ohrlin
- TFTM** - cosponsors
- Nov. 21 - Margaret McArthur!
- Nov. 22 - Dulcimer workshop (Margaret McArthur)

FLAT-PICKING CONTEST

WINFIELD

Norman Blake was there - that was worth the whole trip. 14-year old Mark O'Connor won the contest. He's awful good. I'll bet he knows at least 10 songs - maybe the ones he flatpicks are the ones he used to win the National Masters Fiddle Contest in Tennessee last month. In the flat-picking, contestants played two tunes in Round 1 and one tune in Round 2 (which could be the same tune). Dusty Miller, Black Mt. Rag, and Salt Creek over and over. Not much of a test for a "National" contest. Only one of the people I picked for top ten matched the judges opinion -- and that was just barely. Don Reno and Larry Sparks, Jimmy Driftwood and lots of locals rounded things out - as usual, the parking lot was better listening than the stage. Things were well organized despite unexpected numbers of folks - but a return trip next year is a toss-up.

Dave Luckow

ELECTIONS

The first election for the five member Board of Directors will be held Saturday, Oct. 4 5:30 pm, at El Presidio Park in Tucson. Nominations will be made at that time. In order to nominate or be elected, a person must be a member in good standing. Members must be present in order to vote and, for member families, two persons must be present in order to use both of the family's two votes. Officers will be appointed by the Board of Directors.

Steering Comm.

FIDDLE WORKSHOP

Besides the banjo workshops we mentioned last month, Tucson also has a fiddle workshop under way at the U of A. Pete Rolland of Summerdog and "Diamond Studs" meets with beginners at 6:30-8:30 and intermediates at 8:30-10:30 on Monday nights, room 204 in the Music building. Fee is \$35 for 12 weeks. Pete says an additional workshop will be formed if the demand develops. Call him at 888-5399 for information.

pr & mm

TUCSON BAGPIPERS

There is a society of bagpipers in Tucson, "The 7 Pipers Society". All persons interested in bagpiping, or who play bagpipes should contact Earnest Nelson, of the Kitt Peak Laboratory.

DD

JOIN TFTM - HELP OLD TIMEY MUSIC CONQUER THE WORLD !!!

DAVID PAGE IRISH MUSIC

Mr. Page is a native of Dublin County, Ireland. He emigrated to the U.S. about 25 years ago, and worked in Chicago until his retirement about 5 years ago. In Ireland, as a young man, he became a skilled tinwhistler, and came under the influence of Leo Rowsome, the greatest Uilleann piper of his time. Mr. Rowsome trained Mr. Page as an Uilleann Piper for the requisite 7 years, and included him in his performing group.

Mr. Page competed in the championships at the Fleadh Ceol and National Preachtas and placed highly on several occasions. He is a master performer of the ancient slow airs, laments, and classical music (Ceol Mor) for the pipes, and plays jigs, hornpipes, set dances, slip jigs, and reels with great skill.

THE UILLEANN PIPES

The Uilleann pipes are one of the two traditional bagpipes in use in Ireland; the other being the military or warpipes familiar to all as band instruments in modern times.

The Uilleann pipes are a fairly soft, sweet, bellows-blown "parlor" pipe, meant primarily for indoor play. They were developed from the warpipe in the late 14th century, and were slowly perfected over the next 200 years, finally taking their present form about 1800.

They are made up of a bag, a bellows which is buckled on and pumped by the right arm; a set of 3 drone pipes which sound a constant drone note; a set of so-called "regulator" pipes in the form of 3 stopped donres which are fitted with 19 keys and double reeds, and which are used for chordal accompaniment of the melody; and finally the chanter, a double reeded pipe with 8 open holes and four keys upon which the melody is played. The modern chanters have a modal scale vaguely equivalent to a D major key and have a range of 2-1/2 octaves. Mr. Page's set are Concert Pipes made by Kennedy of Cork.

Dave O'Day

LESLIE KEITH

Leslie Keith, fiddler, was born in 1906 in Pulaski County, Virginia. He moved to Alabama in 1923 and played fiddle for square dances there, building a repertoire of traditional tunes. He began playing on local radio and listening to the early Grand Old Opry programs, especially Arthur Smith. About 1936 he and his band started playing on WHIS, his "Black Mountain Blues" became a hit that led him eventually to the famous Stanley Brothers and the Blue Sky Boys. Now retired to Tucson with his wife, Jessie, Leslie has a recent record on the Briar label (see review).

Matt M.

San & Kirk McGee were about all that was left of the old time country music on the "Grand Old Opry". With Sam dead (in a tractor accident last month), there's nothing left to keep Nashville from forcing Kirk off. Write to Opryland, Nashville, Tenn., and let them know that some people still want something 'Grand' and something 'old' mixed in with the 'Opry'.

TFTM

TRADITIONAL MUSIC

Most of us are interested primarily in American string-band music BUT we are open to suggestion. We would like to explore music of other ethnic groups (Irish, Chicken-scratch, Norteno, Blues, Eastern European, etc.) and folk dance and other related skills and crafts. If you have contact with a group involved with one of these areas and would like to help us get involved, call or write or talk to one of us. We could arrange a meeting between clubs, a joint concern, a concert by them for us, or by us for them. Maybe we could share newsletter articles and costs, or mailing lists, or whatever.

newsletter

STATE FIDDLE CONTEST - PAYSON!! KEITH WINS SR. CHAMP.

Texan Dick Barrett, current national fiddle champ, showed up for the State context -- that took care of the 1st prize money, but the State title was still up for grabs among the 30 or so Arizona fiddlers who competed. Sol Rudnick came out on top - to his surprise as well as everyone else's - he and I and everyone else expected Jay Belt of Phoenix to win. Belt finished an unbelievable 5th place Senior Championship went to 69 yr. old Leslie Keith of Tucson who finished (also unbelievably) only 10th overall. It's hard to tell how much politicking is involved in these decisions. Belt in particular is in ill repute in Payson after his fight to get some gain for the State Fiddle Assn. out of the Chamber of Commerce festival proceeds. Contestants are supposed to be known to judges only by a number, and all of the 10 finalists were good - on the other hand, contestants were issued a badge with their number printed very visibly, and a contestants list was posted only a few feet from the judges room, so. . .

John Barnhouse, a fine young fiddler, of Sahuarita, finished ninth, Matt McConeghy of Tucson was back in the herd at about 16th. The fiddling at the contest was excellent, more could be said for some aspects of the event. (Maybe more next month.)

HELP US FILL UP
THIS SPACE
NEXT MONTH!
JOIN TFTM

VAN HOLYOAK

Van Holyoak hails from Clay Springs, Arizona, and has lived in that general area pretty much since his birth in 1928. He has long been attracted to the old ballads, many of which he learned from his father. Hand in hand with his interest in the songs goes a determination to follow the life style of an earlier day in the West. He has appeared on two L.P. records of traditional songs and music issued by the Arizona Friends of Folklore, and has performed before audiences in northern Arizona. This is his first appearance at a large folk festival. He sings in the old style, unaccompanied, with a minimum of vocal ornamentation, and intersperses his songs with old time stories.



Entertainment-Thurs. -Sat.
Wed. Hootnany
Sun. eve.- Bluegrass
& old time jam
502 N. FREMONT 622-0942
SOUTH OF UA CAMPUS

ANDY WALLACE

Appearing at the Cup Coffeehouse on Oct. 29, will be Andy Wallace, well-known east coast folksinger and scholar. Andy has been chairman of the National Folk Festival Association, has appeared at the Newport Folk Festival and numerous other folk festivals around the country. Andy was one of the original crew members of the Hudson River Sloop (along with Pete Seeger and Don McLean). His repertoire includes sea chanteys, banjo tunes from the south, and contemporary folk material.

R.B.

NEXT ISSUE

- Review of Tucson Meet Yourself
- Old Time Banjo Styles - Robert Freeman
- Tablature--a local tune set in string band arrangement
- Also: Postponed from this month because of shortage of space, Diamond Studs Cast Comments and Weiser Nat'l. Fiddle Contest
- Also: News on TFTM winter concerts, traditional music other than Old-Timey, and more...

LOCAL NOTES

A whole bunch of Tucson folks showed up to watch Leslie Keith win the Arizona State Senior Fiddle Championship in Payson. John Barnhouse of Sahuarita also won prize money for making the finals. Too bad the contest is so far away, we would like to see Ed Smith, Pete Rolland, and Don Johnson try their skill.

John Ragsdale, Mike Wallner, Matt McConeghy and Dave Nebenzahl showed up to play a job at Scot Photo and found Robert Freeman, Tommy Rozum, Jim Griffith and a whole bunch of other folks hard at work on bluegrass two doors away. Everybody had a good time.

We hear that sounds coming from one wing of the Tucson Medical Center bear a suspicious resemblance to fiddle music. Could this have anything to do with the fact that Clarence Langens is recuperating from surgery over there and feeling much improved?

Diamond Studs has closed after a long run at Old Tucson...guess that means Summerdog will be loosed on the world again. We've missed seeing them.

Jam sessions at Basement Cafe have been so successful that the thirty or forty musicians who showed up last time had to go out to the parking lot to avoid disturbing the Loft Theatre upstairs. What's the solution to this problem? Or, is it a problem?

RECORD REVIEW

Leslie Keith
"Black Mountain Blues"
Briar Records BF 4201

Here's a real treat for jaded bluegrass fans. Leslie Keith, now living in Tucson, is a fiddler of considerable reknown in some circles. An alumnus of the legendary Stanley Brothers ensemble of the 1940's and later a sideman with the Blue Sky Boys, Keith was personally involved in some of the most exciting music-making in the history of country and bluegrass music.

This is Leslie Keith's first solo album and it's a fine one by any standards. Besides a good bluesy fiddle and a clutch of really great old tunes, there's a dimension here that's unexpected: an extraordinary voice in the true old time bluegrass mold. Accompanied by five fine bluegrass oriented musicians (including Tucsonans Leonard Berline and Tom Ford), Keith bows and sings his way through 14 numbers, including an exuberant "Cotton-eyed Joe," a fine cover of Jimmie Davis' "Where the Old Red River Flows," and his own "Black Mountain Blues."

The album is available from Mr. Keith.

Highly recommended.

Bob Sayers

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10% off on music, books, and records for TFTM members.

LYDIA MENDOZA

Lydia Mendoza, la Alondra de la Frontera (the Lark of the Border) has been singing and recording traditional North Mexican music for over forty years now. Accompanying herself on the bajo sexto or 12-string guitar, she has built up a strong and loyal following for her music, which consists of modern and traditional love songs and ballads. She has appeared on a multitude of labels, including R.C.A., Bluebird, OKEH, Del Pajarito, Nor-teno, and Magda. A Bluebird reissue of her best work from the 1930's and 40's is planned for the near future. In recent years, she has expanded her audience, appearing before mainly Anglo audiences at the San Diego and National Folk Festivals. Although she has recorded with every conceivable kind of backup instrumentation, she is best known and beloved among her people for her magnificent singing and strong guitar backing. She appears at Tucson Meet Yourself at about 9:00 Friday night, and leaves Saturday morning for El Paso, where she is to participate in the Third Annual El Chamizal Folk Festival.

J.G.

The GUITAR WORKSHOP

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RADIO PROGRAMS

Did you know that when KUAT broadcasts the Philadelphia Folk Festival on KUAT-TV, Channel 6, it is also on KUAT-FM radio, 90.5 in stereo? You have to check your listings to find out when it's going to be on.

Channel 6 has shown films of Jim Griffith, The Sandy River String Band, and Summerdog in a couple of 1/2 hour programs recently.

Chip Curry's Bluegrass Hour is still going strong on KWFM (92.9) at 4:00 on Saturdays.

bb

TOM & MARTHA JENNINGS

The Jennings family lives now in Safford, Arizona. Tom grew up in Pima, Arizona and learned fiddle from migrant workers, farmers and just about anyone else he could find to listen to. Since then he's picked up banjo, mandolin and guitar and has made himself into one of the most skillful instrument craftsmen in Arizona. Martha comes from a musical family. Her father was an outstanding fiddler in the Arkansas-Texas tradition, and her brothers play guitar. She plays outstanding Texas-style back-up guitar as well as mandolin. Recently the Jennings have been influenced by Ray & Ina Patterson and by Clarence Langens, the New Brunswick fiddler now living in Arizona. Besides music, Tom & Martha spend their time with their daughter Sharon who occasionally joins them in concert, and on Tom's hobby - reconditioning antique one-cylinder engines.

J.G.



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715 N. Park (Outside the U of A Main Gate)

THE CUP

COFFEE HOUSE

Bluegrass, Blues, Contemporary Folk music. Open Friday and Saturday 7:30-1:00.

Coffees, teas, sandwiches.

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TFTM

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