

# *The Folklore Society*

O F G R E A T E R W A S H I N G T O N

P. O. Box 19174 • 20th Street Station • Washington D. C. 20036

November 5, 1966

John Legerwood  
265 Missouri Ave., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20011

Dear Mr. Legerwood:

We are glad to get any ideas that anyone has regarding the Folklore Society. We are frequently called a "clique", whatever that means, but we always try to get ideas, comments, and new people involved in Society activities. We have rather poor luck. A lot of people express a desire to work but do not want to be an officer of the Society. Every year our nominating committee has a real problem finding enough people just to have one name for each office, much less to give a choice. I am rambling. For sake of organization I'll comment on each of your points in the order you gave.

1. Program on folksong collecting. Good idea. We plan to do this when we can. Probably with Ken Goldstein of Univ. Penn., who has published a book on this subject.
2. Charter a bus for Phila. We probably won't do this. If we did we would also have to worry about getting people from the festival grounds to wherever they were staying; keep people together for meals, etc. carry insurance to protect the Society; and many other problems. There are always a number of people going to Phila and to other festivals. Perhaps a partial solution to the transportation problem would be to print notices in the Newsletter as to who was going and needed a ride and who had extra room in their car, etc.
3. Children's program. Good idea. We have had several children's programs as part of our pick-niks and the folk get-away. We will probably do this sometime this coming year.
4. Program of protest songs. I don't think there is enough interest in the membership to do this as a program but it might be possible to have protest songs as the subject of an open sing. The subject, or lack of it, for the open sings is usually left up to whoever runs the particular sing. Would you like to run one and feature protest songs?
5. Library. We would like to but this requires having a central location to store things and someone there to supervise the use of. If we are able sometime to get an office this would be possible to do. Our tape archive is now kept by Bob Silverman and it is quite an imposition on him to keep this in his home.
6. Library of Congress. The Library is very poor, moneywise. They usually issue records, or publish something if someone gives them a grant which is to be used for that specific purpose. Anyone doing legitimate research can use the Folksong Archive. The Archivist at the Library is Joe



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Hickerson who is also ~~Vice~~-President of FSGW. If you have something that you are interested in researching, talk to Joe. He will be happy to give you advice and assistance. Tell him that you are a member of FSGW.

7. A member of FSGW, Scott Odell, is the guy at the Smithsonian who is responsible for the programs last summer and also the exhibit of musical instruments currently on display. More are planned. The Smithsonian has a new man, Jim Morris, who is in charge of programs on the mall. He is a friend of ours and is an enthusiastic "folk buff". Jim and Scott know they have the Society's enthusiastic support.
8. Dupont Circle curfew. FSGW is a non-profit organization and has tax-free status with Internal Revenue. As such, it must follow certain guidelines in its operations and functions. Expressing disapproval for the curfew is outside our legitimate sphere of operations.
9. Washington Folk Festival. Where were you at the Folk Get-Away Sept. 30-Oct. 2, this year? This is probably the only type of festival the Society will have. First, because it's more fun and less work to do it this way; second, we have several big festivals going on fairly close - the Phila festival, the Washington Folk Festival put on by Dave Rosenberg and consisting of dance groups and singing groups; third, the National Folk Festival Association is talking of having the National Folk Festival in Washington. We had many good comments (and no bad ones) on the Folk Get-Away. This was a camp-out at Prince William Forest Park 30 miles from Washington. We had a square dance, concert, campfire sing, workshops on contemporary songs, religious songs, tall tales, children's program, etc. We plan to make it an annual affair and it is to be held next May.
10. Folk instrument instruction. Can't do it. Most, if not all, of the people in the Society who are capable of teaching are already doing it and taking all of the fees. We couldn't cut into this. For some it is their only source of income.
11. FSGW Coffee House. We have talked about this but would need a much larger financial base from which to operate. Perhaps in the future...
12. Members songs. If anyone want to run an open sing on this subject, he is welcome to do it. See answer to number 4.
13. Buddy Moss. I'm all for getting him back. He is a personal friend of mine and also a fine singer. We plan to try and get him for the Folk Get-Away next May.

I hope I have answered your questions and replied to your comments appropriately. There are many activities that the Society would like to do if it had the money and the people to work. Most of our programs just about break even and we are able to have the people we do only by paying them a pittance and depending on friends of Society members to come down and help out.

Thanks again for your comments. They were appreciated. Regards,



3 October 1966

Dear Ex Comm:

Unasked for, unheralded (and maybe unwanted) here are some ideas for FSGW activities which you may want to talk over. I won't be hurt if none of them are accepted.

1. Have a program on how one goes about collecting folksongs. How approach performers? Do you pay them? Where can one do research on folksongs? What needs to be done?
- X 2. Charter a bus for the Philly Folk Festival next year.
- ✓ 3. Have a children's program (not at night).
- X 4. Have a program of protest songs.
5. Set up a library on folk music for members. Include books, song books, periodicals, tapes, records. Solicit donations <sup>of same</sup> from members and use available FSGW funds to buy more.
6. Work out an arrangement with the Library of Congress whereby FSGW members could collect folk material in this area, or do research at the L. of C., similar to the tie-in between the Archeological Society of Maryland and the Smithsonian whereby members <sup>exp</sup> <sup>traverse</sup> in the area and write



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papers on the results. The Smithsonian publishes the papers and accepts the artifacts found for possible exhibit.

7. Express FSGW appreciation to Smithsonian for American Music programs this summer - especially Lost City Ramblers and New Orleans marching band programs. Encourage more next year - suggest themes.
- ~~8~~ Express FSGW disapproval to Mr. Jett of National Parks for curfew at Dupont Circle.
- ~~9~~ Have a Washington Folk Festival. Rosenber
10. Arrange instruction in folk instruments in small groups or bring individuals together. Instructors to be FSGW members - students to pay fees into FSGW treasury.
11. Operate an FSGW coffee house, or a practice room, or a "place" where above could be done.
12. Have a program <sup>open sing</sup> of songs composed by FSGW members.
13. Get Buddy Moss back. Get Awa

John Legewood

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