

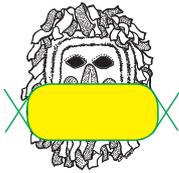


folk news & listings

- folk clubs, sessions, venues
- performers
- services
- festivals

Wales
England West Country
West Midlands

and now a little news from
South-East / London, and from other UK
and from the USA



A-Zooming we will go ...
Listing folk Zoom sessions



FW's FOLKLIFE TRADITIONS PAGES

Our aims include
stimulating a wider interest in
folk studies & folk culture:
the FT pages

'Early, early in the Spring', sung by Norman Perks. By Gwilym Davies

(Sung very freely)

1. 'Twas ear-ly, ear-ly in the spring, I went on board for to serve my King. And
leav-ing the love one, that I left be - hind_ She now would re-quire_of her sail-or boy.

'Mwynen Meirionydd / The Pleasing Melody of Meirionydd', Welsh traditional tune, Arr. Helen Adam

Mwynen Meirionydd / The Pleasing Melody of Meirionydd, Welsh Trad., Arr. Helen Adam; Second part, Helen Adam

#FutureOfFolk: Lynn Noel of Digital Heritage Consulting Looks Ahead

Online Tavern Sing Live From the Mermaid's Tavern 4 weeks ago · 199 views
Online Ballad Sing Live From the Mermaid's Tavern 5 weeks ago · 402 views
Gudrid the Wanderer: Vinland Sagas in Song 6 weeks ago · 211 views
ONLINE CHANTEY SING Live From the Mermaid's Tavern 6 weeks ago · 174 views
Online Tavern Sing Live from the Mermaid's Tavern 7 weeks ago · 108 views
Online Ballad Sing Live from the Mermaid's Tavern 7 weeks ago · 161 views

Edi beo þu heuene quene: a love song by any name by Ian Pittaway

The musical context: the gymel





print magazine in the Folklife West WORKSHOPS FESTIVALS NEWS MEMBERS' NEWS FOLKLIFE TRADITIONS



FT 65



Sept. 2020

p2

THE FT PAGES ARE INCLUDED WITH FOLKLIFE WEST PRINT MAGAZINE, see folklife.uk

Folklife Traditions ♦ Traddodiadau Bymyd Gwerin

FW's FOLKLIFE TRADITIONS PAGES

Our aims include stimulating a wider interest in folk studies & folk culture: the FT pages

- **Edi beo pu heuene quene: a love song by any name** by Ian Pittaway .. p4-6
- **#FutureOfFolk:** Lynn Noel of Digital Heritage Consulting Looks Ahead p7-8
- **'Mwynen Meirionydd / The Pleasing Melody of Meirionydd',** Welsh traditional tune, Arr. Helen Adam p8-9
- **'Early, early in the Spring',** sung by Norman Perks by Gwilym Davies p10

Articles in this online-only edition will be reprinted next print issue.

● **Folklife Studies & Traditions: Folklife News & Diary**

Books & recordings announced, and Folklife Societies news p2

ONLINE DIRECTORY

www.folklife-traditions.uk

- ◆ **List 7, FOLKLIFE SOCIETIES** online only, on above FT website
- ◆ **List 8, FOLKLIFE STUDIES & INSTITUTIONS** ditto
- ◆ **List 9, SEASONAL LOCAL CELEBRATIONS,** a list, & photos, mostly by Doc Rowe online & p60

Ⓞ symbol denotes *Folklife Members* - regular FT contributors receive free *Folklife Membership*; *do join us!*

www.folklife-traditions.uk - FT, these Folklife Traditions pages online

- **FT Directory:** lists 7,8,9 - detailed listings online
- **FT Archive:** individual FT issues, index, links to articles & most of FT

FOLKLIFE TRADITIONS PAGES: contributors.

We are regularly indebted to regular contributors **Doc Rowe** for his list & pictures; to **Roy & Lesley Adkins, Brian Bull, Charles Menteith, Gwilym Davies, Meurig Williams, Ian Pittaway, Chris Stewart, and Helen Adam**, for songs, tunes, articles, & notes; and to others, from time to time, as listed in FT.

And we remember the late **Roy Palmer**, a generous contributor for over 30 years, from August 1983 in FW's predecessor, the *Somers' Broadsheet*.
FT header artwork: © our logo, **Chris Beaumont**; and morris dancers © **Annie Jones**; from The Roots Of Welsh Border Morris (Dave Jones)

Folklife news: societies & organisations



trac, Music Traditions Wales @

The folk development organisation for Wales, which works to promote our traditional music, dance and song at home and beyond. It is funded by the Arts Council of Wales and the Welsh Government. www.trac.wales and www.trac.cymru

Free online resources:

- **Traditions:** Articles on Wales' iconic instruments & song traditions according to the experts. <https://resources.trac.wales/traditions>
- **A Collection of Welsh Folk Songs** with the help of **Arfon Gwilym**, one of our major tradition bearers: videos, soundfiles, dots, and words. <https://songs.trac.wales>
- **Tunes:** get playing videos, soundfiles, and dots. <https://resources.trac.wales/tunes>

trac organises **Gwerin Gwallgo**, a residential Folk Weekend for 11-18s.

See **trac** website, <https://trac.wales>, for **news, directory, listings, resources**, and on **Facebook**, at facebook.com/traccymruwales, where you will find videos, details of online gigs, etc. PO Box 205, Barry CF63 1FF, 01446 748556

⊛ **The Traditional Song Forum (TSF) @** A national organisation dedicated to the promotion, performance and publication of traditional folk song in the UK. The Traditional Song Forum has organised successful talks on Zoom, more are planned. These talks are very popular, now attracting international visitors, currently limited to 100 places; so if interested, see www.tradsong.org sooner rather than later. This website is a gateway to a number of useful resources for those interested in researching or performing traditional folk songs. There is a newsletter to sign up to. Latest details on www.tradsong.org

All enquiries to @ **Martin Graebe** (TSF Secretary), martin.graebe@btinternet.com



books & recordings announced

- **Publicity for appropriate books** and for **CDs of collected songs:** please see www.folklife-traditions.uk → "Contributions" page
- These FT pages:** we don't review 'Folk' CDs, so please don't send them!
- Folk News pages:** members, please do send in news about your own folk CDs

MUSICAL TRADITIONS @

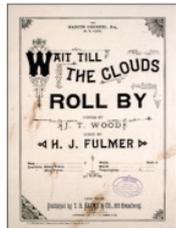
Wait Till the Clouds Roll By
Part 3 of the Old World / New World
Trilogy MTCD518-0.

3-CD Set + 52 page integral booklet in DVD case. 79 tracks, 222 minutes.

MT Records' website, £20

Commercial recordings of American songs that have made it back to the Old World via 78rpm discs and/or printed music, together with how they sounded when taken up by the British oral tradition. There are quite a few songs here that you probably never knew were American, nor can imagine what the 'original' sounded like. Now available from MT Records' website, just £20. **Rod Stradling @**

MTCD518-0



Wait Till the Clouds Roll By

Part 3 of the Old World/
New World Trilogy

- **Musical Traditions Records**, with on-line credit/debit card purchasing at: www.mtrecords.co.uk
- **Musical Traditions Records is on Facebook.**
- **1 Castle Street, Stroud, Glos GL5 2HP, 01453 759475, mobile 0793 099 1641, rod@mustrad.org.uk.**

⊛ **Musical Traditions Internet Magazine** at: www.mustrad.org.uk



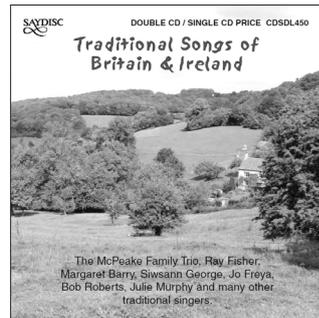
⊛ **The Folklore Society @**, www.folklore-society.com has moved its office: new address is The Folklore Society, 50 Fitzroy Street, London W1T 5BT, 0203 915 3034. Our Folklore Society Library and Archives are still at University College London Library and Special Collections, and publicly available for consultation. Many of our books can be loaned by Folklore Society members. **Contact us: thefolkloresociety@gmail.com, 0203 915 3034.**

Saydisc @

Saydisc continue their re-issue programme of themed compilation double CDs with a single CD price tag. Following "**Traditional Dances of Britain and Ireland**" (Saydisc CDSDL449, see January FW), now out is a double album "**Traditional Songs of Britain and Ireland**" (Saydisc CDSDL450) again featuring a wealth of top performers, this time including The McPeake Family Trio, Ray Fisher, Margaret Barry, Siwsann George, Jo Freya, Bob Roberts, Julie Murphy and many more.

Earlier folk-oriented releases were "**The Funny Side of Saydisc**" (Saydisc CDSDL444), "**Harp, Dulcimers & Hurdy Gurdies**" (Saydisc CDSDL446), "**Awake & Join the Cheerful Choir**" (Saydisc CDSDL442) and "**World's Away**" (Saydisc CDSDL440).

See www.saydisc.com for full details. **Gef Lucena @**





Edi beo þu heuene quene: a love song by any name

by Ian Pittaway



The Virgin of Toulouse, Notre Dame de Grasse (Our Lady of Grace), 1451-1500, now in the Musée des Augustins, Toulouse, France.

Edi beo þu heuene quene – *Blessed are you, queen of heaven* – is a 13th century English song in praise of the Virgin Mary, written in Middle English. It expresses familiarity in relationship with Mary and even romantic attachment; and the two part harmony sounds remarkably sweet and modern. This article explores why this is so, placing this beautiful song in its three contexts – lyrical, musical and historical.

The secular singing the religious

I have no religious conviction, and would describe myself as indefatigably atheist. The vast majority of surviving medieval music, though, is religious, so at some point a decision possibly has to be made about repertoire: to include or avoid the devotional. The appropriate fit of singer and song is always a complex and mysterious affair. Personally, I don't feel I always have to share the experiences within a song lyric or necessarily agree with its point of view. To do so would be to severely limit what I can perform, since there are plenty of early music and traditional songs involving murder, loss at sea, miraculous events and so on, none of which I am personally familiar with, and none of which I have any wish to experience. The same must be true for the majority of singers of medieval repertoire.

This being so, there can sometimes be something odd about singing religious songs for a non-religious audience that is different to any other song type. My most powerful confirmation of this was when performing the beautiful and traditional *Down In Yon Forest* in a folk club. The song has been collected

in several variant versions, from the early 18th to the early 19th century, and it is a variant of the carol called *Corpus Christi*, first attested in the handwritten commonplace book of Richard Hill of London, dated to the first third of the 16th century. By the time of the *Down In Yon Forest* variant, collected from Mr. Hall of Castleton by Ralph Vaughan Williams in 1908, its arresting imagery included the bells of paradise; a hall covered in purple coffin cloth; a bed covered with red (cloth, presumably); the Virgin Mary kneeling on a stone; a flood of water and blood underneath a bed; and a thorn bush that blossomed white on the day the knight was born. All of this the folk club audience took in their stride as I sang it. The whole room of people had joined in loudly and lustily on choruses about halyards they had never pulled on ships they had never seen, bellowed about battles they had never fought in, and sung tenderly for the love of women they had never met. Yet their joining in with the *Down In Yon Forest* refrain, "And I love my Lord Jesus above any thing", was a collective whimper of embarrassment. Somehow, the sung declaration of love for Jesus felt like a qualitatively different leap compared to being the imaginary crew on board ship, or fighting fantasy wars, or loving make-believe women. I still wonder about that experience. I personally have no compunction in being an atheist singing a devotional song. To sing it or join in, I no more have to believe in God or the Virgin Mary than I have to be sea-worthy to sing a shanty or carry a knife to sing a murder ballad. But it is only with religion, it seems, that the problem may arise for a singing audience.

The lyrical context: love poetry

The Annunciation of Mary in a window of 1340 in Ely Cathedral, Cambridgeshire.

Edi beo þu heuene quene (hereafter rendered in modern characters as *Edi beo thu*) is found in its entirety in a single source, a manuscript found in Llanthony Secunda Priory in Gloucestershire, now classified as *Corpus Christi College Oxford 59*, dated between 1265 and the late 13th century.

There are 8 verses, divided stylistically into the first 5 and last 3. In the first 5 verses, the anonymous writer uses the metrical form and numerous phrases from Latin hymns, translated into Middle English. The first-person narrator of the song declares his love for Mary, praising her in standard religious ways: she is blessed, a comfort, unblemished, pure, etc. The song also shows the unmistakable influence of the troubadours, whose influence on worship of Mary was mainstream Catholicism by the 13th century. In *Edi*, Mary is praised in just the same way troubadours praised the object of their affection: for her complexion, for her fair beauty, for her noble virtue, and the love bond with her is affirmed as for a courtly lady and a knight. The final 3 verses are more overtly doctrinal, the personal gives way to the impersonal, and troubadour poetic conventions disappear. It is therefore highly likely that these final 3 verses are a later addition.

The first 5 verses are as follows, translated from Middle to modern English with an attempt to retain the metre:

Blessed are you, queen of heaven, people's comfort and angels' bliss,
Mother unblemished, maiden pure, such in this world none other is.
It is clear for all to see, of all women, you have the prize.
My sweetest lady, hear my prayer, have pity on me if your will it is.

You ascend as the ray of dawn which rises out of the darkest night.
From you springs new illumination, bathing the whole creation in light.
There is no maid of your complexion, fair and beautiful, fresh and bright.
Sweet lady, on me have compassion and have mercy on me, your knight.

Blossom sprung from a single root, the Holy Ghost made you heavenly queen.
That was for the good of all people, for our eternal souls to redeem.
Lady, mild, soft and sweet, I cry for mercy, I am your man,
Both hand and foot and all completely, serving you in all ways that I can.





You are earth's goodly seed, on you falls the heavenly dew.
From you springs the blessed fruit the Holy Ghost has sown in you.
You bring us out of care and dread that Eve so bitterly for us brewed.
You shall us into heaven lead, so well sweet is that heavenly dew.

Mother, full of noble virtue, maiden so patient, lady so wise.
I am in your love now bonded, and for you is all my desire.
Shield me from the fiend of hell, as you are noble, and may and will
Help me till my life is ended, reconcile me to your son, his will.

The last 3 verses that follow are impersonal and doctrinal, lacking the striking imagery and poetry of the previous verses, expressing such theological ideas as: You have a great lineage from David the powerful king ... Marvellously, the Lord arranged that you were a maid without husband ... Bring us to your abode and shield us from hell's wrath.



Medieval and renaissance art consistently links veneration of the Virgin with music. *The Assumption of The Virgin*, for example, painted between 1448 and 1452 by Italian artist, Sano di Pietro, has Mary accompanied by angels playing psaltery, vielle, lute and shawms.

The musical context: the gymel

The image displays four systems of musical notation for a two-part polyphony (gymel). Each system consists of two staves, one for the upper voice and one for the lower voice. The notation is in a medieval style, using square neumes on a four-line red staff. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 6/8. The melody is characterized by its use of thirds and sixths, with unison endings at the end of phrases.

The gymel melody of *Edi beo þu*, ending cadences with unisons but otherwise employing harmonising thirds almost exclusively.

Medieval music worked very differently to modern music's use of largely major and minor chords to create harmonies as a bed on which to place the melody. In the 13th century, at the time of *Edi*, a musical phrase started and ended with a perfectly consonant or stable interval, being a unison, an octave or a fifth. Within a phrase, intervals could be dissonant or unstable, seconds, fourths and sevenths, working their way back step-wise to perfect consonance again by the last note of a finishing cadence. Outside England and Scotland, thirds and sixths were considered an imperfect consonance, more stable than dissonance, but not stable enough for resolution: in England and Scotland only, thirds were stable and perfectly consonant.

The polyphony of *Edi* is not typical of medieval music, for one technical reason: this is a gymel, from the Latin, *cantus gemellus*, twin song, two part polyphony in which the usual fixtures of medieval music are largely laid aside in favour of accompanying almost entirely in thirds and sixths, often moving in parallel. This definition of gymel as marked by thirds and sixths is from the 15th century music theorist Guilielmus Monachus (about whom nothing is known, not even his nationality – English or Italian?), though the practice is evident in England from the beginning of the 13th century.



Edi beo þu heuene quene: a love song by any name

by Ian Pittaway



A statue of Richeldis de Faverches at Walsingham.

The historical context: Marian devotion in medieval England

Edi takes us to a time when England had its own site of Marian pilgrimage, established by Rychold or Richeldis de Faverches, a devout English noblewoman, in Walsingham. Her encounter with heavenly visions is told in *The Foundation of the Chapel of Walsingham*, a ballad of c. 1485 published by Richard Pynson, and therefore known as The Pynson Ballad.

The verses tell the story that, in 1061, Richeldis de Faverches, widow and Lady of the Manor, had 3 visions or dreams in which the Virgin Mary showed her the house in Nazareth where the annunciation took place. The exact dimensions of the house were dictated to Richeldis in her dreams, and she was instructed to build it in the village of Walsingham. Richeldis immediately set her builders and carpenters to work on the special task but, after the first day of work, they returned looking pessimistic. That night, unable to sleep, she heard singing coming from the barely started structure. She ran outside to look and was amazed to see angels departing and that the building had moved 200 feet or more. In the morning the builders agreed that the house had been completed properly, beyond their capabilities, and that it stood solid on its new foundations.

Richeldis' son, Geoffrey, became Lord of the Manor and Earl of the Marches. On Richeldis' death, Geoffrey took responsibility for Mary's holy house and it thrived as a centre of pilgrimage. Geoffrey left to go to the holy land to fight in a crusade, but pilgrims unable to make devotional journeys abroad could now go to their own holy land in Norfolk: Walsingham became known as 'Little Nazareth'.

In the middle of the 12th century, Augustinian Canons established The Augustinian Priory to the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary next to the Virgin Mary's house; and, by the 13th century, Walsingham's importance as a pilgrimage site was comparable in England to Rome, Jerusalem and Santiago de Compostela, travel to which was impossible for nearly all English Christians. With rapidly increasing numbers of pilgrims, the village grew to cater for them. By 1252, a charter had been granted to hold a weekly market and an annual fair. Such was its growth and importance that pilgrims travelled from all over Britain and Europe, including the monarchs of England. Before *Edi* was written down, Henry III had visited Walsingham in 1241; at about the time it was written, Edward I visited in 1280 and 1296. By the 14th century, pilgrims were visiting in such numbers that the priory was extended and the small wooden holy house had a stone chapel built around it to encase and protect it. After *Edi* was penned, the royal pilgrims were Edward II in 1315; Henry VI in 1455; Henry VII in 1487; and Henry VIII in 1513, before his conflict with the Catholic Church.

Climbing inside a song: the performance of medieval music

For any song to be performed well, a singer has to connect with it in some way, either with its broad theme or with some content in the lyric which resonates personally. In this sense, a singer is like an actor: a song, like the script of a drama, needs to be inhabited to give it meaning. Perhaps that is where my folk club audience came unstuck joining in with *Down In Yon Forest*: in these modern times many find religious expression logically problematic.

Logical analysis is important, of course, but if that is all we do I fear we are missing something. In the middle ages people could not 'turn off' their religious sentiment, as for them it was a worldview, a universe of meaning. The complete division between the secular and the sacred is a modern idea, only possible in a context where atheism is thinkable and religion is a matter of personal belief rather than the culturally enforced public policy of church, state and society. If we are to understand history, to get inside the heads and under the skin of the people of the past, we have first to understand their collective conceptual framework and its impact or influence upon an individual. For singers of early music who wish to climb inside a song and understand it from the inside, this will often include an understanding of loving "Lord Jesus above any thing" and the motivation for composing a love song for the "queen of heaven" who is "full of noble virtue".

This may be problematic. As a modern atheist, I can appreciate the charm of this song's melody and the beauty of its lyrics, but I am necessarily unable to fully appreciate the sentiments of religious devotion which inspired the anonymous writer to compose it; and, as a modern person living in a largely secular society, I cannot make the imaginative leap to mentally recapture a Europe in which being Catholic is normative. Perhaps this is similar to the line my folk club audience couldn't cross, wordlessly saying, 'In song, I can work on an imaginary ship, fight an imaginary battle, love an imaginary woman, but I just can't imagine loving Jesus'.

I can't imagine loving Jesus, either, at least not in the literal, devotional, religious sense, but I can imagine loving. Whatever else it is, *Edi beo thu* is a love song by any name. I am not a 13th century Catholic, and I am not medieval. My modern man's point of access to this song is the beauty of its language which could stand for praise of any true love, as indeed was its intent in its original troubadour context: "such in this world none other is ... of all women, you have the prize ... My sweetest lady ... There is no maid of your complexion, fair and beautiful, fresh and bright ... Lady, mild, soft and sweet ... full of noble virtue ... lady so wise ... I am in your love now bonded, and for you is all my desire."

A fuller version of this article, with accompanying performance video, can be found at <https://earlymusicmuse.com/edi-beo-thu-heuene-quene/>

Ian Pittaway © 2020

Early Music Muse: musings on medieval, renaissance and traditional music, <https://earlymusicmuse.com>, is a site written by Ian Pittaway, singer and player of medieval, renaissance and early baroque music on period instruments - harp, lute, bray harp, cittern, gittern, citole, etc. - and traditional/folk music on modern guitars in various tunings.



#FutureOfFolk: Lynn Noel of Digital Heritage Consulting Looks Ahead

Lynn runs **The Mermaid's Tavern Online Folk Club**, with ballad sings, chantey sings, houseconcerts, and special events. She also offers **DIY Digital coaching** for artists and venues pivoting online.

Lynn performs solo, duo, trio, and in ensembles from colonial and Celtic to music hall and mumming. She is a heritage interpreter, independent scholar, and career IT professional and consultant.

So, we thought, the ideal person to ask: *Where we go from here?*

We're very grateful for her timely response. - *Sam & Eleanor Simmons, Editors, Folklife West*

Q: Lynn, what has been your involvement in traditional music and song, prior to the pandemic?

I've been a singer all my life. The Mermaid's Tavern grew out of local sessions I founded 15 years ago, so its roots are deep in pre-pandemic folk. I'm best known as an a cappella and close harmony singer with a taste for multilingual song. I do write and compose in the tradition, and take delight in those of my songs that have escaped into the wild. I've released four albums, one available on [Bandcamp \[https://crosscurrentsmusic.bandcamp.com/releases\]](https://crosscurrentsmusic.bandcamp.com/releases), and have another one in progress. The Mermaid's Tavern began as a home recording studio. I'm surprised and delighted to see it take shape as a digital community space.

I did spend ten years or more on the road, and had many international musical adventures. I'm drawn to grassroots music, cultural heritage communities, and the people who make music happen wherever they are. These days, that's online, and there's more of them than ever.

Q: On the day Massachusetts declared an emergency, while many of us in the UK were wondering what this "Zoom" thing was, you launched The Mermaid's Tavern Online Folk Club. How was that possible?

On March 10, I was in the car with a load of sound gear when the Board of Health cancelled our band's St. Pat's gig. Matthew Byrne was in town from Newfoundland to play the Folk Song Society of Greater Boston the following night. None of the local hosts was willing to risk a large gathering. Driving sadly home, I got a call from FSSGB President Lynn Feingold asking if I could livestream Matthew from my new digital studio. Insanely, I said "Sure!" At 6:45pm, we didn't have sound in, but Matthew is unflappable, and we went live at 7:30 to an audience of over 300. A week later we hosted Alex Cumming live in the studio, but the following week we were in full lockdown. We hosted Debra Cowan over Zoom on April 2. By then it was clear that live-streaming folk music was A Thing.

On April 4 we hosted Elizabeth LaPrelle for a ballad workshop and session. That went so well that we decided to try a full-on ballad sing. By July, we were running two ballad sings a month plus a chantey sing, a tavern sing, and a Thursday concert series. Our song circles draw 35-40 singers from five time zones. We have gone four and a half hours to make sure everyone gets a chance to sing.

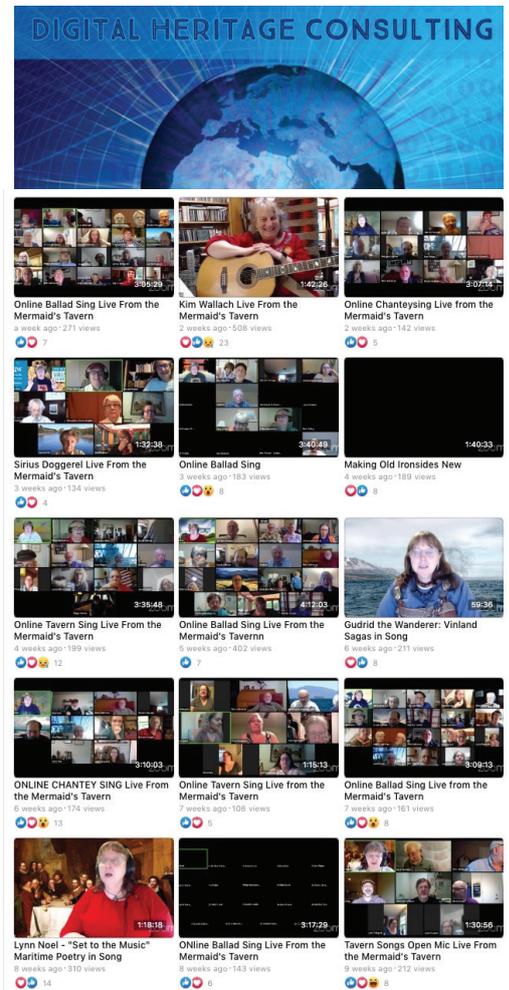
Here's the most important thing about session-leading during the pandemic. It's critical to get a whole community of singers over the first hurdle of computer, network, microphone, camera, and lighting setup. Everyone needs time to get comfortable with basic use of the app platform. When you're stuck on the tech, it's easy to think it's all about the tech. Once the group, as a whole, is communicating comfortably on a common platform, you can begin the real work. The promise of remote sessions is building participatory community that has real-world impact.

Q: During this pandemic, what resources are available on your website to help venues/clubs and paid performers?

- My website www.lynnnoel.com is an example digital business for one solopreneur.
- My blog* includes a **Mermaid's Tavern How-To series** highlighted on the Tavern home page.
- I've led one masterclass and one panel discussion on **The Future of Folk: Making the Pivot to Digital**. Both are available on video from the **DHC Facebook Videos** page*.
- The **Mermaid's Tavern** now has its own website, new in July.

There is an explosion of new resources coming out of lockdown creativity. I collaborate with keepers of the **Virtual Sessions calendar*** and the **CDSS Resource Portal***, especially the **Resources for Organizers: Engaging Participants from a Distance***

continues over page



* **RESOURCES** - Editor's note: if you have downloaded this as a PDF, but the PDF's links aren't responding, copy and paste these into your browser:

- Lynn's website: www.lynnnoel.com
- Lynn's blog: <https://crosscurrentsmusic.blogspot.com>
- DHC Facebook Videos page: www.facebook.com/pg/digitalheritageconsulting/videos/?ref=page_internal
- Mermaid's Tavern website: <https://sites.google.com/view/lynnnoel/music/mermaidstavern>
- Virtual Sessions calendar: www.bostonsongsessions.org/virtual-sessions
- CDSS Resource Portal: www.cdss.org/resources/resource-portal
- Resources for Organizers: Engaging Participants from a Distance: www.cdss.org/resources/resource-portal/covid-19-resources-for-organizers-freelancers#resources-for-organizers



Tunelines



Mwynen Meirionydd / The Pleasing Melody of Meirionydd Welsh Traditional Tune, Arr. Helen Adam

West Wales fiddler and composer **Helen Adam** is sending in **Welsh tunes** for *FW*, based on her latest project, www.tunelines.com

This is an **interactive site**, in which you click on a map, and it shows you the tune or tunes that is named after the place you've clicked on. And you can hear or download the tune as dots. Take a look! Helen will be featuring a different Welsh place each time, with the tune, and counter melody and harmony, and talking about it a little.

Meirionydd is a coastal and mountainous region in North Wales which has been at different times a Kingdom, a cantref, district, and now, as Meirionshire, an administrative county. The county town is Dolgellau.

This is indeed a 'pleasing melody' with a lot of lyrical charm. It is surprising that it is not more often played and deserves to be better known. It is featured in *Cambrian Minstrelsie* which is 'A National Collection of Welsh Songs'. Now out of print, the 6 volume *Cambrian Minstrelsie* was first published in 1893 and is dedicated 'by Gracious Permission to her Majesty Queen Victoria'. The collection was compiled and the music arranged by Joseph Parry. The words for the songs were collected and translated by David Rowlands, also known by his bardic name Dewi Mon. The volumes also include a few examples of their own work of which the words of this are an example as David Rowlands used this tune as a setting for self-penned lyrics. Titled 'Atgofion' or 'Memories' the song describes the nostalgic emotions of an adult looking back longingly to their childhood home.

In my arrangement of this tune I have kept it in the key chosen by Parry of C minor which fits the range of a fiddle or voice very well. I have used some of his chosen chords but have diverged on occasion and the second part is quite a pleasant melody itself when played with a chordal accompaniment.

There seem to be an above average number of beautiful and toponymic tunes that come from Meirionydd which is perhaps indicative of it being an area of thriving culture and also perhaps of it being a region with a strong sense of its own identity.

Helen Adam © July 2020

helenadamfiddle@gmail.com

Helen Adam is a freelance fiddle/violin player, singer, performer and composer living in beautiful West Wales. A prolific composer and songwriter, whose current project is a collection of duets to introduce more of the lesser known Welsh dance tunes to a wider audience. Also performing with George Whitfield as the **Fiddlebox** duo (George, accordion and vocals, and Helen, violin and vocals), a unique sound blending our varying influences and styles, including Klezmer, Rock, Classical, Celtic folk, Welsh dance music and song, Blues, Bluegrass, www.fiddlebox.net



✦ See also *WALES NEWS PAGES* this issue, and our *ONLINE WALES DIRECTORY*, www.folklife/Cymru

continued from previous page



#FutureOfFolk: Lynn Noel of Digital Heritage Consulting Looks Ahead

Q: What's the digital future, for performers and venues, when we can safely sing together again as a community? Will we need to continue digitally?

We are singing together today more than ever before. Mermaid's Tavern audiences adore mingling with fellow ballad geeks from Seattle, San Francisco, Chicago, Boston, New York, Newfoundland, Devon, Cornwall, Dublin, Edinburgh, and Brittany in the same session. **Once you've tasted that richness, you come back for more.**

Smaller clubs and artists face the same challenges in growing and keeping an audience that we've always faced.

One age-old question is "how welcoming are you to new members?"

We are seeing more online venues, and artists mounting their own digital studios and productions.

Performers and audiences can come together at lower travel cost and carbon footprint in virtual venues. I did my first virtual festival in June. There's enormous opportunity for increasing the range and diversity of programming and the reach of indie artists without a tour.

Nothing can or will replace live music as participatory community. This brief pause in life-as-usual has given us the chance to reaffirm the essential importance of making music together live. Harmony is not a metaphor. It is a tangible and essential element of peace in a just world where everyone's voice is heard. We will sing together again. We will value our time together, in place and in person, more than ever before.

It's that quality of connection and that love of the music that binds us around the world. When singers meet, even for the first time, we will hug for certain. Between hugs, we stay connected in digital community. We even have a hashtag for it: #futureoffolk.

Lynn Noel © 2020

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Online Ballad Sing Live From the Mermaid's Tavern



Kim Wallach Live From the Mermaid's Tavern



Online Chanteysing Live from the Mermaid's Tavern



Mwynen Meirionydd / The Pleasing Melody of Meirionydd, Welsh Trad., Arr. Helen Adam; Second part, Helen Adam

Violin 1

Violin 2

8

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

15

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

22

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

28

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Chord progression: Cm, G, Cm, G, Cm, G, E^b, Cm, G, Fm, G, Cm, E^b, Fm, G, Cm, G, Cm, G, Cm, G, A^b, G, Cm.



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the music; they are indeed
gorgeous arrangements"
- Rob Bradshaw,
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Clwb Alawon Llanilltud Fawr

**"Early, early in the Spring", sung by Norman Perks by Gwilym Davies**

(Sung very freely)

1. 'Twas ear-ly, ear-ly in the spring, I went on board for to serve my King. And
leav-ing the love one, that I left be - - hind_ She now would re-quire_ of her sail-or boy.

1. 'Twas early, early in the spring
I went on board for to serve my King
And leaving the love one, that I left behind
She now would require of her sailor boy.
2. I built my nest on a (little ?) wee boat
And on the windy ocean I learnt to float
And every big steamer, that came passing by
She now would require of her sailor boy.
3. She went straight out and she went on board
Crying "Captain, captain is my Willie here?"
(next line sung to same tune as first)
"What colour is your Willie's clothes?"
"His trousers white, and his jacket blue
His curly locks fill my heart with you (?)"
4. "Oh no, my darling he is not here.
He's dead and drowned I do declare
For in yonder sea, where the wind blows high
That's where I left your young sailor boy."
5. She went straight home and she went upstairs
And not a word to her mother said
Her mother followed her behind
And asked what was the matter with her daughter Pride.
6. "Oh fetch me a chair and a pen and ink
A pen and ink and I'll write it down
And every line I'll shed a tear
And every verse farewell, Willie my dear
7. Her father came home and he went in search
He went in search for his daughter Pride
He went upstairs and behind the door
He saw his daughter hanging by a cord.
8. He got his knife and he cut her down
And in her pocket this note he found
(Tune as per verse 1)
"Dear father, dear father dig me a grave
And line it out with lilies brave
And for my tombstone, place a turtle dove
To show the world wide I died for love"

**Notes from Gwilym Davies.**

This is "Early, early in the Spring", sung by **Norman Perks** in Hawkesbury Upton and recorded in the 1970s by Mike Yates.

The song is well enough known in many versions, usually with the line "My father made/bought me a little boat".

This is the only song recorded from Mr Perks, who sings it with great conviction and style, and it is a pity that we do not have any other recordings of him. Hear this song here: <http://glostrad.com/early-early-in-the-spring-2/?post=19038&action=edit>

Gwilym Davies © 2020

Gwilym is a collector, singer, dancer, and musician, and helped set up GlosTrad, <http://glostrad.com>

Source: Sung by Norman Perks, Hawkesbury Upton.

Recorded by Mike Yates 1977

© Gloucestershire Traditions



KAKING NEET ⇒ 1 Nov or near



PEARLY KINGS & QUEENS - HARVEST FESTIVAL 2012
© Carole Jolly (Pearly Queen of Crystal Palace), & Secretary of the LPKQ Society [‡]



TAR BARREL ROLLING ⇒ 5 Nov



WROTH SILVER CEREMONY ⇒ 11 Nov



FIRING THE FENNY POPPERS ⇒ 11 Nov



MARI LWYD ⇒ Before Xmas to New Year

LIST 9: SEASONAL LOCAL CELEBRATIONS, A LIST BY DOC ROWE

Listings © Doc Rowe except any in italics. Photos © Doc Rowe unless otherwise credited.

SEPTEMBER

St Giles Fair	Oxford	Oxford	Mon+Tue of 1st full week in Sept
Abbots Bromley Horn Dance	Abbots Bromley	Staffs	Mon after 1st Sun after 4th Sept
Sheriff's Ride	Lichfield	Staffs	Saturday nr 8th Sept.
Widcombe Fair	Widcombe	Devon	2nd Tuesday in September
Church Clipping	Painswick	Glos	Sunday nearest 19th Sept
Bluecoat March	City of London	London	21st September or near
<i>Pearly Kings & Queens Society Costermongers Harvest Festival Parade Service</i>	<i>London</i>	<i>London</i>	<i>Last Sun in Sept</i>

OCTOBER

Nottingham Goose Fair	Nottingham	Notts	Last 3 days of 1st week in Oct
Billingsgate Harvest Festival	Billingsgate	London	1st Sunday in October
Pearlies Harvest Festival [§]	St Martins in the Field	London	1st Sunday in October
Bellringers' Feast	Twyford (nr Winchester)	Hants	7th October
Pearlies Harvest Festival [‡]	St Paul's Church, Covent Garden	London	2nd Sun in Oct [LPKG]
[§] <i>Original Pearly Kings & Queens Association</i>	[‡] <i>LPKQ London Pearly Kings & Queens Society</i>		
Goozey Vair	Tavistock	Devon	2nd Wednesday in Oct
Court Leet	Clifton, York	N. York	October
Bampton Pony Fair	Bampton	Exmoor	Last Thursday in October
Punkie Night	Hinton St George	Somerset	Last Thursday in October
Quit Rents Ceremony	Royal Courts of Justice	London	Late October
Antrobus Soulcakers	Antrobus	Cheshire	31st October and on
Trick Or Treat	various	UK	31st October

LISTINGS UNDERLINED = see photos

NOVEMBER

** date changes as advised by @ Sidmouth Info. Centre, www.visitsidmouth.co.uk

<u>Kaking Neet</u>	South and West of Sheffield		1st November or near
Guy Fawkes	various	UK	Up to & inc. 5th Nov
Lewes Bonfire	Lewes	Sussex	5th November
Hatherleigh Fire Carnival **	Hatherleigh	Devon	2nd Saturday of November **
Bridgwater Carnival **	Bridgwater	Somerset	1st Saturday in November **
<u>Tar Barrel Rolling</u>	Ottery St Mary	Devon	5th Nov [left; background; p.1]
<u>Wroth Silver Ceremony</u>	Knighthlow Cross	Warks	11th November
<u>Firing The Fenny Poppers</u>	Fenny Stratford	Bucks	11th November
Armistice Day	various	UK	11th November
Yorkshire Carols	various	Yorks	From 11th November
The Lords Mayor's Show	City of London	London	2nd Saturday in November
Laxton Jury Day	Laxton	Notts	Late November
Wall Game	Eton	Berks	Late November
Court Leet	Fylingthorpe	N. Yorks	December

DECEMBER including CHRISTMAS, BOXING DAY, NEW YEAR'S EVE

Tin Can Band	Broughton	Northants	Sunday after 12th Dec
<i>Plygain singing</i>	<i>Montgomeryshire & nearby; now also elsewhere</i>		<i>Mostly pre-Christmas [Eds]</i>
Tup Plays	Sheffield and Chesterfield area		Christmas
Burning Ashen Faggot	Dunster	Somerset	Christmas Eve
Tolling The Devils Knell	Dewsbury	W Yorks	Christmas Eve
Mummers	Bampton	Oxon	Christmas Eve
Feather Guisers	Uttoxeter	Staffs	Christmas Eve and Day
Crookham Mummers	Crookham	Hants	Boxing Day
Flamborough Sword Dance	Flamborough	Yorkshire	Boxing Day
Greatham Sword Dance Play	Greatham	Co. Durham	Boxing Day
Straw Boys/ Mummers	Fermanagh	Ireland	Christmas
<u>Barrel Rolling competition</u>	<u>Denbigh</u>	<u>Denbs</u>	<u>Boxing Day [Eds]</u>
Wren Boys	Dingle	Ireland	Boxing Day
Mummer's Day	Padstow	Cornwall	Boxing Day & New Year's Day
Handsworth Sword Dancers	Handsworth	S. Yorkshire	Boxing Day
Grenoside Sword Dancers	Grenoside	S. Yorkshire	Boxing Day
Monkseaton Dancers	Monkseaton	Tyne-Tees	Boxing Day
Marshfield Mummers	Marshfield	Glos	Boxing Day
Ripon Sword Dancers	Ripon	N. Yorks	Boxing Day
Annual Dip	Whitby	N. Yorks	Boxing Day
<i>Tewkesbury Medieval Play {Mummers}</i>	<i>Tewkesbury</i>	<i>Glos</i>	<i>Boxing Day [Simon Hopkins]</i>
Symondsbury Mummers	Symondsbury	Dorset	Christmas
Fylingthorpe Guisers	Fylingthorpe	N. Yorks	Christmas
Flambeaux Procession	Comrie	Tayside	New Year's Eve
Swinging The Fireballs	Stonehaven	Grampian	New Year's Eve
<i>Mari Lwyd</i>	<i>different places - different days</i>	<i>S.E. Wales</i>	<i>Before Christmas to New Year's Day</i>

The Doc Rowe Collection Support Group has been set up to support the Archive of Doc's unique collection. See: www.docrowe.org.uk