

# L.I. FOLK CONCERT IS A BIG SUCCESS

**3,000 Attended Last Event,  
So New One Is Planned**

By **JOHN S. WILSON**

Special to The New York Times

HUNTINGTON, L. I., Aug. 14

—No one, least of all the organizer of Huntington's first Folk Festival last summer, expected more than 3,000 people to turn up for this year's event in Heckscher State Park.

"We thought there might be, maybe, 500," said Mrs. Joan Fishman, a slim, tall, soft-spoken blonde who organized last month's festival as well as the first one. She is now preparing a folk music concert scheduled for Heckscher Park at 8 P.M. next Friday.

The proposal for last year's first Folk Festival was made to Mrs. Fishman by Winnie A. Scott, executive director of the Huntington Arts Council, less than a month before the event was held.

## **Society Shows Enthusiasm**

At the time, the Folk Music Society of Huntington had been in existence three months. But the enthusiasm the society evinced was evident even in its early stages.

With the help of the Arts Council's facilities and the experienced advice of Don and Estelle Wade of the New York Pinewoods Folk Music Club, the society attracted five members to the first meeting, 25 to the second and 100 to the third monthly meeting in June, 1970. That was when Mrs. Scott suggested having a folk festival.

Though it was a pleasant puzzle at first, Mrs. Fishman can now understand why the Folk Festival, both last year and this year, drew more than 3,000 people, the largest turnouts of any event sponsored by the Huntington Arts Council.

"Folk music," she explained, "is the one art form that appeals to all ages. We had babies, teen-agers, young couples, grandparents. We also had a perfect day both years."

Both Folk Festivals have been day-long affairs. In the afternoon, there were free workshops on autoharp, balladry, classical guitar, dulcimer, recorder, mandolin and children's folk songs and crafts. At night a concert was held, this year featuring Oscar Brand, Jeff Warner, David and Mimi Jones, Celia Kirtland and Karl Finger, among others.

## **Pattern to Be Followed**

The concert next week will be much like the evening concerts at the Folk Festivals. The performers will include Paul Cadwell, the banjo virtuoso; the Canarsie Bluegrass Boys; Paul Kaplan of the Guitar Workshop of Roslyn; Diki Diamond, a guitarist; Pat Cary, a singer, and Mrs. Fishman, who is a well-known folk guitar player and singer.

The concert is a benefit for Community Development for Youth, an organization that offers counseling to teen-agers on problems of health, family, drugs or other difficulties. Admission is \$1 (50 cents for students). In case of rain, the concert will be held in Simson Junior High School, across the street from Heckscher Park.

Mrs. Fishman's road to her role as folk music impresario of Huntington started 10 years ago when she decided to learn to play the guitar.

"I used to play piano and sing at parties," she explained. "But my back was always to my audience and I wanted to be able to see them. So I took up guitar."

Through the guitar, she got into folk music. "Traditional American folk at first," she recalled. "Burl Ives, Pete Seeger, the Weavers, the Tarriers. And then to Joan Baez and the whole new thing."

She did well enough playing for civic organizations and at Pinewoods Club concerts to be urged to turn professional. But when she thought of the demands this would make on her family life—her husband is a house builder and she has two children—she decided to remain a housewife and part-time folk singer.

## **Students Still Eager**

She soon began giving guitar lessons in adult education courses in two Huntington high school districts. There she discovered that many of her students finished her course of 10 lessons and then wondered: "Where do we go from here?"

"They wanted to stay involved," she said, "without going into the city and spending a lot of money for concerts and battling the Long Island Railroad."

That was when Mrs. Scott, who was one of her students, suggested starting a Folk Music Society. The society has grown since that first gathering of five prospective members in April, 1970, to a membership of 300. The membership fee (now \$3 a year or \$4 for an entire family, but slated to rise to \$4 and \$6 in the fall) entitles a member to attend a monthly meeting at which he can perform if he wishes and includes a prepared concert.

**The New York Times**

Published: August 15, 1971

Copyright © The New York Times