

Entertainment

Spirit of the West & Irish Descendents Make Music Close to Home



K. Rainville Photos

By Mark Bray

The big steam engine rolled in last Thursday carrying a cargo of talent, the Spirit of the West and the Irish Descendants. There was a great crowd to meet them, everyone had a good time. These two bands definitely fit in at U.N.B., they have a Canadian uniqueness and the Irish Descendants even hit closer to home coming from Newfoundland. The SOTW is a national treasure, proud Canadians that so eloquently speak of Canada and Canadian views on many issues. It's great to have a band with such nationalistic lyrics and which also possesses such a unique style, incorporating a traditional Celtic influence with folk, punk, jazz and rock. It is almost like this band was born to tie this country together with songs about the nation, what it means to be Canadian and how Canadians look at things and, at the same time, incorporate musical influences from our ancestors which especially touches home here in Atlantic Canada for example, listen to

"It's not just a train" and "Bone of Contention".

I'm not saying that John Mann is a Canadian Peter Garret figure but his interest in people, in environment and politics, both in Canada and in the international world is evident in the lyrics and in his commentaries on the stage.

This band is internationally recognized for its talent. The SOTW has toured Canada, the U.K. Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and Holland. They've released six albums from 1984 through 1993, their latest is entitled "Faithlift".

The SOTW put a lot of energy and feeling into their music and show signs of actually enjoying what they are doing, unlike a lot of bands that show anger and hatred as part of their act. The band has a unique sound as a result of so many musical influences, a direct Scottish influence from Geoffrey Kelly and by delving in the use of choice instruments like the

mandolin, Chapman stick, accordion, flute and Bodharan. They played many songs upon request from the crowd. There was a lot of energy but nothing like some of the old shows that I'd previously seen. The crowd was quite subdued due to the absence of alcohol and the encouragement from security and the band to be tame. There were only three incidences where the crowd was out of line: calling for the SOTW while the Irish Descendants were still on stage, interrupting John Mann's attempt to speak and slugging Vince for his operetta — lighten up conservatives.

The Irish Descendants warmed up for the SOTW but, in some minds, they were the main act. They are talented musicians with an obvious love for both traditional and contemporary



Irish music. It seemed that all of the students from Newfoundland were up front for this act. Everyone around me were singing along with the band, bouncing, weaving and smiling to Donovan, Pogues and more traditional songs which I enjoyed but couldn't sing along to due to my central-mainlander ignorance.

It is really too bad that the Spirit of the West had to slag the Brunswickan. There was no real reason to slag especially after I read last year's review of the concert in the November 12th

issue. They chose to publicly attack and demean the Brunswickan not only in front of a crowd and in an attempt to rial the crowd at a low point, but, from misconstrued interpretation of comments - not professional. It seems that the comments were taken as a personal attack, whereas the criticism was directed at the Student Union's apparent blindness to look broader than a Top 40 listing in the selection procedure of bands for concert bookings. What we need is a broader scope and some open-mindedness.

A World of Attractions

by Gerard Castillo

Singapore is not just one island, but is a composition of a main island, about 640 square kilometres of land, with over fifty surrounding islets. Singapore, or "Lion City", has grown into a thriving centre of commerce and industry in just 150 years. Located at one of the trade crossroads of the world, Singapore's strategic position has helped it to grow into a major centre for trade, communications and tourism. Over six mil-

lion visitors a year come to Singapore, making it one of the few countries in the world to receive more visitors annually than its resident population. The variety of attractions in Singapore range from legacies of the island's colonial past and multicultural heritage, to modern and sophisticated shopping and entertainment facilities. Beautiful Southern islands, sun-baked beaches, zoological gardens, Jurong Bird Park and numerous theme parks and gardens, proudly gives Singapore its garden city image.

Although geography has played a part in the success of Singapore,

it's mainstay are the people. Lacking natural resources, Singapore's strength is its hardworking, adaptable and resilient population. The population of 2.8 million is comprised of 78% Chinese, 14% Malays, 7% Indians and 1% Eurasian or other descent. Each racial group is a part of the Singapore community, yet, maintains its own unique cultural identity. The language is just as diversified, with four major languages of Malay, Mandarin, Tamil and English. English is the language of business and administration in Singapore, and most Singaporeans are bilingual, speaking their mother tongue and Eng-

lish.

This mixture of people, gives Singapore an equally rich mixture of religions. The country boasts the distinctive minarets of mosques, spires of gothic cathedrals, Hindu temples with their intricate figures of the gods, and the pagoda structures of the Buddhist and Chinese religions. Islamic, Buddhish, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism, Judaism and Zoroastrianism are the main religions that can be found in Singapore.

Singapore's climate is warm and humid, with only slight variations between the average maxi-

mum temperature of 31 degrees Celsius, and minimum of 23 degrees Celsius. This is ideal for those who enjoy sunbathing, swimming, sailing, and a host of other water sports. For those who would like to sample the diversity of this exotic island country, The Singapore Students Association are holding Singapore Nite '94 on October 2 at 8:00 p.m. Tickets can be purchased at the booth in the S.C.B. lobby, or at the door.