

Vancouver Folk Song Society

January 2025

www.vfss.ca

Friends (Quaker) Hall, 1090 west 70th at Osler St.

Got news? Performing somewhere? Contact us at **vanfolksong@gmail.com** by **Saturday, Feb. 1** to be included in the next newsletter.

This email newsletter is sent to VFSS members and to subscribers by request.
To unsubscribe, go to vfss.ca/email-lists.

Zoom – Now in stereo for laptops and desktops! *With mics and camera chosen for performance, and lighting, and room set-up to benefit the viewers at home.*

Zoom *is almost always an option on the 3rd Wednesday of the month and we'll list it in the newsletter when it's an option for other times. Links are sent by email the day before the event.*

VFSS Now with Cookies! Please bring your own mug to reduce the dishwashing task!

Share songs, not bugs. *If you have [symptoms](#) — coughs, sniffles, fever, "just a cold," please join us safely over Zoom. We care about your good health and ours, too.*

About that traffic

[Construction](#) work continues around Oak and 70th for sewer upgrades. Completion scheduled for "spring 2025."

Alternatives

If you don't need street parking within 50 yards of the Hall, consider parking on a side street north or south of West 70th and taking a short walk, perhaps with an umbrella.

Please leave plenty of time and bring patience with you and note our construction-free Zoom dates below.

New Year, new membership fees

Renew [online](#) before January 1 at the old rates.

As noted in earlier newsletters, the VFSS Board has reluctantly concluded that an increase in our membership fees is necessary, effective January 1. The new fees are \$30 for individuals and \$40 for families, effective January 1, 2025.

Our rates have been static for as long as anyone can remember and, for most of that time, those fees, plus donations, easily covered our annual costs and allowed us to build up a cushion against unexpected expenses. However, over the past four years, that cushion has been reduced by increased insurance premiums, website and Zoom subscription fees, and

subsidies for our annual retreats and major anniversary celebrations. And now we are facing an almost 300% increase in our rental of the Quaker Meeting House as of November 2024. The venue, and the Folk, are both still good deals compared to alternative venues!

Schedule & Upcoming Events

- **7:00 pm** Doors open
- **7:20 Harmony Jam** warm up our voices together as we start the evening with well-loved sing-along songs.
- **7:30 - 8:30** open stage. Come early to sign up!
- **8:30 - 8:45** break (bring your own mug)
- **8:45 - 9:45** feature performers
- **10:00 pm** Doors close

5th Wednesdays Song circles on Zoom with breakout rooms if there are enough participants.

The Zoom link is sent to our mailing list the day before the event.

Jan. 1

Resolve to have more live music in your life!

Yes, we're singing!

Ring in the New Year with your friends at the Folk.
No featured performers for this evening.

Jan. 15

Features

**Open Stage
& features**

**Songs of
Social and
Environmental
Justice**

Zoom option

Online song circle
& livestream
features

- **Linda Chobotuck** Come celebrate Linda's new CD, *If I Sing*. She writes, "As a singer-songwriter I am best known as a writer of songs about work, since after sleeping that is actually what we spend the majority of time doing. I grew up in a folkie household and have been singing and playing guitar since the age of seven. Not a terribly prolific songwriter but if you keep doing it long enough, it adds up."
- **Jim Edmondson and the Intergenerationals** Jim is excited to be part of the VFSS's Folk Revival and says as long as there's camaraderie, playfulness and serious harmonizing he's sticking around.
- **Mark Dowding and Leah Williams** offer music in honour of the upcoming Robert Burns Day (Jan. 25) Leah and Mark have been performing as a duo for over 15 years, creating the magic in the storytelling through thoughtful and expressive lyrics framed by instrumental counterpoint on guitar, flute, whistle, recorder, quena and harmonica.
- **[Gram Partisans](#)** -- a Vancouver-based roots folk group whose music combines their collective respect for many diverse musical traditions with their beliefs in hope, integrity, justice and a long memory. They play mostly original songs that tell stories of courage, trust, imagination, and solidarity, and challenge your views of what music rooted in social justice can

sound and feel like. The Gram Partisans are Bill Hood, Georgina Arntzen, Jack MacDermot, Alan Zisman, and Michel Drouin.

**Jan. 29
Fifth
Wednesday!**

Online-only song circle (feature TBD)

Feb. 5

Features

**Open stage
& features**

- **Valerie Raoul and friends**
- **Amorphous Folk Collective**
- **Rattlebone**

More details in the next newsletter.

How to be a Feature: Sign up for your “15 minutes of fame” in the calendar at the front desk at the Folk on Wednesday or [email](#) the coordinator.

Accessible Folk! The Friends Hall now offers elevator access for those using wheelchairs or other mobility aids. The entrance is from Osler St.

**Our COVID
precautions**

- **Self-monitoring** If you are experiencing *any* [Covid symptoms](#), or signs of other illnesses, please stay home and get well soon!
- **Ventilation** Doors and windows open as weather permits. HEPA air purifiers and a CO₂ monitor to check ventilation.
- **Masks.** We *welcome* you wearing a mask when you’re not performing and respect each other’s choice.

VFSS Awards

Each year, the VFSS board hands out the [Al Cox Award](#) for “Outstanding service and contributions to the Society” to two members. On Dec. 18 (Winter Wednesday), **Janie Benna** and **Ian Edwards** were presented with their awards in recognition of their ongoing valuable work as volunteers. In addition, **Jim Edmondson** was awarded Life Membership in the VFSS.

Here’s just a few of the reasons to celebrate them:

- **Janie Benna** has served on the board for many years, and well as participating in special projects. She is the smiling and knowledgeable greeter at the Welcome Desk on most of our Wednesday sessions, and one of the dedicated registrars at the retreats, often missing sessions to make sure people are checked in and have answers to their many questions. She is a wonderful songwriter and singer. Her unique harmonies are a great addition to many collaborations, and inspire others to try their musical wings, too.
- **Ian Edwards** is usually the first to arrive and the last to leave our events. He sorts out the sign, elevator, curtains, and sets up the chairs for the evening, and ensures everything is restored to its original place for the next group to use the hall. He’s

also downstairs setting up the refreshments, cleaning up after the break, and locking up at the end of the evening. In addition to singing with the Lazy Jacks shanty crew, his occasional turns at the front of the hall reveal a dry wit and theatrical flair, whether solo or part of a group.

- **Jim Edmondson** was made a Life Member of the VFSS as a special acknowledgement of the decades of his involvement with the Folk – his leadership, commitment, enthusiasm, participation, and passion in so many of the Folk's projects and events.

As Pat Howard said when presenting Janie's award, "All three of them embody the spirit of giving, sharing, collaboration, and mutual aid that we associate with this time of year and that we strive to make the essential character of our Folk Song Society. Congratulations and many thanks to Janie, Ian, and Jim."

How to stay in touch

- With [Facebook](#) and [Youtube](#), you can view the news and photos we share there.
- Our [website](#) has details and reminders of upcoming VFSS events, as well as news, photos, and technical tips for Zoom events.
- Contact us with news of an upcoming performance for the next newsletter at vanfolksong@gmail.com. Next deadline is Saturday, Nov. 30.

OTHER EVENTS

Music & More OFF Main – Every Thursday

Music and More Off Main happens every Thursday, live on the second and fourth Thursdays at City Heights Housing Society, 155 E. 37th Avenue - all other Thursdays are on Zoom. Contact Stoo at fsharp5@gmail.com for more info or to get on the mailing list for live and/or Zoom meetings.

Deep Cove Coffee House 3rd Friday

Jan. 17th: Feature: Jane Mortifee Opening: Marilyn Rushton and The Old Broad's Way. Mount Seymour United Church, 1200 Parkgate Ave, Doors open: 7:00 pm, Warm-up acts: 7:30 pm, Feature act: 9 pm. Admission: \$20 includes baked goodies, coffee, teas, and cold drinks (Youth: \$5 / children & musicians: free).

Local Folk Resources

The following CDs are available at our in-person events or from our [website](#).

- ***Songs of the Pacific Northwest***, by Philip Thomas, edited by Jon Bartlett. 208 pp., 62 songs with lyrics, notes for melody, and chords, historical background to the people and events in the song, b&w photos, and index.
- ***Phil Thomas & The Songs of British Columbia***, by Jon Bartlett, 35 pp. This is a brief biography of Phil Thomas and a description of how he travelled throughout BC meeting singers and collecting their songs and history.

- **“Blow the Man Down: Tall Ships on the Fraser.”**

This CD is a collection of some of our favorite shanties, performed by a collection of singers no longer performing together – so this is your only chance to hear them! It’s a gift to new members upon joining, but maybe you need more than one copy. It includes a small booklet of historical information about shipping on the Fraser River and the songs.

To read more or order copies, go to <https://vfss.ca/order-form/>

Local links and beyond

Across the Water to Vancouver Island

Check out the [Victoria Folk Music Society](#) to see a schedule of their events, as well as other music (and dance!!) events around the Island, from Cumberland to Sooke, and of course, Victoria. VFMS meets every Sunday at 1110 Hillside Ave., 6:30 pm jam; 7:30 pm open stage, 9 pm feature. \$8 at the door.

Support Live Music! Rogue Folk Club live and streaming

The [Rogue](#) is offering live concerts again, as well as streaming options. Upcoming concerts include performances by long-time folk favorites, with new favorites to discover, too.