

CLUB 47: AN HISTORICAL ETHNOGRAPHY OF A  
FOLK-REVIVAL VENUE IN NORTH AMERICA,  
1958-1968

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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CLUB 47: AN HISTORICAL ETHNOGRAPHY  
OF A FOLK-REVIVAL VENUE IN NORTH AMERICA, 1958-1968

BY

© MILDRED L. RAHN, B.A.

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in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts

Department of Folklore  
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1993

St. John's

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis presents an historical ethnography of Club 47, a significant cultural icon of the folk music revival in the United States in the late 1950s and 1960s. Club 47 existed in Cambridge, Massachusetts, from 1958 to 1968 and was the best-known coffeehouse in New England.

Club 47 was instrumental in helping to create a community and a market for commercial folk music by serving as both the principal breeding ground for new talent in the area, and as the showcase for the best performers and the many genres that the folksong revival had to offer.

While it was the music aspect of the club that was best known, performers and audiences came together at the 47 as much for its social organization as for its music. A critical factor that distinguished Club 47 from other revival venues was its membership policy, instituted upon its incorporation as a nonprofit educational organization, which led to its communal ownership and governance. Throughout its evolution, Club 47 both influenced and reflected musical and social developments locally, regionally, and nationally, including the revival's eventual integration into mainstream musical forms and the 1960s counterculture.

As a contribution to the field of folkloristics, this thesis considers the music culture of one group of people over a 10-year period and approaches Club 47 from its grassroots as a fieldwork-based history. I seek to contextualize and synthesize the experiences and observations of the scene's diverse participants within the scholarly purviews of folksong and folk custom, as well as within folksong-revival and New England sociocultural history.

My findings suggest that the revival helped to usher in a new American cultural period and, through appeals to tradition, functioned as social sanction for breaking old

patterns and creating newer ones. As part of a cultural transformation, Club 47 participants, like their folksong revival counterparts in other scenes, were creators and innovators of new musical texts. These texts, when approved as art forms, alluded to continuity with the past and utilized the materials of the present to preserve and transmit their creations into ever-widening circles.

...The artist must employ the symbols in use in his day and nation, to convey his enlarged sense to his fellow-men.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Art"--1841

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Two other members of the Club 47 community who were also principal sources gave me items related to the club, which I treasure as artifacts from this project. From the beginning of my research, Jim Rooney and Eric von Schmidt's 1979 book, Baby Let Me Follow You Down: The Illustrated Story of the Cambridge Folk Years, has been invaluable—and out of print. In summer 1991, Jim Rooney sent me an inscribed copy, along with words of encouragement. He still checks in periodically from Nashville. After giving my first paper on Club 47 in Oakland, Earl Crabb presented me with a copy of his and Rick Shubb's "Humbead's Revised Map of the World" (1969 edition), which now hangs in my dining room in Massachusetts. During fieldwork in Berkeley, he gave me an even rarer copy of the original 1967 edition, which includes Club 47. I treasure both.

This demonstration of the spirit and generosity emanating from the Club 47 community was extraordinary and I have tried to convey it in my work and hope that I have done it justice. Indeed, for various reasons and at various times, all of us have gathered by the river in Cambridge over the course of 35 years.

Saving the best 'til last, this thesis is dedicated in loving tribute to my husband, William Alan Terence Stokinger, an improper Bostonian involved in his own excavations of the Bay State's past; and to Miranda and Georgina, my faithful little research assistants. Each of them understood my quest and believed in me enough to keep the home fires burning while I was on the Rock or doing fieldwork on the road. To them all I owe the greatest thanks from beyond the bottom of my heart.

St. John's, Newfoundland

## CONTENTS

	page
ABSTRACT	ii
EMERSON QUOTE	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
LIST OF FIGURES	xiii
PROLOGUE: LET US GATHER BY THE RIVER	1
Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION	13
1.1 Theoretical Background	16
1.2 Fieldwork	18
1.3 Memory and Accuracy	23
1.4 Terminology: A Word About Words	24
Chapter 2 CAMBRIDGE, HARVARD, TRADITION AND REVIVALS: CLUB 47 IN ITS FOLKLORISTIC AND SOCIOHISTORICAL CONTEXTS	31
2.1 Tradition	32
2.2 Revivals	35
2.3 Cambridge, Harvard, and Folkloristics	38
2.4 Looking Backward	46
Chapter 3 HISTORY OF CLUB 47 AND ITS PLACE IN THE FOLKSONG REVIVAL	62
3.1 Boom-time for the Folksong Revival	62
3.2 History of Club 47	74
3.2.1 Organizational Structure	76
3.2.2 47 Mount Auburn Street	81
3.2.3 Move to 47 Palmer Street	87
Chapter 4 CLUB 47 AND COMMUNITY: SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND SOCIAL HISTORY	100
4.1 Setting the Scene	100
4.2 Component Parts of Social Organization	110
4.2.1 Drugs	111
4.2.2 Separate Spheres	113
4.2.3 Sense of Place and Sense of Self	118
4.2.4 The Cambridge/Berkeley Axis	125
4.2.5 Politics	129

4.3 The Community Diffuses	131
Chapter 5 MUSIC AT THE CLUB 47	140
5.1 Introduction	140
5.2 Musical Influences: Radio, Records, Fellow Enthusiasts	143
5.3 House Performers	149
5.4 Bookings and Trends at Club 47	177
5.5 The Beginning of the End	187
Chapter 6 BEYOND THE WALLS OF CLUB 47	197
6.1 The Newport Folk Festivals	197
6.2 The Newport Folk Foundation Concerts	204
6.3 Club 47-Organized concerts	205
6.4 Philanthropic Concerts	207
Chapter 7 CONCLUSIONS: SURVIVAL THROUGH REVIVAL	213
7.1 Rites of Passage: Club 47's Three Phases	215
7.2 Club 47 as Cultural Symbol	217
7.2 Club 47's Folksong Legacy	221
7.4 Club 47's Role in the Revival	224
7.5 The Last Word	226
Chapter 8 EPILOGUE: CAN THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN	230
8.1 Links in the Chain	232
8.2 Tom Rush: "Passing the torch"	233
8.3 Betsy Siggins Schmidt: "If you have no power, you can't make any noise"	239
8.4 Bringing It All Back Home	243
BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES	250
APPENDICES	
Appendix I: Fieldwork Informants	281
Appendix II: Fieldwork Questionnaires	288
Appendix III: Partial List of Performers at Club 47, 1958-1968	290

## FIGURES

Figure i. Advertisement for Club 47, July 1966.

Figure 3.1. Club 47 calendar for September 1962, also showing the exterior of the club.

Figure 4.1. "Humbead's Revised Map of the World."

Figure 5.1. Club 47 calendar for July 1963

Figure 5.2. Club 47 calendar for February 1966

**NEWPORT??**  
**NO - THE CLUB 471**

Blues, Bluegrass, Ballads, Country Music, City Music, Known, Unknown.

The following performers have contributed  
to another musically exciting year in Cambridge.

Sam Hesso	Charles O'Negarty	John Sadpath
Bukka White	The Times Square Two	Tony & Irma Salerni
Joan Peffer	Eric Andersen	Say Carawan
Minkalgi John Hunt	David Blue	Margaret Barry &
Lightnin' Hopkins	Witch Branch III	Michael Carmon
Skip James	Jeff Quenneville	Daniel Mac Sorley
Ray Dary Davis	Mark Spanierne	Carol Longstaff
Dorale Jones	Earl Cohn	John Wilson
The Silverleaf Singers	John Fahey	Herman Kazanoff
The Staple Singers	Anne Tannoy	The Moore Family
Willie Dixon &	Kel Lyman	St. dy & Jessie Barler Jan
Soneyland Slim	Paul Ansdell	Clarence Ashley & Tex Wiley
The Muddy Waters	Manny Michaels	Doc Watson, Clint Howard &
Blues Band	Bill Statton	Fred Price
John Lee Hooker	Car-lyn Hester	Mike Seeger
The Howlin' Wolf	John Strahaney	Neal Dickson & Alice Foster
Blues Band	Arla Guthrie	The Lilly Brothers,
The Paul Butterfield	Paul Phillips	Doc Hester & Tom Logan
Blues Band	Leslie	The Greenbrier Boys
The Chambers Brothers	Mike Conroy	The New Lost City Ramblers
John Hammond	Mimi & Richard Ferina	Jim & Jesse B.
Judy Sawdick	Jim Kweskin	The Virginia Boys
Eric Van Schmidt	The Jug Band	The Osborne Brothers
Spider John Koerner	The Lovin' Spoonful	The Charles River
Tommy Gleeson	The Flugs Project	Yuliy Soy
Geoff & St. /a Kludaur	The N.Y. Public Library	Maybelle Carter
Glasgow & Urvain	The Stringers	Red Allen & The Kentuckians
Lisa Kindred	The Last	Les Daniels &
Judy Collins	The Mafincination	The Double Standard
Tom Rush	The Trails	String Band
Jackie Washington	Jesse Colin Young &	Keith & Roney
Happy & Arthur Traum	The Youngbloods	Bill Monroe &
Jim & Jean	Dodley Loufman &	The Bluegrass Boys
Patrick Sky	The Canterbury	
	Country Co. - tra	

And more to come

JULY 25,26 JOSEPH SPENCE  
JULY 27,28,29 RAMBLIN' JACK ELLIOTT  
JULY 30 ERIC VON SCHMIDT  
AUGUST 1-6 JIM KWESKIN & THE JUG BAND  
AUGUST 7,8 TOM RUSH  
AUGUST 9-12 THE TIMES SQUARE TWO  
AUGUST 13 LES DANIELS & THE DOUBLE STANDARD STRING BAND  
AUGUST 15-17 THE DIRTY SHAMES  
AUGUST 18 20 ERIC ANDERSEN  
AUGUST 22 27 MUDDY WATERS BLUES BAND  
AUGUST 29-SEPT.3 MOSE ALLISON TRIO

**47 Palmer St., Cambridge**

Figure i. Club 47 advertisement for July 1966 to coincide with the Newport Folk Festival. Uncopyrighted.

## PROLOGUE: LET US GATHER BY THE RIVER

English novelist L. P. Hartley wrote that "the past is a foreign country: they do things differently there." [1] In the New World, Massachusetts writer Edward Bellamy united the New England predilection for "looking backward" with Puritan perfectability to envision a late-twentieth century utopia. [2] Looking backward from the present into a recent or distant past in which we ourselves did not participate is part of the job description for a folklorist undertaking historical ethnographic research, particularly in Cambridge.

Conventional wisdom tells aspiring writers to write about what they know, to study their own backyard. This advice can apply to scholarship, as well. Much research is generated by an impulse to know oneself better. Like social historians we folklorists are concerned with piecing together the lives of ordinary people and their world into a coherent narrative much closer to our own collective experiences than often-abstract political history with its names and dates of famous people and events. [3] To that end, increasingly we have studied our own culture and even ourselves.

Richard Reuss wrote about the ultimate example of reflexivity: folklorists studying folklorists. More recently, Elaine Lawless has been looking at the on-going exchange between ethnographers and subjects, taking "reflexive ethnography" into a new realm that she calls "reciprocal ethnography." [4] In reciprocal ethnography, she says, the role of the ethnographer

...is about acknowledging who we are as we do ethnography, and where we are as we write up these ethnographies and as we offer our interpretations of the materials we study (302).

As early as 1955 in his presidential address to the American Folklore Society (AFS), Herbert Halpert essentially called for more backyard studies of "undeveloped areas in American folklore." [5] He noted that most folklorists are only "visiting

firemen" in the regions where we work. Of necessity, our brief fieldwork sojourns often neglect thorough study of the meaning to a community of the folklore we collect. Such functional insights and realizations can only come from long periods of residency within a community or knowledge of it from birth. Halpert urged his colleagues to

...train more students from rich folklore regions and send them back home to do the kind of complete functional study that only someone born to or completely accepted by a regional culture can do (304).

A "complete functional study" is what I undertake in this thesis on one aspect of my adopted region and a place that once existed literally within walking distance of my own backyard. In this work I have been aided and abetted by Memorial's Folklore Department, which Halpert founded.

If I have learned anything from nearly two decades as a participant/ observer of New England culture—and more specifically eastern Massachusetts culture—it is that the past and present are inextricably entwined and permeate daily life. To me, this is the key to understanding the region.

Historian David Lowenthal says that the past is not just events that happened, but it is also the subsequent interpretations of those events reconstructed according to "present habits and preferences." [6] Memory in its various guises provides a primary method of access to the past. In the frenzy of modern North American life, it often becomes necessary to look backward to feel rooted in something that provides continuity—and meaning—between past, present, and future. New Englanders understand well these links. Moreover, anthropologist Edmund Leach says memories might actually or symbolically "make time" by creating intervals between the sacred and the profane in life, between the actual event in the past and its reconstruction in memory or in "ritual occasions" (133). [7] Both of these theories have influenced my work and expanded my folkloristic interpretations. As a result, I am interested in

studying the past via folk and oral histories, and am equally interested in studying the rituals of daily life manifest in folk custom.

Tangible objects and landmarks offer prompts to, and repositories for, memories. Along the Gold Coast of Mount Auburn Street in Cambridge today (Bunting and Nylander 42-43), heading towards Central Square from Harvard Square, there is a storefront Thai restaurant at the end of an unimposing row of shops parallel to the Charles River. That storefront, presently unmarked by historical-society plaque or pavement worn by pilgrims' feet, was the original site of Club 47.

During the folksong revival or "great boom" of the late 1950s and 1960s, Club 47 was regarded as one of the best-known centres of activity in New England and in the North American revival network (von Schmidt and Rooney 91). [8] For 10 years, the 47 scene was instrumental in helping to create a community and a market for commercial folk music in the region. [9] The Club 47 milieu was a self-conscious community created and nurtured by the folksong revival. As such it was authentic in its own context, although members clearly were participating in musical expression outside their own traditions.

The 47 community launched then-local performers like Joan Baez, Tom Rush, Jackie Washington, the Charles River Valley Boys—hereinafter known as the CRVB—and the Jim Kweskin Jug Band, all of whom later achieved national and even international prominence. [10] The 47's constantly-evolving performance schedule also influenced and mirrored changes at the nearby Newport Folk Festival in Rhode Island, and influenced events on the national revival circuit and the great boom's integration into mass-mediated genres. [11] Club 47 also influenced me, a point to which I will return below.

One of the many factors that distinguished Club 47 from other revival venues—in Cambridge, Boston, and nationwide—was its utopian longevity and New England provincialism, which some people in pejorative terms might call elitism. [12] Community members were indeed card-carrying club members of a nonprofit educational institution, a point of fact that connoted insider/ outsider status. Moreover, the 47's communal administration echoed New England themes.

There is a long tradition in eastern Massachusetts of attempts to create a Utopia in the New World, reflecting what historian Perry Miller called "the New England mind" of the seventeenth century. [13] Frequently based on the Puritan model of hierarchical and authoritarian structure, later movements such as utopianism, transcendentalism, naturalism, and abolition (of slavery) embraced the ideology of radicalism, while having a strong sense of conservationism. For more than three centuries, regional values were reflected in these attempts to create utopian communities, starting in 1630 with John Winthrop's concept of a "city upon a hill" [14] in Boston and proceeding into the nineteenth century with the Transcendentalists' Brook Farm and Henry David Thoreau's call from Walden Pond for cultural and ecological conservation. [15]

Indeed, in the present century, more than a few members of the Club 47 community were educated at the Putney School in Vermont, which was founded as a millennialist Perfectionist Colony by nineteenth-century reformer John Humphrey Noyes. [16] There was even an element of overt radical reform at Club 47 in addition to its communal structure. A contemporary utopian community was a spinoff of the club: former KweSkin Jug Band-member Mel Lyman's enclave on Fort Hill in Boston still asserts its historical ties to the 47. [17]

Folklore and history came full circle at Club 47. In each of its two locations, first on Mount Auburn Street and then on Palmer Street, Club 47 was within a stone's throw of the site where the AFS was founded 70 years before. As we will see in the accounts of various informants in chapters two and four, those who patronised the 47 were the spiritual descendants of people like ballad scholar Francis James Child, children's folklore specialist William Wells Newell, anthropologist Franz Boas, and other early AFS members who vowed to preserve and protect cultures other than their own. [18]

If the roots of Club 47 were planted in Cambridge in 1888 with the founding of the AFS, one of whose goals was to collect the "fast-vanishing remains of folk-lore in America" (Abrahams, "Rough Sincerities 66), they grew through the song (and dance) revivals throughout the twentieth century right up to the venue's opening. At least in the beginning at the 47, the conservationist nature of the folk revival was in keeping with the essentially conservative—and preservative—nature of New England culture.

As Robert Cantwell wrote about the folk revival in conjunction with the 1988 museum exhibit, "Folk Roots, New Roots: Folklore in American Life," which included a lengthy section on the revival complete with recorded musical selections along with historical objects:

From our vantage point of 25 years, we can detect in the folk revival the currents of race, social class, and sheer money working to carry the influence of the northeastern cultural establishment into broad circulation in the wider republic, along the channels of a giant entertainment industry flowing as ever in America with democratic optimism and class aspiration (190). [19]

Club 47 members epitomized the profile Cantwell sketched. This is their narrative, not mine. As such I attempted to collect as objectively as possible their recollections and offer insights about their involvement in Club 47 and this larger thing

called the folk revival, clearly influenced, however, by my own experiences and observations.

I've been told that, as a babe in arms, the first concert I ever attended was by Hank Williams, although like many folklorists before me, I came to formal folklore studies by way of the revival. [20] The music and community of enthusiasts attracted me first, and the more I learned about the music, the more interested I became in folklore and folklife studies generally. As a postwar baby boomer growing up outside Baltimore, Maryland, in the 1960s, I had gone to the Smithsonian's folklife festivals on the Mall in Washington since their inception in 1967, and particularly enjoyed the fiddle competitions since I'm a descendant of fiddlers, but am not a musician myself. These contests were vetted by folklorists and ethnomusicologists, many of whom doubled as competitors. At the same time I bought folk-music records, read Sing Out! and Boston Broadside, and went to coffeehouses, concerts, and festivals. [21]

While at university in the early 1970s, I hung out with old-time and bluegrass musicians in Baltimore, some of whose families had migrated from Appalachia in the 1940s to work in the defence plants; others like myself had migrated from the suburbs during their college years. By the mid-1970s, with coursework in folklore, a degree in American Studies, and several internships in oral history, I spent a year as a fieldworker on the new Maryland folklife survey. [22] I was learning to study culture in situ and certainly thought I knew something about music from observing and working with traditional singers like Ola Belle and Bud Reed from northeast Maryland who, among other things, had run a country music park near their home.

Then, as fate would have it, I moved to Boston. Since the mid-1960s I had been aware that something was happening musically up in Boston (and Cambridge) that was not happening in my city. Late at night when the airwaves were clear, I listened to Dick

Summer's folk- music shows on Boston's WBZ-AM radio, a chronicle of the people, places, and wealth of revival activities in the area. [23] When I first set foot in Massachusetts, I immediately made my way to coffeehouses on both sides of the Charles River, wanting to see and hear what was going on. Only Boston--what I then considered to be the Athens of "Folkie" America--would devote a billboard in Kenmore Square near the Red Sox's Fenway Park to announce a new record album by its own revivalist Jaime Brockett. [24]

Meanwhile, I heard references to Club 47 that I didn't understand at the time, particularly at Passim's, a coffeehouse in Harvard Square. At that time, no one explained explicitly that the austere subterranean coffeehouse behind the Harvard Coop had acquired Club 47's second and last site and much of the old club's reputation as the centre of the Cambridge folk scene. I am not even sure that anyone told me that Club 47 had closed more than half a decade earlier. I had yet to learn about networks and asking the right questions to elicit the stories and great boom traditions that I write about here.

By 1977 I was involved with two partners producing a mostly revival-oriented music series of our own in Cambridge. Living Folk Concerts had begun in the early 1960s and featured musicians and singers primarily from the British Isles and Ireland, but old friends like Oia Belle and Bud, as well as local and regional revivalists, also came along to play formally and informally. [25] Again, I heard continuing mumblings from our audience about the fabled Club 47. By the early 1980s, it became my intellectual quest to track down this legendary place and get the whole story.

The guardian angel who protects the naive took a long time revealing the magnitude of my undertaking. Nor could I foresee how it would parallel developments in my avocational and professional lives as I moved from folk-music enthusiast to

concert producer to various jobs in several cultural institutions and, lately, to graduate student in a folklore department in Newfoundland.

While working as publicist for the AFS's centennial meeting in Cambridge in 1988, I began planning a return to graduate school to study folklore which, in part, would provide the opportunity to write about Club 47 and the revival. I had already noticed that in the short time I was conducting preliminary research, the revival was generating increased—and somewhat long overdue—attention from both folklorists and cultural historians. In addition, I was working with colleagues at an American history museum organizing the "Folk Roots" exhibit. "Folk Roots" opened in nearby Lexington in time for the AFS meeting. The following two years the exhibit travelled to three museums across the United States. Coincidentally, the last venue was the Oakland Museum in California, which helped to host the 102nd meeting of the AFS in 1990, which I attended as a Memorial University graduate student and gave my Club 47 paper. [26]

So I, too, have come full circle. I have laid out my ethnographic biases and framed my research within one worldview of the region. No longer does Club 47 seem foreign to me. The past has taken on the familiarity of the present. Now with the academic training and theoretical underpinning to discuss tradition and folksong, I can tell the story of Club 47 by looking backward and forward, and move from the backyard to the foreground.

## Notes

1. L. P. Hartley, The Go-Between (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1953) 9.
2. Edward Bellamy, Looking Backward: 2000-1887. (Boston: Houghton, 1926).
3. David Cannadine quoting British historian G. M. Trevelyan says, "[social history is] the history of the people with the politics left out" (54). For a comprehensive discussion of definitions and trends in contemporary social history research, see Juliet Gardiner, ed., What Is History Today...? (Basingstoke, England: MacMillan Education, 1988).
  4. See Lawless's article, "'I was afraid someone like you...an outsider...would misunderstand': Negotiating Interpretive Differences Between Ethnographers and Subjects," Journal of American Folklore 105 (1992): 302-14. On the folklore of folklorists, see Reuss's "That Can't Be Alan Dundes! Alan Dundes Is Taller Than That: The Folklore of Folklorists," Journal of American Folklore 87 (1974): 303-17.
  5. See Halpert's "Some Underdeveloped Areas in American Folklore," Journal of American Folklore 70 (1957): 299-305.
  6. David Lowenthal, The Past Is a Foreign Country. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1985) xxii, xxiv.
  7. Edmund Leach, "Of Time and False Noses," Rethinking Anthropology (London: Athlone, 1961) 132-36.
  8. Neil Rosenberg used the term "great boom" in the introduction to his forthcoming book, Transforming Tradition: Folk Music Revivals Examined. I discuss the phrase along with other terminology in the next chapter.
  9. Oral histories of this period from participants' point of view are found in Eric von Schmidt and Jim Rooney, Baby, Let Me Follow You Down: The Illustrated Story of the Cambridge Folk Years, (Garden City, NY: Anchor, 1979).

10. This is marked by conventional standards of success such as record sales, tours, publicity, and longevity on the music scene. Thanks to Neil Rosenberg for bringing to my attention an article that appeared during my research in the Japanese bluegrass publication, Moon Shiner (8.11 [September 1991]: 33), and included the now-defunct group, the Charles River Valley Boys. Only a photograph of a later version of the band and the words "Club 47" are recognizable to me.

11. See, for instance, Cheryl Anne Brauner's "A Study of the Newport Folk Festival and the Newport Folk Foundation" (M.A. thesis, Memorial U of Newfoundland, 1983).

12. Specific accounts of elitist attitudes and charges of elitism permeate von Schmidt and Rooney's book. My fieldwork from an outsider's perspective more than a decade later turned up fewer accounts. For more on elitism at Club 47, see my chapters on community and music.

13. For a definition and historical argument for "the New England mind," see the works by Perry Miller and Van Wyck Brooks cited in the bibliography.

14. In his sermon, "A Modell [sic] of Christian Charity," written aboard the Arbella en route to Massachusetts Bay in spring 1630, Winthrop wrote of the forthcoming Puritan settlement at Boston, "Wee must Consider that we shall be a City upon a Hill, the eyes of all people are upon us." Quoted in Walter Muir Whitehill and Norman Kotker, Massachusetts: A Pictorial History (New York: Scribner's, 1976) 3.

15. See Dillon Bustin's "New England Prologue: Thoreau, Antimodernism, and Folk Culture," Folk Roots, New Roots: Folklore in American Life, eds. Jane S. Becker and Barbara Franco (Lexington, MA: Museum of Our National Heritage, 1988) 1-6.

16. For a discussion of this community, see Oscar Handlin's The Americans: A New History of the People of the United States (Boston: Little, Brown, 1963) 229.

17. One history and discussion of this community is David Felton's "The Lyman Family's Holy Siege of America" in Rolling Stone 23 December 1971 and 6 January 1972: 46+. Also see Bruce Chatwin's "The Lyman Family: A Story" in What Am I Doing Here? (London: Cape, 1989) 36-41; and Tom Wolfe, "The Me Decade and the Third Great Awakening," in The Purple Decades: A Reader (New York: Berkeley, 1983) 279.

18. One article that discusses the founding of the AFS is Roger Abrahams's "Rough Sincerities: William Wells Newell and the Discovery of Folklore in Late-19th Century America," in Folk Roots, New Roots: Folklore in American Life, eds. Jane S. Becker and Barbara Franco (Lexington, MA: Museum of Our National Heritage, 1988) 61-75.

19. For an impressionistic account of the revival, see Robert Cantwell, "When We Were Good: The Folk Revival," in Folk Roots, New Roots: Folklore in American Life, eds. Jane S. Becker and Barbara Franco (Lexington, MA: Museum of Our National Heritage, 1988) 167-193.

20. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's "Mistaken Dichotomies," (Journal of American Folklore 101 [1988]: 140-55) is one article that discusses this phenomenon and transcends the autobiographical account.

21. The publication, Broadside, was launched in Boston in March 1962 and modified its name to Broadside of Boston in June 1963 and then to Boston Broadside to avoid confusion with the original New York folk-music publication known as Broadside. For much of its history, Boston Broadside's editorial offices were actually at various locations in Cambridge.

22. Two accounts of this early public-sector project are George Carey's "Filming the Folk" and Charles Camp's "Developing a State Folklife Program" in Handbook of

American Folklore, ed. Richard Dorson (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1983) 507-12 and 518-24, respectively.

23. Summer is remembered for two things that helped to gain attention and popularity for regional performers. He played an unreleased tape of Tom Rush's version of Joni Mitchell's "Urge for Going" in the mid-1960s, which became hugely popular long before it was commercially released on an album, and similarly helped to popularize Arlo Guthrie's song, "Alice's Restaurant," in mid-1967 before its release.

24. For a discussion of "folkie," see the following section.

25. David Evans reviewed one of these related Living Folk Records productions in his "Record Reviews: Folk Revival Music," Journal of American Folklore 92 (1979): 108-115. He said, "the folk music of the Northeast has lately been receiving an injection of new blood direct from the British Isles (110)."

26. Much of my paper, "Let Us Gather By the River: Club 47 and the Folk Revival, 1958-1968," has been incorporated into this thesis.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This thesis is an historical ethnography of Club 47, a significant cultural icon of the folk music revival or "great boom" in the United States in the late 1950s and 1960s. This work offers a contribution to folkloristics by presenting a fieldwork-based account of the music culture of one group of people over a 10-year period. My research was concerned with analyzing accounts of the experiences and observations of the scene's diverse participants. I sought to contextualize and synthesize their narratives within the scholarly purviews of folksong and folk custom, as well as folksong revival and New England sociocultural history. As far as I can determine, this is the first ethnography to approach a major North American folksong-revival venue in this manner.

Although the folk music aspect of Club 47 was best known, performers and audiences came together as much for the club's social organization as for its music and, like the chicken and the egg, it was often difficult to determine which came first. Whether as amateur or professional musicians on stage or as nonmusicians in the audience or on staff, Club 47 members functioned as a community that encouraged both the discovery and performance of various forms of folk music and the creation of new music in the folk idiom. I identified themes and influences that contributed to Club 47's unique status, and those that marked its participation in the folksong revival.

This thesis consists of a prologue and eight chapters that consider Club 47 from its antecedents to its legacy, along with three appendices and a bibliography. My prologue investigated some of the issues of reflexivity and theories about New England culture that I brought to this work. This introductory chapter sets the framework for my analysis and discusses how I applied methods drawn from folkloristics to study

Club 47 as a total entity. Here I also discuss some of the issues and features encountered during fieldwork, and include a short section defining the terminology informants and I used throughout this work.

Chapter two situates Club 47 within cultural revival movements and suggests how tradition and revivals have shaped and continue to shape the social dynamic of eastern Massachusetts, and especially Cambridge, in order to provide continuity with the past and to compensate for social and spiritual features that are perceived to be lacking in modern life. This chapter foregrounds recurring themes that I develop in the remaining chapters. These themes include historical influences on Club 47, ranging from the Puritans' social and moral imperatives to the turn-of-the-century antimodernists' urban/rural dichotomy, all of which helped to determine the structure and ethos of the venue and distinguish it from other revival scenes. I also discuss the more immediate legacy of early folklorists in Cambridge, which included some of the private scholars who were founding members of the AFS, as well as several generations of folksong scholars who taught and studied at Harvard.

Having set the scene, chapter three summarizes the history of the great boom of the 1950s and 1960s and of Club 47, looking at how the 47's members and their activities reflected or challenged prevailing trends. Here I also outline the history of the club, including how its status as a nonprofit membership organization shaped its self-definition and its perception by revivalists outside the Cambridge scene.

Chapter four on community discusses the social dynamics and ironies inherent in the Club 47 community, how members were able to indulge their self-image as an idealistic, communal enterprise, and how they defined themselves as a subculture within a generation. I also outline some of the social trends of the era that members considered to be significant influences.

The fifth chapter is concerned with the total music culture of Club 47, including musical influences members brought to the venue. Here are profiles of some of the performers through whom the Club 47 scene is best known, discussing their symbolic and actual meaning to the community, and their contributions to the great boom.

Chapter six concerns Club 47 activities outside the venue itself, such as contributions of music, volunteers, and policymakers both to the Newport folk festivals and to the Newport Folk Foundation concerts that the 47 sponsored locally in Cambridge. I also look at the club's own series of sporadic concerts undertaken as educational or charitable ventures.

All of these strands are tied together in the conclusions in the seventh chapter, showing how, like folksong itself, the revival as expressed at Club 47 was constantly infused with new materials and new aesthetics, and survives into the contemporary music scene. I also discuss Club 47 as a cultural symbol and how its evolution parallels the principal stages associated with individual rites of passage.

To continue the narrative to the present, the eighth chapter is an epilogue that is concerned with how the Club 47 legend has been revitalized, enabling former community members to regather with newer participants at two different kinds of events beginning in the 1980s and 1990s, both of which used themes and models pioneered at the original venue. I also discuss other trends that draw on personnel and/or audiences who were influenced by the club.

The bibliography is more extensive than most thesis bibliographies. I have treated as legitimate sources a range of works of which some are not generally recognized as conventional scholarship. Included are all the materials to which I refer or from which I quote in the text, as well as background readings and secondary references on which I drew, if only obliquely, throughout my work. I also included

some of the principal collections that I consulted for annotating songs in performers' repertoires. Full citations for shorter ones in the text and in endnotes are found in the bibliography; where an author has more than one work listed, I used an abbreviated form of the title and author's name.

Three appendices comprise (1) a list all fieldwork informants; (2) my fieldwork questionnaire; and (3) a compilation of performers at Club 47, which is a work-in-progress.

### *1.1 Theoretical Background*

My research is premised on several definitions of folklore published in the 1960s and 1970s that prompted a paradigmatic shift in disciplinary focus from item and genre orientation to a more systemic view of placing items in their cultural context. These definitions united the lore and the folk, and contextualized this union within the folklife milieu. Two of the definitions that refocused the field of folkloristics and on which I draw heavily were those put forth by Alan Dundes and Dan Ben-Amos. Dundes's broad-stroke definition says that "'folk' can refer to any group of people whatsoever who share at least one common factor." [1] Ben-Amos's definition, situated within that group context, is that "folklore is artistic communication in small groups." [2].

Concurrently, Don Yoder stressed adopting a holistic approach by formally integrating folklife studies into the discipline, drawing on models from European regional ethnologies that "involve material, social, and spiritual culture" (4-5). [3] The methodology of folklife research, he said, "alternate[s] historical, descriptive, and reconstructive studies" with "functional studies of culture, society, and the individual," thus reinforcing the discipline's affinity to cultural and social anthropology.

My study is based, then, on these folkloristic approaches, but I also knowledge a research debt to the interdisciplinary scholarship in which I place them. Clearly I am influenced by the study of American cultural history in which Americanists called for approaches to studying the United States that recognized the country as a unique cultural phenomenon, more than simply a cultural composite. As early as 1957, folklorist Richard Dorson, head of the Folklore Institute at Indiana University, called for academic cooperation between the disciplines of folkloristics and American Studies, saying that it is tradition that unites folklore and folklife in America (American Folklore 2). [4] Trained in history and the History of American Civilization at Harvard in the 1930s and 1940s, Dorson was at the forefront of the emergent American Studies movement there, where historians like Perry Miller and Henry Nash Smith and literary scholars such as F. O. Matthiesson were calling for new ways to look at American culture.

More recently, in the U.S. bicentennial year 1976, folklorists Richard Bauman, Roger Abrahams, and Susan Kalcik addressed American Studies scholars directly in the journal American Quarterly on the mutually-engaging intellectual question of "how to define and delimit American folklore" (361). [5] In the context of the intellectual history of both disciplines, they discussed the particular skills and insights folklorists contribute(d) to the study of American culture, such as but not limited to the "centrality of fieldwork," the complex approach to regionalism in our work, and the role of folklore in popular culture. I have drawn on all of these skills, as well as insights from historiography and anthropology, in my research and interpretations of Club 47.

## 1.2 Fieldwork

My fieldwork comprised interviews with former Club 47 members who included performers, audience, board members, and hired management personnel, all of whom are listed in Appendix I. I conducted intensive fieldwork during summer 1991 in metropolitan Cambridge and Boston, and did further fieldwork in Berkeley, California, in winter 1992. For those I was unable to interview in person, I conducted fieldwork by letter and telephone from St. John's between winter 1991 and spring 1992. By far, in the finest oral tradition, the best source of interview leads was word of mouth within the former Club 47 community itself and on the current folk-revival grapevine, some of which was generated by my research queries in the Boston Globe, Harvard Magazine, and other publications. While many folklorists have to coax their informants, mine, in fact, frequently contacted me before I reached them.

I was (and am) blessed with a highly articulate group of people who know how they want to tell their story. Many informants are professional musicians or individuals who are otherwise used to being interviewed and thus could direct our discussions to emphasize the points they wished to make. Musicians, in particular, were professional interviewees with established styles of personal and narrative presentation, a reason why folklorist Jeff Titon noted that musicians often are the subjects of life stories that folklorists collect (285). [6] Many of the accounts I collected are a combination of oral history and life story, epitomizing Titon's definition of one's life story as "a person's story of his or her life, or what he or she thinks is a significant part of that life" (276).

Given the absence of formal archival records dealing with the club's corporate organization, I reconstructed much of the 47's musical history through documentary research in national and local folk-revival publications. This basis also provided

a context and background for interviews. Still, it has proved difficult to reconstruct the entire history of the club, especially for the first four years before Boston Broadside, the biweekly tabloid that covered revival events in the metropolitan area, began publication in early 1962. These sources, combined with Club 47's calendar of events, were useful for compiling a partial survey of performers and performance schedules. Ironically, the most complete source to date of schedules is that in the Club 47 collection at the Archive of Folk Culture in Washington, rather than in any personal or institutional archive in Cambridge. [7] The Archive's collection of the 47's calendars is representative, but by no means comprehensive, although Appendix III goes a long way towards compiling the comprehensive list of performers. The lack of surviving available records precludes devising both a definitive list of performers and activities at the club, and also a related discography, all of which I originally intended to do as part of this thesis. Von Schmidt and Rooney had a limited discography up to 1979 at the end of their book for the musicians they interviewed, many of whom appeared at the 47, and represents a beginning to this venture. For the time being, I must be satisfied with incomplete, albeit highly representative, materials.

Besides, as a folklorist, my emphasis is less on filling gaps in the documentary record, as do historians, than with collecting and preserving a folk history of Club 47. I have been surprised that few published accounts of the midcentury revival actually present the story from the bottom up, that is, in the words of participants who were quite capable of, and had access to, the means to tell their own stories. Robbie Woliver's oral history covering 25 years at Gerde's Folk City in New York is one exception, and includes references to Club 47. [8] Club 47 figures in a major or minor role in several other publications, [9] but the kind of folk history elicited by my fieldwork fits closer the

definition used by folklorist Benjamin Botkin in the 1940s as "history from the bottom up in which people become their own historians." [10]

In addition to their musical and social contributions to the great boom that is central to the folk history of the revival, participants in Club 47 directly or indirectly generated or were associated with a rich, tangible material culture. This includes the physical structure of the two locations, both of which are extant and adapted or modified to new uses. More importantly, materials such as photographs; Club 47 membership cards, calendars, and matchbooks; record album sleeves; and other objects from the period still exist in personal and public collections and are themselves cultural products bridging the past and present, many of which I consulted. In addition, some of these items provided the context for informants to frame their reminiscences or observations.

The fieldwork process is itself noteworthy. Frankly, I was astounded by people's willingness to work with me, an outsider to the 47, in such an intense and time-consuming way. My role, in fact, was defined by several community members as that of a "catalyst" in helping them to interpret their Club 47 days in the context of their own lives and in analyzing their collective experiences. For individuals and as a demographic entity, Club 47 is a symbol of the coming of age of one segment of a generation, a point that I discuss at length in the community chapter. Many informants are now at a middle stage in life, a time when they naturally are reflecting on the role and meaning of their past. This project presented an opportunity for them to examine or reexamine their role in the 1960s music scene.

Conversely, coming more than 20 years after the club's demise, my project generated several reunions by telephone, letter, and in person of former members that has partially satisfied my debt of reciprocity for all the cooperation I was given in the

field. It was personally and professionally pleasing to see parts of the group regathered and to experience for myself the sense of the community that underlies this study.

Fieldwork was not consistently easy-going or without ethical or personal qualms. At times, I consciously limited my participation in current community-related activities. Secondly, as the ultimate mark of trust, I was privy to an extraordinary amount of confidential and intimate personal information that I never sought but which, nonetheless, was freely given to me as background. Such information obviously is not part of the formal record.

Moreover, despite strong suggestions from several individuals, I chose not to contact the Fort Hill community. Preliminary research turned up published accounts that often characterized Lyman and his community as a cult. [11] More than once, otherwise-generous informants flatly refused to discuss Fort Hill – on tape or off the record. Principal informants who had dealt with the group and whose opinions I valued counseled me to avoid the Lyman Family completely, given their alleged history of psychological intimidation, violence, and criminal prosecution. Several people I interviewed on the West Coast, distanced by time and geography, were more willing to share their reminiscences about encounters with the group, but again warned me to be cautious or avoid them altogether.

Another important informant, however, said that the story of Club 47 would be incomplete without including the Lyman Family, adding that because of the group's obsession with their own past, they were the likeliest source for archival materials. Nevertheless, I have chosen not to solicit their reminiscences and none of the group chose to contact me.

On a different note, I want to acknowledge again the debt I owe to von Schmidt and Rooney's evocative book. As an oral history of a regional revival scene and social

history of the 1960s, Baby, Let Me Follow You Down was invaluable. The book made a crucial difference to my research, particularly given its wealth of photographs of individuals and events from the Club 47 period and accounts I could compare to information I gathered during my own fieldwork. It was the first published source I located in my preliminary research and its value only increased as fieldwork progressed and I understood more and more of its nuances. While it is not solely about Club 47, its primary focus is Cambridge and the 47's antecedents in Boston, and presents an emic account of those scenes—of insiders telling their own story.

I took a copy of the book with me to every interview and used it as an aid and prompt to memory. Everyone referred to it simply as "the book" and heaped tremendous responsibility on it. Some informants repeatedly cited it as the source for dates (although dates are woefully lacking in it) or as the most complete or accurate account of an event. Others retold stories adding to or correcting the published accounts. Clearly the book's value is seen by its centrality to people's perceptions of the past. Precisely because it is out of print and some informants lacked personal copies, it had a powerful presence among former participants in recalling the Club 47 experience.

Fieldwork for this project can (and will) go on forever. This thesis is only an introductory examination of the history of Club 47 and its role in the great boom. I have made difficult choices in selecting from the embarrassment of riches turned up during fieldwork. There are many tangents I have not even begun to suggest because each one deserves a chapter to itself. While the existing body of interviews, letters, and documentary sources has produced a respectable ethnography, I expect to continue doing fieldwork as opportunities present themselves. Besides, not a week has gone by over the past three years that I have not heard in some manner from one of my many informants. The wealth of information people are willing to share and their responses

to my research are testimony to the fact that there is an important story to tell about Club 47 and the folksong revival.

### *1.3 Memory and Accuracy*

First, though, a cautionary tale. One of the most vexing lexicological problems I encountered was how to refer to the name of the venue itself that is my subject. Is it "the Club 47" or simply "Club 47," without the article? The Club Mount Auburn 47 took its name from its address at 47 Mount Auburn Street. It was spoken of variously as "the Club Mount Auburn 47," "the Club 47," and "Club 47" (von Schmidt and Rooney 135).

Throughout fieldwork I usually referred to it as "Club 47," largely influenced by printed sources encountered early in my research. After that half-subconscious decision, I did not give it another thought, although I noticed that some people included the article. Fieldwork interviews turned up nearly equal usage of both terms - "the Club 47" and "Club 47." Earlier research, however, showed that the article was frequently dropped in spoken usage and in print.

Musician John Cooke, whom I interviewed at length, challenged my use of "Club 47" versus "the Club 47." He wrote in a letter following an interview:

Yes, I believe you should avoid use of "Club 47" without the article. In my experience, everyone always said "the Club 47," "the Club," or "the 47," but I never noticed any usage like that of the ladies who go "to Symphony" [in Boston, referring to my example of one local instance where the article is always dropped]. It smacks of a Britishism to me, like saying someone is "in hospital," rather than "in the hospital," as Americans say. Two days ago Tom Rush gave a benefit concert in Jackson [Wyoming] for a local institution. He referred many times to the Club 47, and he certainly never omitted the article. If you want to be true to the usage of the times, and of those who made the 47 what it was, you can't go wrong by always using "the," but you risk being out of tune with contemporary usage if you omit it....Press on regardless. [12]

When I interviewed Rush towards the end of my fieldwork, I asked him how he refers to the club, since he now owns the Club 47 trademark and service mark. His concert series logo reads "Club 47" and I pointed out that on a tape I have of one of his Club 47 travelling concerts, he omits the article whenever he refers to the club. His position, he said, is that "I don't know that I have a pattern" and, more importantly, "I don't think it matters." [13]

I dwell on this point because it is symbolic of larger issues of fact and nuance that I encountered. The two most prominent issues were revisionist history, whereby informants "update" their accounts of events for a variety of reasons and, more subconsciously, their general "misremembering" of the past. I do not challenge their narratives or their directives; rather, I have noticed in passing quite honest inconsistencies and telescoping of facts such as dates, personnel, and other errors that one would expect from individuals' memories that reach back more than 25 or 30 years. Most informants were straightforward about their inability to remember things "accurately" to their satisfaction, especially since some were quite graphic about their often-excessive use of alcohol and drugs during that period and how those substances eliminated or distorted their recollections. Those distortions, they added, affected later gaps or suppositions in their narratives, some of which took on a life of their own. This is something I had to keep always in mind when writing.

#### *1.4 Terminology: A Word about Words*

Before I get much further into my narrative, I need to define and clarify my usage of several words and terms that appear throughout this work. The period of heightened interest in folksong during the 1950s and 1960s is often considered by folklorists, cultural historians, and students of popular culture at large as a discrete

phenomenon within the context of folksong revivals in general. By consensus among folklorists and other scholars, it is usually known by various terms such as Neil Rosenberg's "the great boom," the urban folksong revival, or simply the (emphasis mine) folksong revival. [14] Throughout this thesis, I use the terms interchangeably. Other periods of folksong revival are clearly identified without a short-hand nomenclature to distinguish them from the revival here.

Another problem regarding terminology was how to refer to the people whom I interviewed. Initially, I avoided the disciplinary umbrella term, informant, feeling that it was needlessly distancing and, besides, that it carried pejorative sociopolitical connotations describing someone who gives information to authorities for monetary or moral gain. (This might be an instance of oversensitivity prompted by living and conducting the bulk of my research in Cambridge and Boston, where the film, The Informer, about illegal Irish republican activities, is an underground classic to film-buffs and Irish-Americans alike).

I substituted other terms such as "sources" and the cumbersome "people with whom I spoke," but none had the ring and linguistic short-hand that "informant" implies. When possible, I tried to use the word musician or some other applicable noun to describe specific informants, but those terms only fit about half the people I interviewed. In the end, for consistency and brevity, I frequently revert to informant. Now I know why it has remained in use so long in the discipline.

Like my informants, throughout this thesis I use words that were contemporary to the historical period and appear in interviews and printed sources. Among the words most frequently used and for which I sought derivations and definitions are folkie, hangout, and scene. I use each of them as much as possible in the sense that informants do, and try not to introduce terms that were not germane to Club 47.

Nuances of meaning may have changed over time, but the words still hold up after more than a quarter century and certainly convey the ideas under discussion better than any more recent terms. Then-contemporary terms used by the press and some revivalists themselves, such as folkniks and enthusiasts, were not used by my informants.

Folkie is defined variously as "a folk musician or folk-singer, a devotee of folk-music"; "a folk singer or musician," "a fan of folk music," and "of or relating to folk music"; slang for "a folk singer"; and a late-twentieth century term for "devotees of folksong and folk music." [15] The term parallels the nineteenth-century folksy, meaning "sociable, given to associating with common people." [16]

There are conflicting ideas about the origins and meaning of folkie, and I have been unable to date the first uses or context of the word. [17] As an analogy, Robert Cantwell proposes the theory that folknik was a kind of back-formation from the word beatnik. Similarly, then, folkie is probably based on the term hippie. [18] In my fieldwork, the term is used in a positive sense to describe the subculture that originated at—and participants in—Club 47, as well as the folk music scene generally.

Scene has a better-documented lineage via jazz enthusiasts, beatniks, and hippies. I base my usage on this and the following definitions from A Concise Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English. [19] Scene is defined as "something that's happening or the place where it's happening"; the "performers" and "the active participants" [in] "the favoured setting or milieu or activity of a group of people or even of an individual"; "hence a way of life; an attitude." Scene is used extensively by informants and myself throughout this work, and refers to the aggregate—that is, to the people, attitudes, and music that collectively comprised Club 47.

Hangout, by contrast, does not appear in the commonly-used dictionaries, but it is used by informants both as a noun referring to the physical premises of Club 47, and as a verb connoting the act of informal socializing within the club premises. Again it is used in a positive sense. People referred to Club 47 as being their "hangout," where they would gather with their friends or go to hear music. They would occupy their idle hours in the act of "hanging out," implying no specific goal beyond passing the time pleasantly.

Having laid the groundwork, I turn now to a fuller examination of Club 47, which begins with a description of its place in the sociohistorical milieu of Cambridge, and how the notion of tradition influenced and was expressed by club members.

## Notes

1. See The Study of Folklore, ed. Alan Dundes (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice, 1965).

2. See Ben-Amos's "Toward a Definition of Folklore in Context" in Toward New Perspectives in Folklore, eds. Americo Paredes and Richard Bauman (Austin: U of Texas P, 1972) 13.

3. See Yoder's "Folklife Studies in American Scholarship" in his edited book, American Folklife (Austin: U of Texas P, 1976) 3-18.

4. For a brief summary of Dorson's argument for interdisciplinary studies, see Jan Harold Brunvand's introduction to the chapter on "Theoretical Perspectives in American Folklore" in his book, Readings In American Folklore (New York: Norton, 1979) 388. In addition, Dorson cites several of his personal experiences at Harvard as well as distinguishing between folk and elite history in "History of the Elite and History of the Folk" in Folklore: Selected Essays (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1972) 225-59.

5. See "American Folklore and American Studies" by Richard Bauman and Roger D. Abrahams with Susan Kalcik, American Quarterly 28 (1976): 360-77.

6. See Jeff Todd Titon's "The Life Story" (Journal of American Folklore 93 [1980]: 276-92). For a discussion of the significance of such life stories from blues singers, see Barry Lee Pearson's "Sounds So Good to Me": The Bluesman's Story (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1984).

7. I discuss the full implications of this irony in the next chapter, which concerns Harvard's role in training academic and public-sector folklorists throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Several Harvard-trained folklorists were involved in organizing and administering the Archive of Folk Culture in its early years, but Club 47 did not generate any contemporary folklorists that I have been able to identify.

8. Robbie Woliver, Bringing It All Back Home: Twenty-Five Years of American Music at Folk City (New York: Pantheon, 1986).

9. See Joan Baez, And A Voice to Sing With: A Memoir (New York: Summit, 1987) 52-68; Judy Collins, Trust Your Heart: An Autobiography (Boston: Houghton, 1987); Geoffrey Stokes Edward and Ken Tucker, Rock of Ages: The Rolling Stone History of Rock and Roll (New York: Rolling Stone P, 1986); and Eric von Schmidt and Jim Rooney, Baby, Let Me Follow You Down: The Illustrated Story of the Cambridge Folk Years (New York: Anchor, 1979).

10. Quoted in William Lynwood Montell, The Saga of Coe Ridge: A Study in Oral History (Knoxville: U of Tennessee P, 1970) xxi.

11. In addition to articles cited previously, see accounts throughout von Schmidt and Rooney's book, especially pages 183-84 and 290-97.

12. Letter from John Cooke, 24 February 1992.

13. Interview with Tom Rush, 15 April 1992.

14. Some of the most frequently-cited books and articles about this period that use these various terms are R. Raymond Allen's "Old-Time Music and The Urban Folk Revival" (New York Folklore 7 [1981]: 65-81); Benjamin A. Botkin's "The Folksong Revival: A Symposium" and "Little Magazines of the Folksong Revival" (New York Folklore Quarterly 19 [1963]: 83-142 and 62-66, respectively); David A. DeTurk and A. Poulin, Jr.'s The American Folk Scene (New York: Dell, 1967); Daniel J. Goczy's "The Folk Music Movement of the 1960s: Its Rise and Fall" (Popular Music and Society 10 [1985]: 15-31); Stephen N. Gottesman's "Tom Dooley's Children: An Overview of the Folk Music Revival, 1958-1965" (Popular Music and Society 5 [1977]: 61-78); and Bruce Jackson's "The Folksong Revival" (New York Folklore 11 [1985]: 195-203).

15. Sources, respectively: Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd. ed. (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1989), 1143; 9,000 Words: A Supplement to Webster's Third New International Dictionary, (Springfield, MA: Merriam- Webster, 1983) 78; Clarence L. Barnhart, Sol Steinmetz, and Robert K. Barnhart, The Barnhart Dictionary of New English Since 1963, (Bronxville, NY: Barnhart/Harper, 1973) 173; and Paul Beale, ed., A Concise Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English (from A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English by Eric Partridge), (New York: Macmillan, 1989) 166.

16. Mitford M. Mathews, ed., A Dictionary of Americanisms On Historical Principles (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1951), 640.

17. Thanks to Diane Goldstein, Peter Narváez, and Randal Thurgood for discussions and useful information on the derivation of this term. Beale's update of Partridge cites the British periodical New Society's ([18 August 1983]:166) use of the word folkie and likens it to foodie and trekkie, the latter two words being much more au courant in the 1980s. The actual reference in New Society is to programming for folkies on BBC radio.

18. Neil Rosenberg pointed out in a note dated 1 February 1993, that Cantwell opined in a footnote in Transforming Tradition about the origins of folknik. He added that for himself, folkie was "a term I never heard or used during the great boom days, [and] was a similar back-formation from 'hippie' that first appeared (as I recall) in the late '60s. It seems to me the first time I read it was in Rolling Stone ca. 1969."

19. Beale, cited above, page 385.

## CHAPTER 2

### CAMBRIDGE, HARVARD, TRADITION, AND REVIVALS:

#### CLUB 47 IN ITS FOLKLORISTIC AND SOCIOHISTORICAL CONTEXTS

Due to its location in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Club 47 had a unique cultural, historical, and intellectual context that set it apart from other local –and national–great-boom folk revival venues. Club 47 was situated in Harvard Square in the midst of an environment that was (and is) highly cognizant of its academic, political, and social history. Cambridge and its foremost cultural institution, Harvard College, share a distinguished, interdependent relationship as centres of academic and popular interest in folklore, while Cantabrigians have historically supported and participated in avant-garde cultural movements that directly or indirectly influenced activities at the club. [1]

Many if not the majority of the 47's core members were either Harvard students, Harvard alumni, or hangers-on to the area's scholarly and cultural milieu, and thus inherently part of the intellectual and social tradition of Cambridge. Tradition was a concept that unified the activities at Club 47. Moreover, as participants in a cultural revival, the 47's members were consciously and unconsciously engaged in synthesizing a variety of cultural products, with particular emphasis on folk music, which reflected some of the academic and popular traditions for which Cambridge and Harvard had long been known. These circumstances arguably set Club 47 somewhat apart from other centres of great-boom activities and give it a unique cachet.

The relationship between revivalism; the search for identity within a generation; the processes resulting in the formation of communities and subcultures like that at the 47; and the creation of new musical traditions and performance aesthetics comprise the recurring themes of my thesis. To understand how I see tradition linking them, I must

first describe the confluence of the cultural, historical, and intellectual contexts operating in Cambridge within which Club 47 was set.

## 2.1 *Tradition*

For all its varied usage, the very word tradition has eluded exclusive definition by folklorists and other cultural specialists, although popular use generally ascribes to it an almost sanctified status implying direct moral transmission from the past, even the recent past. Having "exposed" the "seven strands" that the word tradition has meant to American folklore studies for more than a century, Dan Ben-Amos postulated applications that described tradition as encompassing "lore," "canon," "process," "mass," "culture," "langue" and "performance" ("Seven Strands" 102-24). After elaborating upon the theoretical constructs inherent in each of those interpretations, he concluded that "...none is more adequate than the other, none is more proper than the other" (124).

Given the breadth of its various meanings, tradition is a key word in the discipline and one whose ambiguity frees us to use and interpret it in a variety of ways; in fact, it forms—and informs—the basis of our work (Ben-Amos, "Seven Strands" 97-98). When applied theoretically to the Club 47, tradition as a word and a concept has no single interpretation, a situation compounded by the fact that the relationship between tradition and revivalism is complex. Like folk culture and popular culture, tradition and revival are part of the same continuum of change, particularly as each connotes and evokes attitudes towards the past.

Tradition and perceptions of tradition pervade revivalism in various forms: as pattern, as continuity, as cultural baggage, and as metaphor. The uses and abuses of tradition in revivals reflect broader cultural values about marking and interpreting the passage of time, especially in a place like Cambridge, where the past is considered a

valuable part of the present, both intellectually and emotionally, and as a component of public policy. There, the past is represented in the present in terms of protected tangible historical monuments and architectural structures and landscapes, and in less tangible calendar customs and worldviews often predicated on valuing historical continuity. In one form or another, all seven strands of tradition were present at Club 47 over time, though I chose not to look at each "strand" individually.

Since tradition obviously means many things to many people, it is not surprising that Club 47 participants often used the word in the broadest constructs possible as they appropriated texts, forms of music, and performance aesthetics from what they considered to be a common American cultural heritage. Collectively, 47 members whom I interviewed articulated romantic notions of tradition and used the word to imply a sense of continuity with the past and an affinity with forms of cultural expression that were not part of their own backgrounds. Rarely, if ever, for them did the words tradition and creativity appear in the same sentence during our interviews.

One informant said he learned "traditional music" in the form of "Negro spirituals" from his mother, an urban, white, classically-trained pianist. [2] Another talked about "interacting" with "traditional musicians" at festivals in the South that attracted northern revivalists as well as local musicians. [3] A musician and impresario from the 47 observed in a recorded performance that the city in which he was playing was "known for its love of traditional music and especially mountain music: country and bluegrass." [4] Someone else recalled that at the 47, "It was a tradition for out-of-town musicians in the audience to be invited on stage." [5] Each of these informants interprets tradition both as process and as lore, two of Ben-Amos's seven strands, interpretations that involve the idea of transmitting cultural heritage over time and space.

Two musicians from the 47 scene, one involved principally with bluegrass and the other an aficionado of blues, elaborated on their interpretations of tradition in terms of their approach to the music. One equated "traditional" songs with "pre-electric" instruments and small-group transmission; the other regarded music as the aggregate lore of "this American folk tradition" mediated by revivalists who had been exposed generally to "more tradition in Boston." The first informant, who grew up in Cambridge, recalled his experience in the context of cultural expression:

I remember going into a room and these guys were doing a version of a country song, a traditional country song, meaning pre-electric, [an] old traditional country song called "All Around this World"—"been all around this world"—which Grandpa Jones recorded. Frailing the banjo. These guys were doing this slow, haunting version of it. I have no idea who they were, but ever since, I've done that version of it and it's still my favourite song. Things like that were going on. [6]

The second informant, who grew up in the Northeast and briefly attended university in Boston, elaborated on revival music as one aspect of a cultural force. He switched his ideas in midthought as to the influence of tradition in the region, an interpretation that considers it as cultural baggage. In our interview, he observed:

Everybody there [Club 47] was very dedicated to this American folk tradition.

*[MR: How much do you think the 47 was influenced by being a New England scene?]*

None. None. Maybe, just because that there was more tradition in Boston than there would be—maybe not though. I mean Massachusetts is not exactly a music state in my opinion, you know. Georgia is a music [state] or Michigan or Detroit. Illinois or Chicago. These are places where heavy amounts of music got done. And for some weird blip in the—I don't understand how it happened, but—and it was because the music was not, it wasn't music per se. Music was one of the outlets of this cultural kind of eclectic renaissance kind of feeling. [7]

## 2.2 *Revivals*

That very sense of "renaissance" expresses exactly the kind of artistic revival that Club 47 represented as part of the great boom. By existing within a context of heightened periodic, or cyclic, interest in using cultural items from the past to enrich the present, participants at Club 47 engaged in the cultural process known as revivals by their appropriation of forms and texts of music, and of ideas. As phenomena, revivals, or what anthropologist Anthony Wallace called revitalization movements, are "recurrent features in human history" and often come at a critical time in a culture that perceives itself under threat of social, political, or industrial change (265, 267).

Generally, two elements are common to cultural revivals: the appropriation of perceived portions of an older culture in order to adapt them to contemporary needs; and the leisure-time use of such cultural products as a consumable commodity. Idealized influences are drawn from the past or from romanticized concepts of contemporary life, such as rugged pastoral images of mountaineers in the southern United States or of rural peoples struggling to adapt to urban life. Former Club 47 members expressed both of these elements in interviews; they were also reflected in the musical styles featured at the club and in the repertoires of performers, topics that are discussed at length in the community and music chapters.

As indicators and reflectors of social stress, most kinds of revivals devise notions of the past that suit contemporary needs, goals, and images. Revivals breathe new life and differing worldviews into the present under the cloak of tradition, thereby providing a sense of personal grounding and societal continuity. The self-defined 47 community was comprised of individuals upon whom were pinned great expectations by their families, academic institutions, and society for intellectual and professional achievement. For them, gathered collectively at the 47, the revival process alluded to

access to the cultural products of perceived simpler and more socially-cohesive times. Songs evoked often unrelated images characterized by romantic nostalgia for a less complex society or way of life than the one experienced in the often exciting, but still betwixt-and-between, years of early adulthood.

Ironically for such a privileged group as that constituted by the 47's members, such notions of simplicity and communal harmony are often grounded in images of economic poverty. Poverty, especially romanticized poverty, serves as a symbolic equalizer and was linked to liminality as a process of spiritual purification and egalitarianism. Symbols of equality are especially appropriate when reacting within, and to, a highly-stratified social and academic society such as that in Cambridge and at Harvard.

Anthropologist Victor Turner noted that liminality "often draws on poverty for its repertoire of symbols, particularly for its symbols of social relationship" (245). [8] He further noted that these impulses were often linked to a countercultural affinity for religious movements in the 1960s. In fact, several scholars and informants have likened people's experiences of the great boom to the fervour of religious movements—represented locally by Lyman's community premised on his messianic teachings. Like their generational cohort sometimes dubbed "the Woodstock Nation," many Club 47 participants were engaged in a search for community that was an ideal that had a profound impact on their lives. Idealistic longing was a major subject of many interviews, whether discussing individuals' great boom years or their present situations.

In the opinion of participants in other revival scenes besides Cambridge whom I interviewed, or in the opinion of those affiliated exclusively with the 47, all felt that some members of the 47 community definitely were influenced by the club's historical

and cultural setting. [9] Those influences contributed to a long, if sometimes circuitous, route for assessing the function and meaning of traditions from which the Club 47 community drew, a contextual genealogy that other venues apparently lacked.

My fieldwork confirms conclusions expressed in much of the previous scholarship on the great boom that indicated the folksong revival was a leisure-time pursuit led primarily by middle- and upper-middle class university students who, in a do-it-yourself kind of way, were able to, or found it necessary to, put aside preoccupation with their own, usually self-devalued, cultural traditions. [10] As an expression of cultural ennui, revivalists appropriated or cobbled traditions that they thought were "purer" or more "authentic" than their own. Symptomatic of this ennui are the very words purer and authentic, two culturally-based terms that recur in my interviews about the 47 and in others' writings about the great boom.

These notions themselves are historical and cultural constructs. In nineteenth- and twentieth-century North America, ideas of purity and authenticity usually were rooted in some form of belief that preindustrial rural cultures held symbolic values, clues to, and/or mechanisms for purifying the present and enhancing the postindustrial quality of life. The three periods of heightened revival activity that expressed such sentiments and relate directly to my research are those dating to the turn of the century, during the 1930s, and the great boom of the late 1950s and 1960s of which Club 47 was a part.

To return to the Club 47 community as exemplar, much of participants' grounding came from the heritage they consciously or unconsciously absorbed by being in Cambridge and/or in and around Harvard. The City of Cambridge had a long and dynamic historical tradition that often intersected with the scholarly pursuits of Harvard, particularly in the field of folkloristics. It is this dynamic that I examine next.

### *2.3 Cambridge, Harvard, and Folkloristics*

More than most American cities, Cambridge has usually looked to Britain, especially England, for its cultural models, and continues to nurture its connections to the Mother Country in its customs, mores, and even haberdashery. New England's Cambridge is named for Cambridge, England, a shire town situated in the East Anglian fens along the river Cam which, like the Charles, is a physiographic feature that helps define the literal and metaphorical boundaries of local life. Like "C.A.W.," the local term for its North American namesake "Cambridge Across the Water," Cambridge, England, is a city whose identity is linked with its pre-eminent university. [11] Cambridge University's graduates are well-represented among the ruling classes of England, where their successes in the larger world reflect well on their alma mater.

Harvard College, America's oldest and best-known educational institution, is modelled after Cambridge University. [12] Harvard's founders and early faculty were predominantly Cambridge graduates and its first students were generally descendants of the East Anglian Puritans who emigrated to Massachusetts Bay. Harvard sits literally in the middle of Cambridge, Massachusetts, reaching from the banks of the Charles River well into the heart of the city at Harvard Square. Its alumni are likewise well-represented among the ruling classes of the United States.

Just as there is a strong affinity between Cambridge (Massachusetts) and its university, there is also a strong link between Cambridge, Harvard, and folkloristics. The American Folklore Society (AFS) was founded in Cambridge in Harvard's University Hall in 1888, 10 years after the Folklore Society was founded in England. For many years the American society, its journal, and some of its officers were based in Cambridge (Zumwalt 13-14). It was at Harvard that ballad scholar Francis James Child, a Boston-born, Irish-American alumnus who was a founder of the AFS and its first

president, conducted the research that culminated between 1882 and 1898 in his multivolume publication of The English and Scottish Popular Ballads. [13] A medievalist specializing in Chaucer, Child's legacy as a ballad scholar founded an academic dynasty of literary folklore studies that reached well into the present century, extending through the 1960s to Club 47 members and other great boom participants. During the first half of this century, Harvard had a profound impact on folklore studies, beginning with the international attention generated by the publication of Child's ballad canon (Wilgus, Anglo-American Folksong Scholarship 53-56, 65, 80, 174; Kodish 18-26; Zumwalt 10, 50-67). [14] For more than a generation after his collection was published, there was a stream of scholars who attended Harvard to study folklore, many of them supervised by Child's protegee, George Lyman Kittredge. Kittredge was another literary scholar who, like Child, grounded his students in classics, English literature, and in ballads; he also edited the remainder of Child's work after his mentor's death in 1896.

It was Kittredge's proteges such as Stith Thompson, Archer Taylor, Francis Lee Utley, Milman Parry, and later Albert Lord who were among the Harvard alumni who helped to establish and perpetuate what is primarily a literary approach to folkloristics in the United States. They continue to influence the field to this day, having produced fundamental works of their own. [15] Parry and Lord remained at Harvard to pursue their academic careers, while their colleagues established folklore curricula at Indiana University, the University of California, and Ohio State University, among other institutions.

Later, Richard Dorson, a product of Harvard's history and American Civilization programmes and heir to Thompson's mantle at Indiana, alluded to Harvard's approach to folkloristics in terms of its preservative and classificatory aspects. His historical approach to studying what he considered to be America's unique folklore encompassed

the literary folklorists' perspective combined with the paradigms put forth by interdisciplinary scholars espousing the History of American Civilization/American Studies movement that was taking shape at Harvard and other institutions during his student days. [16]

Outside the academy, John Lomax, Robert Gordon, and Benjamin Botkin were folksong collectors and archivists who used their Harvard training in federal agencies and programmes to establish a tradition of research, collecting, and publishing (including sound recordings) that paralleled the academic process with which they were familiar as students of Kittredge and his colleagues. Gordon is best known as the founder of the Archive of American Folk Song in Washington in 1928, an agency in which both Lomax and Botkin worked periodically in the next two decades. Gordon, Lomax, and Botkin also worked on various research projects commissioned by the Works Progress Administration during the New Deal (Hirsch, "Modernity" 198-203; Kodish 5, 22, 61, 67, 159-61; Wilgus, Anglo-American 185-88; Zumwalt 61-62).

Lomax's experiences serve as exemplar for the prototypical activities that combined some of the academic and popular traditions that were later emulated by Club 47 members. At the turn of the century, he began graduate work at Harvard with Kittredge and the Americanist Barrett Wendell (Filene 605-06; Hirsch, "Modernity" 186, 189-90; Wilgus, Anglo-American 74-79, 157-65; Zumwalt 61-62). Encouraged by his academic mentors, Lomax returned to his native Texas to collect cowboy songs in situ, which resulted in the publication in 1910 of Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads, "the first important post-Child collection separately published" (Wilgus, Anglo-American 157). Originally Lomax worked under the premise that he was collecting the valued "vanishing remains" of items of American folklore, ironically from a group

whose music and songs helped to threaten the cultural hegemony of the establishment that determined such cultural values.

The positive popular reaction to Lomax's published collection, gathered in a region beyond the domination of the East and including items from African-American and Hispanic traditions, challenged the Anglo-American focus of literary and field collectors like Child and Cecil Sharp, Child's nonacademic English counterpart whose own work on folksong came to prominence almost immediately upon Child's death and who later was involved with revival endeavours in Cambridge. Unlike Child and Sharp, who institutionalized British or Anglo-American texts and items, Lomax helped to shape a body of American texts and a respect for indigenous folk music from occupational and non-Anglo traditions.

While Lomax pursued his downhome work, the United States was accommodating a massive influx of immigrants from non-British and non-Northern European cultures. As one method of assimilating these new Americans, "American" folk music as derived from previously infused traditions was being used as an egalitarian cultural force in social reform projects such as in settlement houses, at festivals, and in public schools—all ironically geared to defining, nurturing, and homogenizing a new popular culture (Whisnant, Native and Fine 45–46). Soon in the third and fourth decades of this century, the interaction and exchange between narrowly-defined tradition bearers and cultural consumers was available in ways that had been unheard of when people like Lomax commenced their work, even though he was among the first collectors to use new methods and instruments of sound-recording technology.

Throughout much of this century, lines became blurred as to strict definitions of what constituted "traditional" materials and to whom they belonged, as recording

technology and marketing forces came to dominate the entertainment industry. The standardization of these materials witnessed a rise in the number of professional performers whose sole occupation evolved into recording and performing some of these works, and who often travelled a circuit of bookings around the country. Beginning in the 1920s, commercial recordings; the proliferation of regional radio broadcasts; the professionalization of the music, recording, and publishing industries; and a climate of economic prosperity all contributed to the process of equalizing access to cultural products (Wilgus, "Hillbilly Music" 196-202; Green, "Hillbilly Music" 204-223). While details of these trends are far too complex to do more than allude to in this work, this process of exchange remains yet another subtheme throughout this narrative. And, it should be added, all these activities had an audience in Cambridge with a predisposition towards new ideas.

Meanwhile, Lomax and his public-sector colleagues such as Gordon and Botkin continued to publicly espouse and perpetuate pluralism in American culture through their work in governmental agencies. Folklorist Botkin, for instance, was an early advocate of scholarly study of revivals that utilized American songs. His work, like Lomax's, challenged the establishment worldview, but from a different perspective. Born in Boston, Botkin was a first-generation American of Lithuanian-Jewish descent, not a member of the WASP elite. By the 1930s he was able to put into action his pluralistic vision of American culture that challenged the dominant Anglo-American worldview that prevailed in places like Cambridge, where he was educated. Yet, in a different voice, he echoed generations of foreign and domestic romantic nationalists and antimodernists by expressing "...a hope that somehow folklore will furnish insight into the past as the key to the present and that folk culture...will provide a corrective for the sterility of our national culture" (Hirsch, "Cultural Pluralism" 29).

By arguing that "folksong could be a 'cultural force' as well as a 'cultural expression'" (Hirsch, "Cultural Pluralism" 29), Botkin could well have been a spokesperson for Club 47 members as for an earlier generation. As one of the folklorists who realized that the great boom could have important implications for the field of folkloristics, Botkin provided continuity between the past and present, and between academic and popular folksong enthusiasts.

Botkin wrote in the New York Folklore Quarterly in 1963 that the "little magazines of the folksong revival" asked the critical questions that had previously only concerned academic folklorists: "What is the relation of the individual to the group? of urban to rural groups? of tradition to change? of traditional to individual style?" As in other centres of revival activity, these vital questions were reiterated at Club 47 in many ways, being expressed in the impulse towards avant-garde cultural revivals, the appropriation of various traditional materials, and experimentation with aesthetic standards and forms of transmission.

Although the extent of the influence of Harvard-associated ballad and folksong scholars is not always obviously discernible, they touched through their curricula and publications a number of individuals involved in later folksong revivals, some of whom did and some of whom did not participate directly in Club 47. Pete Seeger, for instance, was well-established by the great boom years, having been an active singer in the late 1930s and 1940s, travelling on his own or singing and recording with the groups, the Almanac Singers and the Weavers. While he did not play at the 47, he was well-known to many of its participants both as a performer and for his much-reprinted book, How to Play the 5-String Banjo, and the companion Folkways record. He also regularly gave concerts in Boston in the 1950s and 1960s. [17] Prior to his musical career, Seeger had enjoyed his parents' musicological association both with Harvard and the Lomax family

during their mutual Cambridge residence. Abandoning his studies at Harvard in the late 1930s to move to New York to pursue his folksong interests, Seeger thus did not graduate with fellow classmate and future United States president John F. Kennedy. [18] Similarly, Seeger's sister, Peggy, left Radcliffe, the women's college closely associated with Harvard, in the mid-1950s before graduation, but did return to Cambridge as a singer, often accompanied by her husband, the Scots revivalist Ewan MacColl. [19]

Directly and indirectly, the 47's members were part of the long, local tradition of exploring folksong inside the academy or within its shadows. [20] Some of the people I interviewed definitely were aware of Harvard's history of folklore studies, whether or not they actively took advantage of its products in terms of coursework or research. Others evidently were not specifically cognizant that they were part of an intellectual tradition of scholarly and independent studies, although they benefitted from access to the field recordings reissued to general consumers in the 1950s and 1960s by the Library of Congress, those collections often gathered and supervised by Harvard alumni, particularly Gordon, Lomax, and Botkin.

Regardless of their awareness of Cambridge and Harvard's popular and academic traditions, all the 47 members whom I interviewed were well-educated and well-heeled enough to have the research skills and material means to locate historic folksong collections in libraries and on recordings, many of which were housed in Cambridge and Harvard collections. To these nonspecialists, lesser-known printed and aural collections directly helped to expand their knowledge of folksong. In addition, these academic and popular collections, frequently organized by state or region, by occupation, by subgenres, or as a combination of these classifications, often formed the basis for members' repertoires, whether they were sung actively and avocationally in

groups, later performed on stage, or songs known but not performed. More than one informant spoke of the intellectual thrill of locating what they considered to be esoteric folksong collections, unlike the popular commercial songbooks in the 1940s and 1950s that were readily available to the general public. [21]

Of the Club 47 members who were Harvard or Radcliffe students in the early 1960s, some were aware of the university's academic folklore tradition; others were not. [22] Two prominent performers at the club-- students of English literature and romance languages, respectively--knew of Harvard's legacy to folkloristics, but approached that tradition in different ways. Each referred to research generated by Harvard alumni, as well as that conducted by scholars within (and outside) the region whose works were taught in courses or housed in Harvard's libraries.

Singer and guitarist Tom Rush (class of 1964) was interested in a general way in folklore studies and specifically took Lord's courses on oral literatures, as well as any other classes he could get on folklore, ballads, folksong and, in the Kittredge tradition of studying early English literatures, Anglo-Saxon. Rush credited these courses with helping him to develop his repertoire and to learn the background to some of the songs he was beginning to locate and sing. Despite being cognizant of Harvard's scholarly role in folkloristics and even availing himself of that legacy for coursework, Rush nevertheless delighted in the obscurity of various folksong collections; later, the fact that they often were unknown to his peers added to their appeal. Again, the thrill of locating new sources fueled his own research: "part of the excitement for me was that all this [folksong material] was so new." [23]

By contrast, bluegrass musician John Cooke (class of 1963) felt that Harvard's history was irrelevant to his own concerns, although its cultural legacy touched his emotional response to the material:

I absolutely did not feel connected to ballad scholarship. I was aware of the Child ballads. I took an English course called English 195—Folksong and Balladry. I took it as an easy humanities course, but also because I knew I was interested in the subject matter. There I learned about the Child classification of ballads, but I never felt the scholarly connection. To me it was a connection of the spirit or the soul or whatever you please. I responded when I heard certain kinds of songs. [24]

That spiritual response is the essence of the historical legacy that is part of everyday life in Cambridge and at Harvard, where preoccupation with the past is a major contemporary pursuit. The songs unearthed by Rush and his peers in library and record collections opened new worlds to many informants and gave them new forms of self-expression. Many people spoke of the songs as vehicles for reasserting their feelings of continuity with the past. By meshing the old and the new, Club 47 members were very much a part of the contemporary popular culture of their times, particularly the counterculture of the mid- to late 1960s that looked to historical and cultural antecedents, while engaging in the New England cultural tradition of looking backward.

#### *2.4 Looking Backward*

By interpreting romantic influences drawn from many traditions, revival performers and their audiences sought to partake in the emotional security that is provided by commonly-held values. Members and performers at Club 47 nurtured a chosen community united through the common ground of music. Romanticism was the dominant ethos that expressed their symbolic affinity with ways of life considered to be more authentic; they were not unlike their utopian social-reforming antecedents who envisioned a better world and tried to create it.

Moreover, using romanticized images of the past to create a culturally unified American mythology apparently resonated in Cambridge to a greater extent than in

other centres of great boom activity. In Cambridge and sometimes at Harvard, images and activities were drawn from the city's Anglophilia, despite the university's and the city's actual multicultural profiles. Such selectivity reflected a long history of involvement with the avant-garde social, political, and humanitarian causes of the day. While emotionally satisfying, this reformist response is, paradoxically, highly intellectual and draws inspiration from eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European romanticism. In fact, these notions of communal values, cultural homogeneity, and even pastoralism are at the heart of the intellectual history and evolution of our own discipline. For example, the application of these impulses to nineteenth-century academic reform, particularly in Germany, created several disciplinary foci from which Child and his colleagues often benefitted and became part of the folkloristic legacy they bequeathed to their students and followers along with their collections.

This marriage of romantics and reformers was characterized by an urge to collect and classify items of culture, particularly those considered threatened with extinction, a clarion call that early fieldworkers, many trained at Harvard, heeded. In keeping with the growing emphasis on preservation in the face of change, late-nineteenth century academic efforts to collect and preserve items from the folk cultures of North America were expressed in new undertakings in the United States that benefitted later folklorists and revivalists. In addition to the AFS, these included the creation of the Bureau of American Ethnology in 1879 to study Native Americans; and the American Anthropological Society in 1899, which also studied native peoples. Implicit in these institutionalized ethnographic efforts was what became a longstanding tendency in urbanized, industrial American culture to romanticize rural life and values (Lears 169-70; Marx, Machine 5-11). In fact, much of the mid-twentieth century arcadian romanticism that was expressed during the great boom years in the United

States and particularly in Cambridge was rooted in the nineteenth-century movement that cultural historian T. J. Jackson Lears calls "antimodernism" and defines as:

...not simply escapism; it was ambivalent, often coexisting with enthusiasm for material progress. And it was part of a much broader quest for intense experience which ranged from militarism and "Progressive" social reform to popular occultism and the early fascination with depth psychology. Far from being the nostalgic flutterings of a "dying elite," as historians have claimed, antimodernism was a complex blend of accommodation and protest which tells us a great deal about the beginnings of present-day values and attitudes (xiii).

Lears adds that historical advocates of antimodernism were primarily from "the educated strata of the Northeastern elites," the ruling class, if not always the actual personnel, who "ruled" American society. His depiction of this group could easily serve to describe the prevailing people and attitudes in Cambridge for most of the last four centuries:

...old-stock, Protestant...the moral and intellectual leaders of the American WASP bourgeoisie, who joined their British counterparts in shaping a transatlantic Victorian culture and who helped (sometimes unwittingly) to maintain dominant norms and values (xiv).

Clearly, Club 47 members who spoke of continuity with the past were not idly inventing those notions; they had good reason to espouse them since many individuals had family and community links to that very "transatlantic Victorian culture." Unlike the dynamic affecting the 47's heyday, earlier revivalism functioned to support the status quo during periods of change. Expressions of cultural nationalism that celebrated a consensus view of American history became even more prominent in the late nineteenth century after the centennial celebration of the Declaration of Independence in 1876 and lasted well into the twentieth century, where it remains part of the local consciousness. Consensus views subsequently found expression in attitudes towards

song collections like Child's, which supported the hegemonic structure, and Lomax's, which did not.

This period, known as the Colonial Revival, lasted into the 1920s and paradoxically was an era of great change rather than preservation, particularly in the Northeast. Like the earlier European romanticism, the domestic Colonial Revival also foreshadowed boom activities at Club 47. This half-century period saw massive domestic and foreign immigration to coastal cities; the growth of urbanism; the apex of the Industrial Revolution; and the emergence of the United States as a world power, with expanded roles for Washington and New York as foci of political and financial power. It also was a period that codified and homogenized the cultural canon, in part to "Americanize" immigrants by instilling in them a common amalgamated heritage in their new country, despite the fact that this "heritage" often ran counter to their own experiences and often at odds with the customs and traditions of their homelands.

The era was commemorated in Cambridge in public and vernacular architecture that is still extant and with public celebrations that are still enacted. Ironically, the Colonial Revival heralded a twentieth-century pluralism that proved to be the swan song for ideas about monolithic Anglo-Saxon hegemony—progressive ideas that later were literally played out on Club 47's stage.

In keeping with its avant-garde position, Cambridge in the 1910s was one of the first sites of the English-inspired dance and song revival in America, a fad that further indirectly influenced members of the 47 community. While the English revival may seem a tangential connection to Club 47, several informants repeated legends surrounding Sharp finding unchanged "Elizabethan" ballads in the southern mountains, versions of which ballads they sang or heard even before they got to the 47. They also spoke of his more direct influence on their lives through their or family members'

having attended "Robin Hood festivals" at a local museum in a town where Sharp and his dancers held some of their most popular classes. [25] The fact that this deliberate connection to or continuity with Sharp, or at least support for his ideas, arose in more than a few interviews strengthens this historical context.

That early-twentieth century revival activity was also influenced, in part, by Harvard playwright and director George Pierce Baker and by playwright Percy MacKaye, a former student of Child's. Both men were associated with Sharp when he was in Cambridge (Brickwedde 15-28; Glassberg 73, 239). [26] Given Cantabrigians' history of interest in folklore, Sharp perhaps found more ready support in Cambridge and environs than elsewhere for his civic and academic collecting projects. One such instance is the foundation there of the Country Dance and Song Society of America, the New World branch of the English Folk Dance Society that he had founded in 1911.

When Sharp arrived in 1914, preceded by one of his dance instructors, leaders in Cambridge were already involved in related activities by sponsoring historical pageants that combined social reform, dance, and revitalization impulses. A popular activity during the late Colonial Revival, these pageants began soon after the turn of the century and were dramatic productions based on historical themes that romanticized political events and peoples, expressing "the desire to reject the present in favor of an idealized past" (Glassberg 4). Not surprisingly, many of the pageants were organized by the same people who led the local dance revival (Glassberg 73, 107, 239). Harvard held a summer course in pageantry and hosted in its stadium a 1917 performance of Caliban, MacKaye's classically-draped Shakespeare tercentenary pageant for which Sharp helped script the "Elizabethan 'Sumer is y-cumen in' dance interlude" (Glassberg 241). Women's colleges like nearby Radcliffe were also involved in pageants and used them either to dramatize political issues such as the campaign for female suffrage or for

entertainment, such as celebrating romanticized versions of calendar customs like May Day. [27]

In keeping with the sense of continuity, the dramatic historical pageants of the Colonial Revival were descended from the commemorative re-enactments of the eighteenth century. Since the late eighteenth century, people in Cambridge and surrounding towns had been re-enacting colonial events like Patriots Day, which commemorated the Battle of Lexington in 1775 that began the war of independence from Britain. [28] Cambridge had a direct claim on such events that led to the manufacture of an American mythology and cosmology, much of which commemorated military events. Many of the scenes that twentieth-century pageants symbolically glorified had transpired in and around Cambridge during the American Revolution, such as both British and American forces passing through en route to Lexington Green, the colonial militia encamping on Cambridge Common, and national heroes such as George Washington basing his campaign headquarters just off Harvard Square while commanding the Continental Army during the siege of Boston.

Partly as a reaction to the influx of non-Northern European immigrants in the first quarter of this century, however, the pageants were an extension of politically correct, almost reactionary, themes celebrating a revisionist and even propagandistic view of the Anglo roots of American culture. During the period of political isolationism and xenophobia prior to World War I, all these activities utilized "tradition as a bulwark against modernity" (Glassberg 5). In Cambridge, these events reinforced the it-happened-here-first theme that so pervades the local worldview and helped to create an awareness, and tradition, of concentrating on homogenized American values, which would serve as a basis for comparisons, compliance, and polite rebellion. Later, these same forces of comparison, compliance, and polite rebellion found expression,

especially at Club 47, as people chose what to accept and what to jettison from their personal and cultural heritage.

Not surprisingly, given Cambridge's and Harvard's intellectual traditions, along with the dance revival and dramatic pageantry came renewed interest in folksong. In sharp contrast to the homogeneity and scope of the pageants was a less formal and more intimate interest in songs of preindustrial peoples. Much of that interest was expressed first by avocational and academic folksong collectors and ultimately by urban, often university-based revivalists such as Rush and Cooke nearly half a century later.

It is another paradox that Harvard's ethnocentric attitudes, perpetuated by some members of the faculty well into this century, persisted within Cambridge in a haven of nineteenth-century abolitionism and mid-twentieth century civil-rights sentiment (Hirsch, "Modernity" 186). With few exceptions until fairly recently, many academic folklorists ignored the folksong revival, both as a cultural phenomenon and as a producer of texts, charging it with elitism and having no relationship to tradition. Most members of the Club 47 scene actually denounced their own elitist worldview in their actions by beginning to interact with performers of all races and from many regions of the country in a much more egalitarian way than their predecessors had done in earlier periods of revivalism. One example of shifting attitudes and of the boom's ability to mix things up and draw musical sources from every tradition can be seen in the activities of a prominent 47 member, white blues singer and guitarist Rolf Cahn. A German immigrant who had lived in the Midwest and California before arriving in Cambridge in the late 1950s, he taught guitar techniques and African-American blues songs to Jackie Washington, a black Latino born in Puerto Rico and reared in Boston, and another popular Club 47 performer. [29]

A sensitivity to the past and love of tradition often go hand-in-hand with the preoccupation with establishment values, especially in Cambridge. Yet there is a fluidity of exchange in the process of synthesis—of borrowing, imitating, and interpreting— that lessens the demarcation between classes and experiences, an exchange that was very much in evidence at Club 47. The paradox is that adapting something perceived to be old, revivalists have actually by definition, and by construct, created something new. That paradox was constantly operating at Club 47.

At Club 47, as in other centres of revival activity, many players were involved in what Robert Cantwell calls the “fundamental shift in consciousness” that is at the centre of the folk revival. [30] For many people at Club 47, the folksong revival was nothing more than a passing fancy. For others it came to have a profound effect on their lives. Some participants were aware of their heritage and capitalized on it; others may have been unaware of—or rejected—the historical and cultural antecedents of the activities in which they were involved. Still, the regional influences extant in Cambridge, combined with the traditionalizing urge evidenced by cultural revivalism, set the intellectual and historical scene in which Club 47 opened in 1958.

Bob Dylan, who performed informally and unofficially at the 47 and is often credited with being a spokesperson for the great boom generation, integrated several strands of revivalism in his talking-blues introduction on the recording of the song, “Baby, Let Me Follow You Down.” [31] The song, he said, he learned from New Englander Eric von Schmidt, another white blues revivalist who was one of the patriarchal figures at the 47. As an outsider, Dylan, who came from Minnesota via New York, articulated a fitting tribute to Cambridge, Harvard, tradition, and the pastoral aspects of revivalism. His introduction evokes each of those influences and sets the scene in which to discuss the Club 47 ethos and music in the remaining chapters:

I first heard this from, uh, Rick von Schmidt. He lives in Cambridge. Rick's a blues guitar player. I met him one day in the green pastures of, uh, Harvard University. [32]

## Notes

1. Harvard University as a legal entity does not exist, per se. Although Harvard is a pre-eminent research university with undergraduate and graduate liberal arts curricula, and professional schools of business, design (architecture), education, law, medicine, dentistry, and public health, its legal name is "The President and Fellows of Harvard College." Harvard University is simply the informal title of this entity. Some might interpret this as reverse snobbery, since every tiny training college now seeks to reinvent itself as a university (Fussell 152-164).

2. Interview with John Cooke, 18 January 1992.

3. Interview with James Field, 26 July 1991.

4. From a tape of a concert hosted by Tom Rush at the Kennedy Centre in Washington, D.C., c. 1983.

5. Interview with Nancy Sweezy, 6 August 1991.

6. Field interview.

7. Interview with Geoffrey Muldaur, 12 January 1992.

8. See Victor Turner, "Passages, Margins, and Poverty" in Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1974). 231-271.

9. Comparative data from interviews with Rita Weill Byxbe, Bob Cantwell, Earl Crabb, Charlie Frizzell, and Annie Johnston.

10. See, for example, articles cited in the bibliography by Cantwell, "When We Were Good"; J. Cohen; DeTurk; Gonzy; Gottesman; Jackson. Inherent in these broader interpretations is the hypothesis that revivals are largely the product of leisure-time activities and therefore initially class bound, a position that British folklorists, especially, have been offering at least since the time of Cecil Sharp and the formation of the English dance and song societies in the late nineteenth century. Sources for this

information are Dave Harker's works cited in the bibliography and a survey of the publications of the English Folk Dance and Song Society in its various historical and contemporary configurations. These include Journal of the English Folk Dance Society (1914-1915 and 1927-1931), Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society (1932-1964), Folk Music Journal (1965 to present), and English Dance and Song (1957 to present).

11. I draw on personal experience of Cambridge, England, for these details. In terms of folkloristics, Cambridge University's ties to Harvard are in direct contrast. Harvard had a strong literary tradition in folkloristics, while Cambridge leaned towards social anthropology, aligning themselves with "Tylorian culture [sic] anthropologists" and an interest in "primitive religion" (Dorson, British Folklorists 288).

12. Harvard's commencement-programme booklet given to graduating students, their families, alumnae/i, and other participants, makes this point in its introductory statement. Again I draw on personal experience for this observation. Harvard traditions modelled after Cambridge University are evident in ritual language, academic dress, and other features of the ceremonial procession and subsequent commencement rites of passage that are re-enacted in Harvard Yard every June. Just one example of antiquarianism in this ritual enactment is that the governor of Massachusetts is invited to lead the procession, followed by the sheriff of Middlesex County to keep the peace. The governor, however, is referred to during the procession as the governor of the colony, as indeed was his original predecessor.

13. Child was born in Boston of working-class Irish-American parents who quickly recognized his intelligence. He was educated at Boston's classical public Latin School and, with the help of a patron, at Harvard. He married into a "Proper Bostonian"

family; his daughter, Helen Child Sargent, published an abridged edition of his works in 1904, aided by George Lyman Kittredge. Thanks to David Buchan for these biographical details and for many conversations about Child, Kittredge, and the Cambridge/Harvard connections.

14. The list of folklorists connected to Harvard during this period is seemingly endless. Among those not already mentioned in the text, this list-in-progress includes: ballad scholar Francis Barton Gummere and Fred Norris Robinson in Celtic studies, who were members of the faculty; and Phillips Barry, H. M. Belden, S. B. Hustvedt, AFS cofounder William Wells Newell, E. C. Perrow, Franz Rickaby, and Charles Seeger. Among the teachers and students in related humanities disciplines were poet Conrad Aiken, humanist Irving Babbitt, educator and Radcliffe president LeBaron Russell Briggs, literary scholar Charles T. Copeland, novelist John Dos Passos, poets T. S. Eliot and e.e. cummings, historian John Fiske, psychologists and philosophers William James and Hugo Münsterberg, historian Francis Parkman, literary historian and editor Bliss Perry, journalist John Reed, philosophers Josiah Royce and George Santayana, and historian Frederick Jackson Turner (Abrahams, "Rough Sincerities" 68-69; Kodish 17-18, 25, 30; Wilgus, Anglo-American Folksong 218).

15. These works include Thompson's six-volume Motif-Index of Folk Literature and his revisions to Antti Aarne's The Types of the Folktale, Utley's writing on medieval literature, Taylor's work on proverbs and riddles, and Lord's expansion of Parry's studies of oral formulaic theories in The Singer of Tales.

16. See Dorson, American Folklore, 2, 5-6.

17. A typical Seeger concert of the kind for which he was familiar was later recorded on Pete Seeger Singalong, Sanders Theatre, Cambridge, Massachusetts 1980.

(Smithsonian/Folkways CD SF 40027/8, 1991). Thanks to Neil Rosenberg for this citation.

18. For much of this background, I draw on a conversation I had with Seeger and Bess Lomax Hawes, daughter of John Lomax, prior to their concert at the Museum of Our National Heritage in May 1989 in conjunction with the "Folk Roots" exhibit. In June 1990, Seeger returned to Harvard for his 50th class reunion and also performed at the first Massachusetts Maritime Festival in Salem. As a member of Folklorists in New England, I was a staff member at that event.

19. Other Radcliffe alumnae who were involved in song revival activities in the 1940s and early 1950s included the late Beth Best [Milton], who received a graduate degree in 1942 and co-edited the 1955 revised edition of Song Fest with her then-husband, Dick (Radcliffe Quarterly [December 1991]: 46). Song Fest was published by the Intercollegiate Outing Club Association, of which Radcliffe and Harvard students were members. I also gathered secondary information on his mother's activities at Radcliffe during this period from Will Moore. Aida Kabatznick Press, class of 1948, also provided additional information on Best and on her own collegiate activities and later experiences at Club 47, when it was located on Mount Auburn Street.

20. Among these historic practitioners were Phillips Barry, Fannie Hardy Eckstorm, Helen Hartness Flanders, and Mary Winslow Smyth (Wilgus, Anglo-American Folksong 176-77, 202-204).

21. Musician Jim Rooney, a graduate student in classics at Harvard in the early years of Club 47, first brought this fact to my attention.

22. These included, but were not limited to, interviews and conversations with John Cooke, James Field, Carl Lindahl, Margaret Mills, Jim Rooney, Tom Rush, Carol Ann Sheffield, Peter Tishler, and Andrew Warshaw.

23. Interview with Tom Rush, 15 April 1992.

24. Cooke interview.

25. The most detailed source for these observations came from Jill Henderson, who grew up in suburban Belmont and attended the festivals at the DeCordova Museum in nearby Lincoln during her childhood. She was adamant about the Sharp legends, an idea I found very insightful, but did not at first understand in context.

26. Baker is usually remembered for his theatrical work with Eugene O'Neill in Radcliffe's Agassiz Theatre in his "47 Workshop," though I think it is coincidence only (so far) that the number 47 links him to the club, given that the Club 47's name came from its address. Until I began this research, I was unaware of Baker's (or Harvard's) connection with dancer Claud Wright and Sharp or his correspondence with both men, archived in the Baker papers in the Harvard Theatre Collection, which Brickwedde cites (33-36). One of Sharp's American supporters was Helen Osborne Storrow of Lincoln, a friend of Baker's who introduced her to Sharp and Wright. She subsequently endowed the Storrow Room in the Cecil Sharp House in London in the 1930s, still the home of the English Folk Dance and Song Society (English Dance and Song 52.3 [1990]:8).

I want to thank Paul Smith for many long and intense discussions about the British song and dance revivals, for the loan of his collection of video- and cassette tapes and articles, and for alerting me to the massive new research on pageants and on folk custom generally. The earlier works helped me enormously to put this thesis into perspective; the latter ones helped me begin to rethink my research on several local pageants, which I had begun while still working at an American history museum in Lexington (formerly Cambridge Farms).

27. Thanks to historian Barbara Franco for much of this information, especially her recollections of celebrations at Bryn Mawr College. The Radcliffe materials appear

in photographs found in various collections in the college's Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America.

28. Patriots Day itself is a reinterpretation of an earlier religious fast day that became a feast day. Shortly after the Revolution, days like these were reappropriated to celebrate national events and renamed founders' or forefathers' days. Celebrations found expression in local community gatherings, not unlike the customary Thanksgiving celebration that began in the Plymouth colony south of Massachusetts Bay and eventually became an official national holiday. Thanks to folklorist Kathy Neustadt for this information and to historian John Brooke, who first brought to my attention the fact that celebrations of Patriots Day began shortly after the Battle of Lexington. Perhaps the most spectacular Patriots Day pageant was the one staged on Lexington Green in 1925 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the battle. Materials documenting that event are in the collections of Lexington's Cary Memorial Library, the Massachusetts Historical Society, and private hands.

29. Interview with Jackie Washington, 24 March 1992.

30. Quoted from manuscript page 79 in Transforming Tradition.

31. Dylan's involvement at Club 47 and with many members of the community is discussed throughout von Schmidt and Rooney's book, especially pages 125-31 and 222-27. According to various informants in my interviews, he would perform informally at the club and mix with club members. I have, however, found no evidence of Dylan being billed as a performer at the club, although admittedly records of the early years are scanty at best or, more the case, nonexistent. In his book, Bob Dylan: Behind the Shades (New York: Summit, 1991), Clinton Heylin wrote that Dylan repeatedly was refused bookings because management preferred "the dulcet tones of

Joan Baez or Carolyn Hester” and that his only appearances were informal at the invitation of other performers (53).

32. Transcribed from Dylan's version of "Baby, Let Me Follow You Down," released on the Columbia LP Bob Dylan in March 1962. According to notes in the 1986 collected edition of Dylan's songs, Biograph (Columbia CSX-38830), the song was taped during his first recording session on 20 November 1961 in New York. The notes go on to say that Dylan "sounded witty and world-wise far beyond his twenty years. It had been only twenty months since he left Hibbing [Minnesota]." Dylan wrote in the Biograph notes:

That's the way Rick von Schmidt played the song. I think it's a Reverend Gary Davis [black blues/gospel singer who later came to Cambridge and the 47] song. He used to sing it "Baby Let Me Lay It On You." Strange, he used to sing "Twelve Gates to the City," "Yonder At the Cross," and then "Baby Let Me Lay It On You" ....Dave Van Ronk [a New York revivalist] might have played it too (side 1 notes; n.p.).

## CHAPTER 3

### HISTORY OF CLUB 47 AND ITS PLACE IN THE FOLKSONG REVIVAL

Club 47 was one of the best-known venues in the North American revival network and became “the place to play in the Northeast” during the folksong revival or great boom of the late 1950s and 1960s, (von Schmidt and Rooney 91). This chapter examines the history of Club 47, first putting it in context as part of the popular midcentury movement known as the folksong revival.

#### *3.1 Boom-time for the Folksong Revival*

In the late 1950s and 1960s the folk music revival was a mass movement largely supported by young, well-educated members of the middle classes as an alternative to mass popular entertainment. As a generation, revivalists were reared in postwar North America largely on images of folk heroes and rugged masculine individualists such as western cowboys and frontiersmen, with the frontier meaning any territory west of the original 13 eastern colonies. These heroes had been part of the romantic legendry of America at least since the nineteenth century and symbolized challenges to the prevailing urban establishment.

As a genre, cowboys were particularly appealing through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. James Fenimore Cooper's 1821 novel, The Spy, portrayed “cowboys” as Revolutionary-era marauders who favoured the English and pillaged neutral territory. Later novels such as Owen Wister's The Virginian in 1902 and Zane Grey's Riders of the Purple Sage in 1912 portrayed cattlemen on the western plains a century after Cooper's marauders. Likewise, Buffalo Bill's Wild West shows stereotyped cowboys and Indians and influenced their popular perception well into this century. Cowboys themselves had been portrayed as singers as early as the publication

of John Lomax's cowboy songs, and that reputation was strongly reinforced by radio, records, and films beginning in the 1920s.

Country singers were also romanticized, perceived by consumers as the heirs to an authentic body of American folk music, even if it was commercial music marketed as "white" Appalachian music alongside black "race" music and the "ethnic" musics of immigrants. Country singers were available on radio and records beginning in the 1920s, some being syndicated on radio shows like WSM's Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, which began broadcasting in 1925.

The post-World War I and II decades produced periods of relative affluence in which many young people had the means and the time to purchase and listen to records and radio. Often they learned to play guitars and other stringed instruments in the hopes of emulating the songs and replicating the styles they heard on records. Moreover, by the 1940s, city singers such as Pete Seeger and Lomax's daughter, Bess Lomax Hawes, joined forces with singers like Woody Guthrie from Oklahoma to write and perform music in the folk vein to further ideological political causes. Groups such as the Almanac Singers, which included Seeger, Hawes, and Guthrie, became prototypes for more popular later ensembles such as the Weavers, whose folk music made the hit parade in the late 1940s and early 1950s. At the same time, recording companies and, later, concert and festival promoters, catered to these trends. These entrepreneurs capitalized on the growing markets for performers able both to assimilate folk music forms and to generate new forms of popular music.

By the mid- to late-1950s, another by-product of postwar affluence was the opportunity and financial backing that many young people had to attend university in larger numbers than ever before. At home or away, those interested in folk music helped to create a youth market for earlier recordings and for contemporary folk music

the likes of which had never before been seen. This market was already familiar with New York-based commercial "folk" groups like the Weavers and individual singers like Burl Ives and Josh White, white and black performers respectively, who had migrated there in the 1930s to pursue their performing and recording careers. Some of the 1950s revivalists also knew of country singers whom they heard over late-night radio waves originating in the South, although these performers' records were harder to come by and the individuals and groups generally were not yet available on the northern concert and festival circuit. To these folk-music consumers, "'folk' still embodied community, classlessness, craftsmanship, and authenticity," even as it was also becoming a mass-marketed commodity (Becker, "Revealing Traditions" 46).

Folk music appealed to young revivalists because they considered it to be more authentic, and therefore more meaningful, than the popular music on the hit parade. Folk music also represented the music of the underclasses and the voiceless peoples in America, music considered to be in the public domain from a common cultural heritage and overlooked by mainstream culture. Songs were accompanied by acoustic instruments, usually solo stringed instruments such as guitars, or in group ensembles that featured guitars, banjos, fiddles, mandolins, and other instruments.

In Cambridge as in other sophisticated urban centres across North America, the great boom was a revival of intensified interest in folksong that had roots in the travelling medicine shows and popular stage performances such as minstrel shows that utilized folksongs beginning in the early nineteenth century; in the later collecting impulse that culminated in the regional and occupational collections of the 1910s and 1920s; and in commercial recordings. [1]

Each of these activities helped to establish the pattern of exchange between those, usually lower classes, who directly and indirectly provided source material and

those, usually middle- and upper-middle classes, for and by whom these materials were adapted for their own leisure-time entertainment. For example, according to many Club 47 participants, some of the songs that were popular during the revival already were part of their personal repertoires performed within their families, schools, camps, and other group activities. Many of these songs they learned through published folksong collections or from recordings, a fact which I discuss further in the music chapter.

The folksong revival grew into a fad and later was subsumed into popular forms such as folk-rock, psychedelic rock, and jazz fusion. Centres of revival activity fanned out from New York, which had a direct link to earlier political and musical activities particularly in Greenwich Village in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, and expanded across the northern tier of the East and Midwest, reaching into the Far West and across the border into Canada. Venues dedicated to folk music opened in urban centres such as Boston and Cambridge, Chicago, Denver, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and other cities across the country, and their fare was advertised in national publications like Sing Out! and regional ones like Caravan in New York and Boston Broadside.

One feature that distinguished the great boom revival from earlier popular revivals was the proliferation of these music venues and coffeehouses. Venues were situated independently in urban centres or associated with college and university milieux, that consciously courted and nurtured a market, and ideally even a community, for folk music.

Like their counterparts in other scenes, revivalists at the 47 were influenced by many factors including materials drawn from the past and present. Before they even participated in the boom, they had at their disposal access to field recordings, old 78-rpm commercial recordings, and contemporary 45- and 33-rpm records. Radio stations

like WWVA-AM in West Virginia broadcast live and recorded country music that reached the Northeast late at night. Some of the more popular and academic song collections were also well known, such as John and Alan Lomax's Our Singing Country and Vance Randolph's Ozark Folksongs, as well as the more commercially available sing-along collections like Margaret Bradford Boni's Fireside Book of Folksongs and the Intercollegiate Outing Club Association's Song Fest, which included songs like the broadside "Golden Vanity" (Child 286) and "Tom Dooley" (Laws F36). [2]

Like their cohort, the 47's members were consumers of these commercial products and, later, participant-observers who went to festivals at Newport and in the South. There they saw audiences comprised of people more or less like themselves, such as at Newport; or performers and audiences closer to their own indigenous contexts, such as the festivals in Asheville, North Carolina, and Galax, Virginia, although in all places some "traditional" performers were themselves reinterpreting popular songs or appropriating songs from others' traditions and making them their own. Members of the 47 scene attempted to resolve these dichotomies between authentic and borrowed traditions by creating a more comprehensive presentation of the music scene, but one which muddled further distinctions between "real" and imitated traditions. In fact, several informants recalled their surprise when they saw singers and musicians who had recorded in the 1920s and 1930s alive and performing at these festivals--performers who had been sought out and "rediscovered" by fellow revivalists.

Folk revivalists were not the only ones threatening the popular music industry with new foci, markets, and audiences in that quickly-changing business. In fact, by the late 1950s revivalists even formed segments of older markets or the nucleus of newer ones. In the mid-1950s, rock and roll music already was shifting the focus from the East

Coast to Memphis, where singers like Elvis Presley and companies like Sun Records were popularizing white musicians' performances of black music and creating interest in the sources. Memphis had musical antecedents that were very different, but equally as strong, as the more academic ones in Cambridge. By the early- to mid-1960s, for instance, the white Kweskin Jug Band at Club 47 drew some of their repertoire from the black jug bands that were popular in and around Memphis in the 1920s.

Technology surely had a role in these various activities and continued to add to the blurring of definitional boundaries. Yet another paradox is that technology often prompts revivals as a means of coping with the very change that revivals are, in fact, instituting (Goldstein 3-13). As the contemporary postwar recording industry of the 1950s began to attract younger consumers, especially those who already were buying rock and roll records, Folkways records, and Library of Congress reissues of field anthologies, a new market opened for performers who combined popular and folk appeal.

Members of the Club 47 community, for example, had largely ignored the so-called "folk" groups of the 1940s, whose musical styles they considered aesthetically displeasing. Instead, 47 members said they looked for "folk" music more in popular forms like rockabilly, or to earlier rural and urban white and black American traditions with which they were familiar via reissued records. Even if the Weavers et. al. did not appeal to the collective taste of the 47 community, they were not totally discounted. One informant summarized the view held by many privileged revivalists like herself, while also articulating the innocence and excitement of discovering heretofore unknown aspects of an American cultural heritage—and in effect another America—while integrating the songs' messages into her personal worldview

It [the boom] came on the heels of rock and roll. I mean, I see them as coming together and I think that very quickly, certainly in my memory, people began falling in love with somebody like [blues singers] Muddy Waters or Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee. When you got to know more about their music you understood its roots, its traditions. You got to know more about the culture from which it came. Then suddenly you found out you were learning something about Africa and

the slave trade that you didn't know prior to liking a piece of music that you heard on a radio station.

There was no way one heard Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee prior to—my first piece of folk music that I ever heard was the Weavers. Now I knew right away when I heard the Weavers in about 1955 or '56 that I did not like them, but I liked what it was about. That's as best a definition as I can give you. It was already too popular. There was a kind of—there was a stage presence about it that I didn't like, but I loved where it came from; I loved what it was about. Never liked Pete Seeger as a musician, but loved what he was about. Loved his politics. Felt very, very, very impassioned by understanding that people could speak about injustice through poetry and music. [3]

If tradition is a key word in the folksong revival, then 1958 is a key date, coming on the technological coat-tails of Terry and McGhee, Seeger, and the Weavers, and representing the debut of two groups whose activities were symbolic of two philosophical trends throughout the revival. It was also the year in which Club 47 opened.

On the East Coast, 1958 was the year that the revival string-band known as the New Lost City Ramblers—one of whose members, Mike Seeger, had early familial ties to Cambridge—made their first appearance at Carnegie Hall in New York. Like much of their audience, the New Lost City Ramblers were young university graduates; unlike their audience, however, they had studied and immersed themselves in the folklife of the music they were performing. The Ramblers differed from more commercial and economically successful groups like the contemporaneous Kingston Trio by trying to recreate as much as possible the performances they heard on old records rather than adapt traditional and popular forms to musical styles for which the forms were not suited. They used traditional stringed instruments in traditional combinations, which to revivalists meant nonelectrified guitars, banjos, and fiddles. The group also dressed in

turn-of-the-century clothing for their performances and their Folkways record-album photographs to promote a sense of studied authenticity in their endeavours.

By projecting a sense of the past in their clothing, manner, and performance style that intimated an allusion to cultural continuity, the Ramblers were *avant garde* in helping to further blur the distinctions between tradition-bearers and their imitators, who live and learn in nonindigenous traditional contexts (Allen 66; J. Cohen, "The Folksong Revival: Part I" 31). As a group, the New Lost City Ramblers were ardent, and their music was entertaining and popular, but never wildly commercial.

The Ramblers were equally significant as the nationally-popular Kingston Trio because they foreshadowed aspects of the revival that many of their counterparts in Cambridge undertook, such as travelling South to learn music in its indigenous contexts. The Ramblers' was the aesthetic standard that appealed on many levels to revivalists like those at the 47, who shared many of the group's outward traits, such as their social backgrounds and education. The Ramblers were admired for their achievements and popular in many revival circles—Mike Seeger played frequently as a soloist at the 47—but they were not imitated overtly as much as other performers, perhaps because they bore too close a resemblance to fellow revivalists and not imitating them was an instance of reverse snobbery.

A different kind of context was that of acknowledged peer groups. The Kingston Trio personified collegiate performers who began singing songs from popular collections in informal groups round the proverbial campfire. The year 1958 also marked the national release of their hugely successful record, "Tom Dooley," which became a number-one hit and remained on the charts for 18 weeks (Whitburn 183). Originally from Hawaii rather than the East, the group comprised former university students who began performing in San Francisco Bay Area coffeehouses. Unlike the

New Lost City Ramblers, they looked like their admirers, dressing in contemporary uniform outfits that portrayed the clean-cut, collegiate look of Oxford shirts and pressed jeans or chinos.

The Kingston Trio's version of "Tom Dooley" brought the revival fully into the commercial national mainstream. The song's complex lineage of print, recordings, and performances has been noted by others, but suffice it to say that its appearance and familiarity on the revival circuit came directly through its collegiate heritage as part of Song Fest's sing-along collection, an occurrence technically that could have happened almost anywhere to any similar group. [4] The Trio quickly became far too popular ever to perform at tiny coffeehouses like Club 47, even if their style had appealed to the booking managers. Instead, they appealed to college- and concert-hall crowds, large audiences who knew them through their recordings, radio airplay, and television appearances. Some Club 47 members acknowledged the Trio's influence, as they did the Weavers', but did not like them aesthetically because they considered them to be too "commercial." One informant's viewpoint is representative:

I already had strong musical tastes [upon entering Harvard in fall 1958]. I had strong musical opinions. I knew what was crap—and there was a lot of crap being played. Remember, the real energy of early aboriginal rock and roll had already started to kind of dissipate then. The real wonder years were kind of '54 through right about '61. Right in there. That's frankly how the Kingston Trio found a gap, 'cause none of that stuff ever would have been popular, although the Weavers—I think "Goodnight, Irene" was a top 10 in the late '40s. [5]

Another of the Kingston Trio's early songs, however, had particular relevance to record and radio consumers in Cambridge (and Boston), where politics is a traditional sport and a pastime. The Trio's version of a song Hawes co-wrote as a local campaign song, "Charlie on the MTA," was even more popular than "Tom Dooley." [6] The song, which they recorded as "M.T.A.," has entered local tradition and is still popular today,

combining a catchy tune, references to Boston and Cambridge landmarks, and an incident used to dramatize the "name-recognition" of an individual candidate. [7] The Trio's significance to the Boston-area revival was the first hint of an early East/West musical link between centres of activity in San Francisco/Berkeley and Cambridge/Boston, a connection that is covered in the next chapter.

If nothing else, the Kingston Trio had many of the material and social advantages that the 47's members enjoyed; their success might have been imitated by any number of performers. They were not imitated, however, out of respect, but because the 47's collective ethos favoured avant-garde groups like the New Lost City Ramblers over groups like the Trio, who were too close to Top 40 appeal for comfort.

Another reason besides commercialism for 47 members to be less than enthusiastic about the Trio is that the group did not espouse the requisite ethos of historicism, continuity, and appreciation for tradition. In the opinion of many 47 members, the Kingston Trio tinkered with tradition far too much, creating a "slick" product. Thus, another of the group's legacies to the boom is that they helped to establish discussion of the tension throughout the revival between seeking alternatives to commercialism and consequent commercial success, a theme that resonated throughout the 47's history.

Part of the idealism of the revival was that it was popular and thus successful, but not necessarily commercial. Accordingly, folk music was supposed to be pure, transcending the laws of the marketplace. Ambivalence over the creation (and display) of wealth already had a long history in Puritan eastern Massachusetts. Commercialism struck at the core of the 47 community's literal and metaphorical Puritan roots. Wealth had always been a source of discomfort to those who generated large amounts of

money, yet those who often occupied themselves with such activities exclusively rationalized the effort under the guise of divine beneficence (Susman 42).

The word commercial connoted tainted dealings with money, that money was earned for its own sake simply to satisfy a crass profit motive. As musicians became increasingly successful—at the 47 and elsewhere—they hired managers to handle the financial aspects of their careers. Groups like the Kingston Trio epitomized the negative aspects of commercialism that generated huge revenues for its members, but carried the stigma of "selling out." One informant summarized the 47's collective viewpoint with symbolic and judgmental words like "Mecca" and "smelled" that internalized the 47's communal ethos. He recalled:

[The] 47 was mecca. That's where all the good stuff happened. There were other clubs that tried to get into the folk thing, but they always smelled commercial. They always smelled like somebody trying to make money. [8]

Nevertheless, besides helping to generate discussions about commercialism, like their rockabilly antecedents in the popular music industry the Kingston Trio also helped to shift the attention of the music establishment away from New York and into smaller feeder markets throughout North America, a pattern that had been practiced in the early days of record companies' scouring the cities and countryside for performers. New York was no longer the only place where stars were made. This point was brought home to Club 47 members soon after the Trio's early recording successes, when their own Joan Baez appeared at the invitation of Chicago revival singer Bob Gibson at the first Newport Folk Festival in July 1959, a year after the 47 opened, and then landed a recording contract with Vanguard Records in New York and soon decamped to California. [9] All sorts of traditions were being challenged by the boom—and Club 47

had a large role in that challenge, originally in the name of affinity with the past and with folk tradition, and with the philosophical debate over commercialism.

Within 10 years, the national revival that the Kingston Trio and the New Lost City Ramblers helped to launch was in decline and had been so for several years; Club 47 reflected that trend on the local level. Some people have attributed the beginning of the end to Bob Dylan going “electric” at Newport in July 1965. [10] Electric groups, however, became popular at Club 47 and at other stops on the evolving performance network among centres of revival activity soon after Dylan and the Paul Butterfield Blues Band played at Newport that summer. In fact, electric blues bands were booked at the 47 for sometimes up to a week along with nonelectric genres, both to relative success and the mutual bankrolling of each other. By 1965, the revival did not so much decline as diffuse into other popular forms such as electric folk-rock. The newer trend of fragmentation led to emergent folk music networks among enthusiasts of blues, bluegrass, old-time, and other music subgenres, who wished to stay unelectrified. Both trends were prevalent at the 47 in the mid- to late-1960s and are detailed in the music chapter.

As the 1960s progressed, regional distinctions also became less noticeable throughout the music scene. The United States seemed to shrink as folk-music (and rock) enthusiasts, in particular, emulated literary hero Jack Kerouac’s peripatetic and hedonistic ethos. For the folkies, at any rate, affluence and the fact that many 47 members had cars and money, gas and motels were inexpensive, and the United States interstate highway system was under construction all contributed to the sense of the two coasts becoming closer and the formation of a generational subculture. [11]

Already by the early 1960s, core members of the Club 47 community began to criss-cross the United States between Cambridge and Berkeley, in particular, rather than

fly off to European capitals for their holidays as they had done in the past, their domestic travels paralleling their interaction with domestic American music. [12] The movement was bicoastal, from east to west or vice versa, and often frenetic. Journeys were uninterrupted, except by the barest necessities, rather than leisurely sojourns across the country, stopping at scenes along the way. The music scene and the country had entered the McLuhanesque "global village." Village is a good metaphor for describing the history of Club 47, located within its small, cohesive, highly self-conscious milieu.

### *3.2 History of Club 47*

So what was Club 47 and how did it come about and why was it so important? In the late 1950s before Club 47 opened, two local coffeehouses already existed that were identified with revival activity and came to figure prominently in the 47's history: the Cafe Yana in Boston and Tulla's Coffee Grinder in Cambridge, although the latter never actually became a music club (von Schmidt and Rooney 14, 49, 54-55).

These venues attracted the "arty" crowd—young intellectuals interested in the visual and performing arts. In Boston, the Cafe Yana was right next to the railroad tracks in a rough-and-tumble neighbourhood in a soon-to-be revitalized area that was part of the "new Boston" urban renewal plan. The Yana is generally considered to be the forerunner of the 47 in terms of helping to form the nucleus of the community: "It was the other axis from Cambridge. Everybody who came from the other side of the river used to play there" (von Schmidt and Rooney 49). From the beginning, the Yana scene drew students from nearby educational institutions such as Boston University, the Massachusetts School of Art, the Museum School of the Museum of Fine Arts, and from across the river at Harvard, thereby juxtaposing the street-smarts of Boston with

the cultural and intellectual ambience of Cambridge. According to one participant: "It [the Yana] was a little more straight than Cambridge. Cambridge was a little academic, sort of Europeanish. We were a little closer to the Boston streets" (von Schmidt and Rooney 49).

At the Yana, and then at newer coffeehouses like the Golden Vanity and the Unicorn, both of which opened on the tail end of the 1958 boom, "the kind of music that was around was very academic, folksy, Elizabethan ballads" that attracted an intellectual bohemian crowd (von Schmidt and Rooney 49). "For them, finding a place in Boston where you could sing and play and listen to folk songs was like a dream come true" (von Schmidt and Rooney 49). The dream lasted for a decade. By the time Club 47 closed in 1968, it was the only venue of any consequence in Cambridge, while there were nearly a dozen coffeehouses in Boston whose schedules were listed in Boston Broadside, plus many more short-lived coffeehouses at the more than 50 colleges and universities in the metropolitan area. These establishments differed from the 47 in many ways, not least of which was their lack of identifiable participants, their constant turnover of patrons especially in the academic centres, and their general anonymity.

Club 47 existed over the 10-year span from early 1958 until early 1968 in two locations in Harvard Square. Known variously as the Club Mount Auburn 47, the Club 47, and Club 47, the establishment took its name from its original address: 47 Mount Auburn Street, Cambridge (von Schmidt and Rooney 134-135). An examination of the founding and structure of Club 47, which at first featured jazz not folk music, and of the material culture of the two sites in which the club existed serves to delineate further its history and create metaphors for its activities.

### 3.2.1 *Organizational Structure*

One of the most significant events in the 47's history occurred in mid-1958, when the fledgling venture was reorganized as a nonprofit educational institution chartered by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. During its first months of operations, the owners were charged several times with violating the City of Cambridge's antiquated blue laws by serving food and featuring music—mainly jazz—without a cabaret licence, for which the club was nominally shut down by the police with innuendoes of nonpayment of bribes and breaking up a beatnik hangout (von Schmidt and Rooney 17, 100-103). [13]

The 47 reopened as a membership operation, adding other cultural offerings to its jazz bookings. Membership was a thinly-veiled way of getting round city authorities and capitalized on the club's ties to the intellectual community. Yet membership became the single- and most-important fact that separated Club 47 from other revival venues and helped to create a community whose self-perceptions still influence how the 47 is defined and portrayed today. Eventually the owners added folk music, in part in acknowledgment of its faddish, avant-garde status and also to help attract new members to generate revenue to pay off the legal debts.

Initially, there were no intimations of a folk music emphasis when the coffeehouse opened in January of that year, a few months before the release of "Tom Dooley." Club 47 owners and founders Joyce Kalina and Paula Kelley, the latter an Irish-Catholic Cambridge "townie" by all accounts in interviews familiar with local folkways, were recent graduates of nearby Brandeis University in Waltham. They intended to create a European-inspired coffeehouse where people could meet for social discourse. The 47 was the first business venture for both women, neither of whom I have been able to locate. To them and to the intellectual community in and around the

Square, things European rather than American connoted chic sophistication (von Schmidt and Rooney 15-17). In addition to serving coffee and snacks, Kelley and Kalina were initially persuaded by student friends who were local amateur jazz musicians to devote their new venture to jazz, one of the few American art forms that Europeans admired.

Kelley and Kalina leased the venue's first site on Mount Auburn Street. A former antiques shop, the space was renovated at street level to accommodate a coffeehouse comprised of kitchen facilities, an area of tables and chairs for social exchange, and a space for musical performances and general audience seating.

After a second and more serious ambiguous encounter with the law, which closed down the club again and threatened its very existence, management of the venue was undertaken by a pro forma board of directors. The board had already been created as part of a general restructuring of the organization when its mission and future were unclear, even to the original owners. Board members, who favoured folk music exclusively, had participated in a kind of power struggle with the owners to keep the club open. Although I have been unable to determine the actual date, it was during the early period, circa 1959 or early 1960, that Kelley and Kalina eventually sold their interests in the 47 and its administration was undertaken solely by the board collective.

Folk wisdom asserts that adversity brings people together. Adversity created or strengthened the 47 community's growing sense of itself and through adversity the club gained the nonprofit status that is critical to its unique stature among great boom venues as a collective venture. These legal problems served to unite and increase the 47's sense of community as it was evolving into a folk-revival venue. After the second bust, local revivalists who had played informally at the 47 organized benefits to pay the club's legal fees to enable it to reopen. It was then that performers and audience both

began to refer to the club as a collective entity. Significantly, they referred to it possessively as "ours," indicating that it represented more to them than simply a music venue in which to pass leisure time (von Schmidt and Rooney 103). One prominent early member and performer, Jim Rooney, recalled, "When the police were hassling us...our defence made Harvard look like a poor second to Club 47, with our poetry and drama and film." [14]

The collective board upheld the 47's legal requirements regarding its nonprofit membership status, set admission policy, and hired salaried managers to oversee comprehensive day-to-day operations such as booking talent and running the kitchen at a profit. The board was involved in the business, but not the artistic, decisions. The artistic decisions were handled by the paid managers.

The board's role in the Club 47 was often regarded by other community members as that of older figureheads. Members theoretically could vote out the board, since they represented the collective community. According to one informant, the board had a "constant fear of a coup" and therefore held its legally-required annual general meetings at "like 6:30 a.m. on a Tuesday." [15]

Nancy Sweezy was one such older member of the 47 community who became involved at the club through her children and their friends. She was invited to join the board soon after it was formed:

You see, these college kids, they wanted some grown-ups on the board, so there were three or four of us who were on the board....I think it was a pretty pro forma board. Manny Greenhill [local activist and later folk-music impresario] was another adult person on the board, but I do remember having a couple meetings and there were issues discussed, but I'll be darned if I can remember what they were. [16]

One of the student members of the club saw the board from another, more idealistic perspective—as a reflection of the communal ownership of the venue:

You could say, which came first? Because it was a community, there was a sort of collective agreement that nobody owns this thing. We'll pick some upstanding people who we think will show up at board meetings. Or did a group of people say, we've got to keep this noncommercial, so let's be a board? [17]

A membership organization usually needs some means of communication.

Byron Lord Linardos, one of the better-known and longest-standing paid managers of the club, began his career in other coffeehouses in the area and is credited with designing and producing cleverly-illustrated monthly pieces that functioned as newsletters. Pieces included schedules of performances, notices of upcoming special events, and other communications to the community. [18] (Figure 3.1) By mid-1962, Club 47's first official statement of reorganization, which was updated periodically, was printed as boilerplate in the calendars and read:

Club Mount Auburn is a private, non-profit educational institution organized for the exposition of several art forms, including folk music, classical and modern music, theatre, films and an art gallery. All programs are presented in the setting of a coffeehouse to encourage informality among members and performers (von Schmidt and Rooney 135).

The board of directors, which was already in place, satisfied one of the legal requirements of a nonprofit corporation. Another stipulation was that people had to become members of the private club, so the membership policy was also printed on the calendars:

An application fee of 25c is payable by each prospective member at the time of his [sic] application. Dues for General Members are one dollar per visit. A General Member may bring and pay one dollar for one guest upon each visit. Payment for guests are [sic] credited to the member's dues. All memberships are effective for one year from the date of application (von Schmidt and Rooney 135).

Thus, membership in Club 47 was open to anyone willing to pay the initial fee in addition to a one-dollar admission charge every time they went to the club. The

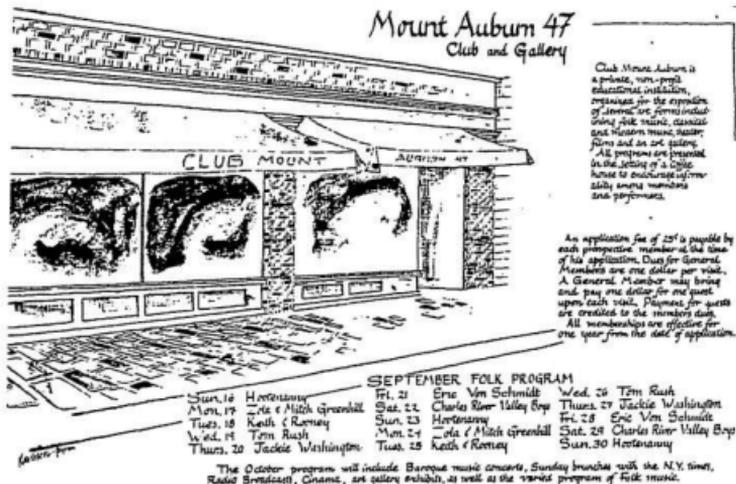


Figure 3.1. September 1962 calendar by Steve Karlsson and Byron Lord Linardos with Club 47's mission statement, membership policy, list of performers, and rare exterior view of the club. Used with permission.

concept of membership helped to strengthen the growing sense of community ownership of the 47. To some members, its idealism also diverted criticism about the club taking advantage of the commercial popularity of folk music. At other venues such as the better-known ones in Boston and New York, profits solely benefitted individual owners; at the 47, profits went into the collective coffers, an important distinction to the self-image of revivalists there. This nonprofit reorganization contributed to the 47's unique status among folk-revival venues, as well as more generally contributing to status markers that distinguished between insiders (members) and outsiders in a city that already had long been organized into highly-stratified social categories. Even Club 47's two buildings reflected the worldview of its community.

### *3.2.2 47 Mount Auburn Street*

The Mount Auburn Street location, a few blocks from the centre of Harvard Square, was situated close to several Harvard residences along and near the Charles River. At that time only male undergraduates lived in those residences, called houses and named for notable men in Harvard's, and Massachusetts', past. The houses functioned as microcosms of the university community and remain undergraduates' principal academic, and often social, affiliation. The Harvard community provided much of the club's early volunteer labour force, as well as its performers, its core audience and hangers-on, and its ambience.

The Club Mount Auburn 47 opened on 6 January 1958 with jazz performed by the Steve Kuhn Trio (von Schmidt and Rooney 13-15). Kuhn, the trio's leader, was a senior Harvard undergraduate. The opening drew unexpected praise from the local jazz press, which caused the owners to drop their pretensions to European influence. Immediately they changed tone and described the venue as "an American

coffeehouse...where one can relax, meet friends, and listen to progressive jazz" (von Schmidt and Rooney 17).

The only other coffeehouse in Harvard Square in the late 1950s was Tulla's, located two blocks away at 89 Mount Auburn Street (Caravan [February 1958]: 26; von Schmidt and Rooney 14-15). The March and April 1958 issues of Caravan, a self-designated folk music "fanzine" published in New York, described Tulla's as "the place where people gather" (April 1958: 28) on Mount Auburn Street "to contact fellow folkmusic [sic] fans" (March 1958: 27). When Club 47 opened, its menu read "jazz coffeehouse" (von Schmidt and Rooney 15), but within the year, the folk music crowd had moved from Tulla's to the 47, and gathered there instead for socializing and music. [19]

By late 1958/early 1959, management at Club 47 as it came to be called for short, had begun booking folk music two nights a week to increase business (von Schmidt and Rooney 35) and to acknowledge that new coffeehouses were also opening in Boston and elsewhere in the region to attract the growing audience for folk music. [20] Joan Baez was one of the first weekly featured performers at Club 47, although informal Sunday-night open-mike sessions had been instituted to introduce unscheduled performers. Baez was becoming known to local audiences in part through her performances at Tulla's and at the Golden Vanity. [21]

One informant who was soon to graduate from Harvard was less influenced by the new folk music craze that was attracting younger students to coffeehouses than he was by jazz. Describing how founders Kelley and Kalina invited local Harvard students like himself to help renovate the club from an antiques store to a coffeehouse, he also commented on the venue's new emphasis on folk music and offered an instance of memories being conflated through time:

In 1958 the location of what was to be Club 47 was an old second-hand store. I am not sure whether it was used furniture (I think so) that was sold there. The location was taken over and a number of undergraduates including myself were enlisted to repaint the rather shabby premises and some used furniture to set up the new club. As I remember we painted everything black. It is also my memory that the first performers at the new club were my roommate Steve [Kuhn] and his group, which played modern jazz, and they alternated nights with a young folksinger from Boston University named Joan Baez. It seemed a bold venture then. I used to go hear Steve, but who knew that Baez person anyway? [22]

Club 47 is closely connected with the development of Baez's image and career, a point that is taken up at length in the music chapter. [23] She was the 47's first star, but she offended her fans and colleagues by swiftly gaining fame and expecting a star's reception whenever she returned to Cambridge. [24] Her stardom, nevertheless, helped to coalesce the community's awareness of its group ethos and prompted its first public rumblings over commercialism's consequent and inherent problems.

Nonetheless, it was as a result of Baez's Club 47 and Newport appearances that Club 47 began to gain national recognition in both the popular press ("Sibyl with Guitar," Time [23 November 1962]: 54+) and folk-revival publications, another factor that contributed to its growing stature as an important venue. Contrary to a legend perpetuated in Israel Young's "Frets and Frails" column in Sing Out!, Club 47 was not started as a platform for Baez. Young wrote that "Joan Baez is singing in every nightclub in the Boston area. Club 47 in Cambridge was started only when she agreed to sing there at least once a week" (April-May 1960: 38). Baez wrote an account of her Club 47 debut in her autobiography, which was accompanied by one of the few available interior shots of the early club:

I was offered a job singing at Club Mt. [sic] Auburn 47, a jazz club in the middle of the square [sic] whose owner wanted to convert it, on Tuesdays and Fridays, into a folk club to accommodate the changing times. I was to be paid ten dollars. [25]

Folk music was one of several additions to the club's cultural offerings, but clearly the major one. With the change to nonprofit status, the board instituted the film series and poetry readings, which were not very popular or lucrative, but helped nominally to maintain its charter (von Schmidt and Rooney 17). More importantly, the attempt to diversify beyond folk music confirmed that from its early existence, the 47 community perceived itself more of a local cultural centre than other Cambridge coffeehouses and attempted to book activities that suited its members. The film community, for instance, that gathered at the 47 is another aspect worthy of study. Several people went on to work with Andy Warhol and other avant garde film-makers in New York. [26]

Four years after incorporation as a nonprofit, the Mount Auburn 47 "Club and Gallery" programme for September and October 1962 listed along with its membership policies "Baroque music concerts, Sunday brunches with the N. Y. times [sic], Radio Broadcasts, Cinema [sic], art gallery exhibits, as well as the varied program of folk music" (von Schmidt and Rooney 135). These offerings clearly were secondary to its reputation for folk music. Few informants can remember spending much time organizing (often unpaid) or attending these events, particularly daytime ones during weekday classes or jobs or weekend ones after late-night, post-club parties, but they remember the music. [27]

Ironically, in an atmosphere hostile to commercialism, Club 47 organizers instituted folk music in its first year specifically to help make money. By the time the Mount Auburn Street location was primarily associated solely with folk music in late 1959 and early 1960, the club comprised one floor at ground level and a basement. The street-level entrance was next to plate-glass windows that sometimes were covered by curtains. The windows again reinforced the sense of status by distinguishing literally

and metaphorically between insiders and outsiders. When the windows were uncovered, nonmembers as well as members waiting for admission could see, but not participate, in the activities inside. All that separated them from the insiders experience was paying money at the door.

Audience/members waited outside to enter, queued up on the pavement alongside the building, which they bitterly resented, especially on winter nights. Part of the reason for these long waits was due to door personnel checking membership cards, settling accounts, and signing up new members. A mark of status for favoured regulars and some musicians was the ability to enter the club without waiting. Even higher status was connoted by those who never bothered to become Club 47 members because, as acknowledged leaders of that community, they perceived themselves above such mundane concerns. Jackie Washington, one of Club 47's most popular performers, recalled that the only time he dealt with "the door" was once when he went to see Baez, with whom he had a long association from working together in Boston and on the road. "Being able to sweep in the door was a big deal," he said, "so I swept." [28]

The public interior changed its focus somewhat with the emphasis on folk music. There was one big room with a partition in one corner for the kitchen; the remainder of the street-level area was devoted to performing and audience space, which uncomfortably accommodated about 100 people. [29] There was a simple sound system that included a microphone for the performer(s) and two speakers. One speaker was mounted on the wall over the entrance and the other was suspended in one corner. The stage was quite modest; performers were elevated a few inches off the floor in a corner or against the wall, in the early days connoting their only slight elevation within the community. Audience—the club's members—sat at tables in an arc around the

performer or in chairs in an arc configuration fanning out to fill the remainder of the room, judging from the few published photos. [30]

Club management and performers, who considered themselves in a separate category when they were not booked to perform, stood along the walls. This freedom of movement connoted yet additional status, where individuals could move among and mix with the audience, work behind the scenes, or even help themselves to free food and coffee in the kitchen.

The basement was the same size as the street-level public and kitchen space upstairs and contained washrooms and an area for musicians to warm up and relax between sets. Except for the washrooms, the basement demarcated space between the core insiders, who mixed with the musicians, and the audience, most of whom were considered de facto outsiders once they were within the confines of the venue itself and therefore acted and were treated as fans. Arthur Krim was one such audience member. He grew up in the suburbs and, while a student at a regional university, gravitated to the 47 because he was learning to play the banjo. He observed:

It was very obvious that there was an upstairs and a downstairs reality to Club 47 and there was very much an in-crowd and social scene going on there....The sense was the basement of the downstairs was sort of open if you felt inclined enough to go down. I mean, they didn't exactly encourage it but on the other hand, they didn't discourage it either. So you felt that if you really wanted to learn or be interested in whatever music was being played, you could go downstairs and talk to the performers if you had the guts and the wherewithal to seek your way down there. Because when the performers came on stage, there was a very obvious audience/performer relationship. There was no official interaction. [31]

The increasing distancing between performers and audience grew out of the growing success of the 47 as a revival venue and, by 1962, its perception by performers as the foremost place to play in the Northeast. The 47 was becoming a victim of its own

success; it was functioning as a community centre and as a folk revival business. It needed more space to accommodate larger audiences and to generate more revenues, yet its move to larger quarters was the result of a situation beyond the community's control.

### *3.2.3 Move to 47 Palmer Street*

In October 1963 the club moved to Palmer Street, its second and final location. The move was prompted by the cancellation of the lease at 47 Mount Auburn Street, when the building's owner wanted to expand his next-door business into the club's space, partially to disperse the frequent crowd scene outside his shop. At Palmer Street, the Club 47 community continued and even formalized its established patterns carried over from Mount Auburn Street of social interaction, of musical performances and other cultural offerings, and of management style.

Selection of a new location required some decision-making by the board and some research to find suitable quarters. Members wanted the venue to remain in Harvard Square. According to board-president Sweezy, "It wouldn't have made any sense to move it somewhere else," but she acknowledged that "there was a lot of grumbling, you know; it involved change." [32]

The club was moved to Palmer Street, an alley-like street between the two buildings that comprise "the Coop." The Coop was (and is) the Harvard Cooperative Society's department store and the commercial hub of Harvard Square merchants catering to the academic community and then one of the leading retailers of recordings for the fast-growing folk-music audience. [33] The increasing interdependence between the coffeehouse and the marketplace added, of course, to existing tensions over commercialism.

Club 47's new premises were in the cellar of an old brick building, one flight down a set of exterior stairs from the street. Half-storey plate-glass windows took up most of the long exterior wall at street level. Eventually full-length French doors were cut into a narrower side wall, which opened at basement level onto a walled terrace. As at Mount Auburn Street, these windows were only sometimes covered, allowing outsiders to observe members' activities within. The board petitioned the city and the post office to redesignate only the cellar's address as 47 Palmer Street. The request was approved, further demonstrating the growing influence of the organization and its individual overseers, which had come a long way from a scruffy club often shut down by the Cambridge police in its first year. [34]

The Palmer Street site's rectangular space had to be renovated to accommodate a kitchen, washrooms, performers' warm-up area, and stage, as had been done on Mount Auburn Street. The stage was long and wide, parallel to the street-side windows. The single level of these subterranean premises made it necessary to maintain even sharper distinctions between musicians and audience members. This distancing trend was becoming pervasive at other venues and festivals as the revival gathered momentum and there developed increasing institutionalized distinctions between performers and fans, distancing them from each other. Musicians warmed up in a small room at the back of the club near the kitchen and washrooms. There was no room to entertain visitors. Members still waited in queues outside the building, even though management instituted two discrete sets per night—and charged accordingly—to try to accommodate the larger audiences. [35]

Seating approximately 150 tightly-packed patrons, the new location accommodated a larger audience than did Mount Auburn Street, which in turn helped to finance more expensive acts, many of which came to the 47 by the mid-1960s as part

of their travels on the revival network. By the mid- to late-1960s, the majority of visiting acts were groups, which tended to be more expensive and required more space. The wider stage and more sophisticated sound system were necessary for such groups, some of which had five or more members and, after 1965, often included electric instruments. In addition, groups that came out of the 47 community like the Charles River Valley Boys and the Kweskin Jug Band had long-established local followings and also attracted new fans in their travels and festival appearances, all of whom had to be accommodated when they became Club 47 members.

Many informants consider the move to Palmer Street a turning point in the club's history and look upon it unfavourably accompanied as it was by a fifty percent rise in membership dues to \$1.50. As president of the board in 1963, Sweezy was chiefly responsible for details of the move. She articulated the sense of loss that the move created, but also noted some of the gains afforded by the new premises:

Most people thought it [Club 47] diminished when it moved....It certainly was in a more physically attractive place—or we made it very attractive.... I thought it was wonderful. Lots of people did and kept coming to it, but some particular spark that had been there from the very beginning was beginning to play out all of it. This is perhaps a normal institutional thing. This simply does happen after a while. It's not new. It's not so exciting. It's got wonderful things going on in it, but it's not that "oh God, we've invented the world" kind of thing anymore. [36]

John Cooke of the Charles River Valley Boys remembers:

The new 47 on Palmer Street didn't have the big basement and the back room, the Green Room—we didn't call it the Green Room. The back room where the performers warmed up was barely big enough to take your overcoat off and open your guitar case. When the Charles River Valley Boys were in there trying to tune up, it was full. It wasn't as hangoutable as the other one, but it was a good performing space. [37]

From the audience perspective, the relocated venue seemed to be run in a much more formalized professional manner that denied the old informal contact with the

musicians. The thrill of defying status markers was lost in the move along with the basement. Krim also recalled:

Then...the 47 moved to Palmer Street, which we all felt was a terrible loss and it never was the same again because there was no basement. You just had this crowded little anteroom where the musicians would practice, but you were never allowed in, so in order to contact the musicians, you had to meet them in the tiny little narrow corridor. [38]

The loss of the basement at Palmer Street symbolically and physically marked the transition from the hierarchical, yet more homogeneous, in-group days of Mount Auburn Street to a more egalitarian participation in the larger great-boom movement. The Palmer Street era also marked the venue's institutionalized transition from the regional scene in its first few years there to its increased role in the bona fide national scene by mid-1965.

By the mid-1960s the club was well integrated into the folk revival network. According to Jim Rooney, the club's manager in the mid- to late-1960s, professional musicians wanted to perform at Club 47 more than anywhere else in the area, but they also wanted to be paid the highest fees possible to cover travel costs and even the expense of small entourages. He recalled that it often was difficult for him to outbid other venues in booking acts and accommodating their escalating fees, often negotiated by managers who also had to be paid. Some performers appeared only once or just a few times before their fees priced them out of the smaller and more intimate Club 47 market. [39]

Clearly Club 47 was flourishing in the second half of its existence from 1964 to 1968 as a major player in the great boom. Virtually everyone involved in any aspect of the revival knew about it, from those who attended festivals at Newport; or regional gatherings such as the Galax fiddle festival where traditionalists and revivalists exchanged techniques; or even folk-rock festivals like the 1967 one in Monterey,

California. All of these festivals had direct links to the 47. [40] For those who did not or could not attend the 47 itself, its musical activities were covered in national revival publications.

All these successes notwithstanding, it was at the Palmer Street location that Club 47 was closed in April 1968. Financial strain, personnel changes, a small club versus the bigger venues, the rise of concert performances and festivals, and the inability to compete with the sophistication of the music business generally were cited by several principal informants as reasons for Club 47's demise. [41] The national revival had been in decline for several years and Club 47 mirrored that trend. Besides, newer networks were developing among musical subgenres, which helped to segment the formerly catholic musical community. [42]

Likewise, the demographics of the club were also a factor in its closing. It cannot be overlooked that the decline was tied to the transitoriness of the local university milieu as people were literally growing up, taking on adult responsibilities, and moving into new stages of their lives after years in and around the revival scene. Rooney's observation that "by the time we all found out we were part of something, it was over" sums up many people's experience at the club. [43]

Nevertheless, when Club 47 closed permanently on 27 April 1968, the folk music press was stunned and wrote of the event in obituary fashion. "Nobody can really believe it, but Club 47 is dead," noted Alan Rotman in Boston Broadside (28 March-9 April 1968: 14). Happy Traum, a New York singer/guitarist who had played at the 47, lamented the loss of another intimate setting for folk music and wrote that the 47 was "...home to a group of young and talented performers who 'grew up' there and later made their name on a national or international scale" (Sing Out! [August/September 1968]: n.p.).

Club 47 had a strong sense of place, community, and the role of music in that milieu. For example, there are elements of traditionalizing in its history. Its own members and participants helped to create its legend, which the revival press reaffirmed. Like lost youth, members are loathe to let go of that era of their lives and demand some remnant of its presence in the present.

One informant commented, "Club 47 was a total catalyst. A catalyst in the truest sense of the word--that makes something dynamic happen." [44] Club 47 was indeed a catalyst--first mostly in Cambridge and Boston, and then on the regional and national scenes. For 10 years, its members fostered much musical activity there which is still part of the narrative history of the local folksong revival. It is an examination of how that community gathered and functioned within the Mount Auburn Street and Palmer Street sites that is the subject of the next chapter.

## Notes

1. Thanks to Neil Rosenberg for many discussions and suggested readings to help refine my thinking on this point. Many of these sources have been cited already; others appear throughout the bibliography.

2. These radio and printed sources were mentioned in interviews with James Field, David Gessner, Jill Henderson, Arthur Krim, and Will Moore.

3. Interview with Betsy Siggins Schmidt, 29 August 1991. Sonny Terry had, in fact, worked in medicine shows (Oliver, [Blues Fell](#) 147).

4. Robert Cantwell expands on the song's history in his revised essay, "When We Were Good: The Folk Revival," that appears in [Transforming Tradition: Folk Music Revivals Examined](#). An earlier version of that piece was published in the book that accompanied the "Folk Roots" exhibit. Thanks to Neil Rosenberg for letting me see the revised work, which includes information from an interview Cantwell did with Dave Guard before Guard's recent death.

5. Interviews with James Field, 24 and 26 July 1991. "Goodnight, Irene" was at the top of the charts for 13 weeks in 1950 and sold two million copies (Clarke 1221).

6. As testimony to the song's place in popular consciousness, it was featured as one of 15 trivia questions about Boston history in a quiz in the [Boston Globe Calendar](#), 17 September 1992 (p. 14).

7. "Charlie on the MTA" was written by J. Steiner and Bess Lomax Hawes as a campaign song for Walter O'Brien, who ran for Congress on the Progressive slate in 1948 and for mayor of Boston in 1949. Hawes also spent some of her formative years in Cambridge before she embarked on her own revival singing career and later, in the family public-sector tradition, as head of the Folk Arts Programme of the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington, from which she retired in 1991. The M.T.A.

referred to the Metropolitan Transit Authority, now known as the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. The Kingston Trio's song was on the charts for six weeks beginning in June 1959 and rose to #15 (Whitburn 183.)

8. Field interview.

9. That was not her first recording, however. In early 1959, before Newport, she had recorded on the Veritas label in Cambridge with two local singers, Bill Woods and Ted Alevizos, on an album, Folksingers 'Round Harvard Square (von Schmidt and Rooney 42-43). Gibson recalled his memories of the Boston and Cambridge scene and of meeting and working with Baez in 1959 in a radio interview on Dick Pleasants's Folk Heritage show on Boston's WGBH-FM on 4 July 1992.

10. It is traditionally recounted that Dylan was booed off stage for playing an electric guitar after his acoustic set. That legend, however, does not correlate with any of my interview data from at least half a dozen informants who were there, including Annie Johnston, who was working backstage that day. Nor does it correlate with Murray Lerner's film, Festival, in which he recorded a significant portion of the crowd responding positively to Dylan. Lerner's own memories of the event, which he discussed at a public screening of his film in Boston in August 1991, affirmed his documentary evidence.

11. These attitudes and information were gleaned from interviews and discussions with Debbie Green Andersen, Earl Crabb, James Field, Annie Johnston, and Geoffrey Muldaur.

12. Interviews with John Cooke, James Field, Geoffrey Muldaur, and Tom Rush.

13. Interview with Jim Rooney, 19 July 1990.

14. 1990 Rooney interview. The board became well-entrenched fairly quickly. A memo dated 14 December 1962 from Betsy Siggins about performers' fees refers to

"officials of the club" and is used to date this item, along with chronology extrapolated from von Schmidt and Rooney's book. The tone of the memo indicates that by then, Siggins was well installed in booking and paying musicians, and in running the kitchen. Thanks to Fritz Richmond for locating this item, which is the only one I have seen with the fee structure for that period.

15. Interview with Tom Rush, 15 April 1992.

16. From 1991 interview.

17. Field interview.

18. Calendars were sent to Club 47 members, as well as to the press and to folksong archives. Boston Broadside often published a reproduction of the calendars if they arrived in time for deadlines, which usually was not the case, so the line-up was dictated to them over the phone. The Archive of Folk Culture has the most extensive, although incomplete, set of calendars I saw in my research, which were sent to librarians Rae Korson and Joe Hickerson. The collection is supplemented by calendars donated by musician Michael Cooney, formerly of Arizona and now of Maine, who performed at the 47 and presumably received calendars to keep abreast of what was happening there.

As time went on, 47 members such as travelling musicians like Cooney or one-time visitors who did not live in the area nonetheless received the calendars to keep informed. (Thanks to Neil Rosenberg for sharing his collection of mid- to late-1960s calendars after he became a 47 member during the 1966 AFS Boston meeting.) At least two informants who performed at many venues across the country credit Linardos with pioneering the calendar idea in its illustrated format. The 47's monthly calendars, now artifacts of the period, were also copied by other venues. From interviews with Jim Rooney, Ron Cohen, and Rita Weill Byxbe. Arthur Krim sent me a copy, for which I am

grateful, of a calendar similar to the 47's in design that was produced for the former Idler Club in Harvard Square. The Idler began as one of Harvard's theatrical clubs and by the 1970s featured folk music, including many performers who used to appear at the 47. The Idler closed as a musical venue in the late 1980s and its building was demolished.

19. Tulla's is the place where Joan Baez's father first took her to hear folk music in Harvard Square. Accounts of Tulla's appear in DeTurk and Poulin's American Folk Scene and also Caravan beginning in summer 1957 through 1958. One of the few photographs of Tulla at her coffee grinder is published in von Schmidt and Rooney's book, page 14. Information also gleaned from an interview with Peter Johnson, 28 August 1991; and letters from Peter Tishler, dated 29 December 1991, and Andrew Warshaw, dated 3 January 1992. I have been unable to locate Tulla or determine when her operation closed.

20. One of these regional venues, the Moon-Cusser in Oak Bluffs, offered "folk music on the Vineyard," according to its flyer. The Moon-Cusser attracted many members of the Club 47 community who summered on Martha's Vineyard, an exclusive colony off the coast of Cape Cod, Massachusetts. Thanks to Annie Johnston for locating the flyer, along with flyers from defunct Boston coffeehouses. Coffeehouses that antedated the 47 besides Tulla's were the Turk's Head on Beacon Hill and the Cafe Yana in Kenmore Square, both in Boston. Those soon were followed by the Golden Vanity in Kenmore Square, the Ballad Room in Park Square, and the Unicorn by the Fenway, all in Boston.

21. Also from an interview with Tom Rush.

22. Warshaw letter.

23. The rock and roll press linked Baez and Rush with folk music's image. For instance, in Rock of Ages: The Rolling Stone History of Rock and Roll (New York: Rolling Stone P/Summit, 1986), the authors described the "genuine Boston [sic] sound—that of an acoustic guitar in the hands of someone like Joan Baez or Tom Rush or any of the musicians who moved in and out of Club 47" (407).

24. Gleaned from a close reading of von Schmidt and Rooney and from interviews with Debbie Green Andersen, Jackie Washington, and Betsy Siggins Schmidt.

25. And A Voice to Sing With: A Memoir (New York: Summit, 1987) 53.

26. I appreciate Andrew MacEwen first bringing this to my attention in our interview of 10 June 1991.

27. From interviews with Nancy Sweezy and Betsy Siggins Schmidt.

28. Interview with Jackie Washington, 24 March 1992.

29. Information gathered from interviews with John Cooke, James Field, and Arthur Krim, and from diagrammes by Field and Krim. The present managers of the Thai restaurant would not allow me or Krim, an architectural historian, to take measurements or see the nonpublic areas.

30. One of the few photographs of the Mount Auburn Street interior appears in von Schmidt and Rooney's book (pp. 40-41), a larger version than that reproduced in Baez's autobiography. Boston Broadside ran a cover photo of front-desk personnel on its issue dated 26 June 1963.

31. Interview with Arthur Krim, 30 July 1991.

32. 1991 Sweezy interview.

33. Information from Jim Rooney and Nancy Sweezy. For greater discussion of these commercial points generally, see Stephen N. Gottesman's, "Tom Dooley's

Children: An Overview of the Folk Music Revival, 1958-1965," in Popular Music and Society 5 (1977): 61-78.

34. Sweezy interview. By the bye, the 47 Mount Auburn Street address no longer exists. The current (1993) occupants use the address 45 1/2 Mount Auburn Street. Passim's, the erstwhile successor to Club 47, has also inherited the 47 Palmer Street address.

35. 1990 Rooney interview. I have also been unable to get information from Passim's proprietors.

36. 1991 Sweezy interview.

37. Interview with John Cooke, 18 January 1992.

38. Krim interview.

39. 1990 Rooney interview. Long before the move, an association with Club 47 often connoted success to performers, such as Dylan's attempts to be booked there.

40. Monterey's links to Club 47 included John Cooke's involvement in the subsequent film of the event by D. A. Pennebaker of Cambridge, Cooke's organizing gigs for the Charles River Valley Boys in San Francisco and Los Angeles after the festival, and Baez's appearances there.

41. Interviews with Betsy Siggins Schmidt, 28 August 1991; and Rooney and Sweezy.

42. Thanks to Neil Rosenberg for many discussions on this point.

43. 1990 Rooney interview.

44. Field interview.

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## CHAPTER 4

### CLUB 47 AND COMMUNITY:

#### SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND SOCIAL HISTORY

##### *4.1 Setting the Scene*

Club 47 members were the antithesis of the Redfield-esque definition of a folk community, which usually is characterized as a rural, agrarian, unsophisticated peasantry. [1] Folklorist Richard Bauman has suggested that studying “expressions of cultural differences” rather than similarities is one way to determine how groups assert their identity. [2] This approach has been useful for studying aspects of Club 47 in relation to other centres of revival activity that informants mentioned in interviews, including activities in nearby Boston.

The Club 47 community exemplified Ben-Amos's definition of folklore. At the club, small-group interaction helped to formulate a collective social and musical aesthetic wherein Club 47 members used music as a means of uniting themselves into a community with a common worldview. Those I interviewed held many different roles in the 47 community and many discussed, often at length, the function and meaning of the club in their lives. A pattern began to emerge, however, whereby music often was secondary in their accounts, an occurrence that is very much in keeping with Club 47's early history that inadvertently reinforced community solidarity against antagonism. This secondary role for music was particularly true in interviews with the women who worked behind the scenes throughout the club's existence supporting the musical performances on stage—predominantly by men. [3]

Two quotes exemplify the perceived—and actual—cohesiveness on which the 47 community was based. One informant commented that “[We were] all Cambridge people....We were really a family.” [4] Another described himself as “half a townie”

when he matriculated at Harvard, thereby having a foot each in Cambridge's town and gown worlds. [5] Many early Club 47 members were already in situ in Cambridge; elsewhere, people frequently relocated themselves from other regions to be part of a scene, such as in New York or Berkeley, the two scenes informants used for comparative purposes to distinguish themselves from elsewhere.

Thus Club 47 was a self-conscious subculture created and nurtured by the great boom. Bruce Jackson's definition of a folk-revival community fits the Club 47 experience, for its members were indeed "seeing and hearing folk music performed in a real context, a real community, that of the folk revival" (202). In effect, Club 47 was helping to create a modern-day "city upon a hill" for the revival scene. Its rhetoric of nonprofessionalism within the professional music business was compatible with certain prevailing generational attitudes that were concerned with antimaterialism and broad-sweeping social change, including new definitions of communal association. Cantwell defined the great boom by its generational affinity and characterized it as a reflection of its times:

[It was] neither reactionary nor revolutionary, though it borrowed the signs of other such movements and subcultures to express its sense of difference from the parent culture. It was, instead, conservative, or more precisely, restorative, a kind of cultural patriotism dedicated to picking up the threads of a common legacy that the parent generation had either denied or forgotten, and weaving them into the present (Folk Roots 176).

Some Club 47 members began to play stringed instruments—especially guitars—and make their own music or perfect techniques they already knew with the encouragement of fellow community members. Themes from folk forms like blues and bluegrass that elaborated on common emotional, sexual, and even metaphysical experiences suddenly had a relevance that rock and roll lacked. New forms of folk music, such as electric blues and jug band music, which often were thought to be best

experienced with drugs, were discovered in the boom. One musician, who was a member of Club 47 and a student during the early 1960s, elaborated on these connections:

It's perfectly clear to me from this perspective that American rock and roll stemmed from the folk boom. The folk boom was what got people to pick up instruments and do it themselves as opposed to pop music that was liked by teenagers and young people in the '50s. We didn't know the Everly Brothers. We didn't know the black artists. We didn't know Elvis Presley. They weren't our contemporaries. There were people buying 45 rpm records and dancing to them and boogying during the '50s, but we didn't know who the people who made the music were. What happened in the folk boom was that some of those same kids and younger versions who were coming into their later teenagehood and their early 20s in the mid-'60s began to pick up the instruments and began to do it themselves. It's what I call the birth of Do-It-Yourself American Popular Music. At first, it was folk and when the influence of the Beatles and the British Invasion came full force, everybody in America—a lot of people—started playing a different kind of music. [6]

The idea of membership—in a generation, a subculture, and a community—was a critical concept at Club 47 and symbolized a world ordered to members' specifications. The 47 was a club with its formal membership policy, physical premises, paying members, organizational by-laws, board of directors, and annual meetings. Members were identified by wallet-sized cards signed by a club official and were sent monthly calendars of events to keep them informed. For them, membership transcended the more amorphous commercial concept of single-event consumer, to whom other local coffeehouse owners and concert promoters appealed in advertisements.

The physical structure at 47 Mount Auburn Street functioned as a symbol of membership within a musical and academic milieu, and within a subculture. Informants continually referred to "going down to the club" as a social activity; the 47 literally gave them a place in the world and, moreover, a place of their own creation.

One member who sometimes worked there defined the feeling: "Cambridge was very secure because we were seeing each other day after day, about 40 or 50 of us." [7]

Two other members, one a nonmusician and one who became a musician at the 47, spoke of the club's role as magnet for like-minded individuals, emphasizing the social, rather than musical, aspects of the place. The first wrote, "Being around the Club made everything that followed possible. It was certainly my social hub and I made many life-long friends there." [8] The latter observed:

It was the musical centre from which a lot of us went out into the world and a lot of people went out and became national performers from there.... The main thing for me was that it was the centre of the social scene from which I made all my friends of the longest standing. [9]

The 47 was formed at a time when people were experimenting with what are now called lifestyles, and forming lifelong social relationships. They also were developing attitudes and values in early adulthood that many still hold in middle-age. In mid-twentieth century American culture, youth is prolonged well into the third decade of life, the 20s. Young people of university age, both those at university and those who hang around university communities, often substitute quasi-family situations for the families they have left behind. Dynamics at the club paralleled or mimicked family structures, with their authoritarian figures who held power and determined the rules under which the others acted. At the 47, authority figures were the paid management rather than the board. They determined who was admitted, that is, who among members paid at the door and who did not; what acts were booked; and the overall tone of the club, such as rules barring drugs and alcohol.

Who were the members of this community/symbolic extended family? The majority of Club 47 members came from New England or the northern Atlantic seaboard, according to informants. Many were from families that espoused liberal

social and political causes. Some members had parents and grandparents who had been involved in earlier folksong revivals. By the mid-1960s, this cohort was joined by like-minded people from other regions who had heard about the concentration of musical and related activities in the area. One informant said, "Things were different in Cambridge. The Guitar Was It! Cambridge brought preppy and nonpreppy kids together." [10] Although I do not have statistics on gender ratios at Club 47, men far outnumbered women according to both the women and men I interviewed. My fieldwork reinforced that observation; in terms of total informants, men outnumber women two to one. [11]

Nearly all of the 47 members I interviewed were born between 1938 and 1943, immediately prior to and during World War II, and well before the postwar baby boom. They arrived at university at the very end of the 1950s or by the early 1960s. They had the greatest influence on the club because they were the most numerous. As a group, many of them came from a highly-structured background of preparatory schools and summer camps that exuded privilege and reflected established patterns for teenagers and young adults of living outside traditional family situations. Many were known to each other and had been functioning in cohesive groups for most of their young lives. For them, Club 47 was an extension of a network established at schools and camps.

The Mount Auburn Street location encapsulated this world and Club 47 represented an expressive outlet for them. It was the first time these young people as a generation were making their own music or encouraging and supporting those who did. They benefitted from the forms established by their elders, such as links between beat poetry, jazz, and coffeehouses.

Intellectual--and musical--standards were high. For many members, schooling was the only world they knew. The intellectual stimulation of learning something new

was appealing to this sophisticated and well-educated group. It gave a dimension of relevance and personal experience to their formal studies. An informant who was a student and musician at the club described "the essence of the folk boom experiences" in terms of its social and musical components. He described it as "the sheer exhilaration of learning and playing great music. The opening up of life, the joys, sorrows, fears, craziness, competition—all of it." [12]

The cachet of privilege prevailed at Club 47 because of the social profile constituted by its early members, who personified the most desirable traits of the establishment. The Northeastern liberal elite represented the epitome of the American Dream, which connoted upward social mobility, education, and political and corporate power. Immigrant and nondominant cultures that valued education and the status it conveyed aspired to send their children to northeastern preparatory schools and universities, many of which are located in and surrounding eastern Massachusetts.

Not surprisingly, one distinction that no one mentioned in interviews was class, since it is a taboo topic in New England. To be sure, members of the Club 47 community exemplified material privilege, although class distinctions certainly transcend material wealth. Club 47 members obviously represented an elite group, even in Boston and certainly to observers outside the region. They were distinguished from patrons of other local coffeehouses by consciously or unconsciously trying to emulate a certain "Proper Bostonian" ethos, the signs of which were recognized by the initiated in class-coded Cambridge, where Proper Bostonians frequently are educated. [13] Class and the strong sense of place were predicated on the rootedness that comes with ancestral tenure in one place over time; with social homogeneity; or with the more amorphous sense of cultural entitlement due to attitude, background, and education.

Many university subcultures are transient, lasting only the length of time it takes for members to earn a degree. The case in Cambridge is different, but not unique. Students often become addicted to the academic environment of the area and settle there permanently after graduation, or stay on for graduate and professional schooling and then seek jobs nearby.

Club 47 owed its success to the interplay of students in and around Cambridge and Boston with nonstudents attracted to the milieu. Nonstudents gravitated to Cambridge. There was a degree of diversity of age and experience, if not equal geographical representation, in Harvard Square in the early 1960s. Several universities in the area on both sides of the river had active music scenes that fed performers and audience into the Club 47, which they considered to be the acme of the local scene. A student from a university west of the city, who began frequenting the 47 in the early 1960s as an avocational musician, observed:

You sort of presumed that everyone was at Harvard or maybe MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology] or BU [Boston University] and that was probably the most obvious set of connections. I mean, you presumed intellect and you presumed sifting of the material you were hearing. I mean, that's what you went in for was the experience of hearing authentic music either by people like Dock Boggs [a southern banjo player], who actually had been discovered—rediscovered so to speak—or by people who had listened to the old records enough so that they could interpret the material for you in very high style. In good order. That's really why I was there. To hear the music as a musician. I had been playing guitar since '55 or '56 at camp. I certainly was aware of what I was hearing. What the 47 was offering was the southern blues scene. That's really what they were functioning as—as a northern outpost of southern folkloric discovery music. [14]

Technically, Club 47 was open to everyone. In reality, few "townies" from Cambridge or Boston joined. Some who did were local students at less prestigious institutions or others who hung out with their Harvard Square friends at the 47, thus

becoming part of the approved network. [15] Most people's experiences with Cambridge townies were with those who generally were working-class nonstudents. They harassed the club premises and some of its members in its earliest days, forcing the management to take precautionary measures. [16]

Most of the memories I'm talking about are not things like division over the [Vietnam] war and the kind of split that was really noticeable in the country all over. It was more basic background, basic culture. The townies would walk through Harvard Square or Harvard Yard and whoever talked first, you know, "You townies something or other," and they'd say [mimics accent] "Ah, ya Harvahd fairy."

The presumption [was] that the Harvard people are effete and certainly way the hell more liberal. That kind of stuff was apparent, but the split was not encompassed in the Club 47. The Club 47 was an oasis of at first, avant-garde coffeehouse with jazz, and then on the leading edge of the wave with the folk revival.

The thing that's a little hard to explain is that the presence of the university community had something to do with the energy in these places, but neither in Cambridge at the Club 47, nor in Berkeley at the Cabale and the group of people I knew out there, was the music scene intimately associated, integrated with the university community. We were in those towns because they were liberal bastions, perhaps, but we didn't think of them that way at the time. [17]

A New England profile also arose at the 47 in the early days as a consequence of the geographical and economic homogeneity of its members. Before the mid-1960s, few local universities attracted the majority of their students from beyond New England or the Northeast. There had always been some sort of geographical representation, but attitudes then did not reflect today's ideas about diversity creating a truly egalitarian student body. The late 1950s and early 1960s was still the era of all kinds of quotas.

Thus cultural, racial, and economic diversity were often only intellectual concepts to privileged members of the 47 crowd who had little or no social exposure to people vastly different than themselves. They knew the music of the under-represented, but few had direct experience of the cultures that produced it. One person

who typified the privileged Harvard student of the early 1960s said that elite culture appropriated folk cultures for various reasons:

It's because they do that that a lot of very middle- and working-class sentiments get preserved. I know that trying to sing your way back to a simpler time and a simpler way of life is also a lower-class or a classless idea. You're singing about absolutes that sort of surpass class. But to cut to the chase...you could sort of, you almost could name the people. Ninety-nine point nine is too high a percent for the number of privileged upper-middles. There were some working-class kids sprinkled in there, I think maybe even one in 10 because their brains had gotten them to BU [Boston University] or to Harvard or BC [Boston College] or whatever. [18]

The distinct university tone lasted throughout the 47's existence, long after early members graduated. Undergraduate Tom Rush and other 47 members who emceed the show later, publicized the 47 and its performers on the radio show, The Balladeers, on Harvard's WHRB-FM station, which was broadcast beyond the campus. [19] The Charles River Valley Boys, most of whom were Harvard students, played concerts in the college's student residences in addition to their performances at the club. Students organized their studies around their schedules as performers or spectators. Some were overwhelmed by the 47's growing influence on their lives and suffered the consequences, ranging from fairly minor reprimands for violating curfews to dismissal for poor academic performance. [20]

Club 47 was both envied and disdained, especially for its predominant Harvard affiliation. In the early 1960s, Harvard seemed to be involved in a national celebration of itself. Boston-born alumnus John Fitzgerald Kennedy was President of the United States and filled his administration with fellow alumni. The Harvard ethos of noblesse oblige, wit, and sportsmanship pervaded the youthful tone that Kennedy brought to Washington. That milieu, dubbed "Camelot," was itself a highly-romanticized instance of antimodernism, a larger version of the local Robin Hood festivals.

Perhaps more importantly, Kennedy personified the traditional American Dream that was both castigated and glorified in song. Education and wealth gained through industry and the consolidation of political power were united over three generations to elevate a member of a persecuted immigrant group to the highest office in the land. It was the epitome of the Puritan ideal adapted to modern circumstances, and a local version of the traditional Irish challenge to Yankee hegemony. Harvard in the early 1960s was scrutinized by the press and the American public for clues to its symbolic meaning to the country. [21] Elsewhere during the revival, topical singer-songwriters challenged that establishment worldview, but not at Club 47.

Class issues also clouded the social and cultural horizons of some 47 members. A cliché often applied to the long-reaching hand of Harvard—"the best and the brightest"—is appropriate in this context. People became the best they could be within a community that valued quality and the pursuit and achievement of quality. For some people, being part of the scene gave access, however ephemeral, to the social aspect of wealth and privilege that came with achievement. A musician who had a high-status role in the club as one of its most successful performers, but who came from a nondominant ethnic culture, noted that Cambridge had a "teflon" quality to it. People could interact with, emulate, and strive to become just like the "in" crowd, but ultimately they could never really be accepted or belong to that group. [22]

Another regional and more egalitarian social link was forged between Jack Kerouac, one of the best-known beat writers, and his intellectual descendants at the 47. His 1957 book, On the Road, was an underground classic and foreshadowed the bicoastal peregrinations of the 47 crowd. Unlike the privileged president, Kerouac was descended from poor French-Canadian immigrants who arrived in Lowell, 30 miles north of Cambridge, at the turn of the century to work in the textile mills. His family

did not achieve wealth and power, yet Kerouac himself personified a different aspect of the American Dream—that of the eternal, romantic drifter.

Like the cowboy, the drifter flouted every convention that Puritan idealism represented, and rebellion symbolized the transcendence of convention. One person I interviewed described the early 47 community as "the Kerouac crowd in Cambridge," and the club as a social centre "to find friends a little more hip" than school friends. [23]

Photographs of early events at the 47 show members dressed in the trendy, collegiate look then called "Ivy League" that today is dubbed "preppy." The "Ivy League" look connoted socioeconomic attitudes as well as fashion statements. It was a conservative-looking style of dressing that followed conventional rules of its own design determined by the prep-school educated upper classes and emulated by others.

The same informant who, above, was looking for friends hipper than her privileged school friends, was adamant that "we were very preppy," but added that under the late-1950s beatnik influence, a tone of rebelliousness was conveyed when "we started wearing black and we started wearing bluejeans." [24] Those events, she noted, converged just when folk music was beginning to supersede jazz at the 47.

#### *4.2 Component Parts of Social Organization*

One way to study the 47 community more specifically is to look at its component, nonmusical aspects. The daily social organization of the 47 scene reinforced group identity and contributed to defining and supporting the musical expression that was played out on stage at night. The following subsections profile significant aspects of the social scene that informants considered contributory to Club 47's strong sense of community.

#### 4.2.1 *Drugs*

Primary themes from the 47's communal re-creation of the ethos of a generation can be summarized in a cliché describing the 1960s: sex and drugs and rock 'n roll. Rock and roll dominated the years immediately before and after the great boom flourished. Rockabilly singers were a strong influence on a significant segment of the 47's membership immediately prior to their university-era years. Folk music, by contrast, had the immediacy of seeing oneself or one's peers performing songs that spoke to common, communal experiences.

The discovery of forms of folk music by the 47 crowd came at the same time that members were discovering their autonomy and independence from parental authority, and experimenting with new sexual relationships and spiritual endeavours. Some of these experimental behaviours were induced and enhanced by drugs and the drug culture that Harvard researcher Timothy Leary and his colleagues were expounding in Cambridge in the late 1950s (von Schmidt and Rooney 212). [25] Drugs also served as a way of determining insider/outsider boundaries and uniting community members through these illicit behaviours. Marijuana was the most pervasive drug used by community members, although some also used LSD, speed [methadrine], and a variety of barbituates. Heroin, largely associated with the New York demimonde, was virtually unknown except for its use by visiting musicians; and cocaine was probably present, but never mentioned specifically in interviews. [26] One person recalled:  
For us at the time what divided our in-group with all the outs was hip versus square. Hip meant a certain involvement with psychedelic drugs and that kind of music and increasingly that lifestyle that later came to be called hippie. It was beatnik in the beginning. That was certainly something that I aspired to. [27]

By the early 1960s, drugs were still an underground experience for most members of the 47 community (von Schmidt and Rooney 168-71, 212, 268). A former

waiter and photographer at the club, who frequented the Mount Auburn Street premises nearly daily, said that drugs were absent there and at postperformance parties, partly because Betsy Siggins [Schmidt] was "down on dope" and her influence prevailed over a sort of "collective responsibility" to keep the club from getting busted and members from being hassled—a form of harassment that many recalled vividly. [28]

Drugs did not "hit the streets" in Cambridge until early 1963, leading to "the Cambridge Dope Paranoia" and "an unreasonable fear of the authorities" (von Schmidt and Rooney 171, 268). A nasty drug bust at the Cafe Yana in March that year, which involved several 47 members, prompted some people to curtail their usage or even to leave town. [29] The paranoia was real, but apparently short-lived, and more people than ever before began using drugs. By late 1963, drug use had increased in frequency and importance within segments of the Club 47 crowd to the point that its use was expressly forbidden in the new Palmer Street premises by manager Byron Linardos; "nobody would risk closing the Club for a joint" (von Schmidt and Rooney 212).

Yet members of the Kweskin Jug Band saw themselves as proselytizing "leaders" in a "family" that was determined to push the limits of conventional behaviour among their fans (von Schmidt and Rooney 187). They said one of their "functions" was "to turn people on" wherever they went as a way of heightening the "life experience" of living on the edge musically, socially, and culturally. One former band member told me his perception of such an experience that combined drugs, music, and unconventional activities, and summarized the do-your-own-thing ethos of the counterculture:

So for me, which isn't the case for everybody, but for me, a lot of it got sort of [into] the drug culture or the booze culture thing. There were people who were involved in that way as well, which was an important part of my life. It was all caught up in the blues kind of thing where

you're playing pool at night, staying up all night, living my life, playing music, [fades]. For other people it wasn't as important. [30]

#### 4.2.2 *Separate Spheres*

Women and men constituted separate spheres at Club 47. The male-dominated, public performance tradition prevailed throughout the club's existence. Most of the men I interviewed completed their studies; most of the women did not. Women were the nurturers. They worked behind the scenes running the kitchen, waiting on tables, and booking the talent, but always supervised by the club's male managers. Outside the club, women continued to nurture the community and support public performances. Many fed and housed local and visiting musicians, took care of their own and others' children, and frequently hosted after-hours parties. [31] Photographs of some of these parties published in von Schmidt and Rooney's book reveal that even when women performers were present, they did not entertain. Only men were pictured with their musical instruments playing to the assembly or jamming with each other.

Betsy Siggins Schmidt was the most prominent woman to emerge from behind the scenes at the club. By 1962, she was responsible for booking the talent, in addition to supervising the kitchen, the club's only other source of income besides performances. She was married to Bob Siggins, leader of the Charles River Valley Boys (CRVB) and a full-time student. The CRVB often played up to half a dozen times per month and were accused of using their connection to Schmidt for their frequent bookings. In fact, their popularity and regular bookings were testimony to club members' growing interest in bluegrass, but this example reveals attitudes about insider/outsider relations among community members, some of which have not lessened with time.

As musical systems at that time, bluegrass and blues, the most popular forms at the 47, were sexist in their lyrical themes and in their roster of performers. There were

no local women bluegrass performers at the 47. Blues was nearly the same. Maria Muldaur, for instance, had performed publicly as a fiddler and singer in her native New York City before she arrived in Cambridge. Once there, she eventually became a member of the Kweskin Jug Band primarily because she was married to another band member and she soon ceased playing the fiddle. Moreover, she no longer performed solo at the 47 or elsewhere during that time. When asked where the women were at the club, one male performer said:

In a few cases they were performing. They were being girlfriends, lovers, and wives. There was almost always some women around, but the performing circle did tend to be men, but not exclusively. Even in bluegrass. Bluegrass is kind of a male form of music.

Now where were the women you said? In the case of Betsy Siggins [Schmidt], there was at least one woman who was definitely controlling the scene. Or we all felt like she was. Sometimes I wonder. She's probably so sick of hearing that. She always had a very forceful personality. Just a very forceful personality....One of the reasons she could do this [exert her power at the club] is she had a straight-from-the-shoulder thing that we almost always associated at the time with men. She could outswear anybody. She had this real kind of acid sarcasm that I associated with male humour. So I think probably a lot of women distrusted her. I know a lot of performers carried grudges, you know, "It was Betsy Siggins's fault" that they didn't get dates. I'm sure they're right.

In other words, I'm sure there's real evidence. All these people couldn't have made it up. And I do know that she's the kind of person, she seemed like the kind of person, that if you got permanently on her bad side, she could make it tough for you. But she knew what she was....She was the most visible woman.

Then there was, of course, the star, Joan Baez. But she was earlier. The first star of the Cambridge folk thing. There was Maria [Muldaur], whom I knew when she was still Maria D'Amato.... There's somebody who had entertainer's genes. [32]

Women themselves have conflicting points of view concerning their roles.

Favourable accounts may be coloured by revisionist history and romanticism of the past. One informant who characterized herself as an "involved observer" since she was

not a musician said, "women were treated as equals and emerged as equals." [33] This contradicts every other account I gathered from women performers and community members in a variety of roles.

Schmidt herself was involved in the 47 until it closed. She came from a prominent, old-line Boston family that culturally were used to making, not adhering to, the rules. For a while she studied theatre at Boston University, travelled abroad, and under other circumstances probably would have developed her own performing career. Schmidt said that women were oppressed and the 47 management knew it and capitalized on it. The American women's movement was not yet organized, but things were slowly beginning to change. She attributed the growing awareness of drugs, mostly marijuana, to breaking down barriers between male and female roles because women were "allowed" to take drugs. [34] Even with fewer barriers between women and men, men still made the rules. Schmidt recalled:

No pay cheques unless you were slaves in the kitchen. And he [manager Byron Linardos] whopped you. It was as if it was the only thing on the planet that mattered. It was whether the kitchen could produce \$100 worth of profit every night. And if you did, he was nice to you. And we were still for all our black clothing and our riding on the backs of motorcycles, we were still oppressed women and Byron knew it and took real good advantage of it. And played one woman against another woman. He was very manipulative. [35]

When asked to elaborate on her views of women's roles and of the total scene, Schmidt contextualized her comments within the social expectations for women of the early- to mid-1960s:

It was pre-breakdown of that. It was pre-women's liberation. It was right on the cusp of all that. All the drug-taking that went on was at the beginning of the breakdown of that. I see it as really--because women were allowed to take drugs. I think the beginning of the sexual revolution. All this was before the door opened.

You look at someone like Maria [Muldaur], who came out of Greenwich Village so she had that advantage. She had an eclectic coffeehouse childhood. She came from straight Catholic, deep Italian stock and because she grew up on Spring Street, there was less to rebel against. She had much more of her own kind of aura about her, which is what made her so attractive in those early days. She was very young, but she was an accomplished fiddler. She could sing the shit out of old-timey music and gospel ballads and there was a lot of respect for that. She was provocative and she was sexy and she was engaging, but she really stands out to me as one of the women of that period, although she wasn't allowed to sing on her own and she worked through the Jug Band. She was much more of a person and a musician and had real confidence than a lot of other women.

Joanie [Baez] was going through hell then. She was psychologically in and out of shrinks' offices. And she had a real hard time with her identity. She was very forceful on stage. Very forceful on stage, but in my memory she did not, she was much more immature than Maria, but to look at them you might not see that. That's my own perception because I knew the pain that Joanie was in. She had a hard time giving. Joanie was in a place where she needed so much. But that place on stage was where she felt good about herself and that was really a driving motivation for Joanie.

Debbie Green [an early performer and source for several people's repertoires including Baez's] was always sort of in the background, kind of a follower, very emotional, very unsure of herself. Lisa Kindred [a revival blues singer], she was just a mess. She had a great big voice, but she was so fucked up. She was already into drugs. She died, didn't she, of an overdose?

And then there was Dayle Stanley [a local singer/guitarist]. Any idea of whatever happened to her?...She had a great voice. She was a real townie. She was probably--let me just say I'm only guessing. My sense is she was probably as mismanaged as anybody who might have come down the pike because she was this little girl from a little town with a big voice and learned to play a 12-string [guitar]. If she could read I would have been surprised. Now I'm exaggerating that, but that was the kind of person she gave off. Everybody wanted to manage her and everybody wanted to make her a star, and I think nothing happened to her. [36]

The board of directors advertised the 47 as a "club and gallery" in Boston Broadside when it began publication in 1962. [37] Part of the reason for the gallery was to increase foot traffic during the day and to have the venue live up to its charter. [38]

One woman board member recalled that the gallery operation, like many of the financially marginal ones that included daytime children's concerts and Sunday brunches, depended on unpaid or grossly underpaid labour, mostly by women. [39]

Not all divisions of labour fell along gender lines. Distinctions between musicians and enthusiasts or between semiprofessional versus avocational performers determined the work each performed and whether or not it carried monetary compensation. Nonperformers generally worked behind the scenes in roles such as board members, management, food preparation and service, and maintenance. Besides musicians who were paid for their performances, the only people who earned money from the 47 coffers were the managers, who oversaw all aspects of the day-to-day running of the club including booking talent, and the kitchen and waiting staff, most or all of whom were enthusiasts. Some members, particularly enthusiasts and aspiring musicians, volunteered for maintenance duties or were paid token wages for their work simply to enable them to feel more involved in the organization. [40] Between 1965 and 1967, Jim Rooney was the only paid manager who was also a performer.

The major role of the audience was to provide a financial base of support for the club. They also had a key role in determining the aesthetics of the club, which is discussed extensively in the next chapter. At one time, Club 47 had ten thousand members on the books, although "only 3,500" were hardcore members, according to Rooney, who managed the club during its most successful period in terms of generating money and audiences. "They all felt they had a piece of that place," he said. [41]

Audience members represented various backgrounds. Most were folk-music enthusiasts. Others were avocational musicians who aspired to perform on their own and consequently participated in Sunday-night open-mike and off-stage jam sessions.

Regular musicians often turned up to hear visitors or to socialize with friends on the nights they were off.

Audience members and musicians together also took care of their own, another crucial aspect of community life that reflected the local history of philanthropy. When Jackie Washington was assaulted by the Boston police in a racially-motivated incident, Club 47 community members organized a benefit concert to help defray his legal and medical expenses (Broadside [11 January 1963]:3). Another time the board voted to give him a grant of money from club funds to pay his college tuition fees after a family tragedy, acknowledgment of his stature within the community. [42]

#### *4.2.3 Sense of Place and Sense of Self*

Both of the 47's sites had symbolic meaning and marked the club's transition from a predominantly local scene to being part of the great boom's national network. The venues created and fostered a sense of place for the 47 crowd within larger contexts, and members of the community also began to define themselves according to activities in and surrounding the club. These activities ultimately led to multifaceted perceptions of and by the 47 scene primarily in Boston, in New York, and in Berkeley.

The connection between folk music and economic viability was evident throughout the history of the 47 and other coffeehouses. An unsigned editorial in Boston Broadside dated 11 January 1963 (n.p.) noted:

Places like the Club 47 and Cafe Yana [in Boston] are primarily successful for the entertainment they present. Others...rely on the quality and variety of their menus, services, and atmosphere to attract their patrons....Folkmusic [sic] is the major presentation in coffeehouses because it makes more money than anything that has been tried....Modern jazz, classical music, movies, even dance have all been tried in this area with varying degrees of failure.

According to those I interviewed, one of Club 47's principal attractions both for performers and audience was its reputation for providing a variety of musical styles. This gave it cachet in contributing to the art scene and the cultural life of the area. These various styles were considered *avant garde*, even if they were traditional styles from the South imported or adapted for northern audiences. For instance, John Cooke of the CRVB observed, "We were learning [bluegrass] as they were learning to like it." [43] Whatever their source, at the 47 many musical styles were perceived to be new and different, and therefore in vogue.

The 47 scene was a unique blend of what Geoffrey Muldaur, guitarist, washboard player, and singer with the Kweskin Jug Band, called a "living art." [44] He attributed part of the 47 management's success with various styles to a sophisticated audience that was willing to support musical experimentation. He also cited the 47's lofty intellectual and performance standards, and its reputation for performers' unique approaches to their music in the folk idiom, which he said distinguished the 47 from other revival scenes, especially those nearby in Boston:

[The Club 47] was a sort of cultural pocket. Everybody there was very dedicated to this American folk tradition. But I think the thing that made it different, and the Jug Band was a good example of this, the thing that made it different was that people used folk forms even more so than in Boston. The Cambridge people used forms to express their own feelings. They weren't just doing folk music à la somebody else. So when I was out to play blues, I was out to be the best there was. In a certain way. Not just trying to imitate people. And I think that's the way most people were.

...There were people in Boston over there that were doing things like A. L. Lloyd [English singer and folksong scholar] did them or so and so did them. There were Irish players, there were Scottish, you know, and they were re-creating sounds. Over in Cambridge, there was a living art going on. [45]

In keeping with its academic milieu, from its beginning a sense of art and an aura of learning pervaded the Mount Auburn Street location, in particular, an ambience

that members said distinguished it from Boston coffeehouses and from those in New York. This intellectual atmosphere continued on Palmer Street and in activities sponsored outside the venue itself.

A number of people with whom I talked noted with pride that people at the 47 shared their knowledge of musical techniques and repertoire in many different ways. Boston and New York were more competitive than Cambridge, some said, and in those cities performers jealously guarded their livelihood. Purity of moral purpose and altruism were important to the self-image of many community members. "[The 47] was about generosity, studying, nonprofessionalism, even if [performers] went on to make money," said one of the club's most popular and successful acts. [46] Another musician observed:

The philosophy of the Cambridge music community as we saw it at the time, and I still think this is a reasonably accurate depiction, was sharing. Our image of ourselves was that we would share what we knew. The cliché of a New York musician was that he turned toward the wall when he played his best licks so you couldn't see how he did it. There really was some truth to these opinions. A lot of musicians came to Cambridge from other places, like Koerner, Ray and Glover from Minnesota...and later Bonnie Raitt, and they were welcomed and they felt good about this community and so they kept coming back. [47]

Unlike venues that attracted audiences for a single performance, the 47 had a community base; members often attended because of the social interaction, regardless who was the billed performer. Often, they became fans of the new musical forms they heard. Community members held club management to standards equally as high as performers' standards. Informants commented that they trusted the 47 management to book acts that would interest them, even if they were unknown performers or musical styles. Cooke, for instance, described the audience/performer interdependence as:

The thing that was good about the Club 47 from the very beginning is that in the beginning, the audiences were discovering music that they

liked a lot and so they were ready to listen to whatever the artist wanted to play. [48]

The idea of giving performers undivided attention developed at Mount Auburn Street, but until the 47's latter days at that location, most of the performers were from within the community or were regular enough visitors to be considered part of the local scene and had grown accustomed to such devotion. To visiting musicians, many of whom were used to playing at Gerde's in New York that served alcohol to talkative, nightclub-like crowds, the intensity and respect generated by the audience was a performer's delight. [49]

By the time the club moved to Palmer Street, the community had become much more egalitarian than in the first venue, and was recognized by both insiders and outsiders as an important market for the maintenance of the folk-revival network. Trends began and were played out there. Club 47 was beginning to attract students and hangers-on to Harvard Square in its own right, not just those who found themselves already there as students or folk-music enthusiasts. Palmer Street continued the tradition of a highly-intellectual "listening room," where people were still expected to pay attention to performers. [50]

The star system was only beginning to evolve during the latter days of the Mount Auburn Street era, where the two floors symbolized the social stratification and perceived exclusiveness of the club. By mid-1963 performers began to come to Cambridge via quasi-official networks. Until then, those who functioned as regular stars emerged from the local milieu. They were students like the CRVB who had "graduated" to playing regularly and frequently at the 47 or people like Maria Muldaur, Eric Andersen, and Mark Spoelstra, among others, who had relocated to Cambridge for concentrated periods of time specifically to participate in the Club 47 scene. [51]

Individuals might hold nonmusical day jobs that provided monetary support, but they identified themselves and were identified within the community as musicians. [52] Identification and popularity as a performer partially gauged the frequency of bookings. These factors also contributed to musicians' status and self-image, and their perception as stars within their own community. Their status also reflected well on those associated with them.

Not all Club 47 musicians, however, considered themselves to be professional performers, yet some began touring, making records, and were able to sustain professional music careers that earned them a respectable income if they travelled and increased their stature within the community. [53] Together, all of them were publicizing the club to fellow enthusiasts inside and outside the region, thus enhancing the 47's reputation and their collective status within the revival network.

Palmer Street also exuded sophistication through its underground, but much more obvious, links to drugs and the growing counterculture of the mid- to late- 1960s. Drugs were becoming more important by the mid- 1960s, both nationally and in Cambridge, partly as a result of the increased mobility of the 47 crowd that exposed them to new experiences. Drugs also influenced styles of musical performance and presentation, foreshadowing events to come. The 47's five-year tenure at Palmer Street reflected all kinds of local and national changes, and was marked by the inevitable upsets such changes brought to the organic community.

Its reputation for privilege and the indulgence of members' tastes exacerbated tensions between Club 47 and the half dozen or so Boston coffeehouses across the river, since the 47 was perceived as a social, as well as a musical, event. Few members left Cambridge for Boston venues unless they wanted to see a particular performer who was not appearing at the 47. [54] Judging by letters and articles in Broadside, Boston

houses resented having to play second fiddle to Cambridge, competing for bookings and audiences.

Prominent Club 47 musicians like Rush, Washington, and the CRVB, among others, played in Boston coffeehouses as well as in concerts and festivals. Many of them, after all, had gotten their start in Boston. Audiences, as consumers, then patronized Boston venues according to who was performing, showing loyalty to the musicians, not necessarily to individual venues. No one I interviewed—either musicians or audience members—displayed a loyalty to other venues like they did to Club 47, although many talked nostalgically about early Boston coffeehouses.

Jill Henderson grew up in an upscale suburb and participated in the scenes on both sides of the Charles River. Beginning in the late 1950s, she worked in coffeehouses in both scenes and later served as a sort of housemother to the 47 community in addition to her day job at a local university. She also noted the intellectual tone of the 47 and recalled that “In the beginning, people who played across the river [in Boston] tended to be less academic, but then we mixed it all up,” when many Boston performers like Washington, Rush, and Jim Kweskin began playing at the 47 and made it their home base, just as she did. [55]

Most informants, however, defined the 47 in terms of how it differed from the scenes in Boston and New York, such as the above account. Boston presented another market for Cambridge performers, yet many did not take advantage of it. New York, of course, was still the centre of the music business during the great boom. New York combined paradoxical attitudes towards the business of making music: either it represented commercial show business, which many of the 47 people found distasteful; or it was the pinnacle of professional achievement, which was measured by recording contracts, occasional television appearances, and national exposure. [56]

New York was equated with commercial success whereas Boston (which includes Cambridge in this emic context) connoted intellectual success. Even though musicians in Cambridge aspired to be exceptional performers, that did not necessarily correlate with aspiring to commercial success in places like New York, reinforcing communal values. Many were ambivalent about commercial and material success, again perhaps prompted by conflicting notions from a Puritan past and contemporary idealism. Contrasting Cambridge to the politically leftist scene in New York City, one woman who grew up in New York and was educated in New England observed, "We were innocent children in Cambridge," meaning that, to her, overt ideology was not perceived as indigenous, despite its long historical tradition there. [57] As a result, she described the music in Cambridge as more "informal and cosy, not like a staged show with a political agenda."

Politically-motivated performers like Pete Seeger, who had a large following in the area for his music, but mixed reviews for his politics, came from New York to perform at concerts, not coffeehouses, in Boston and Cambridge. [58] Another informant, reared in suburban New Jersey and educated at Harvard, echoed those observations. He summarized the distinctions between the two cities—again equating Cambridge with Boston in this context—and their respective emphasis on politics and musical integrity:

It is important to note the differences between the Boston and New York schools. Boston was obsessed with ethnic authenticity, while New York believed in demonstrating the brotherhood of man by singing every culture's songs in the same key and rhythm à la Pete Seeger. In New York, political bonafides were important. Knowing how to recreate a Doc[k] Boggs or Skip James lick was much more important in Boston. [59]

#### *4.2.4 The Cambridge/Berkeley Axis*

The scene that Club 47 members related to most was that in Berkeley, gathered around the local University of California campus. It was another centre of revival activity during the great boom, particularly so in its later years when performers there and in nearby San Francisco moved into folk-rock.

The largest concentration of former Club 47 members today outside eastern Massachusetts lives in and around Berkeley, where some of them have been relocated for nearly 30 years. Informants in both Cambridge and Berkeley referred to the "Cambridge/Berkeley axis" and "a pneumatic tube" between the two cities that suburban Bostonian Buz Marten was among the first to establish when he moved west in late 1960 or 1961. [60] Marten had played formally and informally as a soloist and in several duos and groups, and was one of the core personalities in the early 47 scene. He and Charlie Frizzell, who came from a neighbouring Boston suburb, each became magnets who lured other 47 members out to the Bay Area for visits or long stays, after they had settled there permanently and inadvertently created a Cambridge/Berkeley revivalists' network.

Cambridge and Berkeley have much in common as liberal, progressive, highly-intellectual academic communities. Both communities were also centres of avant-garde drug use, enlightened sexual mores, and extended adolescence through social approval of prolonged academic study or hanging out in such a milieu. One frequent traveller between the two scenes observed:

You have to remember that the thing that made Cambridge and Berkeley natural allies is that they're both university towns and university towns always have lots of stuff going on that isn't going on anywhere else. New York is New York, sure. Greenwich Village is next to NYU [New York University] and stuff like that, but it wasn't—the Club 47 grew up right on the edge of the college community. As I said, I became aware of it because walking from Leverett House [a Harvard residence] up to the

Square you pass right by it. I used to eat a lot in Tommy's Lunch....Right next to Tommy's Lunch was the Club 47. [61]

The Cambridge/Berkeley axis is commemorated in one of the icons of the era, "Humbead's Revised Map of the World," created by Earl Crabb and Rick Shubb. (Figure 4.1). The map is an imaginative depiction that has San Francisco, Berkeley, and Cambridge on the "East" coast and Los Angeles and New York City on the "West" coast. Massachusetts Avenue begins in a tiny Boston located in the lower right-hand corner next to Cape Cod, runs through Cambridge, and become Berkeley's Telegraph Avenue at the border. North Africa is a small area in the lower centre between New York and Cambridge, and "S[outh] E[ast] Asia" is even smaller and lies between Los Angeles and San Francisco. The "Rest of the World" is an island off San Francisco and Los Angeles. Nashville, an island off New York, is "accessible only by airplane from New York" (von Schmidt and Rooney 125). Surrounding the entire "continent" are hundreds of names of contemporary and historical folk musicians, singers, and enthusiasts.

Crabb, a Midwesterner, moved east to Cambridge after several years at Williams College in western Massachusetts, where he produced revival concerts during his student days. At the 47 he continued to be an enthusiast and was involved in much of the social life of the community. He discussed the concept of the Cambridge/Berkeley axis and how the map was created, barely changing his account in von Schmidt and Rooney's book (125):

I was in Campbell Coe's music store in Berkeley one day...Somebody came in and asked, "Do you know of anybody driving from Kansas City to Boston?" We thought he was kidding, but he said, "I've got a ride to Kansas City, but I need a ride from Kansas City to Boston." I suggested that it might be easier to put "Boston" on a sign and go down to the University and try for a straight shot.

He thought that was a good idea and left. But the other guy...said, "You know, that's absolutely right." I said, "I know. Berkeley and Cambridge are very close to each other and getting to Boston from Cambridge is very easy." I said, "Look here. New York and Los Angeles are the same way. People go back and forth between New York and

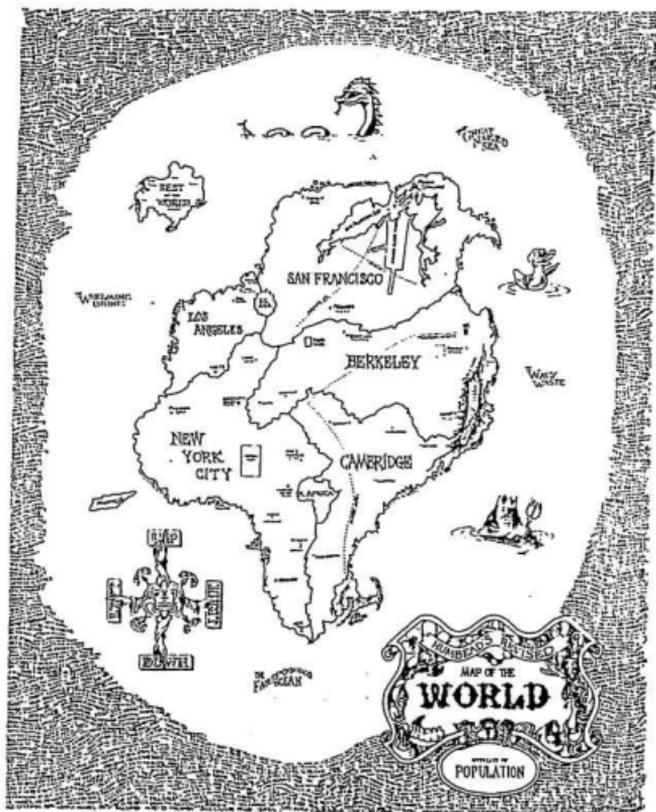


Figure 4.1. "Humbead's Revised Map of the World" showing the Cambridge/Berkeley axis. Created by Earl Crabb and Rick Shubb. Used with permission.

Los Angeles, but did you ever hear of anybody going from Berkeley to New York or from Los Angeles to Cambridge?"

I drew this little pie with four pieces. Berkeley and Cambridge were on one side. Berkeley to Los Angeles was there, and New York to Cambridge was there. So it was simple. [62]

One of the major differences between Cambridge and Berkeley was the lack of "class structure" that dominated the East. [63] Frizzell said that there was no sense of polarization or "pegging people" in Berkeley when he arrived permanently in the late 1960s. He described himself essentially as a "townie" at the 47; for him the club "was a conduit to something different." He waited tables there at night and apprenticed during the day to learn his photographer's trade and later became "court photographer" at the 47. He also hung out with the regulars and was very much a community insider by his own and others' accounts.

Annie Johnston, another informant who moved to Berkeley more than 25 years ago, also remarked on the social openness of the West in contrast to the East. Of all the people I interviewed, she had the most experience in several scenes. She grew up in the Midwest, was an avocational musician in New York, and "became a musician" in Cambridge inspired by the blues she heard there and at Newport in the mid-1960s. She makes the distinction, however, between her musicianship and being a performer, distinctions based on her profound sense of being an outsider at the 47 and feeling intimidated by insiders, whether the intimidation was real or imagined. For the first time ever, she said she realized during our interviews that it was only when she moved to Berkeley that she was no longer worried about performing. "If I'd stayed in Cambridge, I'd never have become a performer." [64]

#### 4.2.5 *Politics*

Despite tensions generated by elitism and status-markers, informants unanimously agree that overt political expression was absent at Club 47 throughout the 1960s. There were conscious attempts by implication to link Club 47 and other local coffeehouses to the Boston area's long history of political and social ferment (Gonczy 20). An unsigned editorial in Boston Broadside's issue of 22 February 1963 (5-6) tried to establish historical continuity between contemporary venues and eighteenth-century coffeehouses such as Boston's Green Dragon, where the Sons of Liberty met to plan, among other things, the Boston Tea Party as a tax protest against England.

Broadside's writer implied that modern coffeehouses were similar to "the establishments that were the haven of the intellectually elite at various periods of history," and tried to arouse interest in using coffeehouses for contemporary political organizing and social commentary.

A month later in Boston Broadside's first anniversary issue, Joe Boyd wrote a reflective piece about Boston (and Cambridge's) distinctive and historical role in the mid-twentieth century folk music scene. He concluded:

...all this coffee house [sic] and guitar business began about 20 years ago when the Lomaxes [John and son Alan] arrived in town with Leadbelly in tow and Woodie [sic] Guthrie soon to follow. The music of these two men and others like Big Bill Broonzy, Josh White and Brownie McGhee was "taken over" by the New York group of folksingers led by the Seeger family. [65]

In contrast to the New York scene that he implied preached an aggressive political agenda, Boyd cited Baez as a key figure in the already short-lived history of the great boom. She represented "a new approach to folk music which had been brewing in Boston for several years and was very different from the approach which has been so popular for so long" (10). Referring to Baez singing Child ballads or lyrical songs, he

continued, "Folk music has real potential as music and not just as [a] platform for liberalism."

Local participants at the 47 were not alone in noting the lack of political activism. William Lockeretz, a New Yorker who went to Harvard and played string-band music occasionally at Club 47 in the early 1960s, wrote:

I don't recall 47 [sic] being political. The major New York folkies were very political--not just the older generation I listed above [Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie, Earl Robinson, the Weavers, the Almanac Singers], but the new followers they acquired in the 1950s. The revival in New York to a large degree represented politically progressive people reacting to the setbacks under McCarthy and the sterility of the Eisenhower years, and trying to revive some of the spirit of the political struggles of the '30s, especially the big labor battles. It was very closely tied to the civil rights movement, the anti-nuclear testing movement, and other political causes. (However, in the late '50s, the influence of very good southern mountain instrumentalists and singers was being strongly felt in New York too; that influence sure wasn't political, and certainly not progressively political!) Maybe I just don't remember it that well, but I can't recall hearing topical songs in 47 [sic]. But I heard plenty of them in Gerde's Folk City in New York, which was the closest thing to the 47. [66]

Gonczy discussed the "predominantly white character" of folksingers in Boston, San Francisco, and New York, and of singers sharing "feelings" rather than political ideology (20-24). Gottesman called the early days of the great boom initially "apolitical" and said that college students turned to folk music for "musical and emotional expression," implying that such expression excluded political commentary (63-66). As late as one month before the 47 closed, the 13-26 March 1968 issue of Boston Broadside carried a piece by staff writer Eliot Kenin saying that "if you wanted to hear folk music you went to a political rally and heard Pete Seeger" (n.p.).

A number of informants recalled "almost nothing" regarding the 47's role in influencing political attitudes and activities. One representative view was:

Now, we were all in total agreement [against the Vietnam war]. There did seem to me—I don't remember anybody in the musical family who was counter to that. We were all politically correct without saying that. I don't remember anybody defending the war. Certainly, of course, no one would be against civil rights. That was in the blood. Some of the musicians were black and all the music was black. If you want to go back far enough, even bluegrass music wouldn't be there if Bill Monroe hadn't begun injecting blues notes in the music. [67]

#### 4.3 *The Community Diffuses*

Civil rights and the Vietnam war dominated the news during the mid- to late-1960s, but other more immediate things were on peoples' minds, too, all of which were reflected in activities at the 47. Nineteen sixty-seven was a significant year there. During that year two crucial actual and impending changes in personnel helped to contribute to the club's closing and a kind of dissolution of the community. In late 1967, Jim Rooney resigned as manager and board member to become a fieldworker for the Newport jazz and folk festivals. [68]

Also breaking continuity with the early days was the anticipated departure the following spring of Betsy Siggins and Bob Siggins. In early 1968, soon after the club formally closed, Bob Siggins completed his doctoral studies and the couple left for Washington, where Bob had secured a federal job in biochemistry research, for which he had been training throughout his CRVB days. Betsy Siggins drew on her management and musical experience with the 47 and the revival and landed a job with the Smithsonian Institution's new Festival of American Folklife, which had been launched the year before largely through the efforts of Ralph Rinzler. The Sigginses were quasi-parental figures and had been the glue that helped to hold the scene together from its earliest days. The prospect of their departure may have contributed to the disintegration of the community by prompting others to make definite plans.

The Jug Band disbanded about the same time, which von Schmidt and Rooney said "was the most obvious sign that the Cambridge/Boston musical community was breaking up" (301). Kweskin and his family had already joined the Fort Hill community. Other band members continued to perform in duos, in new groups, or found other outlets for musical expression. All of these changes mirrored changes in the larger world, where the counterculture subculture was growing and becoming more visible. In the mid-1960s Boston, like San Francisco and other cities, had launched its own underground newspapers, including Lyman's Avatar (von Schmidt and Rooney 294). Resistance to the Vietnam-war military draft was a growing political force; in the months prior to the 47's closing, pediatrician Benjamin Spock was on trial in Boston charged with aiding and abetting draft resisters. In April 1968, just weeks before the club closed, several U.S. cities erupted in riots following the assassination of civil rights leader Martin Luther King. Robert Kennedy, another one-time native son of Boston, was campaigning for the presidency; in June he, too, was assassinated. John Cooke summarized the feeling and attitudes of the time and the growing sense of confusion within the once-cohesive Club 47 community:

[Club 47] was enormously influential in getting a lot of people to come aboard. I mean performers and fans into the musical consciousness of the '60s, which was first folk and then later rock and roll and how music can convey not only emotions, but ideas about how life should be lived and stuff like that. Music changed politics in the '60s.

Between 1964 and 1968 popular music in the U.S. made it mandatory that the candidates in 1968 should be opposed to the war in Vietnam. I think that the political events of 1968, which was a catastrophic year and really hard to live through, knocked the stuffing out of the hippies, the music movement that was attempting to influence the world and politics, the whole—it was us. It knocked the stuffings out of us. It was too many body blows. The Martin Luther King assassination, the Kennedy assassination, the riots in Chicago, and then the election of Richard Nixon, it was like we were down to the count by the end of the year. [69]

Drugs continued to have a large role in this subculture. Psychedelic rock music was the rage and was offered in new venues like the Boston Tea Party, a nightclub across the river that could accommodate and afford large electric bands and dancing. Local radio stations switched literally overnight from classical to rock music. [70] The music in these new venues and on the air sounded more like offshoots of the music in Cambridge, and people related to it more closely, if more individually, than they did to earlier rock and roll. They now had a stake in it; it spoke of and for them. New local bands such as the J. Geils Blues Band, Earth Opera, and Seatrain had roots in Club 47. Canned Heat had moved to Los Angeles, but they also had local roots, and the group soon would gain national exposure at Woodstock, still further testimony to the diffusion of the Club 47 community.

Moreover, the centre of the rock music scene had shifted, along with the counterculture, to California. Cooke, for instance, was there as road manager for Janis Joplin's band and helping to film the Monterey Pop Festival in June 1967 that featured diverse performers as Baez, then folk-rockers Crosby, Stills, and Nash, and psychedelic rocker Jimi Hendrix. Afterwards, he arranged nearly a month's worth of appearances for the CRVB in Berkeley and Los Angeles that summer that included the Berkeley Folk Festival, the Jaberwock coffeehouse, and the Big Sur Folk Festival. At the Ash Grove in Los Angeles, the CRVB did the "world's first painted-face bluegrass opera." [71]

Core and casual community members alike were putting down roots in Cambridge, Berkeley, and elsewhere, and beginning to think of the next stage of their lives. Jackie Washington bought an old house in the Roxbury section of Boston, near the neighbourhood where he grew up. Nearby the Fort Hill community had purchased several houses from which they ran their various enterprises.

Many people I interviewed likened the 47 community to a family, but the time to leave the nest had come. For many that meant starting families of their own or providing stability for the children they already had, both of which connoted financial obligations. Some musicians no longer wanted to live on the road. Even those who were relatively affluent on their own needed additional income for a family. The community had, indeed, collectively matured and with it came new and different responsibilities and new networks and ways of relating.

Writing at the turn of the century in what could easily summarize the last days of Club 47—and even the great boom—Van Wyck Brooks observed, "The wildest dreams of Boston are the facts of San Francisco" (Wine 16). I would include that the same could be said for Cambridge and Berkeley, too.

Club 47 had provided a community for many people, at the centre of which was always music. Now, however, the song was over, at least until the 1980s, when the community began to regather itself, a story left for the epilogue. For now, it is time to examine more closely the music that was at the centre of Club 47.

## Notes

1. See Redfield's "The Folk Society," American Journal of Sociology 52 (1947): 293-308; and The Little Community (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1955).

2. See Bauman's "Differential Identity and the Social Base of Folklore," Toward New Perspectives in Folklore, eds. Americo Paredes and Richard Bauman (Austin: U of Texas P, 1972) 31-41.

3. From interviews with Jill Henderson, Betsy Siggins Schmidt, and Nancy Sweezy.

4. During our initial interview on 19 July 1990, Jim Rooney was the first to mention the recurring themes of the Cambridge-area roots of club members and their sense of themselves as a family. He said, "At first, Club 47 was all Cambridge people—Tom Rush, Jackie Washington, the Charles River Valley Boys, myself. We were really a family."

5. Interview with James Field, 26 July 1991.

6. Interview with Arthur Krim, 30 July 1991.

7. Interview with Jill Henderson, 15 August 1991.

8. Letter from Joe Boyd, 20 November 1991.

9. Interview with John Cooke, 18 January 1992.

10. Henderson interview.

11. Of the 80 informants listed in Appendix I, 53 are men and 27 are women; a 2:1 ratio of men to women.

12. Letter from James Field, 7 October 1990.

13. Cleveland Amory's The Proper Bostonians (New York: Dutton, 1947) is an amusing emic ethnographic view of Proper Boston (and Cambridge) culture. Many of his observations are as timely today as they were half a century ago. Comments about

elitism pervade von Schmidt and Rooney's book; see especially pages 189, 215, 220, 250, 267-68.

14. Krim interview.

15. From interviews with Charlie Frizzell, 11 January 1992; and Betsy Siggins Schmidt, 29 August 1991.

16. These included paid and volunteer bouncers at the door and a gun in the bottom drawer of the admission desk by the front door of Mount Auburn Street. From interviews with Earl Crabb, 19 October 1990; and Nancy Sweezy, 6 August 1991.

17. Cooke interview.

18. Field interview.

19. Harvard's radio station WHRB-FM did not have exclusive rights to Club 47-related broadcasts. In 1962, then-designated WTBS-FM radio at MIT at the other end of Cambridge broadcast the Saturday night performances live from Mount Auburn Street, often hosted by Joe Boyd. Boyd was Rush's roommate and subsequently became a record producer on both sides of the Atlantic.

20. From interviews with Cooke, Field, Geoffrey Muldaur, and Joy Kimball Overstreet.

21. One such intellectual and social history that looks at nineteenth-century sources for the Harvard ascendancy on both sides of the Charles River is Ronald Story's The Forging of an Aristocracy: Harvard and the Boston Upper Class, 1800-1870 (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan UP, 1980).

22. Interview with Jackie Washington, 24 March 1992.

23. Henderson interview.

24. Henderson interview.

25. Cooke interview.

26. From interviews with Cooke, Crabb, Field, Frizzell, Henderson, and Johnston.
27. Cooke interview.
28. Frizzell interview.
29. Group interview with Earl Crabb, Charlie Frizzell, and Annie Johnston, 11 and 12 January 1992.
30. Interview with Geoffrey Muldaur, 12 January 1992.
31. Interview with Joy Kimball Overstreet, 11 January 1992. Information on children and care-taking roles gleaned from interviews with Field, Schmidt, and Sweezy.
32. Field interview.
33. Notes from a telephone conversation with Jill Henderson, 27 August 1991.
34. Schmidt interview.
35. Schmidt interview.
36. Schmidt interview. As of early 1992, Lisa Kindred was still performing in Berkeley.
37. From my survey of Boston Broadside issues commencing March 1962 through summer 1968.
38. From interviews with Sweezy and Schmidt.
39. 1991 Sweezy interview.
40. Interviews with James Field and David Gessner.
41. 1990 Rooney interview.
42. Washington interview.
43. Cooke interview.
44. Geoffrey Muldaur interview.

45. Geoffrey Muldaur interview.
46. Washington interview.
47. Cooke interview.
48. Cooke interview.
49. From Joe Val's comments in von Schmidt and Rooney (139) and from Geoffrey Muldaur interview.

50. The idea of a "listening room" is from an interview with David Gessner, 13 August 1991. I am not sure the term was actually used at the 47. Passim's, the coffeehouse that superseded Club 47 at Palmer Street, is advertised as a "listening room."

51. From interviews with Debbie Green Andersen, Annie Johnston, and Betsy Siggins Schmidt.

52. From interviews with John Cooke, Geoffrey Muldaur, and Jim Rooney.

53. One study of country musicians and their markets contains a useful model for looking at the professionalization of Club 47. See Neil V. Rosenberg, "Big Fish, Small Pond: Country Musicians and Their Markets" in Media Sense: The Folklore-Popular Culture Continuum, eds. Peter Narváez and Martin Laba (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State U Popular P, 1986) 149- 66.

54. Of the people I interviewed, fewer than 10 percent regularly patronized venues other than the 47.

55. From discussions with Jill Henderson, July 1991.

56. These attitudes are gleaned from interviews and discussions with Andersen, Field, Johnston, and G. Muldaur.

57. Interview with Debbie Green Andersen, 20 February 1992.

58. From an interview with Buz [John] Marten, 11 January 1992. He said Seeger played at Symphony Hall in Boston and at Harvard's Sanders Theatre in Cambridge.

59. Boyd letter.

60. Buz Marten was the first to mention the "Cambridge/Berkeley axis" by name in von Schmidt and Rooney's book, page 121. Charlie Frizzell referred to the "pneumatic tube" in our interviews.

61. Cooke interview.

62. Interview with Earl Crabb, 12 January 1992.

63. All quotes from Frizzell interview.

64. Johnston interview, 12 January 1992.

65. See Boyd's article, "And It All Started Here" ([Boston Broadside](#) [8 March 1963]:10).

66. Letter from William Lockeretz, 30 March 1992.

67. Field interview, 26 July 1991.

68. 1990 Rooney interview.

69. Cooke interview, 20 January 1992.

70. Information on the Boston Tea Party from 1990 Rooney interview.

Regarding the switch from classical to rock music, one such event occurred on the Ides of March 1968 on Boston's WBCN-FM radio, usually rated by Arbitron to this day as the city's most progressive station. The event is still commemorated by an annual - air birthday party, which usually includes former 'BCN disc jockey Peter Wolf, who played at the 47 in its last years as part of the group, the Hallucinations. Wolf and Steven Bladd, the other member of the duo, became better-known as members of the J. Geils Blues Band, the original name of that group.

71. Cooke interview, 20 January 1992.

## CHAPTER 5

### MUSIC AT THE CLUB 47

#### *5.1 Introduction*

During the 1960s, music played a crucial role in helping a generation to communicate and bond as it defined itself within American society. It is ironic, although predictable, that the music of the folksong revival, which was considered to be an avant-garde alternative to popular commercial forms of music like rockabilly and rock and roll, came to be the popular commercial music at Club 47 on which the venue's fortunes and reputation were founded. Club members often were aware of and ambivalent about this inherent irony, in which they packaged much of their music and its attendant markets in the same cultural images of the forms they rejected.

This chapter examines the nature, influences on, and patterns of the music at Club 47 to describe the music culture that emerged and was synthesized from the intellectual investigation and appropriation of musical expression drawn from other eras, regions, cultures, and classes in America. [1] How Club 47 participants negotiated these influences and dichotomies, how they created new genres and standards of aesthetics, and how they interacted with aspects of the folksong revival are the themes of the following sections.

Folk music as a stylistic form based on reinterpretations of traditional and commercial musics began to dominate bookings at the 47 by 1959, partially in response to a collective perception of the vacuity of Top-40 music and partly as a trendy investigation of new kinds of popular music. One person I interviewed spoke for many when she declared that the "folk music" performed at the 47 "was the popular music of the time." [2] It followed the first wave of rockabilly and flourished until late 1963, when the "British Invasion" by the Beatles, Rolling Stones, and other seminal groups

began to lead to still newer fusions of popular music, some of which came out of Club 47 itself.

American rockabilly and the "British Invasion" both were influenced by and drew their sources from black American music; both used acoustic or electric stringed instruments and both influenced the styles and repertoires of many performers at the 47. [3] Each is a metaphor for phases of the 47's history that marked the beginning and the end. Rockabilly marked the early era, when musicians were raw and learning their trade, often informally, at Mount Auburn Street. The "British Invasion" coincided with the 47's relocation to Palmer Street, where its music community later integrated acoustic and electric folk music; and created, perpetuated, and presented newer interpretations of it. These newer forms integrated influences from the folksong revival and drew on the counterculture and other trends in American culture. [4]

Musical performances were the driving force of Club 47 and a music culture, parts of which I discussed in the previous chapter, grew up around them. From the beginning, performances at the 47 functioned to separate life into sacred and profane segments. Performance time was marked off "from the flow of everyday life" (Slobin and Titon 3).

Classical and popular ballads as well as blues were the genres introduced at the 47 in the late 1950s by predominantly local white solo singers, both female and male, and remained mainstays, but group forms like bluegrass and eclectic "jug-band" music also emerged, not only providing continuity, but also leading the revivalists into new trends. Like other oral literatures, songs may have provided cautionary tales or presented scenarios for conflict resolution. They could offer messages of hope or simply express common frustrations and disappointments. [5] Music on stage allowed the audience to indulge in emotional states induced by the song texts and the moods

created by the accompanying music and performers' shifting personalities. Emotions could range from nostalgia and melancholy to euphoria, states also induced by the nascent drug culture.

Blues songs were particularly relevant as individualistic commentaries on the problems of love-gone-wrong and appealed to singers and the audience, many of whom were working out personal relationship issues. The emotionally-evocative themes resonated with the listeners' and singers' own experiences, especially since many relationships were generated directly from within the club community. By contrast, bluegrass appealed to spiritual values with its emphasis on immutable subjects: fundamental attachment to mother and home, and promise of a hereafter, values that lifted the community out of the mundane.

Later black and white electric blues, performed by visiting artists, often in groups, were added to these genres. By the mid-twentieth century, all these genres were indigenous to America and are derived from traditional music. Although they are often stereotyped as solely representative of either black or white music, these forms symbolically represented cultural experiences unfamiliar to the predominantly middle-class Northeastern intellectuals at the 47.

Group forms were especially appealing to the evolving Club 47 community because they paralleled on stage the social dynamics of the audience as they moved into new roles and were learning how to interact as adults in a variety of small groups, and ultimately as a subculture within a generation. The group forms of bluegrass and jug-band music, both of which are discussed below, were personified by the CRVB and the Kweskin Jug Band respectively. Both groups were primarily male ensembles and connoted audience entertainment rather than a more intellectual objectification of the songs. The two most popular groups to come out of the 47, the CRVB and the Jug Band

functioned as surrogate nonelectric rock and roll bands until the mid- to late-1960s, when actual electric bands began appearing at the club as folk music moved towards folk-rock. Ensembles were predicated on group dynamics, usually giving each performer a chance to show off his instrumental and/or vocal skills and general showmanship. Each ensemble was united behind a spokesman—and it was a man—who joked with the audience, introduced songs, and generally paced the performance. That role was assumed by each group's founder: banjo-player Bob Siggins was spokesman for the CRVB and guitarist/singer Jim Kweskin spoke for the Jug Band, sometimes assisted by fellow guitarist/singer Geoff Muldaur.

Musicians had high status within the community. Much of the history of Club 47 is summarized in interviews and in the revival press by naming the well-known performers who established their careers there or who came through later on the revival network. A collective assemblage of stellar talent, both by local and visiting performers, helped to develop the reputation for excellence that Club 47 enjoyed throughout its history; a list of these performers appears in Appendix III.

Before I turn to a closer examination of aspects of the music culture that elaborate on these subthemes, a discussion of the musical influences that participants brought as a collective enterprise to the 47's stage contextualizes the club's later developments.

### *5.2 Musical Influences: Radio, Records, Fellow Enthusiasts*

Before and during its existence, Club 47 was greatly influenced by musical forces often communicated via electronic media. Of interest to folklorists is how these forces were combined and how the audience and musicians learned from each other in informal ways, and generated new aesthetic styles and forms based on the older

influences they brought to their Club 47 experience. This section discusses the interaction of these aspects of music-culture at the 47.

Collectively, the Club 47 community drew its inspiration from radio, records, and fellow enthusiasts in the development of its musical consciousness. The community comprised both musicians and nonmusicians and, as we have seen, the music on stage reflected group aesthetics and social values. With few exceptions, only male informants talked about musical antecedents and influences that fused into something new, another instance of separate spheres within the community that became patterned behaviour in my interviews. [6]

It was these same men who talked about "hanging out" as informal socializing and passing the time with each other and with visiting musicians, hanging out being predominantly a male activity in this milieu, which reinforced their idea of leisure time to learn and exchange techniques and material. The attraction of the new—primarily new forms of music, but new ideas and new relationships as well—was cited by several people as one of the strengths of the 47. "The 47 did serve a very real need for people who were interested in new music, [and] who had themselves a sense of musicianship as I did," said one informant. [7]

Radio was one of the influences on the 47 long before the club opened and immediately thereafter, an influence that many members shared. In the early 1950s, Boston had its own country-music station, WCOP-AM, that featured records and broadcast local performers live, such as the Lilly Brothers, Don Stover, and Tex Logan, as well as Joe Val, who later joined the CRVB (von Schmidt and Rooney 92-95). Also in Boston, commercial station WCRB-FM launched Robert J. Lurtsema's Folk City U.S.A., which contributed to the area's self-proclaimed and acknowledged reputation as a folk music centre (Broadside [5 October 1962]:n.p.).

College radio in Cambridge was another source of progressive, non-hit parade music. Harvard's WHRB-FM had begun its Hillbilly at Harvard show in the 1950s. Later its Balladeers show had ties to the 47 through its hosts, who publicized and sometimes interviewed performers who were appearing there and elsewhere in town. [8]

Further away in time and geography, WWVA-AM in Wheeling, West Virginia, broadcast the strongest signal from south of the Mason-Dixon line to reach New England. Since the 1920s it had been one of the principal stations to broadcast country musicians and, later, bluegrass performers, including CRVB favourites, the Osborne Brothers, who were part of WWVA's Jamboree from 1956 until they joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1964 (Malone, Country Music 339, 354-55; Rosenberg, Bluegrass 311). Radio remained particularly influential for revivalists at the 47, especially musicians, until they began swapping records, learning from each other, and interacting with predominantly southern performers at festivals. One account of the influence of WWVA from a CRVB member is representative:

Now this is a common thread for those of us from the New England area—from the whole Northeast, who somehow got to country music or country music got to us. If you ask anybody my age how they first heard country music, they'd say WWVA, West Virginia. That station carried a very strong signal at night....I heard WWVA, Wheeling, West Virginia, and I started listening to that. That late-night programme was Lee Moore, Your Coffee-drinking Nighthawk, [who] brought country music over the airwaves all over the Northeast. [9]

Along with radio, records were another important influence for revivalists. Old and reissued 78rpm records of black and white performers, Library of Congress field recordings, and newer recordings like those issued by Folkways Records provided sources for imitating musical styles and assembling repertoires. To members of the Club 47 community, at least, part of the attraction of these records was their obscurity,

not the fact that they were commercial products available to anyone who took the time to locate them. The prevailing attitude was that the more obscure the records were, the better; searching for them became a source of competition. Later, record stores in Harvard Square began to stock the more popular recordings when it became clear that there was a steady market for them. [10]

Models of performance and aesthetics were adapted from a variety of recorded sources, clearly the most common source of material in the early boom years outside radio and, to a lesser extent, printed songbooks. Musicians in the 47 community often acknowledged learning songs from these records, imitating their perceived "authenticity" and later adapting the songs to their individual styles. Nonmusicians within the audience accepted or rejected these styles based on their own familiarity with the sources. This form of intellectual rescuing and popularizing of such musics satisfied the community's collective aesthetic sense and also their nascent ethos of giving a voice to un- or under-represented members of American society. By so doing club members actually were in the vanguard, yet they also recalled the early American folklorists who wanted to rescue what they considered to be vanishing items of folklore.

John Cooke of the CRVB explained how he distinguished between "authentic" performers and "imitators," aesthetics he said he learned to distinguish from recorded performances. Much of the distinction he makes is tied to commercial success, which the community ethos disdained when it concerned their own members or fellow revivalists, yet from which they benefitted when it was perceived to be old and thus threatened. Ironically, according to Cooke's judgment, records bolster purity, yet records that are commercially successful are perceived as impure:

I got in touch with roots through recordings. By the time roots musicians came to town, we were absolutely wowed to see guys like

Clarence Ashley [a southern banjo player whose Folkways album was as influential at the 47 as the 1952 Smith anthology in which he was included], Dock Boggs [another southern banjo player also in the Smith anthology], [bluesmen] Mississippi John Hurt [in Smith as well], Rev. Gary Davis--all these people. We'd heard them on record first. We were already fans. This was true for me.

Now the people who were a little younger than me might have discovered the music and gotten in touch with the roots through the performances of these musicians. That's totally believable. Most of these people I have heard on record. We were astounded to learn that a lot of these people were still alive. When Clarence Ashley came and Doc Watson [southern guitar player and singer] was with him, we were totally blown away by this guitar player.

I began to distinguish--we all did--as the folk boom produced the highly-commercial groups. We put down these groups to put it politely. We didn't think much of Peter, Paul and Mary; we didn't think much of the Brothers Four, the Journeymen, the this, the that. It's funny now. It seemed to us then when the commercial groups did songs that we knew in their original versions that they trivialized them and made them worse. So we were fairly adamant about that. You could say we were dogmatic about it at the time and that would be reasonably accurate. [11]

Besides records and radio influences, musicians as well as the many members of the audience who were nonmusicians were attracted to folk music through their active experiences with group singing in their families, at camp, and at school. Perhaps this is the one place where women's and men's experiences were equal; summer camps and prep-school singing were particularly influential, according to informants. The most popular song book at summer camps and prep schools throughout the 1950s was Dick and Beth Best's Song Fest. Their 1955 edition was an updated version of earlier collections published by the northeastern chapters of the Intercollegiate Outing Club Association (IOCA). The IOCA promoted group singing among students who were interested in outdoor activities. Few of the songs in the book, however, were sung at the 47, except the CRVB's version of "Rich Gal, Poor Gal" [12], although the Kingston Trio had a hit with "Tom Dooley," and "The Golden Vanity" lent its name to a popular Boston coffeehouse that had early ties to the 47.

The recollections of one informant who learned to play banjo at prep school is representative. By the time he was a university student and 47 member in spring 1962, he had:

...10 years of folk music of some sort and [I] was well-prepared for what I was listening to as opposed to just drifting off the street. That is, we were going in as semiconnoisseurs or professional musicians ourselves, or semi-professional musicians, and in retrospect, '62 was early in the folk music boom. Also Joan Baez had come out to Cambridge School [a suburban prep school actually in nearby Weston] when I was there in '59 or '60. [13]

Finally, as folk music became more popular at the 47, musicians became role models and sources for each other as well as for aspiring performers. Potential players observed performers on stage, they jammed with more-established musicians backstage, and played informally at parties and gatherings after the club shut down at night. [14] Another informant arrived at Harvard with a propensity for country music and rockabilly, which he said "started for most people my age with rock and roll at prep school." He later became a bluegrass guitarist, partly influenced by the music he heard being played by fellow university students at the 47:

So I walked into the Club 47 and my first distinct memory was I looked up at the stage and there was Keith and Rooney playing [bluegrass]. Here I am, already set up. I'd been listening to country music. People like Carl Perkins, early Johnny Cash. The rockabilly people, they were country. They were one side of the genre. My recollection is that as soon as I heard them, as soon as I heard them I wanted to do that. It's the greatest music I ever heard....That was it. That's what I wanted to do. I found my calling. And I hung out from that moment on. I hung out at the 47 and did whatever was necessary to sort of be there, not pay any money. I would sweep up afterwards. Amazing, because I've not felt that way about very little since. [15]

Later, Club 47 members also supported music from traditions other than their own by sponsoring performances by what they called "authentic" folk musicians who were being "rediscovered" through groups like the Friends of Old-Time Music in New

York, fieldworkers for the Newport Folk Foundation, and their own fieldwork at southern string-band festivals, in that order. [16] Exposure to and interaction with these representatives of what the 47's revivalists called "real" traditions is a theme that runs through narratives about the importance of the club and has become part of the institutional portrayal of Club 47. This picture of exchange—of established musicians nurturing new ones, and revivalists and "authentic" tradition-bearers interacting—is the encapsulation of the Club 47 experience. [17]

A closer examination of significant and symbolic performers and their music elaborates on these themes, and is followed by an analysis of their influence on the bookings and music culture throughout the 47's history.

### *5.3 House Performers*

The music culture of Club 47 is symbolized by three individuals and two groups who performed regularly and provided historical continuity. In retrospect, as an entity, each performer or group had an economic as well as an aesthetic and social role in the history and structure of the club, roles that were sanctioned by audience, and thus community, consensus. The individuals I have identified in these roles are Joan Baez, Jackie Washington, and Tom Rush; the groups are the CRVB and the Kweskin Jug Band. Together I consider them the principal "house" performers.

In this context the designation "house performer" conveys different roles and status than its usual meaning in venues like regional country music parks, nightclubs, and other places that develop talent. There, house performers attract audiences and function as warm-up or back-up acts, subordinate to the visiting outsiders who are the booked attraction. Club 47 house performers occupied a separate category. With varying degrees of involvement and by various routes, they emerged from the

community. They were not brought in from elsewhere as resident warm-up acts for the main attraction; the 47 did not use warm-up acts. From the beginning, acts were billed as the main attractions in their own right. House performers had main-attraction billing, but were recognized by 47 members as local stars from within, and sanctioned by, the community.

One of the inadvertent functions of house performers at Club 47, however, was to generate large audiences. Revenue from house performers' appearances helped to finance lesser-known or more expensive talent whose fees could not be generated solely by the gate revenue at their shows. Thus, the community, and not solely individual house performers, benefitted from their collective endeavour.

Although I have identified individuals and groups as house performers, none of them began at or played exclusively at Club 47. Even as house performers, none, with the possible exception of Washington, initially intended to become professional—i.e. paid, full-time—musicians when they began playing at the 47. Most house performers began as avocational soloists or in duos at the club or at other venues in Boston and Cambridge while they were students or hangers-on to the musical scene, and many later joined forces in groups. All of the house performers under discussion eventually became part of the commercial music business and were booked through agents, handled by managers, and marketed by record companies, developments I can only allude to here.

Each individual or group house performer had a regular performing slot at the club. For example, Baez played two nights a week more or less regularly until she left town circa late 1959/early 1960. Later, at various times between circa 1961 and 1963, for instance, Monday or Tuesday nights belonged to Washington, Wednesdays to Rush, and many early weekends and later week nights to the CRVB. By 1964 the Jug Band

regularly played block bookings for an entire week, and band members played additional gigs together in duos and trios. In addition, individual members of the two groups led Sunday-night "hoots" that were open to unbilled local performers, events that are discussed more fully below.

Baez and Rush, who are full-time professional performers in 1993, bracket the 47's existence. Baez was the first bona fide star to come out of the Club 47 scene and she consequently launched its reputation within the revival network by her fame; the contemporary presence Rush has created for the 47 is discussed in the epilogue.

The groups, both of which have disbanded, represented two principal strands of the revival. One strand is their symbolic roles at the 47 was their links to the developing named-system revival of bluegrass (the CRVB) and to popular culture forms derived from counterculture trends (the Jug Band). The second link is the musical paths of revivalists. The CRVB were a nonprofessional local band whose members' principal occupational identities and income lay elsewhere. By contrast, the Jug Band began as a semiprofessional local band whose personnel came largely from within the 47 community and who were already making some of their income by their music. As the Kweskin Jug Band, they went on to professional recognition nationwide as full-time performers. Several band members still maintain full- or part-time musical careers.

Washington, the remaining house performer, represented a kind of loyal opposition to the largely WASP New England tone of the 47. As a black Latino, he challenged and was challenged by the hegemony of the dominant culture. He subsequently abandoned his musical career for acting, although he incorporates singing in some of his roles. [18]

A brief profile of these performers and their contributions to the 47's musical story follows. Many other musicians had an influential role at the club; an analysis and summary of their contributions comes later in this chapter to exemplify the great-boom experience in full.

Baez was the only representative house performer I was unable to interview. She is credited by informants and the great-boom press with popularizing the club and almost single-handedly associating it with folk music. [19] She is also credited with creating the iconic popular image of the female folksinger as "an intense young girl" with long, flowing hair "picking a guitar" (von Schmidt and Rooney 45). Baez's forceful personality, exotic looks and Hispanic name, and unattainable sexuality were symbolized by the songs she sang, such as "Silver Dagger" (Laws G21) with the lines, "Don't sing love songs/you'll wake my mother." [20] She also sang and recorded Child ballads on themes of unrequited or unhappy love, such as "Henry Martin" (No. 250) and "Mary Hamilton" (No. 173), or more blues and country songs like recorded versions of Josh White's "House of the Rising Sun" and the Carter Family's "Wildwood Flower." Like her male counterparts at the 47, her repertoire was influenced by records. Folkways' 1952 anthology reissue of 1920s commercial recordings was a source for her own early recordings on Vanguard and, partly through her influence, the anthology became a cult item for Club 47 members. [21]

Born in New York, Baez became a member of the local music scene while a student at Boston University, which she attended briefly. She lived with her family outside Cambridge, whence she continued her association with the nascent scene. It is ironic that she capitalized on her exotic Mexican/Scots background that produced her much-publicized darker-than-Anglo hair and skin, yet chose to consider herself

mainstream WASP. Fellow Hispanic Jackie Washington once greeted her in Spanish and was quickly admonished by her for his audacity. [22]

Among her peers at the 47, Baez was dubbed "the first star of the Cambridge folk thing." [23] Her star status was enhanced by being recorded in early 1959 as one of three Folksingers 'Round Harvard Square on the local Veritas label (von Schmidt and Rooney 42-43). Despite always being acknowledged by informants as the 47's first well-known performer, she is not considered as representative of the venue—or the community—as are the other house performers. She had a significant transitional role in the shift from jazz to folk music, but she did not fit communal notions of metaphorical, rather than dues-paying, club membership and values. As one member recalled:

There weren't any criteria I can point to for "membership" in the community. It had to do with whether or not you fit in; whether you liked the scene and the people and they liked you. There was no initiation, no trial period, despite some occasional cliquishness. [24]

According to those I interviewed, Baez did not "fit in" and many people did not like her. She was arrogant and, more seriously, often upstaged other performers. She made it clear that she did not want or need the community in ways that others did, hence the predominant emphasis on her personality and image, rather than her music, when people discussed her.

Washington, who had performed along with Baez at the Golden Vanity, noted that "Joan Baez was and is an excellent singer," but she had "an image that sold well, too." [25] He also pointed out that her sexuality—the notorious bare feet and long hair on which she built her image—was "like a red flag to a bull to all the Harvard boys nearby." Geoffrey Muldaur of the Jug Band denied Baez's musical talent, but acknowledged the cult of her personality, the beginning of a theme that soon came to fruition with rock stars:

I don't know that Joan Baez has done anything for music. She's just a strong personality. I don't know. When you compare that [Club 47 scene] musically to Chicago or Memphis or places where music really happened, you're certainly not in the same league. [26]

Baez may have led Washington to the 47, but he paid his debt to her by teaching her some new songs that she later recorded to popular acclaim. "Joan Baez was almost a New York-type," Washington observed. "She would learn from people, but didn't teach much," yet another violation of the community ethos of sharing musical knowledge. [27]

Baez's contribution to the 47 was helping to establish folk music at the venue. She reinforced her association with the club through periodic visits when she returned East for concerts. Through her often-imitated repertoire, she created an awareness of the Anglo-American ballad and broadside tradition in American music and, to a lesser extent at that time, of African-American music adapted as a white woman's art form. Baez was closer than many male performers to domestic traditions of musical performance, including singing unaccompanied, and repertoire formation. Ultimately, she was a woman in a predominantly male scene who expected to formulate her own terms and refused to submit to others' expectations, surely another cause for tension between her and the men, as well as the women, in the Club 47 community.

Tom Rush, on the other hand, epitomized the early Club 47 scene. Born in New Hampshire and educated in Massachusetts, he personified the tradition of genteel privilege that pervaded Yankee Boston and Cambridge, and drew on Harvard's tradition of folklore studies. Yet he was the first informant to comment on the self-irony of "a Harvard kid from Groton [prestigious Massachusetts prep school] singing the blues." Rush began as a blues singer at the Golden Vanity and the Unicorn, and

recorded his first album in 1962 on the latter's Lycornu label, a record that included Woody Guthrie's "Talking Dust Bowl" and "Pretty Boy Floyd," and legendary Delta bluesman Robert Johnson's "Walkin' Blues" and "Rambling On My Mind." [28]

Rush acknowledged influences from established popular commercial singers like Josh White and fellow white blues performers Eric von Schmidt and Geoff Muldaur. Like them, he also adapted material from older records, including Library of Congress field recordings. Part of the "charm," he said, was ferreting out obscure records; folk music, like rock music, was "something our parents didn't know about."

Rush was a high-school electric guitar player, who "discovered" folk music upon hearing his first Josh White record during a 1957 summer vacation in Wyoming. After that, Rush wanted an acoustic guitar so he could "sound just like him." Later, in Cambridge, he "learned to my horror that Josh White was commercial." Not only was that also ironic, but White already had a kind of cult popularity among incipient 47 performers who, like Baez, copied his recording of "House of the Rising Sun" (von Schmidt and Rooney 21).

A biographical profile in Boston Broadside ([3 March 1965]: n.p.) described Rush and his repertoire as:

...a performer whose music is immediately recognizable as his own. Influences are discernible: Bukka White [a southern black blues singer], Eric von Schmidt, [Josh] White....He ranges wide in his materials, drawing upon primarily the songs of [Woody] Guthrie, Cowboy Ballads, and Blues.

By 1965, the revival was at its peak and it was standard practice for performers to romanticize the open road in their songs à la Jack Kerouac or Woody Guthrie, or to sing about rugged occupations like herding cattle and sailing ships. These occupations were far from most 47 members' urban experiences and drew instead on

youthful idealized images of the heroes on which revivalists, especially male revivalists, were reared. Also by 1965, Rush's repertoire may have reflected aesthetic conventions as well as audience expectations and the romance of rootlessness, since many were still rooted. He had already recorded songs about rambling and travelling; he called another early album Got a Mind to Ramble and popularized Joni Mitchell's "Urge for Going." Of his varied repertoire, Rush himself says he "tried to be a windowpane through which the audience could see the song," as well as the image, adding:

I was an obvious patchwork of influences. I knew where the Josh White influences were, where the Jack Elliott [an early Guthrie disciple] influences were. I knew where every note came from, but it must have flowed together because no one ever mentioned those influences.

Rush considers that his eclectic musical taste was an asset to him. Other 47 performers were "specialists," he said, but he was one of the few "generalists," doing "a Child ballad and Bo Diddley songs back-to-back." As a generalist, he felt he was regarded more as an entertainer and observed, "I was not as much a purist as others. I was more of an entertainer. That was a bit of a problem for me. I was not taken seriously by the 'in' crowd."

Rush may have been comfortable with himself, but the tension over purity and commercialism raised red flags to more than the Harvard boys. The conflict was particularly troublesome to the 47 community because the business aspect of the endeavour clearly enjoyed and needed the money Rush's successful performances generated. Like Baez, he was merely doing his job and fulfilling the commercial expectations of his status as a house performer. He was extremely popular with audiences and provided provocative aesthetic debate for fellow club musicians, who often found themselves faced with the same dilemma. Another 47 performer who was

a member of a house-band and, like Rush, does not consider himself part of the "in" crowd observed:

The people who were never taken musically seriously were of course the ones who were really successful. I said nobody ever dreamed of actually trying to make any money at it. If anybody did what you would consider the usual commercial moves or made moves that you would have considered "commercial," Jackie [Washington] would have been one. Tom Rush would have been another.

And as a consequence, we saw them as being impurists. Not having any particular genre that they were into; just grabbing a piece of this and a piece of that. Tom Rush would do an Eric von Schmidt song; Jackie would do a flamenco song then also do a blues and some corny spiritual and a kids song, which to us was how could you really be good if you were doing all this stuff and weren't doing it in any particular authentic style? [29]

Yet, when I asked if he thought that commercialism equalled impurity, connoting that aesthetic judgments tainted by money gave rise to tensions over success, he continued:

I don't think it was tension. I loved Jackie and he and I could get very funny together. We could get in tears because he was so funny. He had a sense of humour about what he did.... I loved to listen to him so I shouldn't—I like to listen to a lot of stuff Tom Rush did, so what do I really mean? I would not do what they did. I don't mean I didn't like what they did; to me it was just [fades without defining feeling].

Rush transcended the philosophical fray and continued to use his popularity to bankroll his own career and, paradoxically again, the image and legend of Club 47. His role is that of the preservationist. His popularity and financial success were transformed into assets for Club 47, which are preserved today. In that sense, he closes the bracket that Baez opened.

Jackie Washington's background is the opposite of Rush's, but his self-perceived insider-on-the-outside experiences are similar, not just because of his equal commercial success. Born in Puerto Rico, he grew up in Boston and was educated at the highly-

regarded public Boston Latin School (as was Child) and at Emerson College, which specializes in training students for the communications and entertainment fields. He was and is highly aware of his nonmainstream role in the club and is the closest of all the house performers to his own traditional roots.

Washington recalled that he learned songs from his West Indian "granny" and also capitalized on Jamaican-American Harry Belafonte's popularity as a calypso singer beginning in the mid-1950s. Washington's style and repertoire were an eclectic mix of influences, and by his own account, he played the guitar "not well" and sang a combination of:

Puerto Rican folksongs, calypso, [Pete] Seeger and Weavers sing-alongs....What I did was come more from who I am, rather than imitate something off a record....While the bluegrassers at the club were imitating licks, I was looking for my own lick. [30]

Washington wanted to be an entertainer from the beginning of his musical consciousness. Others at the club might have been pursuing an avocational interest in music, he reflected, but he was "submerging myself in music." He acknowledged that he had "celebrity status" in Boston even before he got to Cambridge and the 47 in the early 1960s. He saw himself as an idol and role model to "some young people," which he considered to be socially advantageous to both sides. The "total Cambridge scene [was] always open to those whose inclusions benefitted the group," he recalled.

Washington clearly was aware of his unique status in a basically WASP milieu. "Being Latin was a private difference. I was not a part of America," he said. Again it is ironic that at the time, most people in Cambridge—and Boston—considered him exclusively black, and either patronized or harassed him as a black man. Yet Washington now portrays himself as "Latin" or as a "black Latino." Today he goes by

the name of John Landrón, another form of his birth name, sings in Hispanic revues in New York, and cherishes the anecdote of speaking to Baez in Spanish.

Despite his reputation in Boston coffeehouses as a "big shot" before he followed Baez to Cambridge, Washington said his shifting insider/outsider status had a definite effect on his life that he came to realize only through his experiences at the 47.

"Everyone was all liberal, antiwar, but the people who sang came from societies where the nigger comes through the back door." Some members of the 47 community socialized him to aspects of wealth and privilege that he did not experience in his Puerto Rican neighbourhood in Roxbury, one of the few racially mixed sections of Boston. To him, "Cambridge [meant] hanging out and meeting audiences and going to their wealthy family homes."

Washington recalled that he was exploited in situations as much as he used the same situations to his advantage. His status at the 47 elevated him to a unique position, especially in a community that valued celebrity and lionized incipient celebrities. He considered himself a "free zone" outside his own constricted community's expectations and could practice his sexual coming-of-age across the river in Cambridge, where he was a "black guy [being used] as a white girls' rebellion."

Washington also refused to be a stereotype or a "study" for the 47 crowd, though at times he said he felt he was their "exotic trifle." He did not do gospel music, he said, contrary to a fellow performer's memory of his "corny spirituals." Regardless which is the example of revisionist history, Washington said that, "Black people are interested in contemporary things. I'm not interested in looking backward." Yet clearly he was proud of the fact that he learned and perpetuated traditional family songs and sang Puerto Rican folksongs and Seeger and Weavers "sing-alongs" that had entered tradition. For him, singing folksongs was a personal political act as well as an

entertaining one. "Folk music," he observed, "slipped through the cracks" of the dominant culture's control of "nonwhite" people in the early 1960s. Politics, not music, was where they felt threatened by black people, he said.

Washington said he did not practice overt civil-rights activism from the stage, but his 1965 Vanguard album, *Jackie Washington at Club 47*, reflected the growing consciousness of the civil rights movement during the revival. The 47 audience was aware of the civil rights theme at Newport in 1963 and of several incidents of racially-motivated harassment Washington had endured earlier in Boston. Songs such as "Freedom School," "Song for Ben Chaney" [a black civil rights activist killed in Mississippi in 1964 along with two white activists], and "Song of Peace" all had themes calling for racial harmony.

Washington overtly used his racial background and his middle-class stature to help sensitize the 47 community to cultural diversity. He was both different and similar enough to fellow Club 47 participants that his music and personal charisma certainly made his messages palatable to the overwhelmingly white mainstream community. He pointed out that he was particularly conscious of singing about "lilywhite" skin or "pale" and wan faces and intentionally changed lyrics to more inclusive terms. For instance, he altered the lyrics to Phil Ochs's song, "There But for Fortune," from the phrase "whose face has gone pale" to "whose life has gone stale"—a song Washington popularized at the 47 before Baez recorded it.

Thus Washington's role at the 47 included a spiritual dimension; he functioned as a kind of conscience of the community. Through his popularity, he forced the community to confront directly notions of racial and economic inequality, some of which, like theirs, was outside his own experience. He transcended the stereotyped roles of the segregated black musician and entertainer in American society and created

a new model whose success may have been short-lived, but certainly was influential and left its mark.

Washington and Rush each described themselves as the chief money-maker for the 47, despite whatever philosophical qualms those roles caused. Rush said that when he began playing at the 47, Washington was "the attendance king" and Rush's goal, which he said he achieved, was to top him. Washington, in turn, said he vied with Rush to claim title as most consistent money-maker for the 47. Booking manager Betsy Siggins's December 1962 memo on "New Pay Scales" acknowledged Washington's status: "Jackie Washington is to be paid \$50.00 flat fee whenever he sings a full evening [rather than splitting the bill with another act]....He is a proven draw and so is entitled to this for his efforts." [31] Regardless who generated the most money for the venue, the point is that only the most popular entertainers whose repertoires were a mix of styles and sources were capable of consistently bankrolling Club 47 over a long period of time.

The other draws to the 47 were its two bands that originated within the community. The two bands, the CRVB and the Kveskin Jug Band, represent the two eras of Club 47 symbolized by its locations. With the bands came the emphasis on group identity rather than personal history. Bands, with their changing personnel, were larger entities than the sum of their individual members. The way people discussed house bands in interviews reflected more a group's collective personae rather than individual attitudes, although individuals certainly were discussed. Individual histories of band members are interesting, and sometimes critical to the story, but the music as art form is all important.

One of the "first northern bluegrass bands to spring into existence" (Malone, Country Music 249), the CRVB were an avocational, all-male bluegrass ensemble

comprised originally almost exclusively of "Harvard boys" with occasional fellow student members from other local institutions. Half of the band was born in New England or the Northeast; the others arrived in Cambridge to study. The group formed in the late 1950s and personified the more relaxed early years of the community's tenure on Mount Auburn Street, considered by all my informants to be the heyday of the 47, when it was still predominantly a local scene.

The band is generally known by its initials and called the "C.R.V.B." According to a former member, the name is "both an homage [to] and a take-off" on the names of "traditional bands from the South." [32] He recalled that two well-known bluegrass bands in the late 1950s when the CRVB began were Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs and the Foggy Mountain Boys, and Bill Monroe and the Bluegrass Boys. The other model was "naming the band for a nearby river or creek" as in "Cousin Emmy and the Coon Creek Girls" which, in fact, conflates performers who had no connection except for helping to establish independent performing traditions for women in the 1930s that, ironically, preceded the male-dominated bluegrass genre.

Like any group, the CRVB weathered personnel changes but Bob Siggins, its founder and leader, provided continuity until the 47 closed. The CRVB line-up generally comprised banjo, guitar, mandolin, and bass. Influences on the band's repertoire and style were largely classic bluegrass bands like Monroe's, Flatt and Scruggs, the Stanley Brothers, and "particularly the Osborne Brothers because we loved their harmonies and their endings"; and, to a lesser extent, individuals like Uncle Dave Macon, a banjo player from the South who was one of the first stars of the Grand Ole Opry in the 1920s, whose frailing style Siggins imitated.

Band members were also influenced by the Lilly Brothers—Everett on mandolin and Bea on guitar—a bluegrass duo originally from West Virginia who had been playing

in Boston venues since the early 1950s. They often appeared with fellow West Virginian Don Stover on banjo and fiddler Tex Logan, an MIT-educated engineer from rural Texas, who had persuaded the Lillys to move north and also later recorded with the CRVB. "Early bluegrass in New England as far as I know is the Lilly Brothers," said a CRVB member.

In circa 1963 the original group of college boys solidified its folk roots with more traditionally-oriented performers. Joe Val [Valiente], a working-class mandolin player with a day job, joined the CRVB. He was older than the other members and had roots in Boston's country-music scene. Born in an Italian-American section of Boston, he had played on country-music radio station WCOP's Hayloft Jamboree since the early 1950s and appeared in venues such as Boston's Hillbilly Ranch and the Mohawk Ranch, which attracted country-music enthusiasts and, for a short period later, folk revivalists who were of legal drinking age. Val bridged the gap between revival bands and country bluegrass musicians, having performed also with the Lilly Brothers and later with revivalists [Bill] Keith and [Jim] Rooney, whose bluegrass band came out of the Boston country music scene and who also were deeply involved in Club 47. Val gave the CRVB what they considered to be authentic bluegrass credentials, according to a fellow band member who recalled:

It was the addition of Joe Val that made the CRVB into a real bluegrass band. We had one guy who could really sing. Most city bluegrass bands don't have that. They don't have somebody who can really sing. They do as good as they can, that's all I can say. That's the hardest thing to do in a city bluegrass band, to find somebody who can really sing. But we had Joe Val and he could sing. [33]

A year after Val joined the CRVB, Everett Alan Lilly, Jr., became the band's bassist and reinforced the link between the revivalists and older traditions. The son of Everett Lilly, "Everett Alan" as he was called to distinguish him from his father, was a

second-generation bluegrass musician and also a student. With Lilly and Val, the CRVB's bluegrass credentials were above reproach.

The CRVB's country music, gleaned from the Grand Ole Opry, recordings by early bluegrass bands, and local performers, held tremendous appeal to young northerners. John Cooke first heard an early incarnation of the CRVB and said, "What kind of music is that?" and started buying bluegrass records and adapting his guitar style to bluegrass, which up until then had been influenced by rock-and-roll and blues on old 78s. By fall 1961, he was the CRVB's guitarist.

James Field, a later CRVB guitarist, also aspired to play bluegrass, but did not abandon totally his enthusiasm for rock-and-roll or country music:

Just speaking for myself, the music that I sang that I really liked always spoke straight to me. I get pictures when I sing a song. Sometimes it makes me think of people I know. In some songs, especially sacred songs either gospel songs, either bluegrass or black, get straight to the emotional. I'm not religious at all, but it's something about the purity of those young people saying I'll build a stairway to heaven. What that says to me is that I never consciously tried to somehow reach for something pure--there was never a conscious decision to cast off these modern trappings--just let me find something pure maybe if I just learned that song. It just appealed to me in some sort of visceral way. It just spoke right to me.

That doesn't mean that it wasn't some sort of reaction to boring, white, middle-class America.... It's just those lyrics. They speak right to me. Songs I like. Some of them don't [speak]. Eventually, that kind of pushed me toward real commercial country music, because it was about things that were going on. After a while I felt like I was singing about a world that ceased to exist about 1945 in bluegrass music. It wasn't there anymore. But Buck Owens and George Jones were sort of singing about real life. [34]

The appeal of the music led Field to learn how to play it, although it was never his intention at that time to become a musician:

That wasn't 'til later. That wasn't 'til I got good enough at bluegrass music and got paid to do it and then had a chance to be in the local

bluegrass band. Then I think I started toying with the idea. Actually, I've never stopped toying with the idea. [35]

The CRVB were the first house performers to devote themselves to one genre. They knew they were imitating consciously and unconsciously the sounds of their mentors' recordings. Records were their original source for learning style and repertoire until southern musicians began to come north to play for revival audiences.

Soon the CRVB were making their own recordings, which broadened their base of local and regional fans, especially since they usually were tied to Cambridge and Boston because of members' student or day-job commitments. Appropriately, the CRVB made the first record to come out of the 47 on its short-lived Mount Auburn label. The album was reissued in late 1962 on the widely-distributed Prestige Records as the first of the CRVB's several recordings for that company. By 1966 the band recorded their last album, Beatle Country, in Nashville for Elektra. The album featured a dozen of Lennon and MacCartney's popular songs, which band members considered to be folk songs, set to bluegrass arrangements. Field, the principal force behind Beatle Country, recalled the songs and their appeal to local enthusiasts, a testimonial that the band later translated to the album:

In I would guess the fall of '64, one could look it up, the Beatles released the Rubber Soul album and on that album was a tune called, "I've Just Seen a Face." I walked into our next rehearsal and said, "You know the Beatles just did a bluegrass song." They said, "What do you mean?" So I played it. I said, "We ought to learn that. That's a goddamn bluegrass song." No, it's these English kids doing their version of bluegrass.

So we learned it and we went out and sang it some place and got instant, tremendous reaction. And then we added another one, which was Ringo attempting to be Buck Owens doing—it was a really stupid song. What the hell was it? "What Goes on in Your Mind?" So we had these two songs in what must have been the winter of '64/'65 and there was something held in [Boston's] Hynes Memorial Auditorium called WinterFest. WinterFest had folk music on it and the KweSkin Jug Band sang on it. Came time for our part, there was a big crowd. It was the

Hynes Auditorium. Full of people. And we went into "I've Just Seen a Face" and the place was like thunder. That was great. [36]

Despite and because of their popularity, the CRVB had to mediate aesthetic decisions with the audience, negotiating notions of authenticity with the commercial demands of their own marketplace at the 47. I asked Field how they adapted their performances to satisfy audience demands, based on experiences like the one recounted above. Obviously the CRVB had been aware of how their presentation changed, but the question is not one he had encountered before. Changes and modifications in their acts were further evidence of how musicians were becoming distanced from their audiences as the revival matured. At the Palmer Street location, for instance, changes were symbolized by the CRVB's inability to jam informally with their friends and fans as they had done in earlier days on Mount Auburn Street:

That's a really interesting question. Because that changed I would say as the folk revival matured. At first if you were playing bluegrass, you got together a bluegrass band and played the songs that you liked and you learned them as good as you could and then you went out and did them for an audience. Maybe initially that was your repertoire. And then you figured that audiences really liked, started to ask for, certain ones. Oh, they really liked that one. So maybe instinctively or intentionally try and find a couple more songs sort of like that. Or make sure that you have—they really like those hoedown fiddle tunes so we've got to do one every set. That kind of thing. Just kind of basic parameters of entertaining; of doing something that people pay money to come in and see.

You can't arrange your set the way you'd like it. If I arranged my set the way I like it, there'd never be any breakdowns on it because as a guitar player, they're really boring to play. Breakdowns are just like—some wrists are what I associate breakdowns with. [37]

Observations by two community members typified the effect that the CRVB and bluegrass music had on their audiences. The latter, especially, marks the transition between the early and later days at Club 47. To Betsy Siggins [Schmidt], who dropped her proper Boston birth name of Minot upon marrying Oklahoman Bob Siggins, part of

the appeal of the music may have been its being so far removed from her own experiences, yet it aroused the sense of historicism and tradition so dearly loved in New England. Of the music she commented:

I took to bluegrass and old-timey music as if it was second nature to me. I have no idea why. But I certainly [know] that in knowing people like Doc Watson and Almeda Riddle [an Ozarks singer]—I mean who listens to Dock Boggs? I mean, I still hear the beauty in it. I hear the clarity. Anybody who can sing "O Death" and get away with it still to me has a lot of balls. It's a great song and it speaks to English and Irish and Scottish history and I like all those ties. [38]

For Arthur Krim, another loyal CRVB fan and amateur banjo player, the band—and Club 47—reaffirmed a community ethos, which he described in terms of the sheer audience numbers the performers attracted. He also made the link between audience appreciation for and popularity of the CRVB and the Kweskin Jug Band:

It was very clear that the people up on stage were sifted through a very careful talent pool and what you were hearing was the most abstract, the most intellected [sic] and the most authentic presentations of whatever music scene was going on. I never actually understood who selected who was going up there, but it was pretty obvious that there was a group of regular performers and they had regular days and I always tried, again, to come in on Charles River Valley Boys time because I really enjoyed what they did, including the old Dave Macon songs and the Bill Monroe numbers and they seemed to have a wide variety. I also enjoyed Ethan Signer [early CRVB fiddler and mandolin player], who had quite an absurd sense of humour....

Joe Val formed his own group there [the New England Bluegrass Boys]. It was precise and very authentic, but it never had the sort of cool abstraction that the Charles River Valley Boys had, which then blossomed into a group that really took everyone by storm. It was very obvious that the Kweskin Jug Band was where the inner core of Club 47 was operating from. [39]

The CRVB spanned the 47's history and represented one strand of revival history. Today, the professional personae of the core members include a biochemist (Siggins), novelist (Cooke), film-maker (Field), psychologist (Lilly), and biophysicist

(Signer), but those whom I interviewed continue to identify themselves primarily as musicians and still play bluegrass regularly in their local bands or infrequently at some of the Club 47 reunions. Joe Val died in the late 1980s, but throughout the 1970s and early 1980s he was leader of his own renowned band, the New England Bluegrass Boys, which was known for his singing and mandolin playing in the classic Monroe style.

The Palmer Street days are associated with growing professionalism and associated with the Kweskin Jug Band. As the 1960s progressed, the band moved easily between its home base and network sojourns, developing the detachment and personae necessary for becoming commercial and media successes. The Kweskin Jug Band is credited with launching a jug-band fad that spread nationwide during the revival and peaked just prior to the emergence of electric rock music in the mid-1960s. The music was sometimes called "skiffle," linking it to forms reintroduced to Americans by British groups like the Beatles at about the same time.

Jug-band music injected elements of whimsy and playfulness. Drawn from the urban South, the form originated in black groups in Memphis in the 1920s and integrated material from travelling minstrel shows and more mainstream popular music of the early decades of the century (Charters 107-30). Jug band music was good-time music and impossible to take seriously; it utilized nonorthodox musical instruments, and performers' on-stage swaying and prancing often alluded to songs' dance heritage.

The Kweskin band pushed popular revival forms to new limits in their quest to entertain through outrageousness and their enthusiasm forced audiences to take themselves less seriously. Much of this comic aspect had to do with the band's involvement with drugs and their missionary zeal for "turning people on" to drug use everywhere they went (von Schmidt and Rooney 187). Their antics foreshadowed the

counterculture of the late 1960s that incorporated aspects of folk music and its performance into the larger domain of “sex and drugs and rock and roll.”

In their early days in 1963, the Kweskin Jug Band shared personnel with the CRVB until several individuals were forced to make decisions about their musical futures. They had to decide whether to pursue music full time with the Jug Band and go on the road, a lifestyle that many original Jug Band members already found familiar, or remain at home with the CRVB as semiprofessionals with other responsibilities. Bob Siggins chose to stay with the CRVB and develop his banjo and pedal-steel guitar styles, and finish his studies. Mel Lyman, who had participated in other scenes including the one in and around Brandeis University in nearby Waltham, replaced Siggins on banjo in the Jug Band and played a second harmonica to David Simon (also known as Bruno Wolfe). Fritz Richmond, from suburban Boston, made the transition to professional performer when he joined the Jug Band as full-time jug- and washtub-bass player after being the 47's official “house bass player” as well as a member of the CRVB. [40]

Rush and Washington may have earned the most money for the club, but Richmond believes that he is the house performer who consistently took the most money out of the club during his tenure. In addition to his income as a CRVB- and then Jug-Band member, he earned money as house back-up player to, among others, Jackie Washington and to Keith and Rooney. By late 1962/early 1963 Betsy Siggins wrote into club booking policy that Richmond was to get a set fee for his back-up work, as well as any additional monies that individuals and groups he backed paid him. [41]

Like the CRVB, the Kweskin Jug Band also drew most of its original members from the academic milieu of Boston and Cambridge. By 1963 these individuals were in their mid-20s and most had long ago abandoned their studies for jobs that supported

their musical pursuits until they could make a living playing music full time. Jobs also supported their use of drugs, which is reflected in their often zany and euphoric song arrangements, sometimes with spoken asides and in-jokes, and the complement of unconventional instruments such as washtub bass, jug, washboard, and comb-and-tissue paper; and kazoo, ukulele, and clarinet, little known to revivalists outside jug bands. Jug Band members accompanied these instruments with the more familiar guitar, banjo, harmonica, mandolin, and fiddle.

Also like the CRVB, the Jug Band owed much of their repertoire and inspiration to old and reissued recordings. Where the CRVB could see and hear their heroes like the Lilly Brothers, Bill Monroe, Flatt and Scruggs, and the Osborne Brothers perform live as well as on recordings, old jug band music was only available on records from the 1920s and 1930s, as were many of the jazz and ragtime songs of the same period they also adapted. Many members of those early recorded jug bands, in turn, came out of the travelling country medicine show tradition and the black country dance bands (Charters 108, 122). This material was even more obscure than many of the recorded blues songs the band also performed, and unlike many blues singers from that early period, jug-band performers did not find a second career performing at revival festivals and venues after their songs were rediscovered in the 1960s.

Jim Kweskin, from Stamford, Connecticut, was heavily influenced by Memphis jug bands such as the Cannon Jug Stompers and the Memphis Jug Band, black ensembles that recorded in the 1920s, and by ragtime. The Kweskin band recorded versions of the Memphis Jug Band's "Overseas Stomp" and "Jug Band Music." Ragtime songs such as old familiar ones like "The Sheik of Araby," "Somebody Stole My Gal," and "Ukulele Lady" became part of their repertoire. To songs drawn from these influences, the Jug Band added good-time music with humorous lyrics, such as "Never

Swat a Fly" or "Beedle Um Bum." To this already eclectic mix, they played and recorded songs such as Uncle Dave Macon's "Morning Blues"; Leadbelly's "When I Was a Cowboy," a song first collected from him by John Lomax; and southern blues like Blind Boy Fuller's "Rag Mama," which became Kweskin's theme song, and Mississippi John Hurt's "Richland Woman," which later capitalized on Maria Muldaur's vocals and became her signature song.

Blues was an especial interest to guitarist Geoffrey Muldaur, who had grown up in New Jersey listening to black blues singers on old 78s. "I began to hear rumblings about what was going on up in Cambridge, Massachusetts. There were white guys into the same thing I was," he said about hearing Eric von Schmidt and Rolf Cahn's Folkways record of white blues released in early 1961. [42] Von Schmidt, from suburban Connecticut, had been involved in the various revival scenes throughout the 1950s and was a major influence on Muldaur: "It was amazing to me that there was another human being that was into this blues stuff like I was." Like Kweskin, Muldaur abandoned his studies at Boston University and moved "across the river" to become a serious musician, using Club 47 as his base:

You think you're the only person in the world who feels a certain way and all of a sudden you find like 36 other people in the same place, you now, listening to Blind Boy Fuller [black bluesman from the Carolinas] and Clarence Ashley--you know this kind of eclectic--that got into art and all other facets, too. [43]

In 1963, soon after they formed, the band recorded their first album for Vanguard, Jim Kweskin and the Jug Band, which still included Siggins on banjo. The album helped to launch the nationwide jug-band craze that found avocational imitators in high schools and colleges, and manifested in other bands that imitated the Kweskin original. These bands included Dave Van Ronk's Ragtime Jug Stompers and the Even

Dozen Jug Band in New York, which recorded on Elektra Records; or the local, short-lived Unicorn Jook Band in Boston, several of whose members also played regularly at the 47. Coming towards the end of the revival, the jug band craze quickly dissipated; bands either broke up or, like the Grateful Dead and the Lovin' Spoonful, became rock bands following the British Invasion. "With the exception of the Kweskin Jug Band, which happened to be very good, forming a jug or jook band seemed to be a one-way ticket to oblivion" (von Schmidt and Rooney 235).

For the Kweskin group, which started the craze, the alternative was to become commercial. The Jug Band was the only 47-based group to tour extensively and regularly outside New England. In addition, in early 1964, they were the first 47 group to appear on national television, when they were on the Steve Allen Show with Allen and Johnny Carson, whom they taught to play kazoo accompaniment on "Overseas Stomp" (von Schmidt and Rooney 180-81). That summer they were also the first 47 group to appear at Newport. During their travels the Kweskin Jug Band functioned as ambassadors for Club 47 and also brought the burgeoning national network back home via the new performers they were meeting and encouraging to go to Cambridge. They clearly were having fun--insouciance was their trademark. Their popularity surprised them, because they said they did not work doggedly to create their ever-expanding careers. Geoffrey Muldaur recalls that:

When the Jug Band started getting out of town, when we first went to Los Angeles, we couldn't believe it. People would come up and say, hey, I like the no costume thing, baby. Nice bit. You know? We were going, wow, I don't believe this. You know, so we were very cynical, but we truly did not give a fuck. I think we--the Jug Band was to me the sort of predecessor of the Grateful Dead [the rock band that grew out of blues, jug band, bluegrass, and country music influences]. I'd like to think the music was a little better, but the attitude was, you know, we're going to

play a little here and we're not particularly interested in whether you like it or not, but we're glad you could come. [44]

Maria D'Amato Muldaur joined the band in spring 1964, a few months prior to Newport, in one of its perennial personnel shuffles after the departure of Simon/Wolfe. At that time she played fiddle, but soon became known solely as one of the band's lead singers. Where the CRVB had Val and Lilly as working-class ties to traditional music, the Jug Band had Maria Muldaur, not just the token woman, but the New York ethnic Italian. She grew up in Greenwich Village and was familiar with urban street culture and the New York music industry. Like many other eastern urban Italians, she had a brief flirtation singing rock and roll (Curtis 82). She joined several amateur girl groups before her family prohibited further musical development in that genre, and was even a member of the Even Dozen Jug Band before she moved to Cambridge (von Schmidt and Rooney 127-28). [45]

Maria Muldaur herself emphasizes her ties with older and more traditional performers, which was an important aspect of the Jug Band's image when they began to interact with predominantly southern musicians whom they met at festivals and on the road. Like her then-husband, Geoffrey Muldaur, she linked herself to black bluesmen. She spoke publicly about meeting and working with Mississippi John Hurt, in particular, and with other southern performers:

It was a really special time in the '60s because a lot of America's finest roots singers and musicians were still alive and I was part of a group that was into bringing them from the rural centres of the South into the urban centres up North and just to expose them to a much wider audience. It was an exciting time musically and a very influential one for me. [46]

For all their prior innovations, she brought a new dimension to both the band and the Club 47 image, which one informant recalled:

Maria Muldaur when she came on with the Jug Band was very, very captivating and obviously put the Jug Band in a new orbit of interest just

because they had someone, a woman, who could play the fiddle, which she never does anymore. Actually she was a fiddle player and she played very well. [47]

In addition to Maria Muldaur, further evidence of the Kweskin Jug Band's growing professionalism and commercial appeal was their addition by 1964 of banjo virtuoso Bill Keith, who replaced Lyman. A native of southeastern Massachusetts, while at Amherst College he had produced revival concerts in western Massachusetts with future 47 performers Buffy St. Marie and Taj Mahal, and already had ties to the early Cambridge scene through fellow prep-school classmates and also through Jim Rooney, with whom he had formed a bluegrass duo while both were students at Amherst. Keith initially left Cambridge to play with Red Allen and Frank Wakefield and the Kentuckians in Washington, then went to Nashville to help Earl Scruggs write a banjo book, and soon thereafter became one of Bill Monroe's bluegrass boys (von Schmidt and Rooney 96, 155-56). "The first Yankee folksong revivalist to join the Blue Grass Boys" (Rosenberg, [Bluegrass](#) 183), it was from Monroe's band that Keith jumped to the Jug Band and returned to his geographical and musical roots. As he recalled in von Schmidt and Rooney's book:

The Jug Band gave me a chance to get back into the kind of music I had played back in high school....I was unschooled in the kind of blues that Geoffrey was into, and I was also unaware of the stuff that Kweskin was into, so I went back to listening to records and learning stuff....Being in the Jug Band and back in Cambridge got me involved in the whole scene there. It was totally unstructured, but it resulted in a broad education in many musical styles—from bluegrass and old-timey to gospel to blues to ragtime to jazz. A certain person might have a specialty but there was little of the competitive kind of feeling which prohibits anyone from learning what they wanted to know. And the word "community" gets that out to me as much as anything. The Jug Band itself was a community. The whole scene around Cambridge and Boston became a community....Hanging out was a big part of life with the Jug Band. We spent time in Toronto, Berkeley, and L.A., and in each place we had a lot of friends and kept doing what we did when we were home in Cambridge (184-85).

Richard Greene was another stellar musician who joined the Kveskin Jug Band. He began playing old-time fiddle and then moved to bluegrass as a member of the New York-based Greenbriar Boys and was another revivalist who, like Keith, had been a bluegrass boy with Monroe (Malone, Country Music 346; von Schmidt and Rooney 214). The quality of Greene and Keith's musicianship is evident on arrangements throughout the Jug Band's 1967 Reprise album, Garden of Joy, released ironically just before the band's breakup.

One informant summarized the Jug Band's influence and acknowledged their leading fellow audience-members and fans into lesser-known aspects of American music:

It was very evident that once the Jug Band had been formed, that there was something happening that was exploding out of Club 47 and that this was not just simple guitar music by people who had read old folk music books. But this was pressing out the very limits of music. They had discovered a vein of music that no one knew about....All the blues material was completely unknown to me and I honestly believe it was unknown to most of the audience so that the Jug Band was sort of reinterpreting music that most people did not actually know about, but obviously had been playing the records and trying to pull back the material. [48]

The Jug Band clearly thrived and responded to this kind of audience enthusiasm even if they found the adulation bewildering and reacted accordingly. Geoffrey Muldaur said:

It's like, whereas I said before, when I came into the Club 47 during those times in the '60s, everything I was doing was being validated immediately. It was being understood, recognized, realized....Maybe the Club 47--everytime I go down this line of reasoning, I remember Tom Rush and Jackie Washington getting the most people to the Club 47, too, so it wasn't that mass appeal was always there or the most talent was bringing in the most people, either. It wasn't complete truth and justice was going on. But it seemed to include everything. For me, you can't preach unless there's a congregation. [49]

The congregation was willing to listen until other musical forces that they were helping to create and in which they were participating took over. An informant put the Jug Band into historical perspective within the larger musical scene in American popular culture:

Club 47 sort of picked up a slack between real classic rock and roll. I really did like Jerry Lee Lewis and I really do like Buddy Holly and I really did like Little Richard and I really did like the Everly Brothers and I really do like Chuck Berry. I listen to this stuff. I appreciated Elvis Presley, but I really liked Jerry Lee Lewis and I really liked the Big Bopper.

Not that I was aware of the Buddy Holly plane crash. In fact, the only thing I was aware of was that the Big Bopper had died. I really didn't know who Buddy Holly really was. But the Everly Brothers absolutely. Jerry Lee Lewis certainly.

But they had faded by the early '60s and so Club 47 and particularly the Jug Band—I'm offering this out, but I have to say in retrospect that I think the Jug Band is the most purified essence of the people and the meaning of what was going on.

This very sophisticated removed, aloof, wild, intellectualized interpretation of sort of downhome, southern juke joint music. Then the Beatles came in and the music was back in style again. And also the Rolling Stones. But in the period '61, '62, '63, everyone said nothing's going on and you look back and actually historically, that period is a dead point in popular music. [50]

After the group disbanded, Geoff and Maria Muldaur played and recorded together, Keith joined the back-up band for the Canadian duo Ian and Sylvia, Greene joined Seatrain, and Richmond became a recording engineer for Elektra Records (Rooney, Bossmen 89; von Schmidt and Rooney 292, 296). Kweskin teamed up again with Mel Lyman in the Lyman Family, all of whose members came from Fort Hill.

The Kweskin Jug Band—and thus Club 47—continue to have a contemporary presence on the music scene. Several former band members reunite under the name "The Jug Band" to play for tours and concerts, such as their 1991 Japanese tour and

appearance at the Winnipeg folk festival, in addition to solo full- and part-time musical ventures.

The Kweskin Jug band was the first group to represent the Club 47 scene at the Newport folk festival and continued to expand the 47's and their own reputation into the furthest reaches of the revival network. From there, they transcended the revival and entered popular musical culture, where their transitional brand of surrogate rock music became a force in its own right. Along the way they, too, revived many songs and musical styles from America's musical past and infused them with contemporary aesthetics and messages. The next section is a fuller examination of trends represented by Club 47's house performers and discusses musical aspects of the venue not yet covered.

#### *5.4 Bookings and Trends at Club 47*

Musical performances were the driving force of Club 47. Besides being the focus of the music culture there, they provided the basis of the organization's revenue, which came primarily from membership fees and admissions dues, and secondarily from refreshment sales. Music was taken seriously and musicians were expected to meet and maintain the community's demanding aesthetic standards.

Club 47 performers fell into two categories, of which the major house performers typified the first; the second were avocational local performers who did or did not become semi- or professional musicians. To this core were added performers who appeared between 1964 and 1968, who played at Club 47 as part of the folk revival circuit.

The majority of performers were male, appearing solo or in groups. After Baez left, there were no regular solo female house performers, although a few women like

local Boston singer Dayle Stanley, who sang mostly country music; and Carol Langstaff, a Putney prep school classmate of many 47 regulars who specialized in Anglo-American ballads and dulcimer music, appeared frequently for brief concentrated periods of time.

A survey of bookings revealed trends reflecting the aesthetic ethos of the members. This was best exemplified by the 47's reputation as a kind of listening room where the audience was expected to listen attentively and savour the music as an intellectual, as well as an entertaining, experience. Regular and visiting performers were deemed to be known already by the audience and thus were not formally introduced, another instance of in-group, insider knowledge that connoted intimacy. Featured performers played for the entire evening and were not preceded by opening acts, although they were sometimes joined by other musicians in the audience for informal jamming. [51]

According to informants, articles in the revival press, and a survey of bookings listed in the 47's calendars and Boston Broadside, blues and bluegrass were the two genres that were decidedly most popular at Club 47. These popular genres began to affect and influence bookings soon after the club commenced featuring "folk music," beginning with Baez's versions of Anglo-American ballads, African-American blues and spirituals, and old country songs. Early blues regulars were Eric von Schmidt, Rolf Cahn, and Harvard-student Mitch Greenhill. Bluegrass regulars were Keith and Rooney, in addition to the CRVB. Management tried to balance these forms with other kinds of musical presentations. By the mid-1960s, they were booking visiting performers like Mike Seeger of the New Lost City Ramblers and the eclectic Woody Guthrie disciple Jack Elliott; and former out-of-town performers like singer-songwriters Tim Hardin, Eric Andersen, and Folkways artist Mark Spoelstra from New York; and

future Youngbloods member Jerry Corbett from California, all of whom were attracted to Cambridge for varying periods of time.

Nineteen sixty-two was the year the 47 found its niche. In its 20 April 1962 issue, Broadside observed, "Technically, the finest folk music in the area comes out of this non-profit, educational, coffeehouses on Mt. Aubin [sic] Street." Memorial Day weekend in late May was devoted to bluegrass, according to an advertisement in Broadside ([10 May 1962]:2). Two members of the Greenbriar Boys—John Herald and Ralph Rinzler—joined the CRVB on Friday night; Keith and Rooney, virtually a houseband, played on Saturday; and the Gray Sky Boys, "bluegrass from Yale University," played on Monday. That weekend event occurred just months prior to the national exposure of bluegrass via a new television show, The Beverly Hillbillies, for which Flatt and Scruggs wrote and played the theme music (Malone, Country Music 355).

Attendance for a summer Saturday night double bill by already-established house regulars set a club record in August, with the CRVB playing bluegrass and Tom Rush singing "ballads and blues." [52] To expand the 47's cultural offerings and fulfill its mission as an educational organization, later that month Japanese classical guitarist Hideo Itoh made his first appearance in the U.S. He played "his rendition of an ancient Japanese piece, 'Cherry Blossoms'" (Broadside [24 August 1962]:5). By late 1962, after the May theme weekend and August attendance record, Broadside noted that bluegrass had achieved "great popularity" in the Boston/Cambridge area ([30 November 1962]:3).

Nineteen sixty-three was a critical year that represented the 47's transition from its insular early phase to its middle phase, where it became much more of a force in the burgeoning revival network. That year was particularly noteworthy for several individual 47 performers appearing at that summer's revived Newport Folk Festival

and by the club's relocation to Palmer Street. That was also "the year of the hootenanny," according to CRVB-banjo player Bob Siggins (von Schmidt and Rooney 205). A network television show out of New York called Hootenanny featured many revivalists; journalist Robert Shelton of the New York Times had a magazine of the same name; and Boston radio station WBZ-AM launched its own Hootenanny show, which featured many of the 47 house regulars (von Schmidt and Rooney 204-5). Even before the move to Palmer Street, Sunday nights at Club 47 had been institutionalized as "hootenanny" or "hoot" night, and for more than a two-year period they continued to hold the Sunday-night spot and become a significant audience draw. The hoots functioned as informal auditions, when aspiring musicians could perform and be evaluated by both the 47 management and the audience. At the same time, more established performers, particularly those from the club's earlier days, could sing and visit with old friends. Often the hoots were hosted by Club 47 regulars who also performed--the only instance of formally-hosted and introduced performances; by 1964, hoots were listed in the calendar with the names of the weekly hosts. The hoots also relieved some of the pressure of the standards that the booking schedule had to meet, as Betsy Siggins Schmidt recalled:

Sunday nights were nice there. You know how Sunday night is the day you have to get ready to go back to school and you really hate it? That was always hootenanny night. That was always surprise night. It was always quite nice because there was an anxiety about what you'd get on stage, who you'd get to perform, who would hear you. Would [agent/manager] Manny Greenhill be in the audience? That was a really nice night. [53]

In an unsigned piece, "Who Else Could Afford It?," in Broadside ([3 May 1963]:3), the early days of the open hoots, when any one could perform, highlighted the stars the 47 had produced thus far as well as well-known visitors, all of whom happened to be in town at the same time. The tone sounds tongue-in-cheek, but one

informant recalled the event as "the famous hoot night when everyone was there," the 1963 event that foreshadowed the week-long "Grand Finale Hoot" when the club closed permanently. [54] The quote summarized the period and the scene. The fact that many performers were referred to by their first-names again implied intimacy, even to readers who were not part of the 47 scene. It also indicated how much these individual musicians had come to be identified with the 47 community:

Soon Eric von Schmidt and Geoff Muldaur were on stage, backed by Fritz [Richmond] and they did a song called "I Love Jesus" using some intricate musical techniques which the supposedly hip 47 audience didn't understand and proved their unhipness then and there by laughing at something they thought must be intended humorously. From then on, the stage was crowded with Eric, Geoff, Bob Dylan, Jim Kweskin and the Jug Band, which was joined by a kazoo accompanist who was introduced as Miss Blind Ethnic Pygmy, but has been known to sing under the name of Joan Baez, and then there was Jack Elliott dropping in to sing with Eric and Dylan, and Joan came back to sing with the Charles River Valley Boys. Kaleidoscopic is perhaps the only description which could be made. A well-known local promoter, and a record company promoter were seen quietly drooling to themselves, but knowing they could never afford an extravaganza like unto the one they had just witnessed. Who else, but a non-profit organization, where musicians are willing to perform for the fun of performing, could afford it?

Most weeks between late 1963 and the summer of 1965 followed a pattern. On Sunday nights hoots were hosted by various regular performers including individual members of the CRVB and the Jug Band. Monday nights were more or less devoted to Tom Rush, Tuesday nights to Jackie Washington, and the CRVB filled in frequently whenever needed, appearing up to five times in some months. Sometimes films on Tuesdays and theatre presentations on Wednesdays altered the pattern.

Weekends were reserved for well-known regulars or visitors, who until the mid-1960s usually appeared for only one night at a time. For instance, in September 1962, these performers were von Schmidt and the CRVB; in July 1963 they included as

visitors ballad-singer Rita Weill from Berkeley and Ramblin' Jack Elliott from New York, along with locals Don MacSorley from South Boston who did English/Irish songs, blues singer/guitarists Mitch Greenhill and Rick Lee, and Langstaff, Rush, Stanley, and Washington (Figure 5.1). In April 1964, for instance, weekends included regulars like the CRVB; and Tim Hardin, Eric Andersen, and Debbie Green, then identified as Cambridge musicians (the latter two were also members of the short-lived Unicorn Jook Band). Visitors included the Country Gentlemen, a bluegrass band from Washington, and singer-songwriter Phil Ochs. Ochs, however, was never popular with 47 audiences because the majority of his songs contained overtly political themes. [55]

Along with the trends of the times and as a result of the popularity and success of the Jug Band on the road and at home at the 47, club management began booking more groups, many of them electric. These bookings began in August 1965 with the Paul Butterfield Blues Band following their controversial electric appearance with Dylan at Newport the previous month. Soon bookings included local bands like the Hallucinations (the core of which went on to become the nationally successful J. Geils Blues Band) and other blues bands working the expanding circuit of revival venues.

Black, white, and multiracial Chicago blues bands played "a harder and louder form of city blues" (Oliver, [Blues Fell](#) 281) and were especially popular at the 47. Their popularity was due to various factors such as exposure at Newport and their growing reputations on the touring circuit. Bands that were frequent guests at the 47 were black groups like Muddy Waters's blues band, the first black Chicago blues players at the 47; and the Junior Wells Blues Band. The primarily electrified white bands such as Butterfield's and the Siegel-Schwall blues band that grew out of the Chicago scene also appeared a number of times (Oliver, [Blues Fell](#) 281).

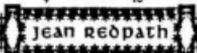
CLUB 47, INC. 47 MOUNT AUBURN CAMBRIDGE, MASS.						
					hours Sunday through Friday 9 p.m. - 1 a.m. Saturday 8 p.m. - 12 mid.	
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>TOM</b>	Jackie  Washington	Dayle Stanley 	Charles River  Valley Boys	 <b>Rita Weill</b>	Don Mac Sorley <b>TOM BUCH</b>
<b>M</b> 		 <b>JEAN REDPATH</b>			<b>JACQUIE</b> WASHINGTON	Carol Langstaff 
<b>O</b>					Dayle Stanley	Don Mac Sorley
<b>T</b> 			Tim Hardin 		<b>RAMBLIN</b> <b>JACK ELIOTT</b>	
<b>E</b>	<b>RUSH</b>	Jackie Washington	Dayle Stanley	Dick Lee Carol Langstaff		
<b>R</b> 	Charles River <b>AAA</b> Valley Boys	 Jackie Washington	<b>DOG BOGS</b> *****Old Time Banjo*****		Rick Lee	Don Mac Sorley Mitch Greenhill
<b>A</b> 					Dayle Stanley	
<b>N</b> 	<b>MIKE SEEGER</b> 					

Figure 5.1. Club 47's calendar for July 1963, the last summer on Mount Auburn Street.

The calendar shows a mix of local and visiting performers. Uncopyrighted

Waters was booked by 47 manager Jim Rooney on the recommendation of Butterfield, undoubtedly as a result of their mutual Newport appearances (von Schmidt and Rooney 270). Rooney considered Waters as important to urban blues and blues bands as Bill Monroe was to bluegrass, both men having taken rural music to the city. In a 1971 book Rooney wrote about Waters and Monroe, he called both performers "bossmen." Bossmen, he declared, are those who "set style...make rules" and "define the field on their own terms" (Bossmen 9).

Blues groups were generally the first bands to appear regularly for periods greater than two consecutive nights. Often these bands played for up to a week at a time, justifying the effort and expense of moving a group of people as well as the club's promotional costs to attract an audience each night. The groups' popularity more than rewarded management's financial efforts. For instance, in February 1966, the month that club dues were raised to \$1.50 per visit, the Muddy Waters Blues Band played for six days (Monday to Saturday) at the end of the month. (Figure 5.2).

The raised dues represented a turning point in bookings. The Waters band was preceded by the Chambers Brothers, another black group who were managed by a Club 47 member, doing gospel and blues; Spider John Koerner of Minneapolis, a popular white blues revivalist who had appeared at Newport; and the Strangers, a group that, appropriately enough, I have been unable to identify. [56] Older established performers who appeared that month for one or two nights performing what the February calendar described as "traditional blues and Negro music" were Bukka White, Son House, and Bessie Jones of the Georgia Sea Island Singers. Each had appeared at recent Newport festivals, especially the 1964 festival that featured country blues, or what folklorist Jeff Titon calls "downhome blues" (Titon, Downhome Blues xiii). Revivalists who played what was billed in the calendar as "city blues" were John Hammond of New York;

CLUB 47 INC.  
 47 PARKER STREET  
 BARNHART SQUARE  
 CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS  
 02142

**FEBRUARY 1966**

Sunday, 8:30pm - 11:00pm  
 Monday, 8:30pm - 11:00pm  
 Tuesday, 8:30pm - 11:00pm

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>1 SAM RIVERS</b> 	<b>JOHN HAMMOND</b>	<b>JOHN KOERNER</b>	<b>2</b> <b>BUKKA WHITE</b>	<b>Bill Monroe</b>	<b>3</b> <b>The Bluegrass Boys</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>THE CARAVAN THEATRE</b>	<b>SPIDER JOHN KOERNER</b>	<b>7-9</b>	<b>10</b> <b>THE STRANGERS</b>	<b>11</b> <b>Eric Schmidt</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOOT</b> 		<b>15</b> <b>BESSIE JONES</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>The Patons</b>	<b>18</b> <b>Eric Schmidt</b>	<b>19</b> <b>Eric Schmidt</b>
<b>VON SCHMIDT</b> <b>20</b>	<b>21</b> <b>THE CHAMBERS BROTHERS</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> <b>SON HOUSE</b>	<b>24</b> <b>SON HOUSE</b>	<b>THE CHAMBERS BROTHERS</b>	<b>THE CHAMBERS BROTHERS</b>
<b>KEN MCINTYRE</b>	<b>MUDDY WATERS</b> <b>BLUES</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28-3</b> <b>THE MUDDY WATERS BLUES BAND</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> <b>THE MUDDY WATERS BLUES BAND</b>	<b>31</b>

Figure 5.2. Club 47's February 1966 calendar, showing the week-long engagement by the Muddy Waters Blues Band, along with block bookings of other visiting groups and local performers. Uncopyrighted.

Koerner of Minneapolis; and von Schmidt, who had been described in a club calendar as "the prime mover of folk music in Boston." [57]

The patriarchal Bill Monroe and the Bluegrass Boys, who had headlined 47-sponsored concerts, which are discussed in the next chapter, appeared for three nights over the first weekend in February 1966, perhaps to assuage the audience for the fee hike. They were followed three weekends later by the local Lilly Brothers with Don Stover and Tex Logan. That month, probably due to the stellar line-up, the CRVB only played once and there was only one Sunday night hoot.

By fall 1967, groups appearing at the club in blocks of four to six days were often electrified and becoming more allied with folk-rock music, not just blues. Folk-rock was gaining national radio attention through the efforts of revival-based groups like the Byrds. Their 1965 recording of Bob Dylan's "Mr. Tambourine Man" was hugely popular and marked another turning point in the evolution of the boom, reinforced no doubt by Roger McGuinn's roots in the Chicago revival scene and David Crosby's in Miami, where each adapted songs to contemporary aesthetics.

The club's schedule for October and November 1967 is representative of the network among North American musicians for whom playing at Club 47 was an important gig. Performers included the Canned Heat Blues Band, which had local connections; the James Cotton, Muddy Waters, and Siegel-Schwall blues bands; and, doing jazz, Boston's Gary Burton Quartet with Larry Coryell. Gordon Lightfoot, a singer-songwriter from Canada who had appeared at Newport, was the only soloist to appear for six days, commanding the same bookings as the blues bands.

Jackie Washington and the CRVB were the only house regulars who appeared in that two-month period. They provided continuity with earlier phases of the club and helped relieve the financial burden of well-known, but expensive visitors. In addition,

as houseband the CRVB played at the club during a 47-sponsored concert by the Butterfield Blues Band in Boston in late October. Other out-of-town acts block-booked into the club played opposite a particularly ambitious series of concerts that autumn, enabling 47 members to attend the concerts as well as see the visiting acts at the 47, all within a short period of time.

### *5.5 The Beginning of the End*

Despite the variety of musical styles, geographical representation, and a roster that reads like a well-rounded music fan's dream, the beginning of the end began in summer 1967 with multiple-night appearances by a number of bands and few individuals. Within six months of this expensive line-up, the club closed. The last two months saw a considerably scaled-down schedule, although the level of talent remained high. The line-up continued to mix local and visiting acts. Long-standing Club 47 regulars like von Schmidt and the CRVB were joined by newer regulars like Taj Mahal, a former student at the University of Massachusetts, and the Hallucinations. All of them were booked alongside solo visitors Joni Mitchell, a singer-songwriter from Canada, and Michael Cooney from Arizona and Pat Sky from New York, both of whom mixed traditional songs with their own compositions.

Once it became clear that the club could no longer sustain such ambitious bookings, only three bands appeared, probably the result of prior commitments by the 47 management undertaken before Rooney left. March 1968 had the Sam Lay Chicago Blues Band for four nights, the largest block-booking that month. Lay was a former member of the Butterfield band, a band for which the 47 helped to cultivate a large following through gigs before and after Newport appearances and large concerts in Boston. David Grisman and Peter Rowan's new group, Earth Opera, reflected Rowan's

bluegrass days with Keith and Rooney and with Bill Monroe, as well as newer musical folk-rock forms (von Schmidt and Rooney 302). Earth Opera closed the month for three nights.

In early April 1968, three weeks before the 47 closed permanently, the Buddy Guy Blues Band from Chicago played for two nights midweek. Urban blues was not the only group form that dominated the bookings during the last months, however. The effect of psychedelic rock music is evident just by considering the names of scheduled groups: the Grass Menagerie, the Bagatelle, the Hallucinations and the Cloud, and Earth Opera.

Club 47 closed in late April 1968 the way it began –among a close-knit circle of musicians, friends, and surrogate family. As I discussed in another chapter, the Club 47 community was evolving into new personal and societal roles alongside the developments of the boom. Bookings for the last week encapsulated the entire history of the club and were a microcosm of themes played out through the club’s—and the revival’s—short history. Stars, housebands, local amateurs, and spinoff bands all were represented. The Lyman Family started off the week for two nights. The CRVB played midweek followed by a one-night open hoot. The remaining two nights, 26 and 27 April, were a “Grand Finale Hoot” with old friends and regulars (Broadside [24 April-7 May 1968]: n.p.).

The closing of Club 47 reflected the swiftly-changing tastes as well as the growing sophistication of the management of the music business and the maturation of the community. In many ways Club 47 succeeded too well, literally bursting out of its cosy premises as a force to be reckoned with on the musical scene and then lacking the facilities and leaders to move it into the next stage. Most of the club’s management had come from within the local musical community. With the exception of professional

coffeehouse manager Byron Linardos, the venue was run by young musicians or music enthusiasts. All of the latter were prompted by a love of the music and learned by doing, having no prior training or experience in such a venture. Changes in the music scene as well as rising costs meant that Club 47 could no longer afford the daily fare of its bread-and-butter performances. Betsy Siggins Schmidt reflected on the 47's closing, particularly in light of its history as a collective musical endeavour:

There was a quality of unbelievability that we were actually going to close the doors on the place. And it was always like, So-and-So's going to take care of it, but So-and-So thought someone else was going to take care of it. Again, it was this poor management. You know nobody had run a coffeehouse with folk music before, so nobody actually knew it was a business like any other. It had this quality that if it was supposed to run out of time and of money, well then maybe that's what was supposed to happen. Because it had never happened before, so how did you have any track record as to how to make it happen? It was a business, but nobody saw it. Everybody saw it as sort of a religious experience. [58]

In addition to the changes in the music scene, many of which came from its newer epicentre in California, Club 47 closed in a period of extraordinary political and social upheaval. The following year, 1969 saw the last Newport folk festival; the first Ann Arbor [Michigan] Blues Festival; and the Woodstock [New York] Festival of Music and Arts, an event that was dubbed simply Woodstock and came to symbolize a new, if short-lived and idealistic, ethos of peace and spiritual world order for many members of the revival (and now rock) generation.

Several members of the Club 47 community even moved to Woodstock under the influence of music maven Albert Grossman. Grossman had managed the Jug Band among the many prominent performers on his roster, and had grander plans for them and their colleagues, some of which grew out of the trends he sensed and helped to become reality as early as the '50s when he ran the Gate of Horn in Chicago. Parting is

a theme common to ballads, blues, and bluegrass songs. As Schmidt recalled of that time nearly a quarter century later:

I couldn't wait to get out of town. It was perfect timing....It was as if we were driving away from a life that to us had said "gone." This is gone now, you can move along. And then Albert Grossman pulled a lot of people out of Cambridge to go to Woodstock, because he was the magical manager. So Geoffrey and Maria [Muldaur], the Jug Band [i.e., the Muldaurs and Bill Keith], Dylan, everybody moved. Not everybody, but a lot of people moved to the Woodstock community. [60]

Just as the revival press had described the 47's closing in obituary-like fashion, there was a sense of a more final rite-of-passage in the club's closing. For a decade, many members had referred to the 47 community as a metaphorical family. Now the head of the family and the symbolic family homestead—the club venue itself—was closed, or dead. Jim Rooney saw the writing on the wall when the boom was moving into rock forms and rock venues like the Boston Tea Party and he, too, wanted to be "gone" to his new job in New Orleans, the perfect excuse "to get out of town." Hence he did not attend the closing week festivities or, as he said more dramatically, "I wasn't there for the funeral." [61]

A symbolic memorial service, as it were—or more appropriately, celebration of life—was held at the Smithsonian in Washington in 1987, nearly two decades after the Club 47 closed. Already 20 years had passed since the Smithsonian folklife festivals had begun, organized and supported in great part by revivalists. A press release issued by the Smithsonian's educational wing, the Resident Associates Program, announced a concert series of "blues, country, and urban folk music" called "Club 47 at the Smithsonian." It noted the formula of older performers nurturing newer ones and described the 47, without mentioning folk music, per se:

At the original Club 47 in Harvard Square, both musical legends and new talent gathered in the early 1960s to trade tunes, traditions, and techniques. [62]

That's the concise version of the story. Now revivalists had become the tradition bearers, bridging the generations just as they had once sat at the feet of performers and revivalists of previous eras.

Before Club 47 was consigned to the proverbial national attic, however, it received institutional credit for having moved beyond its four walls to influence the folk-music scenes in Cambridge, Boston, and eastern New England; the Newport festivals; and the popular music industry nationwide. The next chapter looks specifically at the 47's activities regarding Newport and its various concert series before drawing any conclusions about the life and times of Club Mount Auburn 47.

## Notes

1. "Music-culture" is a term used by Slobin and Titon to refer to a group of people's "total involvement with music" (1). Their model is "grounded or centered in music through performance" (2-3). See their chapter on "The Music-Culture as a World of Music" in Titon's Worlds of Music: An Introduction to the Music of the World Peoples.

2. Interview with Betsy Siggins Schmidt, 29 August 1991.

3. The Beatles, for example, began as a skiffle group. The roots of skiffle in England were traced to early American jazz, to Memphis jug bands, and hybrid forms of North American Anglo and black musics. See Brian Bird's Skiffle: The Story of a Folk-Song with a Jazz Beat.

4. From interviews with John Cooke, James Field, David Gessner, Arthur Krim, and Betsy Siggins Schmidt.

5. For longer discussion of the emotional impact of these musics, see Scott Hambly's "San Francisco Bay Area Bluegrass and Bluegrass Musicians" and Jeff Titon's Early Downhome Blues.

6. From interviews with Cooke, Field, Charlie Frizzell, Gessner, Krim, Buz Marten, Geoffrey Muldaur, Jim Rooney, Tom Rush, and Schmidt.

7. Interviews with James Field, 24 and 26 July 1991.

8. Information on WHRB from interviews with David Gessner and Tom Rush, and pieces in Boston Broadside.

9. Field interviews.

10. Interview with Jim Rooney, 19 July 1990.

11. Interview with John Cooke, 18 January 1992.

12. This observation and the information about Song Fest from Arthur Krim.

13. Interview with Arthur Krim, 30 July 1991.
14. From interviews with Field, Krim, and Rooney.
15. Field interviews.
16. From interview with Field about his own fieldwork at festivals in Virginia and North Carolina.
17. From interviews with Cooke, Gessner, Jill Henderson, Krim, Rooney, and Rush.
18. Since he was such a public person, throughout this thesis I refer to Washington as Jackie Washington, the name he used during his revival career.
19. For an exhaustive summary of bibliographic and discographic references on Baez through the mid-1970s, see Wendy Caesar's "Joan Baez: A Bibliography" ([JEMF Quarterly](#) 12 [1976]: 147-157).
20. Interview with Jackie Washington, 24 March 1992.
21. Krim interview. For more on the Smith anthology, see Robert Cantwell's "Smith's Memory Theater: [The Folkways Anthology of American Folk Music](#)" ([New England Review](#) 13 [1991]: 364-97). Thanks to Neil Rosenberg for this citation. Also see Malone's [Country Music](#) (pages 279-80) for a discussion of the Smith anthology and other sources that revivalists used.
22. Washington interview.
23. Field interviews.
24. Field interviews.
25. Both quotes in this paragraph from Washington interview.
26. Interview with Geoffrey Muldaur, 12 January 1992.
27. Washington interview.

28. Interview with Tom Rush, 15 April 1992. All quotes in this section are from that interview, unless noted otherwise. The story of Johnson's influence on folkies and rockers on both sides of the Atlantic must be told elsewhere. For our purposes here, it is interesting to note that Johnson, who recorded in the mid-1930s before his untimely death, is now usually credited with writing "Rambling On My Mind." Rush, however, recorded it as the more colloquial "Ramblin' On My Mind" and cited its source as "trad." [traditional], perhaps because Johnson's short-lived career had yet to be scrutinized by scholars and record companies. From Rush's album, At the Unicorn (Night Light Recordings CU 58011, rereleased in 1986).

29. Both this and the following quote from Field interviews.

30. All quotes from Washington interview.

31. Thanks to Fritz Richmond, who provided me with a copy of this memo.

32. All quotes in this section are from the Cooke interviews of January 1992 unless noted otherwise.

33. Field interviews.

34. Field interviews.

35. Field interviews.

36. Field interviews. Rubber Soul was released in 1965. The Buck Owens-type song that Ringo sang was actually "Act Naturally" and was not included on Beatle Country.

37. Field interviews.

38. Schmidt interview.

39. Krim interview.

40. Letter from Fritz Richmond dated 25 February 1992. Incidentally, at a

c. 1983 concert at the Kennedy Center in Washington, Richmond announced publicly that he was going to donate his home-made washtub painted by "Cambridge buddy" Bobby Neuwirth to the Smithsonian Institution.

41. From Betsy Siggins's "New Pay Scale" dated 14 December 1962.

42. This seems a late date, but the Folkways catalogue of "1961 New Releases" for the months January to September feature the album on the front cover and the date is corroborated in von Schmidt and Rooney, page 83.

43. Both quotes from Geoffrey Muldaur interview.

44. Geoffrey Muldaur interview. Jerry Garcia began as a banjo player in folk and bluegrass bands and, by 1964, was one of Mother McCree's Uptown Jug Champions. Other Jug Champions were Bob Weir and Ron "Pigpen" McKernan who, along with Garcia, eventually formed the Grateful Dead (Pareles and Romanowski 226-7).

45. The Even Dozen Jug Band included Maria D'Amato, along with Stefan Grossman, David Grisman, Joshua Rifkin, John Sebastian, and others—a who's who of young New York folkies who went on to fame in other genres. As the Even Dozen Jug Band they recorded one album for Elektra, reissued on Legacy as Jug Band Songs of the Southern Mountains (LEG 119).

46. From a tape of a concert, Club 47 at the Kennedy Center in Washington, c. 1983, in which Maria Muldaur performed with the "Jug Band," hosted by Tom Rush. Her comments are from the introduction to the song. The Jug Band personnel at that concert were Geoffrey Muldaur, Bill Keith, Fritz Richmond, John Sebastian, and Maria Muldaur.

47. Krim interview.

48. Krim interview.

49. Geoffrey Muldaur interview.
50. Krim interview.
51. All information from an interview with David Gessner, 13 August 1991.
52. Information on the attendance record was taken from Boston Broadside ([10 August 1962]:5). The description of Rush's repertoire came from Boston Broadside ([23 March 1962]:1).
53. Schmidt interview.
54. Gessner interview.
55. Gessner interview.
56. Thanks to Peter Narváez, who also tried to locate information about this group.
57. From the February 1966 Club 47 calendar.
58. Schmidt interview.
59. 1990 Rooney interview.
60. Schmidt interview.
61. 1990 Rooney interview.
62. The press release was issued 16 June 1987 by the Smithsonian's press office. Featured performers at concerts in July, September, and November were, respectively, Taj Mahal and Charles Sayles, Doc Watson and the Smith Sisters, and Mary Travers and Kevin Roth. Meanwhile, of the performers billed in the series, only Taj Mahal and Doc Watson had actually played at Club 47 according to my preliminary survey of performers. The press release is located in the Club 47 vertical file at the Archive of Folk Culture at the Library of Congress.

## CHAPTER 6

### BEYOND THE WALLS OF CLUB 47

For a comprehensive understanding of Club 47, it is necessary to look briefly at several crucial activities variously undertaken by board members, management, and musicians outside the venue. By the mid-1960s, a number of factors coalesced to expand musical endeavours beyond the club itself. Three such collective activities examined below were the result of the 47's success as a showcase for local and visiting musical talent and its reputation as a vital participant in folk-revival events.

These activities are: 47 members' active participation in the Newport folk festivals from 1963 to 1969; the 47 serving as a regional sponsor for a series of concerts organized in 1965 under the aegis of the festivals' parent organization, the Newport Folk Foundation; and the 47 producing its own series of sporadic concerts between 1960 and 1967 to feature stars of the folk scene, or serve as benefits for either philanthropic organizations or the 47 community itself.

#### *6.1 The Newport Folk Festivals*

Beginning in the 47's middle period after its somewhat insular heyday on Mount Auburn Street, the club community developed a symbiotic relationship with the annual Newport folk festivals. As an aggregate, no other revival scene contributed as much to Newport as did the Club 47. Well-known performers who had established their reputations and developed followings at the 47 began to appear before increasingly larger regional and even national audiences at Newport and on festival-related recordings. In addition, the 47 community also contributed organizational and management expertise to the festival's parent organization, the Newport Folk

Foundation, in the form of board personnel and sponsoring travelling concerts in Cambridge.

Newport was the most important popular folk festival in America during the 1960s. My fieldwork among Club 47 members showed that even today in revival circles, the word Newport alone is sufficient to convey this fact. It is spoken of with approval and even a kind of reverence. Newport signalled a high-point of summer for many people, the annual gathering of thousands of like-minded individuals interested in similar kinds of music and musical experiences. For performers, an invitation to perform at Newport indicated a kind of approval by the revival's powers-that-be and conferred status, provoking attitudes of snobbery and even reverse-snobbery among participants. Equally, individuals and groups were upset when they were not invited to perform. [1]

Between 1959 and 1969, nine festivals took place each July in Newport, Rhode Island, a shore-side resort community approximately 100 miles south of Club 47 that had long been associated with both southern and northern elites throughout the nineteenth century. From the beginning, the multiday Newport festivals helped many musicians gain entry into the commercial music industry; by the mid-1960s, Newport also introduced revivalists to older tradition bearers, all of whom were featured on the programmes (Brauner 210).

The Newport Folk Foundation grew out of the festivals, in part to sponsor fieldwork to locate tradition bearers and bring them to Newport each summer. Like the 47, the Newport Folk Foundation was a nonprofit organization run by a board of directors. Most board members were themselves traditional or revival musicians (Brauner 69-70). These artists reorganized the festival and resumed its production in 1963 after a two-year hiatus, and produced future festivals annually until 1969 (Brauner

62). In addition to organizing and producing the festival, the board of the Newport Folk Foundation was "solely devoted to the perpetuation and presentation of grassroots American culture" (Brauner 159).

Two musician members of the 47 community served on the Newport board during the festival's last years, marking the first official representation the 47 community had in the festival and its work. Jim Rooney joined in January 1967, shortly before he resigned his full-time job as the 47's manager to work as a talent scout for the Newport jazz festival. [2] Jim Kweskin joined the board just prior to the club's demise in 1968. Both served until the end of 1969, when the festivals were terminated (Brauner 69-70).

Enthusiasm for increased participation at Newport by the Club 47 members initially came as a result of the festival's reorganization. The Newport Folk Foundation's mission to be "artists-run" and to fund fieldwork to locate and produce "grassroots" talent from "traditional artists" such as musicians, dancers, and craftspeople (Brauner 209-11) was sympathetic with the 47 ethos. The 1963 festival was dedicated to a civil rights theme in light of the forthcoming march on Washington; the 1964 festival featured country blues artists. Artists who performed at festivals gained or regained access to the commercial music industry and new audiences of revivalists.

The emphasis on grassroots music reflected the 47 community's growing awareness of and interest in "roots" musicians. The Newport board, for instance, hired revivalist Ralph Rinzler to be a fieldworker. Rinzler was known to the 47 crowd as a member of the Greenbriar Boys, a bluegrass band that played at the club in the early 1960s and had recorded with Joan Baez. He was also one of the Friends of Old Time Music who had helped to bring "roots" musicians to New York (Rosenberg, Bluegrass

81-82). The 47 management were also interested in booking roots musicians in Cambridge to expand these performers' audiences beyond Newport and New York.

Given their proximity to Cambridge and philosophically sympathetic musical agenda, the Newport festivals attracted a large proportion of the 47 community. Many members of the 47 scene participated in the annual event in various capacities: as paying audience, paid performers, and volunteer hospitality workers. The "Cambridge folks" felt especially involved in the "revived" Newport festivals beginning in 1963, festivals "revived" through the efforts, they said, of people they knew or knew of: "George Wein, Pete Seeger, Manny Greenhill [also a member of the 47's board], and many members of the New York folk community" (von Schmidt and Rooney 189). One member noted that "a lot had happened [at the club] since the last festival in 1960, and the Cambridge folks were ready to join in the festival," which they considered to be the gathering of the "folk communities of Cambridge and New York" (von Schmidt and Rooney 189, 250).

Surprisingly, with the exception of Baez, performers who were identified at Newport principally by their Club 47 affiliation did not begin to appear until the mid-1960s. The "Cambridge people" who performed at Newport included the CRVB, who only appeared as a group at the 1965 festival, although banjo-player Bob Siggins and mandolin-player Joe Val returned individually in 1968. Other well-known 47 regulars who played individually were Jackie Washington (1963 and 1968), Eric von Schmidt (1965 and 1968), Tom Rush (1966), and Jim Rooney (1968, although he played guitar as part of the CRVB in 1965) (Brauner 280, 306, 315, 327, 331, 339, 340). Bill Keith appeared in 1963 as a member of Bill Monroe's Blue Grass Boys. [3]

The Kweskin Jug Band was among the most acclaimed acts at their first festival performance in 1964 and appeared annually until 1967 (Brauner 105, 306, 315; von

Schmidt and Rooney 258-59). In 1968 the group had disbanded, but several former members appeared in new configurations that grew out of the band. Kweskin appeared with the Lyman Family; Geoff and Maria Muldaur performed as a duo; and Keith played solo (Brauner 306, 315).

Apparently the Kweskin Jug Band was sufficiently well known outside Club 47 to be featured in the opening scene of the 1967 documentary film, Festival, about the mid-1960s Newport festivals. Even before the opening credits roll, the episode features a largely incomprehensible exchange between members of the Kweskin Jug Band and an off-screen interviewer concerning the role of music in their lives. Filmed by independent film-maker Murray Lerner "in cooperation with the Newport Folk Foundation," the documentary features a variety of popular and traditional performers at the 1963 to 1966 festivals. [4] The film also contains many contextual shots of the audiences at concerts and afterwards temporarily overtaking the town and beaches of Newport. Some of these scenes include identifiable members of the 47 community. [5] Club 47 community members also appear in photographs with performers, at concerts and workshops, and general crowd scenes at various Newport festivals recorded throughout David Gahr and Robert Shelton's The Face of Folk Music and documented in "the book" (von Schmidt and Rooney 148, 182-85, 251, 256, 260, 276, 279, 293, 301).

For some 47 members, especially nonperformers, Newport was the social and musical event of the summer. Individuals volunteered for hospitality work in order to get a free pass and to meet and interact with the performers. [6] Nonmusician Jill Henderson, for instance, rearranged her work schedule to volunteer as a "housemother" to musicians domiciled in a local college. [7] This was an extension of her perceived informal role as a responsible and reliable caretaker in the 47 community back home.

In 1965 James Field did not have a performer's pass, as he did the previous year, so he volunteered to work in exchange for free admission. Field knew blues guitarist Lightnin' Hopkins from the season he managed the Moon-cusser coffeehouse on Martha's Vineyard, where some 47 members and their families summered. The prospect of interacting with a black blues tradition-bearer and fellow guitarist was exciting and memorable to a white revival musician:

One of the great things about Newport in its heyday was if you were a performer, especially a Boston-area performer, one could show up and you could walk into the office where Joyce Wein was. Joyce Wein was George Wein's wife [George Wein organized the Newport folk and jazz festivals and had run music venues in Boston] and say, "Joyce anything a little ol' guitar player like me could do to get a pass and kind of help you out?"

"Ok. Fine. Can you run messages on a bicycle and then you can have your pass and then Lightnin' Hopkins is coming in day after tomorrow and he needs a driver and you'll be it."

Oh God! So I was Lightnin' Hopkins's driver and Lightnin' Hopkins liked to drink even more than I did. So fortunately it was just little trips from wherever they were putting him up over to some stage and then back to some place, go to get something to eat.

Anyway. So I was a practicing alcoholic at the time. I got to hang out with a real blues man. One of the best. I love Lightnin' Hopkins. He liked to drink Fleishman's gin. In other words, you could buy this guy a bottle of Tanqueray or whatever some fancy gin was and he would ask flatly if you had any Fleishman's. Anybody who could drink gin straight is out there anyway. So I was out there and he was even farther out there. But he was a great musician. [8]

On the other hand, a less-than-adulatory tone about Newport was expressed by another member of the 47 community. As a semiprofessional banjo player, he had a reverse-snobbery attitude about having to share a musical experience at Newport with thousands of others. Yet it was clear to him that an invitation to perform at Newport was the stamp of approval for a musician and perhaps even a sign of future commercial success. He was especially proud when the Kweskin Jug Band was granted that

recognition, feeling that as a member of the 47 scene, he had had a small part in their success:

Yes, that was always the other thing, was to go to Club 47, not to go down to the Newport Folk Festival. You got a more rarified—I actually never did go to the Newport folk festival ever in my [life]. The irony is that I later got a teaching job down in Newport, so actually I know Newport after the festival, but I never knew it in its classic days, but we heard about it in the summer of '62 [there was no festival that year] or '63, we had heard that Dylan had played. And when the Jug Band began to play the Newport Folk Festival, we really knew that something was going on, but we waited—or I waited—until they all came back from Newport to play that night. It was more intimate and you didn't have to fight the traffic. [9]

Summer programming at the 47 often piggy-backed on the Newport schedule to take advantage of nonregional performers who were already in New England. These performers generally were older traditional musicians and younger revivalists. A three-year survey of the club's July bookings in the mid-1960s showed traditional and revival artists appearing before and after the festival. This was the heyday of Newport and the period when the 47 moved into prominence on the burgeoning revival network, and the time when many members of the Cambridge crowd said they became intimately involved in the festival.

In 1963, performers at both venues were southern banjo-player Dock Boggs, Scottish singer Jean Redpath, and revivalists Jack Elliott and New Lost City Rambler Mike Seeger. For 1964 the survey yielded: the Kentucky Colonels, a California bluegrass band with family roots in Maine and the Maritimes; the Jim Kweskin Jug Band, who played at the 47 for an entire week before their first Newport appearance, Mike Seeger, and the revival blues trio Koerner, Ray, and Glover from Minneapolis.

Several other revivalists made their Newport debut in 1965 and also played at the 47, including von Schmidt and Kathy and Carol, a duo from California. Those who

played the 47 in July 1965 before or after their only Newport appearance were Lightnin' Hopkins, the Beers Family from upstate New York, and revivalists Hamilton Camp, and the Paul Butterfield Blues Band. [10]

## *6.2 The Newport Folk Foundation Concerts*

In early 1965, the Newport Folk Foundation board organized an educational series, "The Folksong Trail," which was sponsored by "folk music organizations in major Northeastern cities" (Brauner 167). Club 47 was one of the sponsors between February and May, holding the series of four concerts "by traditional folk performers" in a church hall near the club. [11] The 47's February newsletter (n.p.) described the series as:

...an exceptional opportunity to see some of the very best of the traditional performers still performing today, and we hope that as many [members] as possible will take advantage of the chance to hear first-hand the real sound of folk music.

Two concerts featured "Anglo-American performers." The first presented Maybelle Carter "of the original Carter family" and Sam and Kirk McGee "from sunny Tennessee," all of whom had appeared at the Grand Ole Opry, on radio, and had extant recordings. They were billed along with "old-time fiddler" Arthur Smith of Tennessee, another Opry star who had recorded in the 1930s. [12] The second concert included singer and guitar/banjo player Roscoe Holcomb "of Kentucky, ballad singer Dillard Chandler of North Carolina, and the Galax String Band from Virginia, hosted by Ralph Rinzler of the Newport Folk Foundation." [13]

The second two concerts featured African-American traditions. At the first, folklorist Alan Lomax, also a member of the Newport board, hosted an evening of "old-time Negro country music" by: Bessie Jones and the Georgia Sea Island Singers, Ed Young, a fife player and dancer from Mississippi, and blues singer/guitarist Fred

MacDowell, who had appeared on Lomax's 1959 Atlantic field recordings set, Sounds of the South. [14]

The final concert of the series was hosted by blues scholar Sam Charters and featured music of the Bahamas performed by "legendary guitarist" Joseph Spence, and a group from Andros Island, both of whom Charters had recorded for Folkways. The 47's newsletter for May noted that the concert would mark the first time any of these people performed in the United States. [15]

As far as I can determine, no other series was undertaken jointly by the Newport Folk Foundation and Club 47. From my informants, however, I gathered that the concerts meant a great deal to the individuals who attended them. [16] Regardless of whether 47 members attended Newport, this particular series was a Newport dividend and an opportunity to see important traditional performers in an intimate setting in Cambridge on members' home turf. Several of these performers subsequently played at the club that year and later.

### *6.3 Club 47-Organized Concerts*

Besides Newport-related concerts, the 47's board and management expanded the club's mandate as an educational entity to include organizing its own concerts outside the venue, which also functioned to make the essence of the 47 scene accessible to nonmembers. The concerts featured locally-identified performers as well as nationally-known artists whose popularity was increasing through a combination of factors such as festival appearances, and recordings and other media exposure. Concerts featured some of the 47's "stars" such as Rush, and regular stellar headliners who, by the mid-1960s, commanded larger fees than the club's admission price could generate and whose following could no longer be accommodated at the 47 itself. [17]

Ironically, it was across the river in Boston, where several sites of varying sizes were available for hire as commercial concert venues, that many of these events took place. Each site lacked identifiable constituencies such as regular patrons or club or university affiliations, which was an asset to the 47 board and management as they became increasingly sophisticated about the business aspects of the entertainment industry spawned by the revival. These venues also were larger than any of the university facilities for hire in the area.

Along with the appointment of Rooney as full-time club manager in fall 1965 came the 47's formal sponsorship of concerts, which he supervised in addition to his daily duties. [18] During the next two years, Club 47 was the sponsor or cosponsor of a number of events at Symphony Hall, the Back Bay Theatre, and the War Memorial Auditorium, the only sites that could accommodate the increasing audiences that were developed, in part, at the 47. The concerts also drew new and additional audience members who were aware of performers who had appeared at the 47 through reviews and other publicity in revival publications. [19] Concerts were advertised in the club's calendar/ newsletter and tickets were available at the 47 in addition to each venue's box office.

During 1966 and 1967, a number of artists who had appeared at Newport were featured at these independent 47-sponsored concerts. Acts at the club were block-booked for several nights opposite these events so that 47 members had the opportunity to take in both musical events. Concerts included those by "our own" Tom Rush at Symphony Hall, and Tom Paxton, Pete Seeger, the Paul Butterfield and Otis Rush blues bands, and Doc Watson. [20] In April 1967, "the country music show of the year" at the Back Bay Theatre featured Buck Owens and his Buckaroos, popular country-music recording artists of the 1950s and 1960s, and Bill Monroe and his

Bluegrass Boys, who had long been known to the 47 crowd, in part through regular club appearances and the group's association with Bill Keith, Richard Greene, and Peter Rowan, also among the 47's "own." [21]

An equally ambitious concert schedule was planned for fall 1967 with individual concerts by Joan Baez, Arlo Guthrie, Patrick Sky, the Chambers Brothers, and return engagements by the Butterfield Blues Band and Buck Owens. Like the previous lineup, many of these performers were fresh from recent Newport appearances. Moreover, by then each of them had established some sort of connection to Club 47, usually having appeared there more than once. In the case of Guthrie, he made his "Cambridge debut" at the 47 in April 1966 (*Boston Broadside* [10 April 1966]: n.p.), but it was his 1967 debut at Newport that gained him national recognition when he sang "Alice's Restaurant," his antidraft, anti-Vietnam War talking blues situated partly in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. [22]

The anomaly in the 47's ambitious fall concert schedule was Ravi Shankar, a sitar-player from India who had gained popularity in the West through his recent association with the Beatles. His appearance under the 47 banner signals the club's growing affinity for the music of popular- and rock-influenced groups and combined the club's avant-garde aesthetic stance with its chartered educational mandate to present all forms of music.

#### *6.4 Philanthropic Concerts*

Lastly, following the philanthropic traditions of the region, many of the popular and well-known musicians at the 47 donated their time to fundraising concerts for charitable causes under the aegis of Club 47. Here members of the 47 community parlayed their entrepreneurial expertise and musical celebrity for the benefit of society.

These acts reflected attitudes about noblesse oblige and volunteerism that had long been a characteristic feature of privileged inhabitants of Cambridge and Boston, and foreshadowed more recent charity events discussed in the epilogue.

In fall 1965, the 47 sponsored a fundraising concert to benefit the Breath of Life Fund for the respiratory unit at Boston's Children's Hospital (Boston Broadside [29 September 1965]:n.p.). Among the local musicians who donated their performances in the huge War Memorial Auditorium were the CRVB, Mimi and Richard Fariña, Rush, and the Kweskin Jug Band. This was the only evidence I could find of such an ambitious undertaking, but it built on the 47's history of undertaking other smaller fundraisers, largely in aid of issues affecting members, such as the benefits for the legal fund in the late 1950s and those for Jackie Washington in the early 1960s (Boston Broadside [19 December 1962]:6, 8; [11 January 1963]:3).

Rooney, who was responsible for most of these outside concerts, also had had a hand in these earlier endeavours. [23] It also appears that as Club 47 manager, Rooney used his stature in Cambridge to help further local civil-rights causes, the only overt act of political activism I could document in connection with the 47, and then only from a secondary source. According to Boston Broadside ([22 June 1966]:n.p.), he was a board member of CORE's [Congress on Racial Equality] "second freedom folk festival" at Cambridge's Rindge and Technical high school that summer. He never mentioned this or any similar activism in interviews or conversations, and I have been unable to find the list of scheduled performers at this event. Several years before, however, he and his bluegrass partner, Bill Keith, used an appearance at a ban-the-bomb event "because they thought that if they did well, they'd get hired to play regularly. Gig now; save the world later" (von Schmidt and Rooney 92).

It is clear from this brief account that events and activities at Club 47 had repercussions beyond the walls of the venue itself. Musicians and nonmusicians, individual performers and groups, all used their skills to influence and be influenced by events in the local community; at Newport; and beyond, activities that foreshadowed events of the 1980s and 1990s.

Now that I have told the comprehensive story, it is time to draw some conclusions about Club 47, and about its role in the folk revival of the 1950s and 1960s.

## Notes

1. Interview with John Cooke, 18 January 1992.
2. Interview with Jim Rooney, 19 July 1990.
3. Thanks to Neil Rosenberg for calling this fact to my attention.
4. From my notes viewing the film 9 August 1991 at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Murray Lerner was present and afterwards publicly discussed how he filmed the documentary over the course of several festivals between 1963 and 1966. He admitted upon questioning that the film is not entirely representative of the scope of the festival and agreed that it tended to favour the "name" performers like Baez, Dylan, and Peter, Paul and Mary. He said, however, that Festival presents the best shots and sound recordings he had and that there are no out-takes for further study.
5. Thanks to James Field, who identified many of these people for me at a commercial screening in Somerville on 24 August 1991.
6. From interviews with Cooke, Field, Jill Henderson, Annie Johnston, and Betsy Siggins Schmidt.
7. Interview with Jill Henderson, 15 August 1991.
8. Interview with James Field, 26 July 1991.
9. Interview with Arthur Krim, 30 July 1991.
10. Sources for this information are the calendars issued by Club 47 for the month of July in 1963, 1964, and 1965. This is the period that club members—and my research—identify as years when they were especially involved with the festival in large numbers.
11. Club 47 calendar for February 1965 (n.p.).
12. On the night of the first concert on Saturday, 13 February, two local singers, Jerry Corbett and Ray Pong, were booked at the 47. Both were regular and popular

performers, but apparently were not considered serious competition to the visiting musicians. Subsequent concerts were scheduled opposite club appearances by Mimi and Richard Fariña, Geoff Muldaur, and Mike Seeger. All but Seeger were 47 regulars.

13. All quotes are from the club's February and March 1965 calendars, neither of which is paginated. Holcomb had appeared in the 1963 documentary about Kentucky mountain music, High Lonesome Sound, made by New Lost City Rambler John Cohen, who had been doing fieldwork and recording the music around Hazard, Kentucky, for Folkways at least since 1960. Both Holcomb and Chandler were featured on Folkways recordings of the 1960s. I have been unable to identify the Galax String Band, but assume they are among the many old-time and bluegrass bands that grew out of the Galax fiddlers' conventions (Rosenberg, Bluegrass 173, 189, 221; Sandberg and Weissman 66-67, 70).

14. April 1965 calendar (n.p.). Bessie Jones was another traditional singer who was taken up by revivalists and booked at concerts and festivals. Jones also made recordings for Folkways and the Archive of Folk Song (now the Archive of Folk Culture); she, too, had been recorded by Lomax during his 1959 fieldwork for Atlantic, which also included recordings of Hobart Smith and Almeda Riddle. In addition, Jones collaborated with others such as Bess Lomax Hawes on a collection of Sea Island stories, songs, and games, Step It Down (Harper, 1972); and on her "autobiography," For the Ancestors: Autobiographical Memories, collected and edited by John Stewart (U of Illinois P, 1983) (Sandberg and Weissman 47, 150, 185).

15. I have been unable to find the names of the Andros Island performers, but they may have included John Roberts and/or Frederick McQueen, who were recorded with Spence on Folkways. Spence also recorded on Arhoolie and Elektra (Sandberg and Weissman 138).

16. Several informants commented, sometimes at length, on these people coming to town, both under the aegis of these concerts and sometimes additional later appearances at Club 47. Specific references are in interviews with David Gessner, Jill Henderson, Arthur Krim, Jim Rooney, and Tom Rush. Maria Muldaur spoke publicly about opportunities to meet traditional musicians at a Club 47 reunion concert in Washington, c. 1983, of which I have an edited tape.

17. Interview with Tom Rush, 15 April 1992.

18. 1990 Rooney interview.

19. During much of this period, Jill Henderson was one of the principal editors of Boston Broadside. I thank her for reminding me of her involvement in this additional outlet for Club 47 publicity.

20. From Club 47 calendars. See the epilogue for a discussion of Rush's on-going association with Symphony Hall.

21. It may or may not be coincidence that this location was near the old Hillbilly Ranch in Park Square and the Mohawk Ranch on Dartmouth Street. For more on these places, see von Schmidt and Rooney (92-97 and 139-40).

22. Incidentally, the most amusing fact I turned up during fieldwork is that Alice Brock, of "Alice's Restaurant" fame, is now a cat therapist on Cape Cod.

23. 1990 Rooney interview.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSIONS: SURVIVAL THROUGH REVIVAL

Folksong has always been infused with new ideas and, to survive, it must be performed with an aesthetic sensibility that finds community approval. Club 47 participants kept alive the tradition of making music that helped to define and entertain a community. Music was the glue that help the community together and lifted its music culture out of the everyday world and into the realm of the sacred. Themes of songs may not have always reflected the individual experiences of performers or audience members, but the songs nevertheless appealed to collective taste.

Folk revivals fall somewhere in the continuum between tradition and innovation. The best way to summarize the ethnography is to look at some of the patterns that emerged through the study.

The Club 47 legend connotes the golden age of the local scene, as well as of the revival itself. It served as both the principal breeding ground for new folk-music talent in the area, and as the showcase for the best performers and the many genres that the folk revival had to offer. Clearly, Club 47 remains a cultural icon in the local consciousness. Members of the Club 47 community were the last generation to interact with the first generation of musicians recorded by the commercial music industry of the 1920s and 1930s, often perceived by revivalists as a golden age itself that provided analogues for their songs. As such, revivalists served as a bridge between those earlier performers who were revitalizing their own times and the present.

The success of Club 47 equalled more than the sum of its parts and its influence continues to be acknowledged today in many music-related activities in the region. Club 47's legend lives on through recordings by its most prominent boom-period musicians and in its legacy to newer generations of singer-songwriters and concert

hall/coffeehouse patrons, particularly in and around the metropolitan Cambridge/Boston area. The remainder of this chapter summarizes significant points made in this thesis and the conclusions I have drawn from them.

Club 47's form followed its function. Within the social context of a coffeehouse, the self-created community nurtured an intimate, face-to-face exchange in the mutual pursuit and development of new forms of music and new forms of relationships, a model that it outgrew because it succeeded too well when these activities no longer were regarded as avant garde. Across the country as well as in Cambridge, the folksong boom had entered the mainstream and become a force in the entertainment business; Club 47 was less intimate and its once-unique distinctions and aesthetic characteristics were diffused quickly over space and time by festivals and recordings.

In its time, Club 47 was part of a national discovery and contemporary adaptation of traditional forms of music from the musical heritage of North America. The club's social structure and self-image were greatly influenced by its setting in Cambridge. The participants and activities that comprised the collective entity known as Club 47 reflected the highly intellectual and academic milieu in which it was situated. There, traditions of excellence are endemic, as are establishing continuity with the recent and distant past. That Club 47 is remembered both within and outside the 47 community itself for its stellar line-up is one example of this fact.

I have divided the club's history into the following three phases, each significant and symbolic, which also tie its history to national trends and helps portray it as a cultural symbol.

### *7.1 Rites of Passage: Club 47's Three Phases*

Club 47 passed through three distinct phases in its decade-long history, a process that paralleled the social maturation of individual participants, as well as the coming-of-age of the great boom as a musical force that later was subsumed into the popular entertainment industry. These stages are akin to the transitions that anthropologist Arnold van Gennep identified sequentially as rites of passage (11-12).

The three phases correspond to the rites of separation, which I liken to the club's early years (1958-1963) when it was determining its identity; rites of transition, the 47's middle years (1962-1965) that overlap with the other phases, when the community was becoming aware of its increasing role in the boom and moving towards even greater participation and sense of itself within the revival; and rites of incorporation, the last years (1965-1968), when Club 47 and the revival generally were subsumed into popular culture via folk-rock and rock music, and club members became incorporated fully into adult society in new roles such as parents, breadwinners, and, most significantly, as revival tradition-bearers in their own right.

Members declared that the 47's heyday was its early phase on Mount Auburn Street, when the community was socially cohesive, determining its self-image, ethos, and mission. This is when musicians from within the community were learning their trade, and there was a creative tension between audience and performers as they undertook their mutual voyage of exploration. Together they faced issues of authenticity of texts and performance aesthetics, commercialism, and even career possibilities, when it became evident that some individuals could actually occupy themselves as professional musicians or as producers and entrepreneurs in the music industry. These same early members voiced a sense of loss when, within a few years, they outgrew the earlier mode of creative tension, and musical forces moved them into

the larger world of the burgeoning folksong revival nationwide. This is the dichotomy of the so-called community-based folk professional that dogged 47 members and their fellow revivalists.

Throughout its history, performers on stage at Club 47 represented and reflected communal values. In the first phases of its early days, nonmusicians among the 47's membership felt that they had an active role in helping to establish the performing careers of many individual musicians and groups. Standards of excellence at the 47 mirrored those in the academic and social worlds surrounding the club. Performance standards were high, and the audience expected bookings to reflect the best their own community had to offer as well as hosting the fellow revivalists who met community standards.

The second phases comprised the two-year period surrounding the club's relocation to Palmer Street, when the 47 was gaining recognition as a full-fledged regional force in the developing national revival network, in part through the growing professionalization of both its own performers and its administration of paid and volunteer staff, and of the growing sophistication and recognition of visiting musicians. [1] Moreover, as the revival gained momentum, the 47's bookings began to reflect and influence trends in New England and nationwide.

The line-up remained interspersed with local musicians, however, even if they and the club had moved beyond their original model of intimate interaction. This parallel local/visiting booking policy is another distinction that separated Club 47 from venues that functioned simply as star-making factories. And yet, as a defence mechanism, local and visiting performers became more remote on- and off-stage. Even once-local musicians were developing followings that foreshadowed rock-and-roll fandom. Regardless, these performers still represented role models and expressed

communal wish fulfillment, and their remoteness ironically sometimes made them even more desirable role models.

The third and final phase lasted roughly three years from late summer 1965 to the club's closing in spring 1968. By 1965, many performers who were generally identified with Club 47 were debuting or making return engagements at Newport, in addition to working the network. Moreover, the period witnessed the 47's contribution of performers and fans to the developing named-system revivals such as bluegrass, blues, and old-time music that created discrete subgroups among revivalists who were interested in specific musical forms. It also marked the 47's role in the folksong revival's being subsumed into national movements, for which it contributed more than a few performers. It was also during the early part of this phase that older artists and tradition-bearers played at the club, usually via the Newport Folk Foundation. The Club 47 community's rite of passage into incorporation into the folk revival leads to discussion of the 47 itself as a cultural symbol.

### *7.2 Club 47 as Cultural Symbol*

As a cultural symbol, Club 47 carried on the community-assembly tradition of the tavern into the folk revival. It also connoted the demimonde subcultures inherited from the beat coffeehouses, and implied continuity with jazz, a musical form also derived from folk forms. The dual meaning of Club 47 as the place and the aggregation of individuals in that place implies that participants actively ascribed to some sort of amorphous membership criteria and group identity from the beginning.

The origins of Club 47 in a setting conducive to eating, drinking coffee, and social discourse is significant, since club founders emphasized the inclusive role of the public house/tavern as a meeting place, a concept from British culture that was

transplanted to America with colonization, a tradition that had a long history and presence in the Cambridge/ Boston area (Rybczynski 121). For instance, the much more egalitarian and still functioning Folk Song Society of Greater Boston was founded at about the same time as the 47. The Society, however, met in the YMCA in Boston in its early years for the sole purpose of listening to musical performances. Social interaction was not part of the primary structure of that organization and to this day it produces its events in public halls; the only distinction between Society "members" and nonmembers is a slight difference in admission fees, but no sense of belonging to or exclusion from anything. [2] In its earliest days, many members of the 47 crowd were under 21, then as now the legal drinking age in Massachusetts. Making the club a membership organization did more than skirt the licencing issues in Cambridge. It created a sense of place and group identity for members outside their age and occupational cohort. By creating an establishment to encourage social interaction, the Club 47 founders were very much in keeping with local historical antecedents. Much of the political life of colonial Massachusetts transpired in taverns, the de facto social clubs of the day. Taverns are central to local legends surrounding the American Revolution, a pivotal time in United States history, just as to a lesser extent the folk revival helped to create a new social vision for its participants.

Every local schoolchild knows that the Boston Tea Party was organized at the Green Dragon tavern in 1773. Legends about Paul Revere often mention his stopping at taverns en route to Lexington late one night in April 1775. Marching out from Cambridge, British and colonial forces retreated to their separate, commandeered taverns on either side of Lexington Green after the "shot heard 'round the world" launched the war of independence in what was once Cambridge Farms. Legends about people and events related to these historical sites help to romanticize the late colonial

era and provide continuity with its past Puritan mission to create a "city upon a hill" and to create a sense of historical identity today in a newer metaphorical musical city upon a hill.

The ideal of colonial America continues to attract literal and metaphorical tourists to eastern Massachusetts "in search of experience" (MacCannell 1), not unlike the revival or revitalization impulse, who want to see the past in the present and associate themselves with places touched by the legendary founders.

As a frame of reference, the tourist metaphor can aptly be applied to Club 47's participants as well. The perpetual appeal of the past, and especially the cultural artifacts surrounding the Revolution, was a strong example of the kind of romantic nationalism expressed in all revivals. Whether it was consciously acknowledged by the 47 community or not, the Anglo-American ballads and broadsides and the African-American blues and spirituals that Baez is remembered by informants as singing at Club 47 alluded as well to a perceived romanticized past and one that combined eighteenth- and nineteenth-century musical antecedents.

The spatial layout of Club 47 is a prime example of its symbolic link to its colonial and republican heritage. The two levels at Mount Auburn Street reinforced the hierarchical status distinctions between performers and audience and between insiders and outsiders. The subterranean single level at Palmer street symbolized the underground nature of what the boom once was, but also its more egalitarian nature by the mid- to late-1960s, when other status markers had to be determined and/or maintained. High-status club insiders and management stood along the walls, where they could move easily and mix with the audience or work behind the scenes. Freedom of movement connoted status, even in an ideologically classless, democratic society.

Informant Jane Mansbridge, a political scientist and former club member, observed that such an arrangement paralleled the configuration of New England town meetings:

The most important officials of the town tend to sit on the sidelines, so they can get up and go in the back and talk with people easily. This is true of many town meetings. The same dynamic was true at the 47. If you were in the back, you could move around...and whisper, clap to the music, or dance a little, and move to where the action was— whereas if you were sitting down, you were fixed, eyes forward. For the members and friends of performers, the reason for going to the club was as much to talk with your friends and hang out in the back as to hear the music. [3]

Attitudes towards taverns changed as periodic temperance movements tried to undermine their role in community life by equating them with public disorder. Teetotallers favoured instead the coffeehouses and other establishments that served nonalcoholic drinks, but retained their associations with public assembly for social interaction. By the mid-1950s, coffeehouses came to imply a social gathering of a like-minded, generally intellectual, community. Coffeehouses were the favoured venue around universities both because they were easier to manage and licence, and because they allowed underage patrons to participate in intellectual social intercourse. Also their fare was less expensive than taverns. Tulla's may have preceded Club 47 on Mount Auburn Street, but it was at Club 47, not Tulla's, that local revivalists created their own community in their own image, in part because there was no single personality owning or overseeing the place.

The metaphorical sightseeing implicit in cultural revivals can be considered a kind of tourist experience where participants have the ability to transcend their physical place and create "collective touristic versions of other people and other places" (MacCannell 13). Sightseeing, the central ritual performed by tourists, is an even more apt metaphor for Club 47's history. Sightseeing, says MacCannell, is:

...a kind of collective striving for a transcendence of the modern totality, a way of attempting to overcome the discontinuity of modernity, of incorporating its fragments into unified experience (13).

At Club 47, community members were reworking into their own authentic experience attitudes, beliefs, and musics borrowed from other segments of American culture.

### *7.3 Club 47's Folksong Legacy*

As part of a cultural transformation, Club 47 participants, like their folksong revival counterparts in other scenes, were creators and innovators of new musical texts as art forms that alluded to continuity with the past and utilized the materials of the present to preserve and transmit their creations into ever-widening circles.

My data is at odds with the popular notion that technology is the death-knell of cultural traditions. If anything, technology in the form of recordings and radio broadcasts—and now in the form of cassette tapes and compact discs—is the primary agent of transmission, while enabling new traditions to develop via, and literally around, technology. Many Club 47 participants based their aesthetic judgments on how much performances sounded like the record. Performers imitated or altered others' styles to suit their own or collective aesthetics, and condemned groups like the Kingston Trio when they consciously parodied older styles in the pursuit of humour, not musical integrity. In fact, part of the reason I think the legend persists about Dylan being booed off the stage at Newport in 1965 is that the legend itself symbolizes the underlying tension of the revival between acoustic and electrified music or, rather, between tradition and innovation.

The revival helped to usher in a new American cultural period and, through appeals to tradition, functioned as social sanction for breaking old patterns and creating newer ones. At the 47, the revival was an agent of change instituted by young middle- and upper-middle class participants. They had the material means and leisure to appropriate ideas and cultural materials in a self-conscious way as they sought to preserve the dynamic, creative tension between continuity and change. They also had the confidence and often the freedom from conventional social arrangements to foster new models of behaviour such as taking drugs and forming new sexual relationships--and even making their own music or hanging out in coffeehouses--that played on the synergy of the music community. All of these activities reinforced new ideas of individual and collective identity, which helped to distinguish this particular group of revivalists from others in terms of the longevity of key personnel and activities on the 47 scene.

Revival activity at the 47 also launched local representatives of a new generation into the entertainment business. Some of the performers from and within the Club 47 community began to move into the public-display arenas of festivals such as Newport, which were a showcase for seeing and being seen. Some of those who began or made their names at Club 47 are still full-time professional musicians. Others, who were avocational, semiprofessional, or professional musicians have different occupations now, but continued to participate in music-making by playing in local bands or recording and touring sporadically, activities that parallel those of earlier generations of performers whom they imitated, few of whom were ever full-time artists. Yet others have returned to their music after periods of time in which they concentrated on other pursuits.

Besides musicians, the 47 enabled people to participate in the music business in roles other than as performers, activities akin to those of more traditional communities where acknowledged performers need and are supported by their peers. It was nonmusicians who launched the original club and primarily nonmusicians who served on the board and who determined the booking policy. Others were involved in the daily task of running the club or learning the technical and promotional aspects of the recording industry.

Ultimately revivalists at Club 47 launched a whole new body of folkloristic items or texts into tradition in the form of new or revitalized folksongs. Many of the newer songs were written and performed in the folk idiom. For instance, Arlo Guthrie's talking-blues, "Alice's Restaurant," cannot be attributed directly to Club 47, but he has been credited with an institutionalized presence there. [4] The song has entered tradition, in part as a humorous account of a latter-day Thanksgiving celebration in Massachusetts, reminiscent of the earlier feast at Plymouth. [5]

Another example that has become a metaphor now reaching beyond the Club 47 community concerns Eric von Schmidt's song, "Baby, Let Me Follow You Down," which he reworked from an older blues song learned from Rev. Gary Davis. The song served as a symbolic invitation for others like von Schmidt to get involved in the immediacy of the music and its ambient culture, which appealed to emotional and spiritual values that participants often could not express or articulate in the course of everyday life. That aura of time out of time, an aura that participants could create for themselves on the grassroots level, is perhaps one of the principal legacies of Club 47. It is a legacy that continues to empower its former members and those they touched through their records, performances, and their songs.

Musically, Club 47 also functioned as social sanction for change in the preservative—or conservationist—nature of the variety of music performed and generated there. Acknowledging the elitist profile of most preservation movements in the area, one former 47 member observed that the great-boom revival was classless in its attempt to purify contemporary life by “singing your way back” to a simpler place and time. [6] In so doing, singers' efforts enabled many “good songs” and sentiments to survive and be preserved for future generations. Like the musical texts it generated, Club 47 survives in spirit because it revitalized, updated, or reinterpreted items from the recent and distant past and fashioned them to once-contemporary needs and notions. Now, nearly 35 years since Club 47 opened in 1958, its name and legend lives on as if its activities happened only yesterday.

#### *7.4 Club 47's Role in the Revival*

Lastly, my research both confirms and challenges a variety of prior conclusions in the existing folkloristic and historiographic literature on the folksong revival, and provides opportunities for further research.

Patterns provide means for comparing and contrasting. I am struck by the dearth of ethnographies on folk-revival music clubs and their historical predecessors. A review of the literature on both British and North American song and dance revivals from the late nineteenth century to the present yields much information based on secondary sources. In Britain, or at least in England and Scotland, most clubs met or meet in community-based public houses within living memory. These venues provided a physical space and a generally stable indigenous audience that held shared values and attitudes, or at least had a commonality of experience. [7]

By contrast, in the United States during the great boom, there were no pre-existing venues already identified as communal gathering spots that functioned the same way as pubs do across the Atlantic as centres of community life. Most of the folk clubs and coffeehouses identified with the North American boom seemed to spring up to fulfill a particular consumer need and image. Such venues like Club 47 were cultural artifacts of their specific time and place and, like many things in American culture, were generally short-lived, in essence cultural fads. Previous studies of the folksong revival in the United States tend to homogenize the characteristics and functions of faddish venues and fit them to generalized national or broader North American models. [8]

Based on my evaluation of the Club 47 scene that was sometimes characterized as model and sometimes as anomaly, I would argue that the revival literature needs to be re-evaluated. To date, it has been based largely on conclusions drawn from and by musical participants in the New York scene or others who have for various reasons accepted it as the prototype (e.g., J. Cohen, "The Folksong Revival II" 35-37).

This fact acknowledges again the lack of solid ethnographies on other scenes or on significant individual venues. If my study of Club 47 does not support general observations and patterns in the existing literature on the folksong revival—and I think often it does not—then perhaps other scenes deserve further scrutiny to see what trends they, too, confirm or refute. Certainly my study would have benefited from data on these other scenes, especially Boston. Even in my fieldwork, I only gathered peripheral information on the handful of Boston clubs that had direct influence on Club 47, although many more existed. Like this ethnography on Club 47, other studies should certainly include participants' own observations and insights, and attempt to portray the entire music culture, not just the summary of trends that an analysis of a roster of performers might elicit.

An inclusive history of the North American revival remains to be written, overwhelming task that it might be. I hope that the task will be undertaken by a folklorist who builds on the current trend in the field towards greater interdisciplinary research, using methods from folkloristics, ethnomusicology, history, and anthropology. Clearly, I have benefitted from the ability to look at music and the music culture of Club 47 in its cultural context. The folksong genres I studied, as well as other folkloristic genres and topics that arose in my fieldwork, such as legend, custom, material culture, and even belief, helped me to understand the nuances of the material I collected.

### *7.5 The Last Word*

In closing, I want to reiterate that Club 47 certainly was a product of its time and place, and its unique cultural milieu. The prevailing ethos in Cambridge is preservationist in nature, a lesson in looking backward for inspiration and new models that the Club 47 community learned well in Harvard Square. It was a lesson that more than one informant credited in interviews as a virtue. The collective image of Club 47 articulated by former members may sometimes have erred in its predilection for provincialism and elitism, but I think the 47 community integrated the high standards demanded by their milieu to create and perpetuate a truly lasting contribution to the folksong revival, framed firmly in the New England traditions of conservationism and innovation.

Like life itself, music and culture need organic and dynamic change to survive. On many levels, Club 47 members preserved as many texts as they created. At least the songs will—and do—survive because of their vitality at Club 47 and their continuing presence on records and reinterpretations by newer performers. In 1841, local sage

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote that artists must speak to their times. Over a hundred years later, members of the Club 47 community indirectly took his advice. Emerson has weathered well. May Club 47's fate be equally timeless.

## Notes

1. In our interview of 15 April 1992, Tom Rush challenged the notion of a recognized network. In the early '60s, he took a year's leave of absence from his studies to see if he could make a living by his music. Even with a professional manager, he said he did not feel part of a formal network at that time; rather through the grapevine "you'd know where to go"—in New York it was the Gaslight and Gerde's; in Philadelphia, the Second Fret; Miami was "another planet." He recalled that everyone in Miami, including later folk-rocker David Crosby of Crosby, Stills, and Nash, played revivalist Bob Gibson's repertoire. In Miami Rush said that for six months he himself was considered the "king of the Coconut Grove" because he "knew more songs than anybody else," including Gibson.

2. From the published history of the Society in their newsletters of summer 1990, my survey of Boston Broadside issues commencing March 1962 to summer 1968, and from personal experience. Several of the FSSGB founders were involved in the leftist political movements of the 1930s and 1940s, and the concerts they organized reflected these attitudes, taking on the posture of more formal exchanges between singer/speaker and audience.

3. Letter from Jane Mansbridge, dated 21 November 1991.

4. In the entry for Club 47 in her book, The Rock 'n Roll Road Trip: The Ultimate Guide to the Sites, the Shrines and the Legends Across America (New York: Pharos Books, 1992), A. M. Nolan recounts a legend that Arlo Guthrie was discovered at the 47. Guthrie did, in fact, play at the 47 a year before his Newport debut, but I turned up no accounts of this legend in my fieldwork.

5. I have evidence of this fact collected informally from revivalists and also from the song being played on Thanksgiving Day on local and regional radio stations, as well as National Public Radio in the States.

6. Interview with James Field, 24 July 1991.

7. These include Ginette Dunn, The Fellowship of Song: Popular Singing Traditions in East Suffolk (London: Croom, Helm, 1980); Joan Kosby, "An Ethnography of the St. Albans Folk Music Club" (M.A. thesis, Memorial U of Newfoundland, 1978); Ailie Munro, The Folk Music Revival in Scotland (London: Kahn, 1985); and John L. Smith, "The Ethogenics of Music Performance: A Case Study of the Glebe Live Music Club," Everyday Culture: Popular Song and the Vernacular Milieu, eds. Michael Pickering and Tony Green (Milton Keynes, England: Open UP, 1987) 150-176. Also see the videotapes of Carole Pegg's 1984 ethnographic film of the Ship Inn in Blaxall, Suffolk, England, Tune-Up at the Ship, which updates Peter Kennedy's 1955 BBC film, Here's a Health to the Barleymow. Kennedy, Dunn, and Pegg all studied the performance traditions at the Ship Inn spanning a 30-year period. I want to thank Paul Smith for telling me about these videotapes from the Ship and for access to his collection of tapes from and about the 1960s British revival.

8. See, for instance, DeTurk, Gonczy, Gottesman, and Jackson cited in the bibliography.

## CHAPTER 8

### EPILOGUE: CAN THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN

Throughout the history of Club 47, music was perceived as a force for finding common ground and for creating and sustaining a dynamic community. Club 47 closed during a time of musical flux. At the same time, as one informant summarized, Americans of a certain age generally were fragmented, confused, angry, and saddened by the political and social tragedies of 1968. It is only now, at midlife, being at a conventional age for introspection, that many informants have the perspective and ability to synthesize their experiences and attempt to read retrospective meaning into their individual and collective pasts. It is also a time of action for many of them, predicated on those insights. Thus, I feel it fitting that I end this thesis with an epilogue that updates the preceding historical account of Club 47.

Two kinds of events and many more activities and endeavours symbolically represent the lessons learned at Club 47, each of which highlight some of the many roles music continues to play in former members' lives. The theme of reunion, with its bridging of the past and the present, pervades all these activities. For the 47 crowd and their legatees, these events are official and unofficial reunions of performers and other former community members, affording participants the opportunity to integrate their past and present situations. Metaphorically, as a group, many participants were returning to their surrogate family comprised by the 47 community.

The idea of epiphany was—and is—important to the people I interviewed and was a recurring theme in our talks. Whether epiphany came during the club's existence, when their interaction with music there often changed the course of their lives, or later, when they realized that they were no longer merely the inheritors or creators of traditions but rather those who consciously pass on their culture to the next

generation, nearly everyone I talked with referred to their Club 47 experiences as a symbolic touchstone for framing and ordering their life stories.

Now as in the past, former Club 47 members' actions mirror social trends. Some, for instance, have tempered their lives, forswearing the drugs and alcohol and other excesses of their youth for the proverbial clean-living of the 1990s. Some people are returning to their music-making; others never put it aside. Some participants have children who are as enthusiastic as their parents for the forms of music they heard in the 1960s in their formative years at Club 47 and at after-hours house parties—in a sense carrying on their family musical traditions. Together they have created a multigenerational audience for the music, which manifests itself in newer coffeehouses and concerts in the Cambridge/Boston area, and in the revived Newport festivals.

Generational demographics have an important role in this continuum. Recent census statistics published in the Boston Globe and elsewhere confirm that the '60s revival generation and revivalists' progeny born at the tail end of the baby boom are moving west (an old American tradition itself) of Boston and Cambridge to places like Concord and Westborough. [1]

Music for aging enthusiasts is thriving in that subregion. Radio station WADN-AM, known locally as "Walden Radio," has been broadcasting for the past three years from Concord. It bills itself as "folk music from Walden Pond" and as "the official flagship station of the revived Newport folk festival," which in turn bills itself as an event "for the children of the '60s and their children" (emphasis theirs), reinforcing the sense of tradition that pervades this work. [2] In two slogans, Walden Radio also unites the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in a continuum, which ironically parallels the period of formal folklore studies in the United States. WADN further establishes its symbolic link to Henry David Thoreau, transcendentalism, and cultural conservation,

along with promoting its contemporary role at Newport and nurturing daily the continuing revival on the airwaves in the tradition of defunct Cambridge folkie station WCAS that broadcast throughout the 1960s and 1970s.

Walden Radio knows its market well. That market thrives in upscale places such as the Old Vienna Kaffeehaus in Westborough, where folkies of the 47 era and later can and do park their cars, have a meal with beer and wine, and listen to live music without the hassles of city traffic, expensive parking garages, or oppressive blue laws.

### *8.1 Links in the Chain*

Irony and paradox are two characteristics that pervaded much of this narrative, often prompted by epiphanies and insights. At middle age, when conventional wisdom speaks of people beginning to think of slowing down, many Club 47 members have begun to espouse activism for causes—musical, political, and social—with a vengeance now that they have the means and power to effect change. They realize that they are in the middle between the older and younger generations, and feel that they have a job to do and a legacy to impart, influenced no doubt by a strong sense of historicism as well as by the course of the life cycle.

The spirit of Club 47 lives on in two kinds of events that began in the 1980s and 1990s and link the historic venue to the present. Beginning in 1981, Tom Rush formally organized a series of concerts in Boston under the Club 47 name. A decade later, Betsy Siggins Schmidt used her contacts with former 47 musicians and community members to organize a fundraising concert in New York for the social service agency she directed that serves the urban poor and sick. While the events created by Rush and Schmidt inherently served as impromptu reunions, each of these undertakings also incorporated

aspects of the 47's history. Both kinds of events juxtaposed old and new audiences for popular revival music and provided an opportunity for the Club 47 community to renew ties and work together in new ways, and to revive and pass on its own tradition. Each event is described below.

### *8.2 Tom Rush: "Passing of the torch"*

Of the many events that Rush has organized under the Club 47 name, the occasion that is particularly significant to informants and involved many of them actively and passively occurred in December 1984, when he hosted a series of three "concept" concerts in Boston's Symphony Hall. These concerts presented fellow former Club 47 performers and "newcomers" before a sold-out audience of 2,600 people. [3] Each night featured different acts, but included "largely the original cast from the 47" such as Joan Baez, the CRVB, and several members of the Kweskin Jug Band, along with "new people like Claudia Schmidt [a feminist singer-songwriter; no relation to Betsy Schmidt] and [David] Buskin and [Robin] Batteau" [a piano/fiddle songwriting duo].

Billed as the "Club 47 twenty-fifth anniversary festival," the event marked the passing of a quarter century since 1959, when folk music began attracting audiences to 47 Mount Auburn Street. The three-day event is remembered as a single occasion by informants, telescoped into one long holiday-time family reunion. It was even commemorated in souvenir t-shirts like the highly-coveted apparel that has come to mark many kinds of musical tours and occasions.

As with all reunions, it was a time to renew old ties, bask in past accomplishments, and express contemporary attitudes and activities. The concerts were an opportunity to "bury hatchets," as one informant observed, and expand the

community with an infusion of new members linked by their associations with older ones. [4] Consciously or unconsciously, the event was patterned on and recalled the Christmas-time concert the Club 47 management produced in Symphony Hall in late December 1966. That event featured the 47 regulars, many of whom, again, were reuniting during the seasonal festival "to help spread the cheer around in real style" at a "holiday get-together" (Broadside [21 December 1966]: 1).

The passage of a quarter century is a significant anniversary in North American culture, especially after a rite of passage such as the collective coming-of-age of the Club 47 community. On the personal level, the passage of that significant amount of time is usually celebrated by high-school and college reunions, by silver-wedding anniversary parties, and even with token gifts to mark occupational anniversaries. Like the twenty-fifth anniversary class reunions held by the preparatory schools and ivy-league institutions that many 47 members attended, the reunion theme at these concerts marked the symbolic reconstitution of the original community.

Rush is the self-appointed public custodian of the Club 47 legend. Fellow 47 performer John Cooke described him as "the official Keeper of the Flame." [5] Nevertheless, there is ambivalence within the 47 community about Rush having rights to the name: as one informant said, "He has no right to it, but he's using it well." [6] Again, these attitudes evoke the historicism in which the original Club 47 was set and the communal sense of proprietary responsibility, as well as the latter-day spirit of healing and reconciliation in a collective enterprise.

The concerts were the result of savvy research to target and serve a market. By 1984, what Rush said was interesting to him and significant for the music industry was that, "We had no stars and still managed to sell out, even before Joan Baez and Richie Havens [singer/guitarist who made his name at Woodstock in 1969] agreed to do it."

Rush had already experimented with the concept. In 1981 he organized and hosted the first Symphony Hall concert using the formulaic model of established performers who had played at the 47 introducing newer performers, a tradition honed at the 47 itself and at Newport and other revival productions. Even before the great boom, folk music producers had used the model of well-known acts bankrolling lesser-known ones, and Rush himself had had such a role at the 47.

By then Rush was convinced that a market for acoustic folk music still existed, but was neglected by the music industry in favour of more lucrative youth markets. He also knew that, like himself, his target market had matured and were willing and able to pay higher ticket prices for an evening's entertainment. Working with strategic marketing consultants, he parlayed his popularity as a kind of "has been" into a new career direction, determined not to be perpetually labelled and ignored by the industry as "a '60s folksinger," he said. Such a label denied the ability of both performers and audiences to grow musically and build on the past.

Rush and his consultants chose Boston as the test market because: it was close to his production and recording company in New Hampshire; Boston has a constant influx of young populations due to the proliferation of academic institutions and entry-level job opportunities; and it was the historical site of many great-boom venues in addition to Club 47, a large portion of whose audiences still lived in the area. The idea was to appeal to a range of ages and musical interests rather than pure nostalgia. One marketing survey, in fact, showed fewer than one percent of the audience at the 1981 concert ever attended Club 47.

Between 1981 and 1984 Rush acquired the rights to use the name, Club 47, as a registered trademark and servicemark of his production company and to legally protect it against use and abuse. The trademark also protects his Maple Hill Productions

against legal action that might arise in connection with using the former nonprofit educational organization's name when working in unionized venues such as Symphony Hall, another sign of legal and political savvy that has come with maturity.

Rush's periodic concerts since 1981 have alluded to the Club 47 experience, particularly the exposure to and interaction with older and/or traditional performers for which the 47 was known. At one such concert in Washington, called "Club 47 at the Kennedy Center," Rush linked up with former members of the Kveskin Jug Band and post-47 newcomers like Cambridge singer-songwriter Patty Larkin and young Midwestern bluegrass fiddler-singer Alison Krauss, and introduced the concept to a multigeneration audience as:

Club 47 was one of the places that we started. Some of the legends of folk music would come through there. Some of the blues players like Sleepy John Estes and Bukka White. Country and bluegrass musicians Bill Monroe, Jean Ritchie. And the kids would get to sit at their feet—the little Joanie Baezes and little Bobby Dylans and Richie Havenses and Tommy Rushes. Hang out with these master musicians and learn from them. We don't have that same kind of coffeehouse and club scene today, and we've come up with some other ways for musicians to pass on the music and share the audiences. [7]

Rush continues to use some version of this introduction when speaking about the meaning of the 47 to audiences who never attended the original club, and reinforcing original members' connections to an earlier generation of performers. On the liner notes to the album that came out of the 1984 anniversary concerts, he wrote:

The Club 47 was tiny, a basement room of about thirty by fifty feet, and could only hold one hundred and eighty people when packed. But it provided a meeting place for a diverse family of acoustic musicians and their audiences, and the music from that stage came to be heard around the world....Now it's the eighties, and we're in Symphony Hall. The Hall is a lot larger than the Club, but with the cabaret seating, the festive atmosphere, and a stage full of musicians come together to sing some old songs and try out some new ones, there's a feeling of intimacy between

the audience and the music that feels a lot like the old Club 47. It's great to get together again! [8]

People outside Cambridge and Boston often were aware of Club 47's fame; others were attracted by the talent line-up and concept. "Lots of people don't know Ben and Jerry's either until you tell them what it is," Rush said, referring to the Vermont ice cream company that is the corporate sponsor of the new Newport festivals. His explanation of Club 47 for devotees and newcomers alike from the Washington concert continues:

One of the things Club 47 is for is introducing new talent to wider audiences. And with that goal in mind, we've been doing Club 47 concerts since 1981 at places like Symphony Hall in Boston, Carnegie in New York, and tonight the concert hall at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. There's lots of good music around and there's a large potential audience that isn't always being served by the commercial music industry. The trick is to bring the music and the listeners together and that's why we're here tonight. Bukka White, the Carter Family, and others set some pretty darn high standards for us back in the '60s and though the music's changed, as it must, as it should, I think those high standards remain. [9]

The Club 47 twenty-fifth reunion concerts at Symphony Hall, in particular, held tremendous importance for members of the former scene, whether it was a nostalgic evocation of their youth or a family reunion. Many people I interviewed recalled making a special effort to attend, coming from as far away as California, Wyoming, and New York. During interviews, most people spoke of the event immediately and without prompting when I asked about the significance of Club 47 for them today. As Rush noted, it healed old rifts within the crowd, but never became a "nostalgia show" because the "magic was two generations involved under the same roof, a kind of passing of the torch." Beyond that, the event symbolized the continuity of life, bridging youthful idealism of the 1960s and the mellowness and insights of the present, transcending reality with messages of optimism and regeneration.

One such message was that of personal empowerment, of one individual challenging a large industry, a legend that has taken on a life of its own among contemporary Boston-area folk music enthusiasts. [10] Today Rush is perceived as a hero by many younger contemporary acoustic musicians who are looking for alternative ways of marketing themselves and their music, and taking direct responsibility for their careers in the grassroots, decentralized 1990s.

Club 47 ultimately was about music. Whatever emotional states it induced or social actions it engendered were ancillary. The music transcended the 1960s in that one small club and found a larger audience a quarter century later at the reunion concerts. One informant recalled:

The other thing about Tom Rush's Club 47 reunion show at Symphony Hall is that the music still worked on the audience and the audience could not have been composed of people who all came to the Club 47 or who had all listened to this kind of music when it was popular in the '60s. I think that these sold-out audiences at Symphony Hall, I keep thinking of Richie Havens's set, I think they were just blown away at the ability of one man and a guitar or one woman and a guitar or one little acoustic group to get up there and move that many people in unison in such a pleasant, exciting, moving way. That's it. [11]

Another former member of the 47 community spoke for herself and many others when she recalled the meaning of the reunion concerts in the context of personal, institutional, and social history. Her remarks serve as a summary of this one kind of event that bridged the past and present with music. From her viewpoint:

We don't lose track of each other. We may not see each other for a very long time, but everybody knows who everybody is and everybody can stay with everybody else. It never fades away.... It doesn't go away. [Today] there's not a sense of bonding or community. There was a sense of hope that the world could be changed and the way people behaved could be changed. And people lived it, believed it, went out and started communes.... It was part of that time. Back to nature. Back to the land. Back to basics. Let's have music in our lives. Let's have dancing in our

lives. Let's sing. Let's be friends with each other. Support each other. Let's get rid of all this other phony business that we had all around us.

Of course, it didn't work, because it didn't have the economic structure, base, to work on. You can't do that except as a very eccentric group of people in the midst of a capitalist society. So it failed. It gradually faded away. There are still some people living that role in life. All of us have these kinds of goals and missions in our lives. My connection with Club 47 is just one in a long series of trying to find that way of living or relating to people or making sure that other people as well as myself have opportunities to live openly and fully instead of cramped up in tight--(*fades*). My life has been part of a continuity, but the '60s were a high point. It wasn't just Club 47. It was the hopefulness that people felt. They don't feel now. They didn't feel before. [12]

### *8.3 Betsy Siggins Schmidt: "If you have no power, you can't make any noise"*

A very different kind of event arose from the same communal spirit and love of music at the "Strictly for Hunger first annual benefit concert" at the Beacon Theatre in New York in November 1990. With the help of old friends from Club 47, Betsy Siggins Schmidt organized a concert to raise money for the Yorkville Common Pantry in East Harlem that serves the hungry, the homeless, and people with AIDS.

Using music and song to raise awareness of social issues and to work for social change is a theme that arose periodically in folk revivals throughout the century. Yet most members of the Club 47 community I interviewed went to great pains to explain that they considered themselves apolitical in the 1960s and not part of this tradition. As executive director of the Yorkville pantry, Schmidt translated her organizational skills gleaned from running the kitchen and booking music at Club 47 to serving the underclass. These activities reflected her social awareness and perhaps served as compensation for her lack of activism in the 1960s. The musical fundraiser marked Schmidt's coming-of-age as a social reformer.

Several members of the 47 community were already involved in the pantry before the fundraiser. Schmidt herself saw it as an opportunity for their mature selves

to express political concerns they were unable to articulate or act upon in their Club 47 days. People joined the cause through their friendship with her and volunteered to serve meals, donated money, or used their professional contacts to help the organization. Later they and others agreed to donate their time and support as a personal favour in honour of Schmidt's fiftieth birthday, yet another instance of linking personal rites of passage with social trends. Echoes of the social activism of the domestic political policies of the Great Society of the mid-1960s are inherent in her words now:

This is the work that counts on the planet. Everything else is gravy. But if we don't take care of the poor, we're a lousy society. And as we well know, people are not taking very good care of them. So those relationships that were born in the '60s have come back as mature relationships in the '80s and the '90s. And as real friendships and as real ties, as real bonds and as real responsible calls. So they're very gratifying. I can't off-hand think of any small or a large group of people that I've been acquainted with in my adult life that I feel the same about in any capacity.... So it's the people who are in social concern. Never meant having to belong to SDS [the 1960s Students for a Democratic Society] and burning flags, necessarily, though I don't think it's a bad idea. The goodness that clearly was not overt in many cases in a lot of people because we were very self-directed as youngsters and unsure of who we are. [13]

The programme booklet for the benefit reads like a Who's Who from Club 47. Performers included former 47 regulars Joan Baez, Taj Mahal, Geoff Muldaur, and Maria Muldaur. They were joined by singer-songwriter James Taylor, who never had billing at the club but hung out with the 47 crowd; and the newer Irish-American group, Cherish the Ladies, who represented the domestic tradition of women's music "because our cultural heritage was passed on to us in our homes," a heritage that homeless people are denied. [14] All of them were joined informally by Jim Rooney, Eric von Schmidt, and other former 47 musicians and friends. The morning after the event, several of the same performers did a concert for children who are unwitting

clients of the pantry. Jackie Landrón [Washington] joined them, recreating the spirit of the children's concerts that he had popularized at the 47.

In addition to performing, von Schmidt also designed the programme book, just as he used to design the Club 47 posters. Most of the photographers of the event came from the 47 community. The thank-you list has many recognizable names from the 47 crowd. The co-executive producer, Lybess Sweezy, literally grew up in the 47 milieu while her mother was on the board of directors and the club functioned as an erstwhile daycare center for children like herself. Children of other 47 members, managers, and performers also worked on the fundraiser, making it a multigenerational and familial event that reinforced these family traditions.

Again, former members of the 47 scene came from far away points to attend this unique event that was a different kind of reunion, one that reactivated their generational belief in their abilities to change society largely through the power of music. Like Schmidt, several informants discussed their support of the pantry's work as a way to compensate for their lack of political activism earlier in their lives. Their own cities and towns might be doing similar work, but collectively they wanted to make a difference through the symbolically resurrected Club 47 community, reinforcing in part their link between past and present. [15] A second fundraiser was in the planning stages in summer 1991, when I did the bulk of my fieldwork.

Schmidt summarized the event in the context of the politically conservative 1990s. In retrospect now, she acknowledged that Club 47 functioned as a crucible, and the music there instilled in her and her peers a sensitivity to social injustice for which their privileged upbringings spared them direct experience.

To Schmidt, one legacy of her youth is the belief that music has the power to change people's attitudes and affect social policy. It may have taken her a quarter

century after Club 47 closed to find her voice, but now she knows that in the right circumstances one person like herself can make a difference and that music, can and will change the world. Schmidt was at Club 47 until the last note of the finale hoot. It is fitting that she have the last word here, too, in what may be only the latest, but not the last, chapter in a continuing story:

People [performers] have been able to be more flexible once they've made it. And it's in a way that everybody hears it. I mean, if you're Bruce Springsteen and you're singing about out-of-work truck drivers, you can legitimize that plight in a way that it would take unions and strikes and decades and pain and death and starvation and humiliation and suicides to make the same kind of a statement.

It's a foreshortening of time and social upheaval if it's done through music that I think was clear then [the 47 era], but has become much clearer now because it's become this massive industry. And the whole communications system has become so sophisticated. Tom Petty can make a statement. John Cougar Mellencamp can say something about farmers.

I think it [politically-motivated music] still has growth potential. It still has the opportunity to make even greater statements, but again it'll depend on money. It cannot float out there as a satellite without sort of the blessings of the record companies and the distributors. I mean, it's still hard to make a movie that makes a strong statement about injustice that makes a real difference to a population other than the already converted.

...We're in terrible conservative times and it feels like the '50s again and I haven't got the patience because I don't have the rest of my life in front of me (laughs), so I'm impatient. I'm impatient for more change and better change and some social justice because It Sucks. And that's sort of my diatribe on music and politics and power. So if you have no power you can't make any noise. And that's where I see where a place like the Club 47 was born as a nucleus for the soapbox that became the voice place for that kind of power to be heard. Expressed. It may not have been a political place and there was not a major political movement at the Club 47, but I must, if I had to guess, I would say that 75 percent of the people whose lives were touched by that place went on to say something that may make a difference.

...You had to be born some place and it all came together there. And when you heard a person like Dock Boggs sing or Bessie Jones sing, they were singing about shit. Life was a bitch we didn't know anything about. When I first heard Hazel Dickens and Alice Gerrard, the name

she uses now, I was very, very, very taken with the whole idea of how we were treating coal miners. It would have been the luck of the draw that I would have picked up a newspaper somewhere in my adult life and read about it and internalized it. Because the music I could immediately internalize. I really could personalize it immediately and realize that we were real shits in this country. That was overnight education for an awful lot of folks who heard the story of our country. Who heard Walker Evans's book [[Let Us Now Praise Famous Men](#), produced with writer James Agee] made live. So that's kind of how I saw it, how I see it, how I move through from it. [16]

#### *8.4 Bringing It All Back Home*

It is upon this intersection of the past and the present that the 47's legacy continues to remain vital. Joan Baez is identified in the Club 47 legend as a local girl-made-good. In a recent Cambridge concert, she juxtaposed traditional songs, songs by revivalists Bob Dylan and former Kingston Trio member John Stewart, and songs by a newer generation of singer-songwriters such as Mary-Chapin Carpenter. According to the [Boston Globe](#) review, Baez was regarded both as an historical figure and as a contemporary artist, perceptions that recalled similar visits to Club 47 by an earlier generation of performers who combined those dichotomies. Her bridging those roles was not without tension between the old and the new, as the reviewer noted:

There were plenty of old favorites, though it was perhaps a sad sign of this pop-obsessed culture that the finest traditional singer of our times felt the need to apologize every time she sang a folk song. "I-House of the Rising Sun" was hot and angry....When she stepped away from the mikes to let that glorious soprano loose on "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," she stopped her own show. [17]

Club 47's Joan Baez as a traditional singer? The [Globe](#) writer's evocation of tradition goes back to my earlier points about the pervasiveness in Cambridge of needing to establish continuity with the past, the recent past as well as with historical texts. As her Club 47 experience attests, Baez did participate in "artistic communication

in small groups" and learned some of her repertoire in informal exchange with other club participants. [18] By that definition of folklore, she is a tradition-bearer. Surely more than a few audience members learned Baez's songs from her records, one of the standard and unavoidable mechanisms of transmission for the last three-quarters of a century, the same way her peers at Club 47 learned from an earlier generation of recorded singers.

In the constant effort locally to demonstrate continuity, it is ironic that no academic or public-sector folklorists came out of the Club 47 scene to continue the academic tradition of folkloristics that began privately in Cambridge and institutionally at Harvard a century ago. It is equally ironic that few courses of folklore study are available anywhere in southern New England, least of all Harvard, and one now has to leave the region to find degree-granting programmes in the field. Perhaps because the current scene in and around Cambridge is so dynamic and had retained much of its dynamism after the 47 closed a quarter century ago, there was/is less need to seek out texts in centres of academic study. The concept of the folk has truly evolved from them to us. It is tempting to link Club 47 participants and their legatees to the Cambridge tradition of private scholarship, where studies of folksong genres and contexts are ongoing, personally engaging, and recognized by their peers, but rarely by the folklore establishment. [19]

The idea of building on the past is pervasive in Cambridge, as its residents constantly readapt the older city and its legends to present needs. Old buildings are converted to new uses; new buildings are acknowledged as being erected on sites of historical importance and often are named for their historical associations; and the entire physical and topographical landscape alludes to the continuum between past, present, and future. The physical structure that once housed Club 47 on Mount

Auburn Street itself has come to be regarded as an historical entity, evidenced by the willingness of the Cambridge Historical Commission to take the almost unprecedented decision to commemorate this twentieth-century site with a plaque recording its significance in contributing to the cultural life of the city. [20] Moreover, as I write, a book listing significant 1960s and 1970s musical sites worthy of pilgrimage has just been published. [21] Club 47 is included.

Other indications of the 47's legacy in creating new texts and reworking earlier versions, reach far beyond Cambridge and Boston in the on-going revival. The Rounder Records collective in Cambridge, and its spinoff operations such as distributing the Smithsonian's reissues of Folkways records, continues to produce and distribute recordings of traditional, ethnic, and reinterpreted folksongs—an activity that they began in the late 1960s as the revival was diffusing into newer musical forms. In the tradition of John Lomax, Robert Winslow Gordon, Benjamin Botkin, and other early folksong collectors, the Rounder collective undertook fieldwork to find many of the performers and genres they have recorded.

Another group in nearby Wellesley has capitalized on the concentration of revivalists in the area and in 1990 began a mail-order business that produces the Hear Catalogue. Its early marketing campaign synthesized the mailing lists of the many revival-oriented concert producers in eastern Massachusetts. The Hear Catalogue caters to new markets who missed, or were not around for, significant recordings and other revival memorabilia the first time through. They also distribute festival paraphernalia and early jazz, blues, and cowboys records that they consider to be "the essential recordings by the essential artists." [22] Many of their great-boom selections feature recordings by former Club 47 performers such as Tom Rush, the Jim Kweskin Jug Band, and Taj Mahal, as well as those who performed at the 47 and Newport, such as reissued

records by Mississippi John Hurt, Muddy Waters, and Son House. In addition, they offer reissued or new albums recorded at Newport festivals during the 1960s and at the revived festivals of the late 1980s. Already the recent past is a cultural artifact.

Whether through reissuing recordings; commemoration by plaques and pilgrimages; or by concerts for reunions, contemporary entertainment, and social reform, the communal re-creation of the idea of Club 47 survives because it meets current needs and ideals. By linking contemporary pilgrims with historical ones in seeking out the products of a special place and time, both Club 47 members and newer folk-music enthusiasts are united in the hopes of enriching their everyday lives. The same dynamic operated a generation ago with the music that was symbolically recalled from the past and adapted to then-current needs and ideals at Club 47.

In the New Age, when Ben and Jerry's progressive ice-cream and rainforest-saving empire is bankrolling the new Newport folk festivals and when recycling the detritus of civilization makes economic as well as environmental sense, looking backward remains or becomes even more culturally satisfying. Revivalists apparently do follow the Firesign-Theatre motto of other, more conventional New England archaeologists, who declare with the conviction born of experience, "Forward into the past." [23]

The rest of the story is yet to unfold. Anniversaries of significant dates in the history of Club 47 are forthcoming, heralding other rites of passage and providing yet other opportunities for reunions and musical exchanges. In the meantime, the folksong community will continue to gather by the river.

## Notes

1. There are numerous historical and cultural studies on this theme, such as Henry Nash Smith's Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1950).

2. All quotes recorded during summer 1991 from WADN-AM's self-promotional spots and its advertisements for the 1991 Ben and Jerry's Newport Folk Festival.

3. Unless noted otherwise, all quotes in this section are from an interview with Tom Rush on 15 April 1992.

4. From interviews with Rush and John Cooke. Rush talked about the concerts in terms of "burying hatchets" and Cooke mentioned their "healing power."

5. Letter from John Cooke dated 24 February 1992.

6. Interview with Jill Henderson, 15 August 1991.

7. Transcribed from the tape of a "Club 47 at the Kennedy Center," circa 1983. The event was recorded with a grant from the American Public Radio Programme Fund and broadcast on Boston's WGBH-FM radio in April 1989.

8. Tom Rush: Late Night Radio. (HS-48011, 1984). The location he described was Palmer Street.

9. Kennedy Center concert tape.

10. Rush spoke regularly about taking control of his career at marketing workshops run by the Folk Arts Network in Cambridge, of which he is a board member. Even audiences are aware of his activities since many are added to his mailing lists after attending concerts.

11. Interview with John Cooke, 18 January 1992.

12. Interview with Nancy Sweezy, 6 August 1991.

13. Interview with Betsy Siggins Schmidt, 29 August 1991.
14. From the concert programme, 16 November 1990.
15. Several informants spoke of this, including James Field, Charlie Frizzell, Jill Henderson, Geoffrey Muldaur, and Jim Rooney.
  16. Schmidt interview.
  17. See Scott Alarik's "At Sanders [Theatre at Harvard], a happier, more melodic Joan Baez" (Boston Globe [24 November 1992]: 34).
  18. From interviews with Debbie Green Andersen and Jackie Washington, February and March 1992.
    19. One such piece of private scholarship is Boston writer Craig Harris's book, The New Folk Music (Crown Point, IN: White Cliffs Media Co., 1991). Club 47, Joan Baez, and Tom Rush are discussed in the chapter on "The Old School," which foreshadowed newer performers and trends that Harris recounts in the remainder of the book. I take exception to some of Harris's scholarship, however, such as the fact that he says Francis James Child travelled throughout Britain and Ireland to formulate his ballad canon and his account of Cecil Sharp's finding "pure" Elizabethan ballads in the southern Appalachians.
      20. One of the spinoffs of my research is my functioning in the role of folklorist-as-advocate when I successfully petitioned the Cambridge Historical Commission to erect a plaque at the former Mount Auburn Street site of Club 47. They have agreed to do so, but details remain to be negotiated.
      21. Nolan includes Club 47 in the Boston [sic] chapter of The Rock 'n Roll Road Trip: The Ultimate Guide to the Sites, the Shrines and the Legends Across America (New York: Pharos Books, 1992), the only folk-revival venue to be included in that section. Except for a few minor mistakes of fact, her account is generally correct. She

notes that Passim's, the "listening room" that subsequently moved into Club 47's Palmer Street location, is the place where "the [Club 47] folk tradition was maintained" (6).

22. Hear Catalogue, fall 1991.

23. From fieldwork I conducted in winter 1991 on customs and beliefs of one group of New England archaeologists, who prefer anonymity.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

This bibliography is more extensive than most thesis bibliographies in that it includes materials to which I refer in the text, as well as background readings and references on which I drew, if only obliquely. From the beginning, I have taken an interdisciplinary approach to my study of Club 47 in order to contextualize and interpret the primary ethnographic materials I collected during fieldwork. These bibliographic references are drawn from North American and British folkloristics, cultural anthropology, cultural history, sociology, American Studies, and British and American popular culture.

Many of the British articles, in particular, I found useful for emic, that is revivalists' own, arguments on topics such as tradition and revival; and on folk custom. There, these topics have been considered by folklorists far longer than they have been in North America, even if some of their theoretical insights, such as Tylor's preoccupation with survivals, are no longer accepted by contemporary folklorists.

I have also included some of the better-known collections that I consulted when trying to annotate songs in Club 47 performers' repertoires, both those mentioned in interviews and recorded on albums. This bibliography is highly subjective and by no means should it be considered comprehensive on the subject of the folksong revival of the 1950s and 1960s.

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**APPENDIX I:**  
**FIELDWORK INFORMANTS**

The people with whom I discussed Club 47 between June 1990 and November 1992 are listed below and consist of three categories. Former Club 47 members with whom I had major interviews are indicated under the interview section, along with the dates and locations of the interviews, and the dates of any supplementary conversations or correspondence. Many of those interviews were tape-recorded and the tapes are in my possession. Transcripts and/or a table of contents and fieldnotes exist for each interview and conversation.

The second category, listed under the correspondence section, are additional former Club 47 members who, for a variety of reasons, it was impossible to interview in person, often because of geographical limitations. These individuals provided valuable data through letters or other memorabilia, all of which are in my possession. Some of the correspondence was initiated by me; other letters involved replies to my published research queries in the Boston Review (September 1990); the Boston Sunday Globe (30 December 1990); Harvard Magazine (January/February 1992); and NEASA News (April 1991), the publication of the New England American Studies Association.

The remaining category, listed under the background heading, is constituted by those—47 members and nonmembers—with whom I discussed Club 47 and/or its role in the great boom either in person and by telephone. I also have fieldnotes from all of these conversations. Where no date is recorded, there were multiple conversations for which keeping track would have been far too obsessive.

One of the most satisfying aspects of my fieldwork was the networking process of gathering information. Keeping up with correspondence and responding to telephone calls was a major component of this project. Many informants provided me

with addresses and telephone numbers of the people with whom they still keep in touch. In many cases, I followed up on these contacts. At issue was the need to limit my thesis-related fieldwork, although I view this thesis as an ongoing venture and still plan to contact many of these people at a later date.

As always, fieldwork also comprised contacts that I initiated with potential informants that did not result in interviews. For whatever reasons, since these individuals have chosen not to respond to my request for information and/or an interview, I do not feel it appropriate to list their names here.

There is no one point of view or one way to retell the story of the Club 47. Fieldwork accounts of specific events and personalities are often contradictory. Multiple events are often condensed into one memory. Historical impressions are revised to suit contemporary attitudes. My approach was not to judge, but merely to record and analyze.

#### List of Fieldwork Informants

##### *Interviews*

\* = taped interview

Debbie Green Andersen. Telephone interview from Santa Monica, California; 20 February 1992.

Rita Weill Byxbe. Berkeley, California; \*11 January 1992. Telephone interview 10 January 1992.

John Byrne Cooke. \*Taped interviews in response to my questions, 18 and 20 January 1992. Telephone interview from Teton Village, Wyoming; 31 October 1991. Letters: 15 October 1991, 24 February 1992.

Earl Crabb. Oakland, California; 19 October 1990; Berkeley, California; 10 January 1992, \*11 and \*12 January 1992. Telephone interviews: 17 August 1991, 31 October 1991.

James Field. Watertown, Massachusetts; \*24 and \*26 July 1991. Telephone interviews: 12 July 1991, 17 August 1991, 20 August 1991, 15 October 1991, 9 April 1992. Letters: 4 January 1991, 7 October 1991.

Charlie Frizzell. Berkeley, California; \*11 January 1992. Telephone interview 10 January 1992.

David Gessner. Watertown, Massachusetts; \*13 August 1991.

Jill Henderson. Concord, Massachusetts; 15 August 1991. Telephone interviews: 11 July 1991; 9, 20, and 27 August 1991; 14 January 1992.

Peter Johnson. Cambridge, Massachusetts; 28 August 1991.

Annie Johnston. Oakland, California; 19 October 1990; Berkeley, California, \*11 and \*12 January 1992.

Bill Keith. Telephone interview from Woodstock, New York; 18 November 1991.

Arthur Krim. Watertown, Massachusetts; \*30 July 1991. Telephone interview: 26 August 1991. Letters: 10 February 1991, 9 March 1991, 30 March 1992.

Carl Lindahl. St. John's, Newfoundland; \*18 October 1991.

Andrew MacEwen. Stockton Springs, Maine; 9 June 1991 and 1 September 1991.

Jane Mansbridge. Telephone interviews from New York, New York; 24 November 1991 and 16 February 1992. Letters: 25 November 1991, 29 January 1992.

John [Buz] Marten. Telephone interview from Gualala, California; 10 January 1992.

Geoffrey Muldaur. Mill Valley, California; \*12 January 1992.

Joy Kimball Overstreet. Berkeley, California; \*11 January 1992. Telephone interview: 10 January 1992.

Jim Rooney. Telephone interviews from Nashville, Tennessee; 19 July 1990 and 16 August 1991.

Tom Rush. Telephone interview from Jackson Hole, Wyoming; 15 April 1992.

Betsy Siggins Schmidt. Cotuit, Massachusetts; \*29 August 1991. Telephone interview: 20 August 1991. Letters: 6 June 1991, 16 December 1991, 29 January 1992.

Nancy Sweezy. Lincoln, Massachusetts; 21 July 1990; Arlington, Massachusetts; \*6 August 1991.

Peter V. Tishler. \*Taped interview from Brookline, Massachusetts; in response to my questions, February 1992. Letter: 29 December 1991.

Jackie Washington [John Landrón]. Telephone interview from New York, New York; 24 March 1992.

### *Correspondence*

David M. Boehm. New York, New York; 23 January 1992.

Joe Boyd. London, England; 20 November 1991.

Gordon Edwards. Natick, Massachusetts; 31 December 1991.

Robert L. Jones. Ridgefield, Connecticut; 13 November 1991, 27 April 1992.

William Lockeretz. Brookline, Massachusetts; 24 January 1992, 30 March 1992.

Nick Pearson. Weston, Massachusetts; 30 December 1990.

Richard Pike. Atherton, California; 2 February 1991.

Fritz Richmond. Portland, Oregon; 20 March 1991, 10 May 1991, 25 February 1992.

Peter Rowan. Mill Valley, California; October 1992.  
Barbara F. Sherman. Needham Heights, Massachusetts; 20 May 1991, 17 June  
1991, 16 March 1992.  
Ethan Signer. Cambridge, Massachusetts; 3 December 1991.  
Rick and Mary Stafford. Boston, Massachusetts; 22 August 1991.  
Eric von Schmidt. Westport, Connecticut; 27 January 1992.  
Andrew Warshaw. Brookline and Boston, Massachusetts; 3 January 1992, 6  
February 1992.

Untaped conversations for background information

*Personal Discussions*

Jane Becker. Arlington, Massachusetts; 11 July 1991.  
Saul Broudy. Washington, D.C.; 19 June 1990.  
David Buchan. St. John's, Newfoundland.  
Robert Cantwell. Washington, D.C.; 18 June 1990; telephone: 10 May 1990.  
John Cheney. Shrewsbury, Massachusetts; 14 August 1991.  
Ron Cohen. Oakland, California; 19 October 1990; telephone: Cambridge,  
Massachusetts; 10 May 1990 and 16 July 1990.  
Joanna Fitzgibbon Doyle. Weymouth, Massachusetts; 4 July 1991.  
Diane Goldstein. St. John's, Newfoundland.  
Kenneth Goldstein. Watertown, Massachusetts; 14 August 1991.  
Genny Haley. Berkeley, California; 10 January 1992.  
Joseph Hickerson. Washington, D.C.; 18 June 1990.  
Alan Jabbour. Washington, D.C.; 22 June 1990.  
Martin Lovelace. St. John's, Newfoundland; October 1990.

Margaret Mills. St. John's, Newfoundland; 14 October 1991.  
Will Moore. Winchester, Massachusetts; 8 February 1990.  
Peter Narváez. St. John's, Newfoundland.  
Kathy Neustadt. Lincoln, Massachusetts; 12 August 1991.  
Paul Noonan. Cotuit, Massachusetts; 29 August 1991.  
Bill Nowlin and Matt Walter. Cambridge, Massachusetts; 13 June 1991. Matt  
Walter, telephone: 18 June 1990.  
John Solomon Otto. Greenbelt, Maryland; 26 December 1990.  
Mary Lou Philbin. Loudon, New Hampshire, 4 August 1991.  
Aida Press. Cambridge, Massachusetts; 10 August 1990; West Newton,  
Massachusetts; 3 August 1991.  
Neil Rosenberg. St. John's, Newfoundland.  
Jack Santino. St. John's, Newfoundland; 15 October 1991.  
Carol Ann Sheffield. Berkeley, California; 12 January 1992.  
Paul Smith. St. John's, Newfoundland.  
Lisa Sullivan. St. John's, Newfoundland; 29 May 1992.  
Eleanor Wachs. Boston, Massachusetts; 24 July 1992.  
John Widdowson. St. John's, Newfoundland; October 1991.  
Paul Wright. Boston, Massachusetts; 23 August 1990.

*Telephone conversations*

Cambridge [Massachusetts] Historical Commission. Telephone: Sally  
Zimmerman, 2 August 1991; Letter: Charles Sullivan, 14 August 1991.  
Barbara Franco. St. Paul, Minnesota; 15 June 1990.  
Vera Mae Frederickson. Berkeley, California; 10 January 1992.

Byron Lord Linardos. Cambridge, Massachusetts; 20, 25, and 27 August 1991.

Robert MacKay. Boston, Massachusetts; 1 November 1990.

Maria Muldaur. Mill Valley, California; 12 January 1992.

Victor Oppenheimer. Cambridge, Massachusetts; 12 November 1991.

Suzy Thompson. Berkeley, California; 10 January 1992.

Johanna Winer. Framingham, Massachusetts; 20 August 1991.

APPENDIX II:  
FIELDWORK QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questions comprise the basic questionnaire I used throughout fieldwork. I sent these questions to all actual and potential informants and also used them in personal interviews. The questions were designed when I began initial fieldwork in summer 1990. I stuck with them throughout fieldwork, although in retrospect, I would have asked several questions differently and added other ones. Personal interviews obviously covered many more issues and questions, but I included these basic questions, too, in order to have comparative data.

**Questionnaire**

re: Club 47 (1958-1968), Cambridge, Massachusetts

General questions include:

1. Your personal background. When and where were you born? Where did you grow up, go to school, what did you study, etc. What are you doing now?
2. When/how did you become associated with Club 47? For how long? In what ways?
3. What instruments did/do you play? How did you learn them? How did you learn your repertoire? How did you get involved in [your group or solo] performance?
4. Who were your music idols growing up? As a performer?
5. Who do you think the club belonged to since for most of its life it didn't have individual owners? How did/do you define the community there? What were the criteria for membership within the community?
6. Use of the space—discuss space for musicians vs. space for audience and others. Who determined access? How was it used (for rehearsing? socializing? privacy?) How did it differ in the two locations?

7. For musicians/workers: Do you remember how much you were paid? Individually or within the group? (So far, I have not been able to find the records of the club; no one seems to have saved them, but I'm still searching.)
8. How did Club 47 affect your life? Did it affect your studies or other aspects of your life, such as relationships, during its heyday? What's its effect on your life now?
9. In the early days, particularly, Club 47 seemed to have been a real Cambridge scene primarily populated by local students and townies. Is that your experience? Can you describe the local scene as you remember it? When did outsiders—both musicians and enthusiasts—begin to enlarge the scope of the scene?
10. Do you remember any traditions, stories, superstitions, etc. concerning the club and/or the community?
11. Anything else you want to add?

### APPENDIX III:

#### PARTIAL LIST OF PERFORMERS AT CLUB 47 1958-1968

Since I have been unable to locate any comprehensive archives for the Club 47, the following is a partial list of performers who were booked to appear at the club between 1958 and 1968. This list is a work-in-progress and omits dates, since my data base is still in the early stages of information gathering and it is premature to try to make any kind of definitive record.

Sources for this list are an incomplete set of Club 47 calendars between 1962 and 1968; published listings, articles, and advertisements in Boston Broadside between March 1962 and April 1968; and fieldwork interviews. Names are transcribed as they appeared in these sources except for corrections of spelling. I am assuming that booked acts did, in fact, appear, except for the usual cancellations due to emergencies, illnesses, transportation problems, and inclement weather.

Red Allen and the Kentuckians  
Mose Allison Trio  
Scheffrin and Kuy Amjian  
Eric Andersen  
Herb Applin  
Paul Arnoldi  
Clarence Ashley and Tex Isley

The Bacchanlians  
The Bagatelle  
Banana  
Margaret Barry and Michael Gorman  
Joan Baez  
Barry and the Remains  
Beers Family  
David Blue  
Blues Project  
Dock Boggs  
John Braheny  
Sandy Bull  
Gary Burton Quartet with Larry Coryell

Paul Butterfield Blues Band

Rolf Cahn  
Cambridge Consort  
Hamilton Camp  
Canned Heat Blues Band  
Andrew Caponigro [Jazz] Trio  
Caravan Theatre (theatre workshop)  
Guy Carawan  
Maybelle Carter  
Chambers Brothers  
Len Chandler  
Charles River Valley Boys  
Judy Collins  
Commonwealth Rag Pickers  
John Cooke  
Mike Cooney  
Jerry Corbett  
Elizabeth Cotton  
James Cotton Blues Band  
Country Gentlemen

Les Daniels  
Les Daniels and the Double Standard String Band  
Sandy and Jeannie Darlington  
Rev. Gary Davis  
Gil de Jesus  
Hazel Dickens and Alice Foster  
Hamsa el Din  
Dirty Shames  
Willie Dixon and Sunnyland Slim

Earth Opera  
Ramblin' Jack Elliott

John Fahey  
Mimi and Richard Fariña  
Jim Field  
The 47 Chamber Players  
Dave Freidel  
Jesse Fuller

Gleason and Gravlin  
Little Sun (Tony) Glover  
The Grass Menagerie  
Gray Sky Boys

Debbie Green  
Greenbriar Boys  
Mitch Greenhill  
Jeff Gutcheon  
Arlo Guthrie  
Buddy Guy Blues Band

The Hallucinations (and the Cloud)  
John Hammond  
Tim Hardin  
Richie Havens  
Joe Heany  
Carolyn Hester  
Roscoe Holcomb  
Holy Modal Rounders  
John Lee Hooker  
Lightnin' Hopkins  
Son House  
Mississippi John Hurt

Image Theatre (theatre workshop)  
Hideo Itoh

Skip James  
Jim and Jean  
Jim and Jesse and the Virginia Boys  
Joe and Eddie  
Bessie Jones  
Robert L. Jones

Kathy and Carol  
Bill Keith  
Keith and Rooney  
Norman Kennedy  
Kentucky Colonels  
Louis Killen  
Lisa Kindred  
Spider John Koerner  
Koerner, Ray and Glover  
Steve Kuhn Trio  
Jim Kweskin  
Jim Kweskin and the Jug Band

Derek Lamb  
Carol Langstaff  
Dudley Laufman and the Canterbury Country Orchestra

Sam Lay Chicago Blues Band  
Rick Lee  
Leonda  
Gordon Lightfoot  
Lilly Brothers and Don Stover  
Tex Logan  
The Lost  
Lovin' Spoonful  
The Lyman Family  
Mel Lyman

Don MacSorley  
Taj Mahal  
Ken McIntyre  
Nancy Michaels  
Joni Mitchell  
Bill Monroe and the Bluegrass Boys  
Geoff Muldaur  
Geoff and Maria Muldaur

Fred Neil  
Bobby Neuwirth  
New Lost City Ramblers  
New Strangers  
New York Public Library

Phil Ochs  
Charles O'Hegarty  
Osborne Brothers

The Patons  
Houston Person [Jazz] Trio  
Paul Phillips  
Pickabillies  
Fred Pike, Bill Rawlings, and Twin River Boys  
Ray Pong

Jean Redpath  
Almeda Riddle  
Sam Rivers  
Judy Roderick  
Jim Rooney  
Dick Rosmini  
Peter Rowan  
Tom Rush

Buffy Ste. Marie  
Tony Saletan and Irene Kossoy  
Mike Seeger  
Siegel-Schwall Blues Band  
Betsy Siggins  
Bob Siggins  
Silverleaf Gospel Singers  
Patrick Sky  
Joseph Spence  
Spike's Group  
Mark Spoelstra  
Bill Staines  
Peter Stamfel and Steve Weber  
Dayle Stanley  
Staple Singers  
Alice Stewart  
The Strangers

Ann Tansey  
Times Square Two  
Happy and Artie Traum  
The Trolls (or Trols)

Joe Val  
Bill Vanaver  
Eric von Schmidt

Jackie Washington  
Carl Watanabe  
Muddy Waters Blues Band  
Doc Watson  
Rita Weill  
Junior Wells and the Buddy Guy Trio  
Junior Wells Blues Band  
Bukka White  
Big Joe Williams  
Robert Pete Williams  
John Winn  
Howlin' Wolf Blues Band  
Danny Wright [Jazz] Band

Jesse Colin Young

Zola







