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TALES *from under* BLACK HILL

folk music in S-W Herefords & nearby **... by our Correspondents**

John & Jane Baxter

As so often happens when we come to write this column we are wondering where all the time goes. Having so much to distract us is one explanation, so when it comes to doing some practice for songs we might sing at the ***Folk Night at the Crown Inn ®***, Longtown, we always wish, as with this column, we had started earlier.

Recently, it has become increasingly apparent that regulars make the effort to learn something new for our monthly session. Thanks to the internet there is much to choose from, whether it is tracking down some lyrics and tabs or adding a new collection of songs to the bookshelves. Our last two sessions had twenty and fourteen singers respectively and so with some performers managing three turns the list of titles can be quite lengthy. Thanks to the number attending there are always enough new songs to maintain variety, and we would like to pass on the thanks from our many visitors to all those who make the evenings a success.

Another source of inspiration for learning new songs is the number of venues and events to be found in the pages of ***Folk Life Quarterly***. Whether it is another sing around, club or concert there is no shortage. Our most recent outing was to ***Halsway Manor ®*** in Somerset for a weekend course entitled ***From Albion to Appalachia*** over the weekend of 18th to 20th May. As long time believers in Anglo-American folk, or Music of the Atlantic Nation, this was a perfect subject, made even better by the line-up of tutors. Led by **Brian Peters** and supported by **Jeff Warner** and **Anna Roberts-Gevalt**, this was a very enjoyable and inspiring experience. Whilst having a semi-academic ring to it we couldn't have asked for a better mix of musical and literary content and skills. As though this was not a sufficient source of additional repertoire, the hall's library was selling various items in its effort to concentrate more on the folk music of the South West. Consequently we came home with yet more books for the shelves, old vinyl, and CDs. The £20 we donated will go towards the restoration fund, currently evidenced by the scaffolding for roof repairs. Incidentally, it was very gratifying to see a copy of ***Folk Life Quarterly*** dominating the listing publications spread out on the library table. When asked where we were from, it was very useful to refer the inquirers to this, and we hope that not only will some of them visit the ***Folk Night at the Crown Inn***, but will take out a subscription so that they will have no shortage of live folk music should they come this way.

We had hoped to call in at a folk club somewhere on the way home, but as is so often the case our trip didn't coincide with any of the regular sessions. The local folk listings on the internet did however leave us feeling that we would be welcome if we made another trip, although whilst intended to be welcoming the phrase 'crib sheets permitted' did not quite live up to that purpose containing as it does a hint of disapproval.

It has become usual at the Crown to start the second half with a song from the community choir, ***Black Hill Voices.*** They are currently preparing for a concert entitled ***'Farmers, Miners and Iron-workers'*** which will be performed at Longtown Village Hall on Saturday 14th July, at 7.30 pm, in aid of ***The Farming Community Network***. Further details from Sue on 01981510360. At our last session we had a taste of their work in progress, and it sounds as if we are in for a good evening.

Away from matters of repertoire and content the three of us who make up Red Darren Skiffle had a works outing to the ***Upton on Severn Folk Festival ®*** for the Sunday parade, and a nose around the stalls. We were very pleased to meet Terry and Ann (much valued singing visitors to the Crown) from the ***Newport Folk Club ®*** who had nearly lost their voices such was the success of their festival club session.

We were struck by the wide range of ages and styles which are now found among the parade dancers. Neither the descriptions 'Morris Men' or 'Morris Dancers' do justice to the variety, but it was a bit concerning to see so many young girls dancing in the various groups. Where are the boys? Or is this an unnecessary question as the answer is obviously in line with the difficulty in getting boys to join singing groups. We can't help thinking that the National Curriculum is to blame as it busily squeezes the timetable to reduce music, sport and dare we mention, dance?

John & Jane

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LEDBURY POETRY FESTIVAL: Tuesday 3rd July sees the special **Homend Poets** meeting at Icebytes cafè launching the new annual book of poems (*www.folklife.org.uk/homend-poets.html)* and Wednesday 4th July sees the usual **session at the Prince** *(above)* become a poets & musicians session.

'At The Prince' © Eden Tanner. *'Homend Poets'* © Liz Johnson

® **THE PRINCE OF WALES FOLK SESSIONS, Prince of Wales** (01531 632250), Church Lane, **Ledbury** HR8 1DL.

Every ***Wednesday***, 9pm

Every Wednesday evening, kick-off around 9pm.

This acoustic session has just celebrated its 24th birthday - including a visiting didgeridoo player! We have mainly folk songs and music, with some blues, but anything goes.

The session is always enjoyable, with a relaxed atmosphere - aided by some of the best beer in the region (plus food for performers, on the last Wednesday of each month).

Contact ® ***John Burton*** 01531 630159

Pub's session page:

www.powledbury.com*/page6.html*

Session, gig, CD, to promote? 1/16th page *as 'Homend Poets', left,* ***just £8 prepaid, see p3***

HEREFORDSHIRE: **1-LINE SUMMARIES.** *For full details, see our* **online Members DIRECTORY, www.folklife-directory.uk**

⇒ **our Membership** *(only* ***£18*** *a year! see page 3)* includes **listings & your publicity & FQ posted to you**

❖ Members List 1: VENUES ❖ *Song — Music — Poetry — Story — Dance* ❖ *Clubs — Concerts — Singarounds — Sessions — Dance Clubs & Ceilidhs* ❖

3rd Tue	Herefs	LONGTOWN	**CROWN INN FOLK EVENINGS**	http://blackhilltales.blogspot.com	John/Jane Baxter	01981 510388
Weekly Wed	Herefs	LEDBURY	**PRINCE OF WALES FOLK SESSION**	*[pub site]* www.powledbury.com/page6.html	John Burton	01531 630159

❖ Members List 2: PERFORMERS ❖ *Pf.1 Folk Music & Song — Pf.2 Folk Dance — Pf.3 Spoken Word* ❖

Pf.1a	***Folk Music & Song - Bands/Groups***				
Herefs	**ROVING CROWS**	www.rovingcrows.com	Paul O'Neill	07896 327069	
Pf.1c	***Folk Music & Song - Solo***				
Herefs	**PAUL CHIEF O'NEILL**	www.chief-oneill.com	Paul O'Neill	07896 327069	

❖ Members List 3: MEDIA ❖ Members List 4: SERVICES ❖ Members List 5: WORKSHOP LISTINGS ❖

M.1	**ONLINE FOLK MAGAZINES & LISTINGS**		
Herefordshire	**TALES FROM UNDER BLACK HILL BLOG**	http://blackhilltales.blogspot.com/search/label/FolkWorkshops	John & Jane Baxter

❖ *see* DIARY-LISTINGS PAGES (follows these news pages) *for* ❖ List 5 : WORKSHOP DIARY ❖ List 6 : FESTIVAL DIARY *(NEXT 12 MONTHS)* ❖