

Traditional Song Forum Meeting, 29<sup>th</sup> September 2007 held at Cecil Sharp House, London

## Meeting Report

Chair: Steve Roud

Seventeen members made the journey to Cecil Sharp House for this meeting, which was focused on TSF itself and giving some thought to the future of the organisation. We also held a general meeting and elected (or rather, re-elected) the officers of the society.

### Member's Activities

The meeting started with our usual review of recent activity by the members present

Bob Askew is continuing his work on George Gardiner and the Gardiner Appreciation Group. He gave a talk on Gardiner's work at Sidmouth and took part in a Hampshire song day with the group at Titchfield to mark the centenary of Gardiner's visit.

David Atkinson reported that the next issue of the Folk Music Journal is currently with the designer and on schedule for publication at the end of the year. He attended the Ballad Conference at Kyle of Lochalsh and gave a paper - *The Material Ballad - a documentary approach*. He also gave a paper at the 'Voice of the People' conference in Sheffield called *From Literary Anonymity to Ballad Revival: Textual Authority and the Invention of Tradition*. He will shortly be going to talk at the American Folklore Society annual meeting on *Ballad Manuscripts, Textual Reception, and the Condition of Folk Literature*.

Elaine Bradtke continues to work on the Carpenter collection. Her great interest at the moment is in the play-party material and they have discovered a new mummings play from Cornwall in the tapes.

Poppy Holden will shortly be moving to the North of the country to be nearer the ballads that she is working on. She has done a number of interviews with people about the border ballads in the living tradition including Mike Tickell, Duncan Williamson and Ray Fisher. She recently received a prize for singing an unaccompanied ballad at a festival. She also delivered a paper '*What is a Border Ballad?*' at the Elphinstone Institute earlier in the year. Currently she is looking forward to getting to know the ballad landscape better.

Lewis Jones continues to publish hymn texts on the internet and is looking forward to retiring next year. Lewis was commended by those present for passing on useful links to information of interest to members on a regular basis. He agreed to review the current list of links on the TSF website and to expand the section of links to useful texts, based on his knowledge. Lewis has, on many occasions, identified interesting information on the Internet and alerted TSF members to it. He was commended for this and was persuaded of the value of producing a comprehensive list of materials available (see below)

Malcolm Taylor reported exciting news from the EFDSS and the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library. The Heritage Lottery Fund has awarded £150,000 to the society for the 'Take 6' project which will involve the digitization of six collections (Janet Blunt, George Butterworth, Francis Collinson, Anne Gilchrist, George Gardiner and the Hammond brothers) and the development of materials that will enable the use of the collections in education. There will be a particular focus on linking material to the localities in which they were collected and projects are being created to do this in Lancashire (Gilchrist) and Hampshire (Gardiner). This project will result in the appointment of a project archivist and a heritage education officer. This project is exciting not just because of the funding and the importance of digitizing the collections but because it demonstrates that the VWML is recognized as a major national archive. Malcolm paid tribute to the efforts of the team whose professional approach had led to these funds being secured. Otherwise Malcolm reported that the average age of users of the VWML continues to plummet, which is great news for the future of the Library and folk music in general.

Joan Crump told us about collecting songs from George Gaskin, a traveler. She has reviewed a book on Gypsies for the last issue of ED&S. She is currently involved in organizing the Loughborough Folk Festival for 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> March next year. The festival will include a new thread for traditional singers and singers in the tradition.

Derek Schofield's life has been dominated by the day job and by *English Dance and Song*. He will shortly be talking at the Festival Organiser's Conference on the way in which the magazine has been re-positioned and is trying to link the past with the present. He is also part of the EFDSS editorial group and has been involved in the recent productions: *Marrowbones*, *Hardcore English* and the *Folk Handbook*. On 29<sup>th</sup> Feb 2008 it is hoped that a book will be published to celebrate Bert Lloyd's birthday, edited by Dave Arthur. They are looking for volunteers to become project managers for this and other publishing ventures. Derek's book on the history of EFDSS is (temporarily) on the back burner due to pressure of work.

Peta Webb Has been enjoying facilitating the research done by visitors to the VWML. She has continued to maintain her links with the Irish Tradition (particularly that of the North) through visits during the year. At present she is thinking ahead to the organization of the Keith Summers Festival (9<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> may 2008). She is also giving thought to the transcription of a large quantity of song which she has recorded on minidisk.

Fred McCormick confesses to having more than 3000 hours of recordings of jazz bands he has made round Leeds - and not knowing what to do with it all. The double CD of Ewan McColl material that he has been collaborating on is expected to be issued in the New Year. It is a double CD, the material being drawn from the best of the old Riverside Child Ballads set. His major task, however, is working on the huge collection of recordings that were owned by Keith Summers, which was left to Peta Webb, as well as his own collection. Between them they amount to about 7000 pieces of media. Fred has, so far, listed about 65,000 tracks. Once the task is complete the plan is that the collection will be given to the Institute of Popular Music at Liverpool University.

Technological diversion - at this point we had one of our frequent diversions into interesting technology. Poppy Holden mentioned that she was using an attachment for her i-Pod called 'XtremeMac Micromemo' which enabled recordings to be made in the field directly as MP3s and of good quality. The device has its own stereo microphone and other microphones can be plugged in if required. Details on [www.extrememac.com](http://www.extrememac.com) . It represents a low cost (about £30) way into field recording if you already have an i-pod. Joan Crump said that she was using a voice recorder made by Olympus which was giving her good results, having cost about £60 for a machine that needed no extra bits. This discussion prompted the thought that it would be good to have a feature on technologies for folk song researchers at a future meeting.

Sam Lee has taken on a new role as London Links Officer for EFDSS. He will be working with Malcolm Taylor to develop new relationships with organizations across London and exchanging ideas and practice with them. It is another part of EFDSS aim to become a part of the local community as well as a national body. There are an increasing number of folk events in Cecil Sharp House as well as other events that bring people in on a more inclusive basis. His Club, The Magpie's Nest, is reaching out to younger people but aims to keep the tradition to the fore. He has also undertaken a form of apprenticeship with the Scottish ballad singer, Stanley Robinson and will be spending time with him in the coming months - until now their contact has involved singing songs over the phone.

Gwilym Davies has discovered that retirement does not mean that you have any more time. He has been performing with his various groups and delivered a talk on wassailing at the Sidmouth Folk Week, which could lead to further research in the future. He recently visited the USA and presented the Library of Congress with a copy of the recordings that he made on his visit to the USA a few years ago. He described how, in Sussex last year, he had collected a version of '40 long miles' and had recorded a traveler fiddler, Vernon Smith. He has also visited singers in Cardiff and Brackley. Increasingly he is using a camcorder for his collecting. He has been involved in the production of a play written by Tim Laycock with Radio Winchcombe. The play, called 'Really Beautiful Company', tells the story of Percy Grainger collecting songs in Winchcombe Workhouse in the 1900s. He has also contributed to the Double CD of the Brasil family recently issued by Musical Traditions - a remarkable snapshot of a singing family. Gwilym asked if anyone had heard recently what Nick Dow was doing. He is, apparently, making caravans for a living. His song collection has been digitized by the British Library Sound Archive.

Irene Shettle has continued her work on the Broadwood collection, particularly the letters. She has given a number of talks to local organizations as well as assisting David Gregory with the preparations of talks and papers. She has yet to complete her bits on Folkopedia on Lucy Broadwood. She advised people not to join Facebook since it meant that you got messages to deliver to the meeting (see reports from Mary Humphreys and Johnny Adams below). She is looking forward to the celebrations which will mark 150 years since Ms Broadwood's birth next year.

Steve Gardham paid a brief visit to Sheffield in September to deliver a paper on Peter Buchan at the 'Voice of the People' Conference. He reported that the Hudleston Collection is currently in transit and progress is being made in getting access and goodwill. Much of his recent work has been related to the Yorkshire Garland project. The website is now up and running ([www.yorkshirefolksong.net](http://www.yorkshirefolksong.net)) with an increasing number of songs. There are 15 songs on the site at present and the two principle singers represented are Will Noble and John Greaves. It is hoped that it will be possible to include material from Arthur Wood in the near future. Steve's personal collection of songs is now in the VWML.

Andrew King apologized for his late arrival due to celebrations about having been awarded the research position in Sussex that will enable him to do the long hoped for work on the EFDSS cylinder recordings. He will be giving a talk about this work at the British Library on the evening of 12<sup>th</sup> December. There are 102 cylinders in the collection (one broken). They are about one third each English, Welsh and Scottish. The recordings were mostly made by Lucy Broadwood and some are in very good condition, unlike the Welsh material which is appalling. Some of the English recordings are by Sharp, Leather and Gardiner. Many of these recordings can be heard on the British Library Sound Archive 'Collect Britain' website. Otherwise

Andrew is performing as often as possible. On 19<sup>th</sup> October he will be singing at the Union Chapel with Jonathan Beatty playing the Willis organ.

Martin Graebe has continued working on his article for the forthcoming Folk Music Journal on the working relationship between Sabine Baring-Gould and Cecil Sharp. He gave a talk on this at the Sidmouth and Whitby Folk Weeks in August. Work continues on the next stage of indexing the Baring-Gould song manuscripts and on research into Baring-Gould's singers. This work will form the basis for a talk in October at the Baring-Gould Song School. Some time has also been spent on preparing talks on Baring-Gould's visit to Iceland in 1862, in preparation for an event at the British Embassy in Reykjavik to launch the new edition of Baring-Gould's 'Iceland: Its Scenes and Sagas' for which Martin has written a foreword. As part of this exercise Chris Foster and Bara Grimsdottir arranged some of the Icelandic songs Baring-Gould noted while he was there and these were performed at the Embassy event and at an afternoon concert in one of the largest book shops in Reykjavik, Eymundsson, where Martin and Shan added some English traditional songs - to the surprise of the customers.

Steve Roud is hoping to give up the day job at the end of the year and focus on his writing. Current projects include a book on London folklore. He is also involved in a national survey of what children are up to in the playground nowadays, since it is now many years since the Opies did their work (see [www.loreofthepark.co.uk](http://www.loreofthepark.co.uk)). A book, *The Lore of the Playground*, will be published in 2009, based on the results of the survey. Steve has also been filming with Griff Rhys Jones for a BBC programme about Charles Dickens and the reinvention of Christmas (to be shown at Xmas).

(Malcolm Taylor was reminded by this that there will be a three hour programme about Ralph Vaughan Williams at Christmas)

There were a few reports from members unable to join the meeting

Mary Humphreys is continuing to work on songs collected in Cambridgeshire by Vaughan Williams, Cecil Sharp and, particularly, Ella Bull. She gave a talk on 'Unearthing Cambridgeshire Songs' at Whitby Folk Week and is planning a song book based on her research.

Johnny Adams has been, as ever, hyperactive on behalf of the folk world. He has been involved in a project working with the Paul Graney Archive of sound recordings made from the 50's through to the 70s which include a number of recordings of folk clubs, festivals, off-air recordings and oral history interviews. These recordings have been digitised by the Greater Manchester County Record Office as part of a lottery project and Johnny has now taken over the 2.5 terabyte server. As a result other people have offered their own collections of similar recordings. He has raised funding from his university and installed equipment to store and distribute the recordings at some point in the future. There is space available on the new servers and he is able to offer space for appropriate material such as has been suggested for the 'Voices from the Attic' idea (see below) and on-line publishing etc. In the meantime the Folkopedia project ([http://folkopedia.efds.org/Main\\_Page](http://folkopedia.efds.org/Main_Page)) continues to grow and work to further expand the Village Music Project ([www.village-music-project.org.uk](http://www.village-music-project.org.uk)) is also in progress.

**Paul Cowdell** was at the Smithsonian Festival in June/July accompanying a group of musicians associated (though not necessarily from) Kent, including the whole Millen family. He is collaborating with George Frampton on his Kent Traditional Music Gathering in March 2008. He spoke at the 'Voice of the People' conference in Sheffield on 'Cecil Sharp and the Witting and Unwitting Class Warriors of English Folksong Scholarship'. He recently won the Folklore Society's Presidents Prize for his essay about an unpublished song from the Collinson collection and is now looking at further possibilities for research in this area.

**Sue Allan** has registered at Lancaster University to do a part-time PhD – working title 'Creating a sense of place: Cumbrian traditional music, customs and dialect since 1750'. She is also working part-time at Eden Arts, a local arts development agency and writing freelance for 'Cumbria' Life magazine

Georgina Boyes is working on an illustrated and revised edition of 'The Imagined Village' for publication early in 2008.

## Peter Kennedy Collection

Martin Graebe reported on the status of the Peter Kennedy Collection, based on a statement prepared with the agreement of the parties concerned. This read as follows (updated to October):

*Peter Kennedy died on 10 June 2006 and his wife, Beryl, earlier this year. A small group has been working with David Kennedy to ensure that Peter's collection of sound recordings, books, papers and other artifacts remains available in the UK for future researchers. This group was formed at Peter's instigation a few months before his death and is known as 'Customs and Traditions' or 'CAT'.*

*It had become clear, in recent years, that maintaining the collection as a single entity was not going to be easy and so it proved. Peter's own efforts to secure a future for the collection were not, unfortunately, completely successful. There was some confusion in the months following his death but a set of agreements is now in place that has, we believe, resolved the situation as well as could be hoped in the circumstances.*

*The outcome of these agreements is that Peter's collection has been placed as follows:*

- 1. The library of about 3,000 books has been given to the Halsway Manor Society as well as his collection of journals. These will, once catalogued and prepared, be added to the existing library and the whole will be known as the 'Kennedy Grant Memorial Library'. The gift to Halsway Manor Society also includes Peter's collection of commercial recordings of folk music comprising c3,000 78rpm records, 3,000 LPs, 500 CDs/DVDs, 50 HMV test pressings, and other items. HMS has also received a full set of the folktrax recordings issued by Peter Kennedy.*
- 2. CAT, with David Kennedy, has worked with Tony Engle, head of Topic Records, and Dr Janet Topp Fargion, curator of the World and Traditional Music Section of the British Library Sound Archive, to secure an agreement in respect of the archive of sound recordings. As a result of these discussions Topic Records has acquired the rights to the recordings and will be working towards releases of as much of the material as is commercially viable. This will obviously take some time but they hope that these releases will happen early in 2009 - Topic's 70<sup>th</sup> year. The British Library Sound Archive will house and protect the tapes and, in due course, they will be available for listening via the British Library procedures. As well as the recordings themselves, Peter's files and records form part of this archive and will provide valuable background information for the recordings that are issued and for future researchers.*
- 3. A small collection of papers and photographs that came from Maud Karpeles' estate have been given by David Kennedy to the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library where the bulk of her papers are housed. Some other family artifacts and papers have also been presented to the VWML.*

*Peter's sales outlet, 'folktrax', ceased trading on 30 September 2007 and the associated website was closed. Following requests from a number of people it is planned that, with the support of the Traditional Song Forum, a revised version of the website will be opened shortly as a source of information about Peter's work and as a permanent memorial to Peter and Beryl Kennedy. 'CAT' will be wound up in the next few weeks.*

*Obviously, it will be some time before the new holders of the material will be able to make access to it available or to deal with more than very basic enquiries. In years to come, though, there will be a large quantity of new and interesting material from and about Peter Kennedy's collection that will enable future researchers to form their own views of this complex man and his work.*

Tony Engle joined the meeting and agreed to fill in some details, as far as possible, in response to questions. The agreement with BLSA had not yet been signed off, but agreement had been reached in principle and Topic are planning on the assumption that it will be. He is, at present, discussing possible CD formats with Reg Hall and their ideas are beginning to crystallise - their hope is to issue 10 packages of 2-4 CDs each themed in various ways with the 'Voice of the People' branding. They may license other projects based on the material and Tony believes that a lot can be achieved with this important collection and he hopes that they will be able to create appropriate recognition for Peter's work. They will be paying royalties where appropriate to do so.

Some disappointment was expressed that the 'folktrax' website would no longer be available - several people expressed their appreciation of it as a research resource. Martin Graebe agreed to talk to David Kennedy and see whether a way could be found to re-house the site as a permanent research aid.

## Forum Business

### 1 General Meeting

#### Chairman's Report

The Chairman expressed satisfaction at the steady progress being made by the Forum. We had enjoyed a number of very good meetings over the last year and it was gratifying to see how much Forum members were achieving in the areas of research, performance and publication. Discussion at the meetings is always interesting and feedback from attendees and from those who read the meeting notes is very positive. He believes that we are living up to our promise and that the future looks good for the organization and for its members.

#### Treasurer's Report

The treasurer, Doc Rowe reported in absentia, that we currently have £356 in the bank. This is sufficient to meet our needs at present. Our main expenses are the TSF website, currently costing about £50 a year. The

other main expense is the hire of meeting rooms, though we have been fortunate in the last year or so in having been given free or low-cost facilities on a number of occasions. 41 members were currently paid up (and a few more did so at the meeting).

After some discussion it was agreed that the subscription for 2008 would be increased to £8-00 to ensure that our balance was maintained and that a small balance would be available to support TSF supported projects if needed.

#### Election of officers

Steve Roud proposed that Steve Gardham should share the role of Chair with him becoming, effectively, the 'Northern Chair'. After an appropriate amount of modest hesitation on the part of the propose, this was agreed and the Chair congratulated his new colleague.

The treasurer was re-elected in his absence and the Secretary failed to move fast enough to avoid being re-elected. It was suggested that, should it be necessary, other officers could be co-opted but the Chair reminded the Forum of the wish expressed at the outset that we would not get bogged down with red tape and committees.

#### TSF Logo

Andrew King agreed to see whether he could design a logo for the Forum to be used in its communications and on the website.

## 2 Next Meetings

We have now confirmed that the winter meeting will take place at Newcastle University as a result of the invitation by Vic Gammon. The Spring meeting will take place in May at Cecil Sharp House and will focus on the work of Lucy Broadwood. It proved too expensive to hold this meeting at the Surrey Record Office as had been hoped. The third meeting in 2008 has yet to be fixed but may take place in the South-West..

## Forum Focus - 'TSF - The Next Ten Years'

The Traditional Song Forum will shortly have been in existence for ten years. It was felt appropriate to take the opportunity to review how well TSF was doing and to give some thought to plans for the future. In this session we discussed a number of thoughts and possibilities put forward by members and agreed on some themes for the future. This discussion is summarized (very briefly) below. It is intended that these thoughts will be pulled together as a plan to be discussed and agreed at the next TSF meeting in January.

### 1 - Introduction (Steve Roud)

Steve re-iterated the view that he had expressed earlier, that TSF has been successful in its primary objective of bringing those interested in folk song research and collection together to share their experiences and support each others activities. The main role of the Forum will always be to support individuals and groups in achieving objectives that meet our aims through facilitation and encouragement, rather than through projects undertaken as an organization - though there may be areas in which action by the Forum working as a group may have unique benefits.

### 2 - The Virtual Archive (suggested by Ian Russell)

Ian has identified a possible model for a virtual archive for the traditional folk music community using as his example the approach adopted by 'Scotland and Medicines: Collections and Connections' (see [www.scotlandandmedicine.com](http://www.scotlandandmedicine.com)). This site is a portal that 'signposts' key collections relevant to the organization and enables interested parties to find either the web resource or the physical location. In discussion it was felt that this was essentially what the TSF web site is designed to do - though, of course, we could do better with more effort and resource. It was agreed that we would seek to improve the TSF website to move towards this model and become a portal for folk song archives. It was recognized that there was a strong link with the work that Lewis Jones had been charged with above and he agreed to take on the role of Portal Manager. The present 'Links' pages will be reviewed and added to and we will then review how best to

improve the presentation of this material on [tradsong.org](http://tradsong.org). Volunteers will be sought to write short summaries to describe each archive and describe their value to researchers.

**Action:** Lewis Jones to review the current links available on the [www.tradsong.org](http://www.tradsong.org) and draw up a list of additions and improvements as part of a proposal to a future TSF meeting. The proposal should also identify the changes to be made to the website to achieve the desired outcome. Volunteers to be sought to write descriptions.

**Action:** Martin Graebe to check with Ian Russell how well this meets his expectations and whether he has any additional thoughts

### 3 - Publication (suggested by Steve Gardham)

The question posed was: *'Publication of the work of researchers and collectors, whether in traditional or electronic forms, is a high priority for TSF members. Other than material provided by members for [tradsong.org](http://tradsong.org) TSF itself is not in a position to publish material. How can we best support those who do wish to publish material on traditional song?'*

There are some specific areas where there are choices to be made about the direction to be taken - the issue of print versus electronic media, for example. It had been widely thought that electronic media would replace print, but the technology has also enabled print-on-demand services to emerge - and there are many people who prefer books. The role of the Forum might be to help people to choose the most appropriate route for dissemination of their material. A way to do this might be to feature this as a topic for a future meeting and, using the output, create a feature for the website that would give guidance on publication in both print and electronic media. There might be areas where small publications from TSF are relevant but we do not, at present, have a publication committee who could undertake this role. No clear action was identified in this respect.

**Action:** Steve Gardham to make a proposal for a session on electronic publishing and 'print on demand' for a future meeting

### 4 - Voices from the Attic (Suggested by Paul Cowdell)

The idea that Paul presented (in absentia) was: *"Many families made recordings of parties and other private events which include examples of the songs that they sang. Would it be possible to initiate a project to get people to unearth these recordings and to make them available in some form to researchers?"*

This was thought to be a very good idea and there was a lot of enthusiasm for it. It was felt though, that it would be a big job and would have to have someone willing to do the work necessary to make it happen and funding would almost certainly have to be obtained to make the recordings available in a suitable format. The aim would not be to make a collection but, rather, to act as a repository. That having been said, seeking recordings would be relatively straightforward; appeals in local papers, in the Saga Magazine or through the National Trust, for example. It was recognised that this may fall into the remit of the British Library Sound Archive (though they may not welcome that thought). It was agreed that volunteers should be sought to make this happen, possibly led by Paul himself if he wishes to bring his idea to life.

Unfortunately, the notes from Johnny Adams (see above) outlining the work that he is doing with similar collections only arrived on the day and their significance for this discussion was not recognised at the time. Clearly what Johnny is doing is precisely what is being talked about here and there is an opportunity to work with him on this, if he is willing.

**Suggested Action:** Paul to talk to Johnny and come up with a detailed proposal for the next TSF meeting.

### 5 - Making 18th Ballads more available (suggested by Steve Gardham)

The thought behind this suggestion was: *"Street Literature collections are well covered for the 17th/19th centuries but there is a big gap for the 18th century due to the delicate formats used during this period. We need to encourage archives etc to publish these online where possible so no-one need touch the originals ever again and we all have access to previously inaccessible material essential to our studies."*

Steve explained his concern that there was very little 18<sup>th</sup> Century material available to researchers and that he would like to see it better represented in on-line collections. Eighteenth Century Collections Online (<http://gale.cengage.com/EighteenthCentury/>) is an example of what is possible, though a charge is made to

access material on this site. One point made was that not all sites had a secure future - concern was expressed about the continued availability of the Bodleian Broadside Ballad website, for example. While no definite action was agreed as a result of the discussion - there is very little that TSF can do other than to encourage those who might want to take action in this area. Steve agreed to become our '18<sup>th</sup> Century Officer' and to start the ball rolling.

**Action:** Steve Gardham will start making approaches to target organisations to encourage action by them

#### 6 - Support for Song Research (suggested by Martin Graebe)

This proposal is based on the thought that *"many singers and folk song enthusiasts are interested in understanding the background to the songs they sing or hear. There are a number of resources available to them, including the VWML and resources online. Can TSF help them by identifying points of contact and resources available? Additionally, can it help them to critically evaluate the information they uncover?"*

Martin Graebe explained the thought behind this proposal and explained that he was constructing a workshop called 'Finding out about folk song' that he would be offering to festivals and other folk gathering during 2008. His suggestion was that this could form a basis for TSF to give guidance on how to go about research in folk song at a basic level - identifying resources and understanding and evaluating the information they produce. Those present expressed interest in the idea (including a booking for the workshop!). A number of suggestions were made for content including FAQs and links, but it was agreed that the Internet is not the only answer when it comes to folk music research - and that it needs to be used critically. The importance of peer review was suggested. If this feature were added to the website (and if it were properly peer reviewed) the TSF 'brand' would be a guarantee of reliability and sound recommendations. Martin agreed to carry this idea forward and to seek input from and involvement by other TSF members

**Action:** Martin Graebe to complete construction of the workshop and then to create a web page based on it. After review by a panel of TSF members this would be added to the TSF website.

#### 7 - The Child Grows Up (suggested by Steve Gardham)

*Francis Child's 'The English and Scottish Popular Ballads' remains the key work on the ballad more than 110 years after his death. Is there an opportunity to produce a ballad collection better adapted to needs of singers in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?*

Steve Gardham made the point that the Child canon of ballads has become set in stone, even though it is well understood that it was selection made to an arbitrary set of criteria. Bronson's work added considerable to the value of the canon. One third of the material in Child's collection comes from broadside sources. Steve feels that the time has come to do the job again, starting (nearly) from scratch and producing an 'Exclusive Edition' which would focus on a stricter definition of the ballad. He feels that, on the whole, Child was right in his basic assumptions and can be used as a benchmark. Steve would like to hear from anyone who would like to participate in this project.

**Action:** Steve Gardham to carry forward. Any TSF members interested in participating to contact Steve.

#### 8 - The Virtual Learning Environment (raised at the meeting by Lewis Jones)

Lewis urged those who were interested in creating teaching materials to look at the possibilities created by the virtual learning environment (ie electronic media). He drew the attention of the Forum to Moodle ([www.moodle.com](http://www.moodle.com)) - a piece of open source software that enables the creation of learning packages and provides resources to support them.

**Action:** none, but noted

#### 9 - TSF Awards (raised at the meeting by Steve Gardham)

Steve reminded the meeting of an earlier suggestion that TSF could offer commendations to projects or organisations with creditable achievements that were in line with TSF objectives. It was agreed that this was a good idea and that members should be encouraged to make suggestions to the Secretary for consideration by the officers.

**Action:** TSF members to nominate organisations or projects for commendation by TSF on an on-going basis

## Conclusion

The Chairman thanked all those present for their ideas and for the high quality of the discussion. It is unlikely that TSF will be able to follow up all these ideas immediately but the wealth of suggestions indicates that TSF still has a lot to offer and to do. We will consider the proposals for development of these ideas at future meetings but, he emphasized, TSF is always ready to support individuals with help and advice on their own projects.

We did not, at this meeting, tackle the question of the fate of archives of material - not so much access to archives that are established but the difficulties of finding somewhere to house the mass of recordings, paper and artifacts that some individuals have built up. This was a question raised at the very beginning of TSF's existence and, while some good things have happened in this respect, there are also some examples of where the future of an archive that seemed secure is now in doubt. This is not going to be an easy one to solve but requires consideration over the next few years.

We look forward, with confidence, to the next ten years of the Traditional Song Forum

Martin Graebe