

Collective strives to keep spontaneity

The mammoth, bearded figure of Peter Allen squats behind the microphone and hurls his ragtime voice out to the people grouped around the candles which stand on plywood and steel tube tables.

It's a form of entertainment at the University of New Brunswick which differs from the kind many students know presently. The entertainer isn't providing music to drink or talk by, he or she is the centre of attention.

Peter Allen's songs featured at last week's Coffee House in the STUD's Oak room ranged from ragtime to blues to humorous ditties about how the camel got his hump (and the Sphinx its mysterious smile) and there were others ranging from a Columbian guitarist to a woman folk singer. It's one of the every-second-Friday events put on by the College Hill Folk Collective and represents entertainment which is gaining popularity.

Those who are the most involved in the collective are reluctant to describe it in brief terms. They want to emphasize its spontaneity and lack of structure — a characteristic which they have come to value even more of late.

One of the group's organizers, Paul Meyer, said the collective comprises people — not necessarily students — sharing an interest in folk entertainment. This means not only music but also drama, theatre and poetry. Another organizer, Mark Lulham, added



Photo by Anne Marceau

cross country skiing and tubing to the list saying the "folk" in the group's name refers not only to the art but also to the people who make up the group.

Attendance at the coffee houses ranges from 100 to 200 and its organizers want to see more get involved, either as listeners or

performers. They see the houses creating benefits for both by giving potential artists an audience to which to play and to gain their confidence and providing people with "down-to-earth" music such as blues, jazz, bluegrass and folk.

The collective has received a

budget from the Student Representative Council and is submitting a constitution in order to become recognized as student organization. The organizers are uneasy with the move, however, for two reasons. The council, in an attempt to exercise financial control over the groups it sponsors, demands certain constitutional requirements and the right to watch over the money it grants the group. The collective, however, values the unstructured quality of the group, the spontaneous way in which it evolved and continues and is conscious that conventional ways of running a campus organization could detract from the group.

As it is, decisions on the collective's activities — which it hopes will be ranging well beyond just the music and poetry featured in coffee houses — have come about often as accidents or ideas which were quickly accepted with others in the group. The SRC requires that the collective classify itself according to "purpose", identify its officer and each's respective duties and outline how these officers are chosen.

The group was organized in the early spring of last year by Lulham and Meyer and was inspired largely by their exposure to a coffee house in Saratoga Springs in New York state. The first coffee houses emerged as groups of interested people watched musicians practise and this impromptu

form has continued. Meyer said the group functioned at first without SRC support and worked "remarkably well". This has prompted much discussion on whether the collective should involve itself with the SRC and subject itself to council's regulations.

The collective won't sponsor any alcoholic events but organizers are quick to add that they have nothing against alcohol and that the coffee houses did not begin as alternatives to pubs. They say the membership prefers to "participate by being themselves, with a full unaltered state of mind."

The emphasis on spontaneity has created some doubts on the part of the collective's organizers about the proposed coffee house — or SubTerrain — in the Student Union Building. They criticize the "colossal waste" of spending between \$10-20,000 on a room filled with several pillars which tend to obstruct the audience's view and suggest that the coffee house should be built as part of the proposed SUB expansion. The organizers would prefer, in fact, to see a coffee house rented by the SRC off the campus. This, they say, would ensure the collective doesn't become identified solely as a student group and leaves it open to artists from throughout Fredericton which they are anxious to attract. It also sets up the conditions for another goal, that of running the collective's activities through the summer break.

Another goal considered by the collective are exchanges of artists between collectives within the region. But their foremost goal is to make themselves known to students and others in Fredericton.

"We feel we have a good thing going," says co-ordinator Denise Pearce, "and we'd like to share it with others. I think there may be a number of people out there who don't know about us but would like to get involved."

Their next coffee house is tentatively scheduled for a week from today and the time and location can be ascertained by looking for the collective's posters which will be posted around the campus or by contacting Pearce at 455-2366.

Exhibits slated for former city library

The former York Regional Library building, located at the corner of Queen and Carleton Streets and inactive since gutted by fire five years ago, will welcome the general public again as of December first, this time as a "national exhibition centre". As such it will be one of 31 centres from Whitehorse to Conception Bay set aside under Canada's National Museum policy as display locations from travelling art, history, and science exhibits — in

an attempt to bring the country's cultural treasures out of storage and into the view of as many people as possible. And now that the John Thurston Clark Memorial Building's interior renovations are nearing completion at last, the first of many exhibits is about to make its debut.

"Images of Lunenburg County", the centre's premiere exhibition, brings to life the pulse-like pounding of tide against shoreline, the lonely wail of the wind,

the raucous cries of the gulls — are the sounds real, or are they part of the magic of the scene which greets the eye? Turn, and you're drawn in towards more subtle perceptions: the squeak of a rocking chair, the crackle of

kindling in a wood stove, the creak of time-worn wooden stairs, the lowing of cattle, the soft breath of pipe smoke, the silence of a seaside graveyard. Lunenburg's past reaches back to the arrival in 1753 of some 1400 German, Swiss, and French settlers, who saw the community grow from crude beginnings as a farming and lumbering society to a highly successful seaport and ship-building centre. This is the portrait, sensitively captured on film, of a way of life that will soon vanish forever. Something to be experienced before it fades away into the past.

This first exhibition is brought to us under the sponsorship of the Mount Saint Vincent University Art Gallery and the Nova Scotia Museum. It is comprised of 60 black and white photographs, remarkable both for their artistry and their documentary value, and twenty-two accompanying text panels. These will be on display, free of charge, from December 1st

to December 23rd (Mondays - Wednesdays 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.; Thursdays and Fridays 1:00 - 9:00 p.m.; and Saturdays 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.). In addition, the staff of the York Regional Library will be

conducting a story hour at the National Exhibition Centre (for the 5- to 12-year-old set) three Wednesdays (December 1, 8, and 22) from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. A video-tape component of the exhibit will be featured from December 11th to 22nd, and two National Film Board films will be screened on Thursday and Friday evenings (December 9, 10, 16, and 17) at 8:00 p.m.

So when the festive hustle and bustle makes you want to escape for a little while, come get away from it all — without ever leaving Queen Street.

Pat Garret features more than enough violence

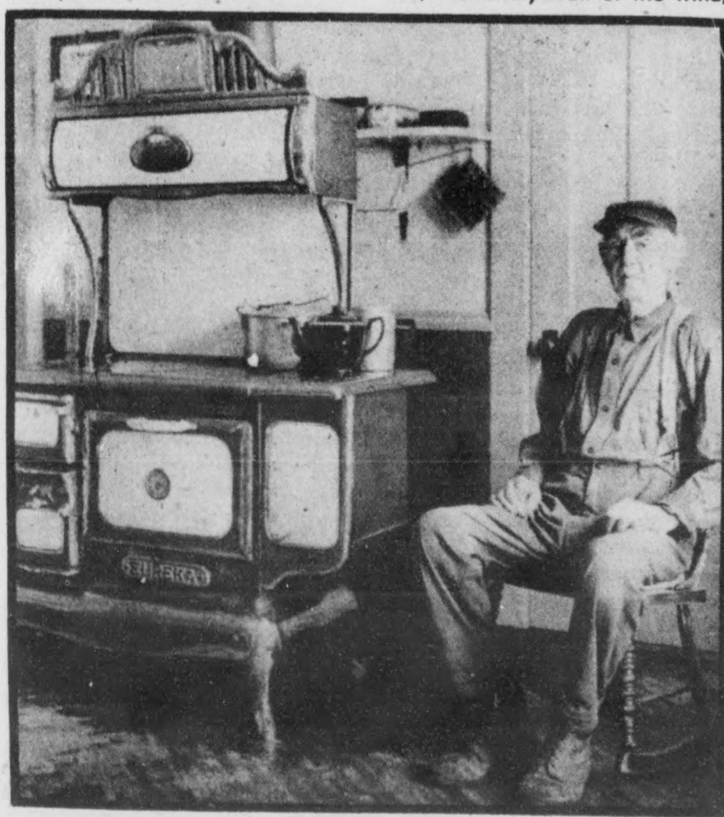
Pat Garret and Billy The Kid

with James Coburn as Pat Garret Kris Kristofferson as Billy The Kid directed by Sam Peckinpah music by Bob Dylan

This is a story of how Pat Garret tracks down and shoots his infamous friend Billy the Kid. Pat Garret feeling threatened by age, decides to give up his outlaw habits for the security of a lawman's job. On the other hand, Billy the Kid prefers their wild ways and continues to hang around with his old friends. (One who is played by the enigmatic legend, Bob Dylan). The ranchers and politicians who hired Pat Garret, decide that they want Billy the Kid out of the way so the

sheriff is forced to do his job. Ironically, Pat Garret was killed twenty years later by the same people who hired him to gun down Billy.

Like other Peckinpah pictures (i.e. Straw Dogs), this one has more than its share of violence. The film editors (all six of them) seemed intent on maintaining a high violence per reel ratio, often at the expense of meaningful dialogue. For example, Billy the Kid's girl friend (played by Kristofferson's real life wife, Rita Coolidge) was never identified but merely dragged in and out of bed. Regardless of your perspective, this is a rich, exciting film, enhanced by the music of the incomparable Bob Dylan.



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