

THE NEW ENGLAND FOLK DIRECTORY

DONATIONS

1984 EDITION

REQUESTED!!

A SOURCEBOOK FOR FOLK MUSIC, TRADITIONAL DANCE,
AND STORYTELLING IN THE NEW ENGLAND STATES



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DON'T JUST RATTLE DEM BONES—PLAY THEM!

Yes, the suggestion is that you *play* them, which means that the bones are used as an instrument that has musical possibilities far greater than has previously been recognized in the 5,000 years of bones history documentation.

The feel of *playing* the bones is a *dance* feeling with the music inviting the bones to participate in a variety of rhythm patterns, changes in dynamics, tempos, time signatures, colors of sound, mood, etc. For example, the response to "Turkey in the Straw" will be altogether different from that to "Rondo alla Turca" of Mozart, or Scott Joplin's "Solace." You would dance differently to each of these, and to reels, jigs, hornpipes etc.

The bones know an extensive vocabulary that enables them to speak fluently in these and almost any other types of music situations. But all of this broad potential is built on just two simple rudiments: the tap and the triplet. These two, however, can be positively controlled and varied only when the bones are held in a certain way

The reason for workshops, then, is to show that the anvil bone is anchored to the hand, being rigidly held in place by the thumb and middle finger. The other bone, which is independently movable, is held in place by the ring finger so that it can whiplash against the anvil bone to tap from very loud to a whisper when a relaxed arm whips.

With this holding technique achieved we are ready to work down the list of elements shown at the right. On the average, within thirty minutes, the beginner will play taps and basic rolls with both hands together. It takes a while for the bones to become an extension of the physical being, but when that place is reached the fun can really begin; the mechanics of "holding" are incidental, and the dance feeling is there to be enjoyed.

So now you need bones, which you will select to suit those kinds of music situations you will be playing in. There is this assortment: white pine with hard annular rings running the right way for sound, maple, walnut, cherry, oak, and twenty-year seasoned hickory. Each kind has a characteristic sound that is best for a specific ensemble.

Ask for these, bone dope, and cassette with manual "How to Play the Bones" at your favorite music center, or Percy Danforth, 1411 Granger Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48104 (313) 662-3360. Also arrange for workshops and concerts; bones with modern dance, tabor pipe, finger cymbals, poetry and song.



PHOTO BY SUE TUSSA

ELEMENTS FOR PLAYING

- Application of bone dope
- Holding the bones
- Adjust for alignment
- Adjust for separation
- Taps: right, left, combined
- Flam patterns
- Running alternate taps
- Running alternate two-tap
- Tap triplet-accentuated pattern
- Basic roll, one hand
- Basic roll, two hands
- Rolls with accents
- Rolls with syncopated accents
- Rolls with tap patterns
- Seven-tap roll and 13, 19, etc.
- Alternate triplet pattern
- Extended triplet pattern
- Roll with counter rhythms together
- Cross-bone for dynamic control
- Crescendoeoed rolls
- Change to low-tone register
- "Fret" to high pitches
- Tuning bones pairs for match
- Selecting bones for ensemble
- Adjusting for ensemble dynamics

Recital-Lecture

Percy Danforth

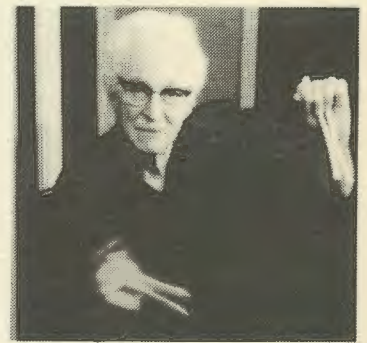
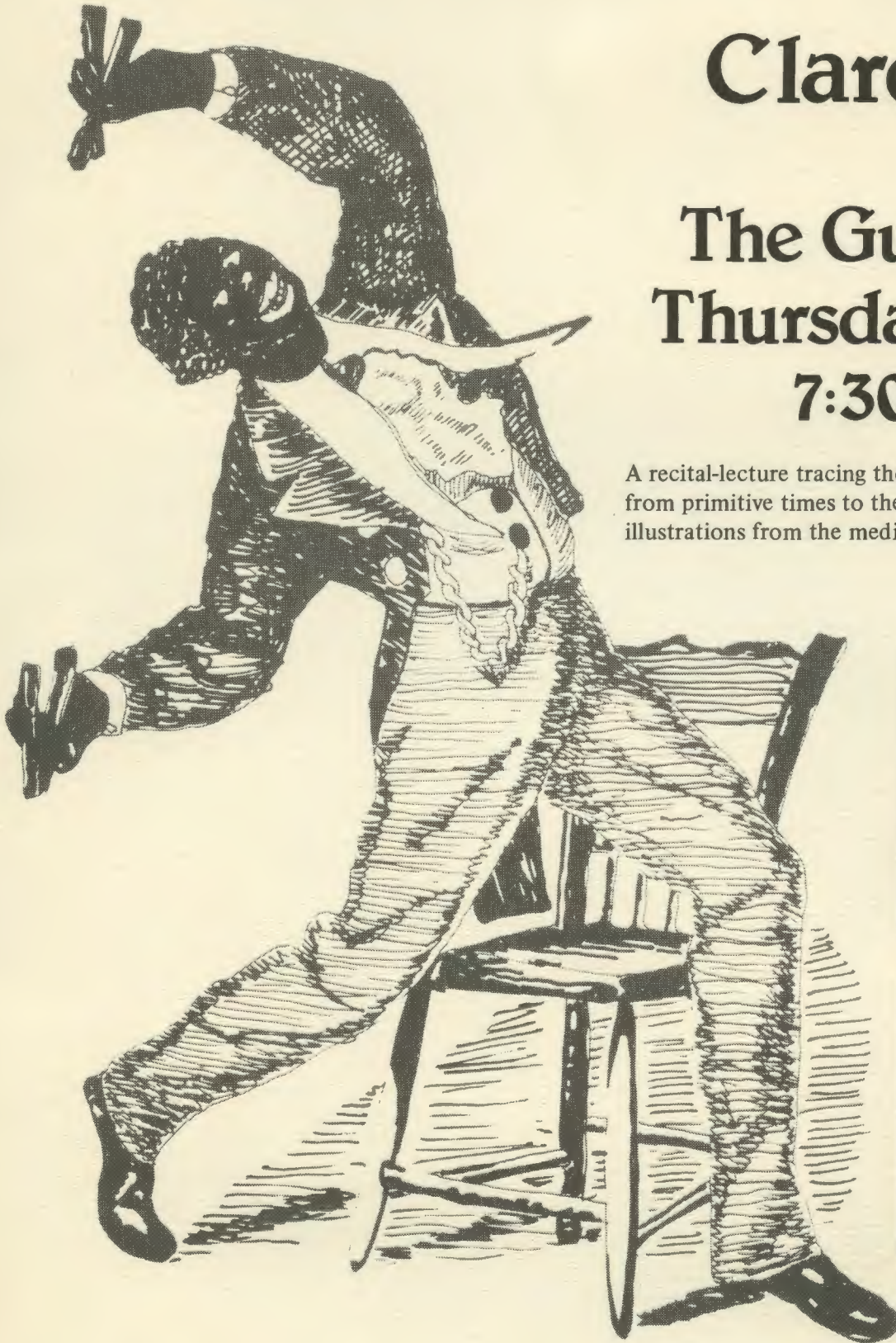
Rhythm Bones
assisted by

Clare Jones

piano

**The Guild Hall
Thursday, July 10
7:30 p.m.**

A recital-lecture tracing the history of the Rhythm Bones from primitive times to the present day with musical illustrations from the medieval period through ragtime.



Tickets: £ 1.25 and £ 1.75

from the Information Centre, Abbey Churchyard, Bath

Recital-Lecture

Percy Danforth
Rhythm Bones

assisted by:

Clare Jones
piano

Alistair Anderson

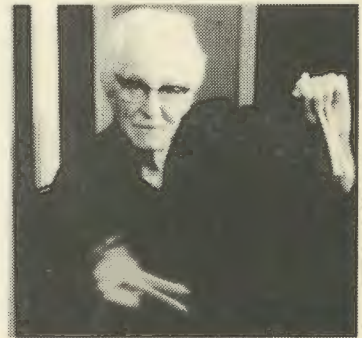
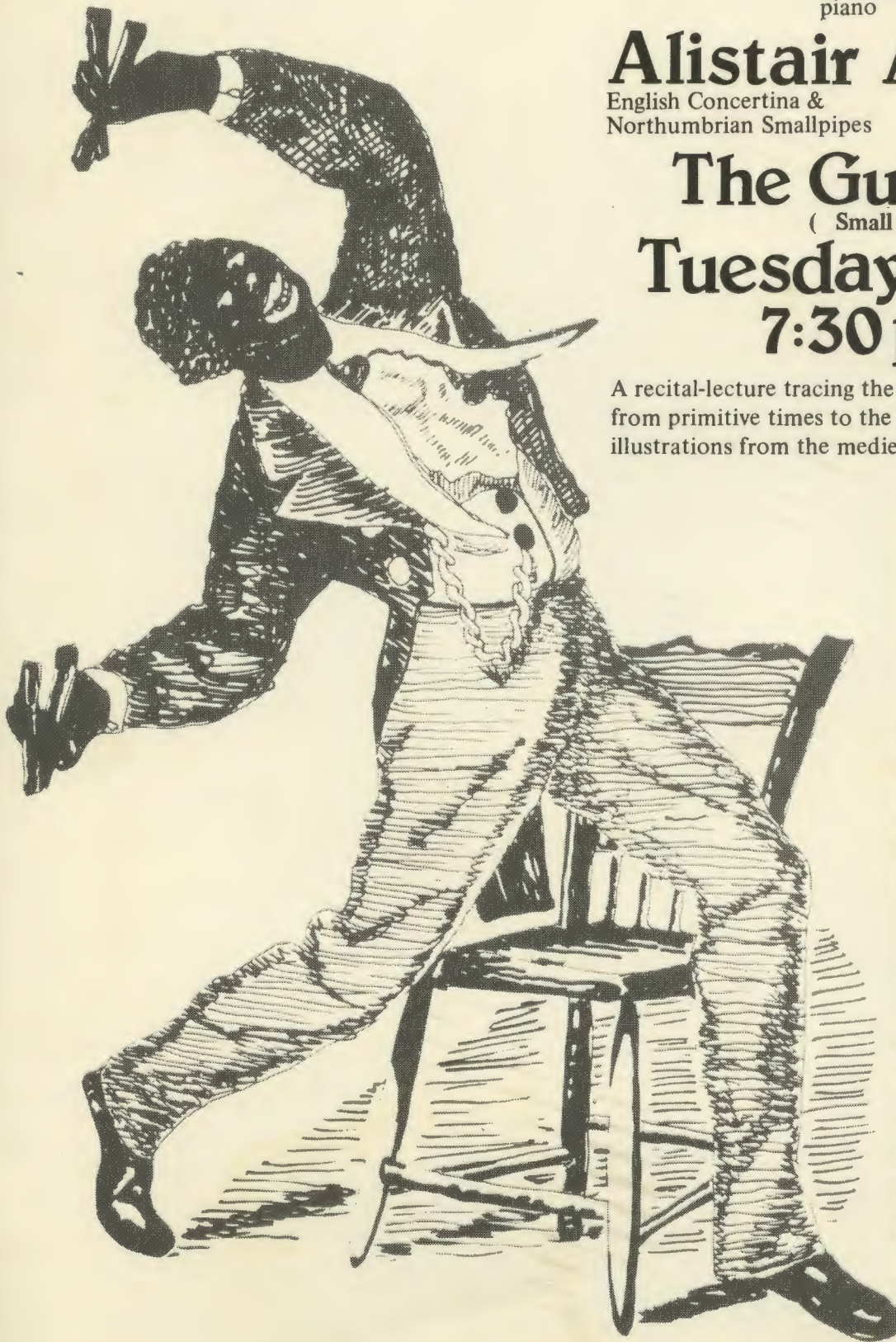
English Concertina &
Northumbrian Smallpipes

The Guildhall

(Small Hall)

Tuesday, July 15
7:30 p.m.

A recital-lecture tracing the history of the Rhythm Bones from primitive times to the present day with musical illustrations from the medieval period through ragtime.



Tickets: £ 1.50

from the Box Office, Central Library, Lion Yard Cambridge



TRYWORKS

First Unitarian Church Parish House

Eighth Street, New Bedford, Mass. 02740

SATURDAY EVENING PROGRAMMES - APRIL, 1976
Admission 50 cents, except Mini-Concerts

April 3 DANCE! DANCE DANCE!

Want to relearn all the dances we taught you in the Fall - want to learn some new ?????? Well, come to us tonight, though you be left-footed, for with the lively, lilting music of the Tryworks Ceilidh Band, your feet will start twitching of their own accord and we'll all have a lot of fun. Martha Pline and some of her friends say they will teach us a dance from Greece and Jugoslavia, Big Jim will pace us out in an English country dance, whilst Jody and I will do our best to call American and Irish dances - easy ones, so that you can all follow. Doorkeeper will be our own Treasurer and right-hand woman Hester Sears.

April 10 HONOURED GUEST - PERCY DANFORTH from Michigan (Mr. Bones himself)

Thanks to a letter to "Write-in" in the Standard Times, I discovered a few Bones players in this vicinity for, having heard Percy in Ann Arbor, Mich. I returned home highly enthusiastic about the arm-circling, foot stomping, bones-clacking music I had heard from the one and only Percy. We are thrilled to have him with us tonight, and Prof. Vincent Luti from S. M. U. will be accompanying him on the piano with Joplin Rags and Percy himself will be giving us a lecture on bones playing - and is bringing with him a score of bones to hand out into the audience for practice. Our own scalp-headed Robert Garvin who eats mouth-organs by the score will be along to give a set of his own mouth-harp music, with help from some friends. Oh, and I almost forgot to say that Percy is 75 years of age, but flings the bone like a two-year old. DK. Renny Perry

April 17 MINI-CONCERT - BRUCE HUTTON from Washington D. C. (Folk Song Society), JODY HECK AND STEVE LEVALLEY

We are delighted to have Bruce and his good wife with us this weekend and we look forward to two fine sets of Traditional styles of playing on instruments too numerous to mention - but his instrumental style is really fine so whether he brings with him his 5 string banjo or his Dubro steel resonator guitar (bottle neck style) or even does a couple of numbers on his jews' harp, it will all be highly enjoyable. He has played at many Folk Festivals including Kent State and the Smithsonian Workshops on American Folk instruments and has majored in English with emphasis on folklore, so we'll be able to learn something from him too. And from our own bunch of fine artists we are pleased to include in our Mini-Concert this evening Jody and Steve who have been charmed by the grand songs of Gordon Bock and intend to sing a number of those tonight. Is this an evening you are likely to miss??? Fools, if you do! Doorkeeper: Cory Suchman

April 24 Really, in typing out this April programme I cannot help but be pleased with myself. Damn it - what we give you folks - or what I should say is what YOU give YOU folks - for tonight we have another wow of an evening and all made up from our good neighbours - Jim Bean whom we all know and love - mostly traditional, Robert Smith, Poet from Lakeville, Rick Santos and his pals from Acushnet. (I think their names are Rowan, Ralph and Danny) with a contemporary sound, and the one and only Jt. brother and Karen Hanczaryk, who are always a joy to hear. Note: Rick and his gang have only been coming here in the last couple of months and last Saturday night as we were leaving around midnight he came back and said "Gee Maggi, Tryworks is dynamite: and now that we have Jerry Vinci's hand-carved sign on our stairwell, I cannot help but feel proud, because you people, with your responsibility and maturity (something that is supposed to be totally lacking in the younger generation) have made it this way - bless you all! Doorkeeper: The Bridgmans

PERCY DANFORTH

AND

GEMINI



Sandor and Lasslo Slomovits

*playing and singing traditional songs
and music of their native Hungary,
and of Israel, America and
the British Isles.*



Renowned virtuoso on

BONES

ASSISTED BY

CATHY BARTON on Hammered Dulcimer

BOB AULT on Ragtime Piano

*Two free master classes on the Bones will be conducted by
Mr. Danforth and several local exponents on Saturday November 19
from 3:00-5:00 at Focal Point-8027 Big Bend, Webster Groves, Mo.
The second will be after the concert on Sunday following the
concert. Bones will be available for purchase.*

GEMINI is the performing name of folk musicians SANDOR and LASZLO SLOMOVITS.

Born in Budapest, Hungary in 1949, the twin brothers emigrated with their parents after the 1956 Revolution and lived in Israel for three years before moving to the United States.

Their lifelong involvement in various kinds of music has become focused into an intense interest in folk music since the early seventies. Between them, they play guitars, violin, mandolin, pennywhistle and various percussion instruments, such as bones and bodhran. Their repertoire includes traditional songs and fiddle tunes from America and the British Isles, as well as folk music from Hungary and Israel. However, at the core of their performances is a growing number of original songs and instrumentals. These include love songs, childrens' songs, settings of poems by Robert Frost and A.E. Housman, lyrics written to traditional Irish tunes, as well as occasional wry comments about the joys and tribulations of twinship. They've also composed duets for various combinations of the above-mentioned instruments, and these, as well as the songs, reflect the early influence of the Hungarian and Israeli cultures, as well as the more recent influence of American and British Isles music.

7:30 - 9:00 P.M.

THE KIRKWOOD COMMUNITY CENTER 111 S. Geyer

Admission \$3.00

PERCY DANFORTH will give a Bones workshop at Focal Point on Saturday afternoon from 3:00 to 5:00 P.M. This workshop is free.

Percy will also give a short workshop after the Special Concert at the Kirkwood Community Center on Sunday evening.

FOCAL POINT
8027 BIG BEND
WEBSTER GROVES, MO. 63119

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
VALLEY PARK, MO.
PERMIT NO. 45

"BONES" in CONCERT



PERCUSSION and RAGTIME

featuring

Percy Danforth playing the
"BONES"
with

the MICHIGAN MARIMBAS

Charles Owen, Conductor

MAR. 29TH

notables

Dem bones, dem bones

You might say Percy Danforth picked up his musical talents on a Washington, D.C., street corner. "All the kids from my white neighborhood and the nearby black one gathered on summer evenings in front of Isaac Clayman's grocery store. The black guys would take sand from the gutter and sprinkle it on the sidewalk. Then they'd pull their bones out of their pockets and softshoe, sand dance, accompanying themselves with the bones. They showed me, a scrawny little white kid, how to play the bones."

That was 1908. Percy Danforth didn't play the bones much in the next few decades. In 1973 he was asked to give a bones demonstration in his wife's Eastern Michigan University world musics course. Now "Mr. Bones" (Danforth's nickname and a sobriquet for one of the main characters in 19th-century blackface minstrel shows) has inadvertently inaugurated a one-man revival of this art.

Originally, bones were just what their name implies — curved pieces of animal rib or shin bone, dried and polished. Today they are usually made of wood. When held between the fingers and struck together, they produce rhythmic patterns. Bones have been found in prehistoric Mesopotamian graves and pictured in ancient Egyptian and Greek artifacts. In the 18th century European immigrants brought bones playing to the New World. Black slaves added their own flair and variations, and American-style bones playing began.

In 1977, National Public Radio did a feature on Percy and his bones. Recently, he demonstrated artful bones-playing for amazed staffers in the Folk Archives section of the Library of Congress. He appears at folk festivals in many parts of the country, and has made instructional videotapes for school districts in Michigan and Wisconsin. He has also gone into the bones-making business, selling his wares at festivals and selected outlets around the country.



photo by PAT BECK

Bones playing is an exuberant endeavor, and Danforth becomes exasperated with those who refer to it slightly as "rattling the bones."

"There is a lot more to good bones-playing than just hitting some sticks together. You have to know how to move your arms and wrists and fingers to make the various rhythms. You have to get into it with your whole body. I don't really *play* the bones. I *dance* the bones — from the soles of my feet up to the top of my hair.

"When I come out on stage and start 'tuning up the bones', people always wonder what in the world this silver-haired old bunny is going to do. When they find out, they are ahh-maa-zed! Lots of time people come up to me afterwards and say something like, 'My grandpa used to do that years ago, and I'd forgotten all about it. Will you show me how?'"

Percy Danforth always does.

■ SUE BARBER



photo by RICHARD LEE

tomorrow

admits he's wear-proud of it. That's an Ideal Topper, a He holds two pat-and manufactures al Hairpieces, Inc. in Detroit. His busi-otographs of him. "with" and "with-strom makes both ead) and hairpieces ea). He says they ees" anymore — ed word.

ner can choose be-ustom-made wares. ade from synthetic emical composition roturf; the custom tural hair. Ostrom New York, but the one here. To fit a measures the head angles; for a hair-aster mold. Prices \$35 to \$600.

5/75

the last director of the In 1975 that lecture he oldest of its sort in l hold that record, but ones. The Town Hall 1977 at the age of 50. ctor since 1971. Town ber the subscription appointed mornings Fisher Theater to hear amous public figures eaker was columnist y, Green is part owner n's clothing store. She he Town Hall series , she will run it in the orthern suburb.



photo by LONA O'CONNOR

in this issue

Heavy weather

Winter is upon us, and a young man's fancy turns to slush. Yes, compared to summer in Paris, winter in Detroit just doesn't make it. But the question is not whether the season makes it, rather whether *you* will. To lend a helping mitten, *Detroit* had Dan Carlinsky divulge the secrets of surviving the cold. Just turn to page 8 and bundle up. On page 16, we present a portfolio of the art of David Mitchell, and Peter Gavrilovich's posthumous profile of this talented young man who succumbed to leukemia at age 20. Then on page 33, Robert Serata tells you how to buy a stereo to wile away those long, cold nights.

Cover illustration by Doug Harris.



sunday editor
GARY BLONSTON
editor of *Detroit*
ELIZABETH RHEIN
associate editor
MARTIN F. KOHN
art director
BARBARA WEINBERG
staff writer
PATRICIA CHARGOT
advertising manager
HARRY LENCIONE

Detro

How to stay warm this
(and still keep yo



Doug Har

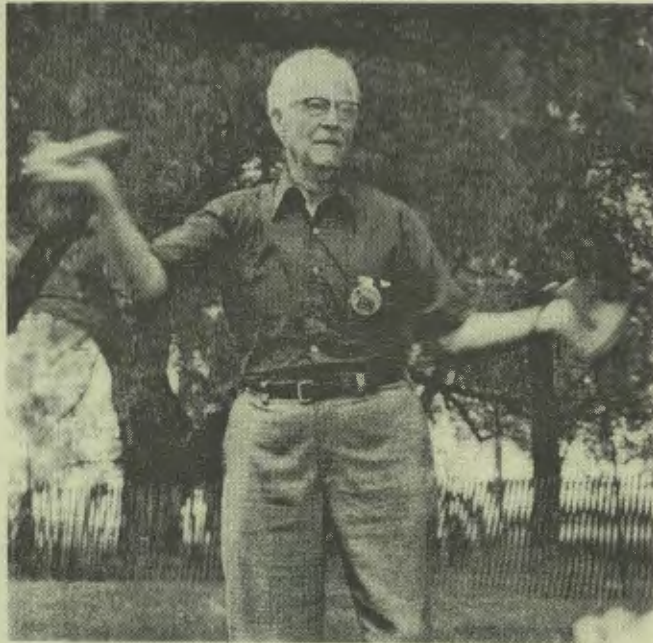
BONES WORKSHOP

Sunday
Feb. 27
3 - 5 pm

with
Percy

Danforth

- free!!!



at

Elderly Instruments
541 East Grand River
East Lansing

We're proud to have Percy "Mr. Bones" Danforth with us for a Workshop on playing bones. Percy learned to play "under the streetlights of Washington, D.C." in 1906.

Bones are an ancient type of rhythm instrument, now made of wood rather than bone. Bones playing is now enjoying quite a revival in the United States, due mainly to Percy's concerts, demonstrations, lectures and TV appearances throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Percy will give a short lecture on different types of bones and then teach you how to play them. It's easy and fun!!

The workshop is free - sponsored by **Elderly INSTRUMENTS**
541 E. GRAND RIVER
332-4331 E. LANSING

Pictures & Brochure

Have spent 8 or 9 years establishing
Bones status.

Have gone anywhere

Workshops & Concerts:

(Please return this for sure)

- Philadelphia - (7) big
- Wheatland - (5) Remus
- Los Angeles - (3)
- Jay Hollow - (3) Troy NY
- Altamont - (3)
- Iri Works - New Bedford
- Maraposa - (3) Toronto
- Windspey - (2)
 - La Cross - (3)
 - Moline - (1)
 - Washington - (4)
 - Baltimore - (1)
 - Hartford - (3)
 - San Francisco (2)
 - Toledo - (1)
 - Lima - (1)
- Smithsonian - (1)
- London - (1)
- Cambridge - (1)
- Bath - (1)
- Phornix - (2)
- St. Louis - (1)
- Wolf Trap - (1) Va.
- Foster Memorial - (2) Florida
- Chicago - (1)
- New York - (1)
 - Bowling Green (1)
 - Indianapolis (1)

Lansing (3)

2. Lansing (5)

Elkins W. Va (1)

Louisville (1)

Public Radio-National
Hugh Downs "Over Easy"
Kelley & Company
Good afternoon Detroit
Channel 31
WTAQ

Re-runs
}
}

Public Schools - all grades
Cressi Hospital - Mental
Univ. Hospital
St. Joseph
Convalescent Homes
Retirement Homes

Theatre "Improvisation for
Bones and Modern
Dance

Blind Pig
Pretzel Bell
London Pubs.
Art Fairs, etc.

Made Instruction Manual with tape.
Working on better one with Bill Cahn who
has written instructions for drumming.
Eastman School of Music

Will start Workshops:
Elderly Instruments — Lansing
Crescent Music — Ann Arbor

Add in New England Folk Directory —
Lots of interest in New England Proof of page
But no Bone players

Lots of possibility for workshops (How?)
Must travel, eat & sleep

I have tried to change thought of "rattling" to
that of "Playing" associated with Dance.

as of a year and a half ago have made
and delivered 10,000 pairs. Have made
many since then.

(Sears and others?)

Bones receive enthusiastic response
either:

- 1- Because the Bones performance was enjoyed for what they have been able to do; or
- 2- There was amazed appreciation for what a white haired old bunny was able to make the bones do.

It's the potential of the Bones I have labored to demonstrate — their potential as a percussion musical instrument.

Composing:

Bones accompaniment for
"Mountain Whippoorwill"
"Shooting of Dan Magro"

a three movement piece for Bones
& Double Bass to be played
with Modern Consort.

Music of Percy and Frances Danforth

with

The University of Michigan Marimba Ensemble

Michael Udow, Director John Pennington, Coach

Carol Leybourne, Soloist

Eric Scorce, Soloist

Saturday, December 5, 1987

The Ark

8:00 p.m.

Variety of Pieces

Percy Danforth, Bones
Carol Leybourne, Piano

Suite for Piano

Frances Danforth

Karelian Light

Frances Danforth

Carol Leybourne, Piano

**Into the Vortex,
Dialogue for Timpani and Tape**

Frances Danforth

Eric Scorce, Timpani

Percy Danforth, Bones Soloist

Ronda Ala Turk

W.A. Mozart
arr. James Moore

Alene Taub, Marimba

Rainbow Ripples

G.H. Green
arr. David Kane

Matt Factor, Xylophone

Triplets

G.H. Green
arr. Bob Becker

David Mitchell, Xylophone

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN MARIMBA ENSEMBLE

David DeVore

Matt Factor

Fernando Meza (guest performer)

David Mitchell

Alene Taub

"UPDATING the Bones"
Playing the bones
Rock MUSIC

OBJECTIVES

- Ting Chud. the Bones - REASONS
- 5

- LOST ART
- SELF IMAGE
- PORTABILITY
- CREATIVE RHYTHM
- MEDIUM →
- ASSOC. w/ DANCE
- IMMED. FEEDBACK / SUCCESS. HISTORY

HISTORY

DESCRIP. / RICA

TECHNIQUES IN TING

- DEMONSTRATION (ALT. ROCK & ROLL & RAGTIME)
- NOT MUCH ON HISTORY
- SHAPE OF BONES & Why that shape
- DISTRIBUTED BONES (CURVED BONES)
- DEMO (2 or 3x)
- VIDEO FEEDBACK
- MADE BONES (p.m.)
- BEGAN WORKING w/ THEM
- UTR
- TV Sta.
- KIDS DANCED
- KIDS SAW TV PROG. - REASONS Why good

STAFF INVOLV.

DAY II

- INTENTIONS of qps of 4, turned out to be groups of 8-12
- VIDEO (5 min. of ea. gp)
- reviewed tapes & ASSESSED CHILD. SKILLS
- KIDS SAW UTR

STAFF INVOLV.

DAY 2 (cont)

KIDS Began dropping up indiv. & smaller gps
Some dropped

DAY 3 Mr. Jones - getting bone weary!

- 1 - PICNIC
- 3 - Informal 1:1 lessons on voluntary basis
- 2 - demo → other KIDS / STAFF
Master Models of other KIDS - MORALE BOOSTER
Other KIDS wanted to play, frustrated (not much time)
history of bones to staff

Day 4

GPS OF 4
IS THIS THE LAST DAY? - melancholy
Final tapes

DISCUSS

- KIDS called Percy "Mr. bones"
- KID → KID bone lessons
- Black market
pitching pennies
playing w/ Percy's bones.

EVAL

Acnic @

STAFF INVOLV. - ^{TV} ^{Superintendent} ^{CCW's}, Principal
Principal practicing
Superintendent

Autographed bones.

All KIDS could CLACK, 2-3/can't rattle - ^{somewhat} ^{intermittently}
(fragile skill)

261
"Bones" Activities,
Percy Darforth

FESTIVALS:

- 1- Smithsonian Folk Life Festival, 1976,
Washington, D.C.;
- 2- Wolf Trap, National Folk Festival, 1976;
- 3- Philadelphia Folk Festival, 1978-'79-'80.
- 4- Fox Hollow Festival, 1977-'78-'79;
- 5- Gottagetgone Festival, Fox Hollow, 1976.
- 6- Connecticut Folk Festival, Hartford, 1977, '78;
- 7- Florida State Festival at Steven Foster
Memorial, 1977, '78;
- 8- Detroit Ragtime Festival, 1976;
- 9- Bothim Festival, San Francisco, 1978.
- 10- Sandusky Festival, Sandusky 1977.
- 11- Mariposa Folk Festival, Toronto, 1977, '78;
- 12- Medieval Festival, Univ. of Mich. School
of Music, Ann Arbor, 1978;
- 13- The Great Hudson River Revival, 1980,
Croton on Hudson;
- 14- Great River Traditional Music and Crafts
Festival, Univ. of Wisconsin at
La Crosse;
- 15- Festival at Rothbury, Northumberland,
England, 1980.

Moline 1979

TV & RADIO:

- 1- Hugh Downs "Over Easy" show;
- 2- National Public Radio;
- 3- WUOM, Univ. of Mich. "Bones" lecture;
- 4- WXYZ, Channel 7, Detroit, "Bones Demonstration";
- 5- Folk Music Archives, Congressional Library,
recording and TV tapes in Coolidge Shelter
(Gerry Parsons & Joe Hickerson);
- 6- Four-day documentation of "Bones" project
at School for Delinquent Boys, Baltimore,
Maryland. - TV tapes;
WUOM - Christmas Ragtime Bash.

see
Smith
Lond's
letter

CONCERTS, WORKSHOPS, ETC.:

- 1- Special Concerts with Ars Musica Baroque Orchestra, 1978-'79;
- 2- Area Public Schools;
- 3- Michigan Center for the Performing Arts, Detroit Michigan; 1978
- 4- Ford Auditorium, Detroit 1979
- 5- Ford Museum, ^{Recital Hall} Greenfield Village, Dearborn, Mi;
- 6- Power Center "Bread and Roses", Univ of Mich.;
- 7- "Improvisation - Bones and Modern Dance - Recital, Univ. of Mich. Dance Dept. Auditorium, Ann Arbor, Mich.; 1978
- 8- Workshop, "Broken Flow Share" Coffee House, San Francisco. 1978.
- 9- Ten Pound Fiddle, Mich State Univ. 1978
- 10- Ark Coffee House, Benefit Concert for Mike Cooney 1978. 1980
- 11- ^{Bones} Seminars, Univ of Wisc., LaCross, with Recreational Music Students & Practice in public schools.
- 12- Festival, Ohio State Univ., Lima campus, Arts & Crafts & Workshops 1980;
- 13- ^{Johnny} Folk Festival, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1980;
- 14- ^{of} Black Swamp Festival, Bowling Green Univ., Bowling Green, Ohio; 1977
- 15- Bones Seminars with Percussion Dept., Univ. of Mich. School of Music.
- 16- Concert - Univ. of Michigan School of Music Percussion Ensemble & Bones. 1979;

Ars Musica
 Bones
 of
 Percussion Dept.

concerts, Workshops, etc. Cont.)

4 of 4
Danforth "Bones"

- 17- Workshop, New Bedford, Mass. at
Trivorks House. 1976
- 18- Recording, "New World Records, Authentic
Minstrel Show Music".
- 19- Lecture-Recitals:
 - a- London, England, Purcell Room of
Royal Festival Hall Complex on
South Bank;
 - b- Bath, England, Guild Hall;
 - c- Cambridge, England, Small Guild Hall.
- 20- University of Michigan, Department of
Humanities, Lectures and Bones
workshops.
- 21- Eastern Michigan University Humanities
Department, Lectures & Bones
Workshops.
- 22- Concert, Union Club, Philadelphia.

PERFORMANCE CREDITS

TV and Radio

Hugh Downs "Over Easy" Show
National Public Radio
WUOM, U. of M. - "Bones" lecture
Channel 7 Station WXYZ, Detroit
Recording and TV in Coolidge Theater for
Congressional Library, Washington, D.C.

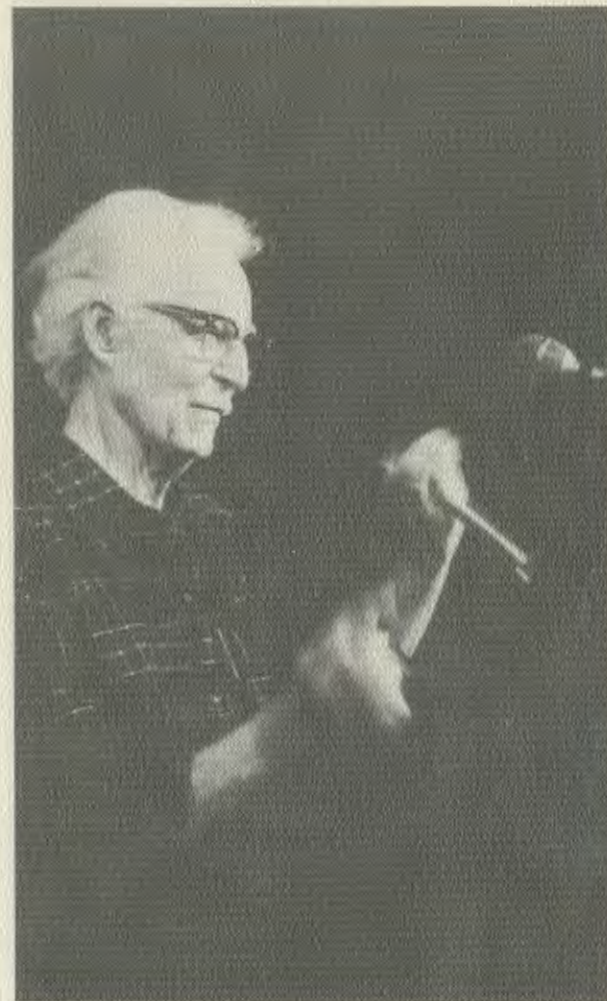
Festivals

Smithsonian Folk Life Festival, 1976; Wash., D.C.
Wolf Trap, National Folk Festival
Philadelphia Festival
Fox Hollow Festival
Gottagetgon Festival, Fox Hollow
Connecticut Festival in Hartford
Florida State Festival at Steven Foster Memorial
Detroit Ragtime Festival
Bothim Festival - San Francisco
Sandusky Festival - Sandusky
Mariposa Folk Festival
Medieval Festival, Ann Arbor

Clubs & Universities

Special concerts with Ars Musica Baroque Orchestra
Area Public Schools and is booked into Purcell Room,
Royal Festival Hall, London, England.
Michigan Center for the Performing Arts - Detroit
Ford Auditorium, Detroit
Ford Museum, Greenfield Village, Detroit
Power Center, "Bread & Roses" - U. of M. Ann Arbor
"Improvisation - Bones & Modern Dance" - Recital,
U. of M. Dance Dep't Auditorium, Ann Arbor
Red Fox Folk Coffee House, Washington, D.C.
Plow Share Coffee House, San Francisco
Ten Pound Fiddle, East Lansing
Ark Coffee House, Ann Arbor
Tony Pacos, Toledo

Percy O. Danforth
1421 Hill Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48104



PERCY DANFORTH

ABOUT PERCY

Seventy-nine year old Percy O. Danforth doesn't rattle or shake his bones. He plays them!

Danforth's background is as fascinating and varied as his talent. He came to Ann Arbor in 1918 and studied chemical engineering. Danforth served a brief stint as a member of the Student Army Training Corps (SATC) from September to December, 1918. He later switched his major to architecture and received his degree in that field in 1927.

Danforth had his own architectural firm in Monroe from 1929 to 1934. He joined the Monroe Schools and designed an elementary art curriculum for the school system. He also taught art for five years there.

Spurred by his great interest in art, Danforth returned to U-M and later received a master's degree in art education. His plans to obtain a Ph.D. in education were interrupted by World War II. The ensuing war years were spent helping to design various components for B-24 bombers at the Willow Run bomber plant.

Following the war, Danforth later became supervisor of mechanical engineering at Bendix Corporation's Industrial Metrology Division. He is now Personnel Manager at Balance Technology in Ann Arbor.

Despite his age, Danforth has no intention of retiring. Throughout his career he has continued research on the art of the bones. Since 1908, when he first became fascinated with the rhythmic "bones," which were part of early minstrel shows in this country, Danforth has experimented with special techniques for playing them. Originally, the bones were actually spareribs used as "clackers" to create dancing rhythms which were imitated later in tap dancing.

Percy Danforth never travels anywhere without a full compliment of bones, some of them handsome specimens made from animal rib bones like those which Zulu tribesmen must have used centuries ago in deep Africa. Marrow in real bones makes the hollow sound but most of Danforth's bones are made of wood, such as hickory, walnut, white pine and balsa.

QUOTES

"Bones artist Danforth enlivens Union crowd...yesterday's performance showed just how much the white-haired bones wizard had refined his uncommon hobby into an art...the best part was saved for last: Danforth came equipped with a whole pile of bones and distributed them to the audience, leaving all concerned happily wriggling their wrists and tapping their toes as the light-hearted program came to a close."

*Michigan Daily
February 1975*

"The evening closed with what was certainly the newest work on the program, created right there on the spot: an improvisation for Elizabeth Bergmann and bones virtuoso Percy Danforth. More a duet than a solo, the piece was the perfect 'dessert,' a delightful interaction between dancer and musician, with Danforth creating his own choreography as well as the music for the piece."

*Dance Review
Ann Arbor News
March 24, 1978*

" 'Doing the bones' made music that entranced city audience...Danforth is a popular performer in solo or in ensemble, wherever he goes...'When you put your whole heart into it, it becomes a kind of dance and it flows through your bones.' "

*Sunday Standard-Times
New Bedford, Mass.
May 2, 1976*

Percy Danforth:

"Playing the bones is a lot of fun. I keep on discovering new possibilities with rhythm and tone colors. Eventually I'd like to invent a nomenclature to make possible notation for the playing of the bones. There's no record or written description of bones playing now... The bones are more than just a percussion instrument. It's an art form."

*Ann Arbor News
Sunday May 25, 1975*



BONES

Prices subject to change without notice

Pine Bones	\$3.00/pair	\$5.00/set (4)
Hardwood Bones	\$6.00/pair	\$10.00/set

Plus shipping and handling.
Discounts available for large orders.

To order, please send

Please send _____ pair (sets) of _____ bones.
Enclosed is \$ _____.

Send to:
Name _____

Address _____

Make checks payable and send to:

PERCY O. DANFORTH
1421 Hill Street
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

PERFORMANCE CREDITS

TV and Radio

Hugh Downs "Over Easy" Show
National Public Radio
WUOM, U. of M. - "Bones" lecture
Channel 7 Station WXYZ, Detroit
Recording and TV in Coolidge Theater for
Congressional Library, Washington, D.C.

Festivals

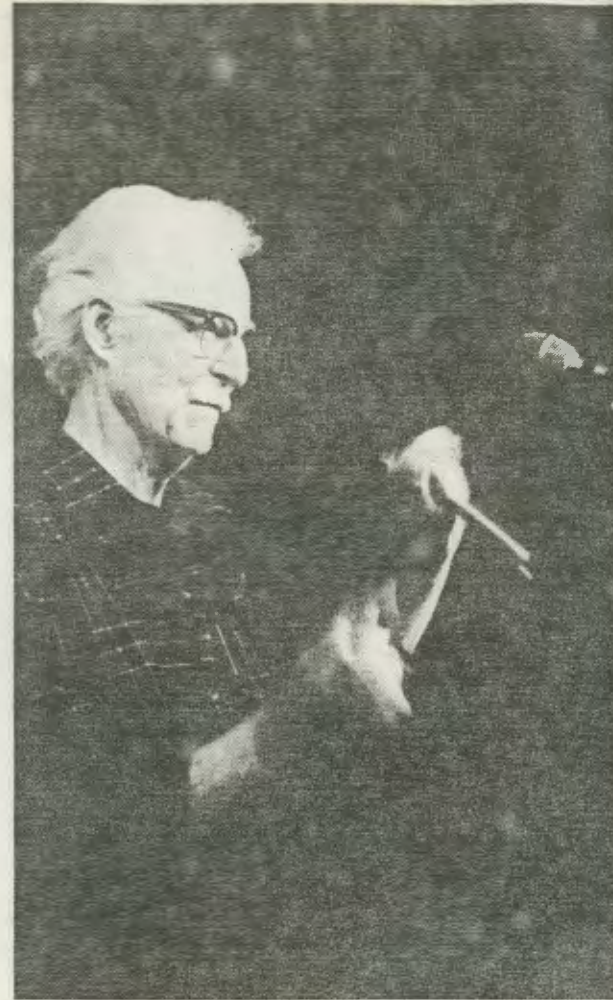
Smithsonian Folk Life Festival, 1976; Wash., D.C.
Wolf Trap, National Folk Festival
Philadelphia Festival
Fox Hollow Festival
Gottagetgon Festival, Fox Hollow
Connecticut Festival in Hartford
Florida State Festival at Steven Foster Memorial
Detroit Ragtime Festival
Bothim Festival - San Francisco
Sandusky Festival - Sandusky
Mariposa Folk Festival
Medieval Festival, Ann Arbor
Croton on Hudson

Clubs & Universities

Special concerts with Ars Musica Baroque Orchestra
Area Public Schools and is booked into Purcell Room,
Royal Festival Hall, London, England.
Michigan Center for the Performing Arts - Detroit
Ford Auditorium, Detroit
Ford Museum, Greenfield Village, Detroit
Power Center, "Bread & Roses" - U. of M. Ann Arbor
"Improvisation - Bones & Modern Dance" - Recital,
U. of M. Dance Dep't Auditorium, Ann Arbor
Red Fox Folk Coffee House, Washington, D.C.
Plow Share Coffee House, San Francisco
Ten Pound Fiddle, East Lansing
Ark Coffee House, Ann Arbor
Tony Pacos, Toledo
Univ. of Mich. School of Music Ann Arbor, Mich.
University of Wisconsin at La Crosse, Wis.
New York Univ. at Brookport, N.Y.
Ohio State Univ. at Lima, Ohio

Percy O. Danforth

1421 Hill-Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
1411 Granger Ave.



PERCY DANFORTH

Intro to Danforth

He prances. He dances. He clicks and clacks and rolls. He dazes, he amazes, astounds, confounds -- behold, PERCY DANFORTH, bones player extraordinaire.

Percy Danforth learned to play the bones at the age of nine, under a carbon gas lamp, on a street corner in Washington, D.C. The year -- 1909. His teachers were black youths, masters of bones playing techniques that dated from the 19th Century halcyon days of the black-face minstrel show. Over the years, octagenarian Danforth, virtually single-handedly, kept the tradition of bones playing, minstrel show style, alive. And since the early 1970's, he has spearheaded a revival of interest in bones playing that has brought audiences from California to Cambridge (the English one) to their feet, laughing and cheering.

Separating "Mr. Bones" from ~~the-in-~~ his instrument -- yes, the bones are a musical instrument -- he handles so well is always something of a challenge. Still, a few distinct words about each are in order. First the bones.

Originally, this ancient instrument (they date from prehistoric times) consisted of just what the name implies -- bones. After being scraped and dried, bones produce a musical click when struck together. This simple, single click is just the beginning. Pairs of bones, two held in each hand, produce intricate patterns of rhythms, rolls, tempi, volumes, and variations. Various types of musical accompaniments add flavor and style to them. In the hands of a master, the musical possibilities are bones renditions. virtually endless. Percy Danforth is without doubt, a master of the art of bones playing.

Part of the charm of a Danforth bones performance is Percy himself. "Everybody is just ahh-maazed," says Perc, "when this silver-haired old

bunny gets up and starts jumping around with a bunch of sticks in his hands." But jump around he does, with verve and energy that are the envy of many a fraction of his age. He hands are ^a a blur, he arms are awake, and his music is a fresh ~~;-unusual-treat;~~ astounding, unusual experience. Danforth is also a serious student of the history and technique of bones playing. He has researched the instrument to its ancient roots, traced its progress through the Middle Ages, followed its ~~a~~ use as ~~an~~ integral part of the American minstrel show, and now, passes his original techniques along to students ^{avid} in hundreds of workshops each years. "It's really something," marvels Percy. "How somehting so old could be so new. A lot of people have never heard bones played before. Others remember their grandfathers playing a little bones. But most people have no idea what they can do or how they are played or how much fun they really are."

Mr. Bones

Percy Danforth is the man to show them. Whatever the musical medium -- from American ragtime to Irish jigs to caassical Scarlatti --

~~Mr.-Bones-Percy-D-nforth~~

Percy Danforth and his bones are lively,

entertaining, and unique.

DEXTER MINSTRELS OF '76



Margaret Marz, Chairman

ACCOMPANIST: Ruth Arnold

BANJO: Gary Glover

DRUMS: Ron Gainsley

COSTUMES: Bea Lavalli, Arlene Crocker

MAKE-UP: Ruby Brown, Alice Schneider
Eileen Brown

USHERS: Mary Marz, Patti Marz, Dawn Darrow,
Kelly Darrow, Beth Darrow, Cherie
Utsler

TICKETS: Carl Genske, Dort Bates, Nancy Aiken

STAGE TECHNICIANS: Barry Johnson, Tom Palmer,
Larry Stalker, Mike Vencil, Jim Driver

Accompanist for Percy Danforth (Mr. Bones):
Corky Landis

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Opening Number
Bring Back Those Minstrel Days
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Carolina in the Morning Bob Jones

"Scott Joplin favorites" Percy O. Danforth
Bones Player

Me & My Shadow Ken Huff

Dianne Bob Jones & Waltz Ensemble

"Scott Joplin favorites" Percy O. Danforth

Great Day Bob Stacey

Ragtime Cowboy Joe
Darktown Strutters Ball Entire Company

Mandy Jack Ritchie &
Swanee Mandy Dancers

WALTZ ENSEMBLE: Bob Stacey-Gloria Jordan,
Ken Huff-Sharon Darrow, Jorge Henderson-
Tracey Darrow, Chuck Coy-Charlotte Coy, Mike
McKillen-Sonia McKillen, Bill Marz-Joyce Stacey

MANDY DANCERS: Linda Brown, Julie Knight,
Jo L. Winans, Betty Schnebelt, Kay Purdy,
Joann Huff

END MEN: Bob Aiken, Harry Bates, Gary Glover,
Jack Ritchie

INTERLOCUTOR: Robert Jones

CHORUS: Maggie Marz, Stell Steinaway, Max
Darrow, Rita Rendell, Sheila Marz, Lisa Marz,
Lee Schilling

SING OUT!

Volume 29/Number 3

July - Aug - Sept 1983 \$3.00

THE FOLK SONG MAGAZINE

302F1

Percy Danforth
1411 Granger Ave
Ann Arbor, MI 48104



Featuring • Paul Reisler of Trapezoid • Holly Near—Ronnie Gilbert • Muddy Waters • Teachins on Bones and Blues Harmonica • Tribute to Stan Rogers • Songs by Guthrie, Near, Reynolds plus much more.

Teach In: Rhythm Bones

by Percy Danforth

Despite the fact that the history of the bones is documented starting back some 5000 years ago, has come out of most early cultures, and is interesting to know about, we are going to skip all of that and spend a while showing you how easy it is to get started playing the bones - - - rhythm bones.

Playing the rhythm bones is pretty much like interpretive dancing. When we dance we listen to the music, feel its mood and express physically what the music suggests or helps us feel emotionally.

There comes a time after we have associated with the bones long enough that they become a part of our being, and we don't have to concentrate any longer on how to hold them, or even think about what we are going to do next with them, we simply feel the mood of the music, and what we feel comes out through the bones. In order to speak this way through the bones, they must know an extensive language. They do, and can teach it to us.

Of the thirty or so rudiments that make it possible to respond to an extremely wide variety of music, there are only three fundamental ones that you must know for a foundation:

1. How to hold the bones
2. How to do a simple tap
3. How to do a simple roll

Generally, the trickiest one of these three is the holding of the bones. Bones are not manipulated like chopsticks, they are held precisely as we will describe and everything they do musically happens because of body movement.

One bone, the one that springs over and strikes the fixed one, is placed between the ring and

middle fingers (Fig.1) and is held tightly in place by pressing on the bone's edge with the ring finger high on the bone. (Fig.2) You will observe later why it is so necessary to keep this ring finger high on this bone. Also, the bone is not touching the palm of the hand; it is free to spring back when moved out of this initial position.

The other bone, the anvil, is held between the index and the middle fingers. When the bone is loosely in place, reach up and across with your thumb as shown (Fig.3). The pad, meaty part of your palm, at the base of your thumb is now well over the moveable bone so that when you lock the anvil bone in place (by pressing on the edge of the bone with your middle finger, forcing it into this meaty pad) the two bones are parallel. (Fig.4) Keep the index finger straight out, but pressing down just as the little finger is pressing up against the ring finger. This vise grip assures not losing a

fig 1)



fig 2)



bone during a hot bluegrass number. (Fig.5)

The bones are now locked in place, parallel, bellies facing, and about 1/8 inch apart. (Fig.5) Check this stance carefully, practice it, and when you are able to maintain it you will be able to make use of all 25 or 30 rudiments the bones are capable of performing. Of course, you may discover others of your own.

fig 3)



Now we are ready for Basic number 2, the simple tap. With elbow down, arm bent and floppy relaxed (Fig.5), imagine a bit of something like putty lightly stuck to the face of the anvil bone at the lower end, and you want to flick it off. The movement will be like flicking someone with a towel, whipping the lower end of the bone through a small arc, clockwise for right handers and counter-clockwise for lefties. The moveable bone stays behind for an instant, then springs over (whiplashes) and taps the anvil. With practice this tap can be repeated rapidly. With practice and correct bones stance you will be able to play a note that's like a firecracker or like the touch of a butterfly.

The third of the basic elements, the roll, is done with the bones held precisely as for the tap. Move the hand and arm as when waving farewell to someone. This, again, you must do with your arm relaxed clear to the shoulder. Rotate the bones as when window washing, the upper

fig 4)



end of the bones rotating in a circular arc. The lower end of the bones will be the pivot point for the rotation, so it will stay in one spot.

This will feel awkward because you will be trying to make the bones do something. DON'T! Just hold the bones and move the body and stay relaxed. Remember to keep your arm bent, elbow down, and the bottom of the elbow the same distance below the bottom end of the bones as the length of the bones.

An incongruity occurs in the tightly held bones versus the utterly relaxed everything else. You'll get used to it. All of a sudden you will feel a whip-like flip in your arm, and you'll feel and hear those bones rolling.

fig 5)



It may seem like a jump ahead to proceed the way we now suggest, but it works well. The only way we can experience everything the music suggests or helps us to feel is with a pair of bones in each hand. The approach is this simple:

Hold a pair of bones in the hand that you haven't yet learned to do the roll with. Hold them in the exact playing stance of

MORE ➡

your hand that has been doing the rolls. Get a roll going with this good hand, but hold the second hand ready until your first has a smooth and comfortable roll going. Now, go with the learning hand. Almost invariably this second hand will take off. If it doesn't work the first time, try again, it will shortly.

If we take the same approach with taps, we'll be where we can start looking at the design of some rhythm patterns. Music is nice to work with, but a metronome set at about 100 works well. The right music for starting bones is hard to find; besides, you have to keep moving back to the beginning of the song. No interruptions with the metronome. Let's look at some tap patterns to start with:

1. Hands tap simultaneously.
2. A grace note (or flam pattern) is the simplest variation -- one hand taps and the other follows instantly afterwards.
3. One hand does 2 quick taps on the beat, and the other repeats on the next beat, and so on.
4. One hand taps 2 times while the other is tapping 3 times. (You might want to practice this one, tapping with your fingers on the edge of the table.)

5. The triplet pattern -- it's the foundation for 6/8 time. It goes 3-taps 3-taps 3-taps, etc., with the first tap of each triplet accented. The accents will come from opposite hands on the first tap of each triplet. Like this: L-r-l-R-l-r-L-r-l, etc. (Capitals are accents)

This variety of taps, fit into rolls of various durations will get you started. In future installments we'll work on accented rolls, 7-beat rolls, 13-beat rolls, as well as many other possibilities. It is the facility with the nuances of these and many other rudiments that differentiate bones rattlers from bones players, who know the potential of this seemingly simple percussive instrument.

You may be able to get bones at your favorite music store. You may even be able to find the answers to questions about bones playing there. If you can't, our paths may cross at many of the folk festivals. If not, and you need bones or answers, you can contact me:

Percy "Bones" Danforth
1411 Granger Ave.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

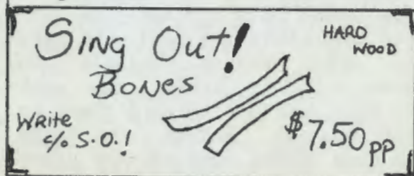
• 50!

Percy Danforth, of Ann Arbor, Michigan, has been known as "Mr. Bones" as he crisscrosses the country from folk festival to folk festival playing the bones and teaching his audiences how to play and make them.

In 1907, when Percy was seven and living in Washington D.C., he first encountered the bones as young blacks would use them as accompaniment (along with Jew's harp) for soft shoe dancing in front of the local grocery store. From that point on Percy has played. In 1973, while his

wife was doing graduate work in ethnomusicology, he was invited to demonstrate his talent for her class. That was the turning point in his bones playing 'career'.

Percy plans to continue his teach-ins in future issues of Sing Out!.



I don't hear much from Mr. Jones
of Ann Arbor.

I have been asked to give two
talks on the bones, and if you
would share any of your information,
I would appreciate it — such as
book titles, papers, etc where I could
gather some authoritative data.

also, do you know a source for
both wooden and bone "bones"?

Sue

God bless you
and keep you
in the circle
of His love.

Wilma & Sue Myers



RUSSELL B. MYERS
P.O. BOX 43
BRIGHTWOOD, VA 22715

mm mm

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12
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1977
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*Mr. & Mrs. Percy O. Danforth
1411 Granger Ave.
Ann Arbor, Mich. 48104*

MONDAY, 26 AUG, 85

DEAR PERCY -

I AM VERY HAPPY THAT I SAW YOU ON THE LATE T.V. NEWS FRIDAY EVENING (11P.M.). I WAS NOT AWARE OF THE FOLK FESTIVAL GATHERING IN SCHWENK-VILLE. HOWEVER, WHEN I SAW YOU ON T.V., I THOUGHT TO MYSELF THAT IT WOULD BE NICE TO MEET ANOTHER BONE PLAYER BECAUSE THERE ARE NOT TOO MANY OF US AROUND ANYMORE. I MADE A FEW TELEPHONE CALLS AND LUCKILY OUR PATHS CROSSED WHEN I WAS CONNECTED TO THE CRAFT'S TELEPHONE LINE AND YOU WERE THERE. THAT WAS REALLY GREAT!

SINCE YOUR DEPARTURE WAS SCHEDULED FOR EARLY MONDAY MORNING THERE WAS NO CHANCE OF OUR MEETING UNTIL NEXT YEAR. AFTER TALKING WITH YOU A LITTLE LONGER WE DISCOVERED THAT EARLY SUNDAY MORNING WAS OPEN FOR BOTH OF US. PERCY, THAT SURE WAS A WONDERFUL FIRST MEETING - THANKS IN PART TO THE RAINY DAY. I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO NEXT AUGUST TO OUR MEETING AGAIN AND ALSO PLAYING "DEM BONES"

I PROMISED MYSELF THAT I WOULD TRY TO CONTACT JIM WHITE IN SOUTH CAROLINA BECAUSE I HAVEN'T HAD CONTACT WITH HIM IN OVER 30 YEARS. WHEN I GOT HOME AFTER OUR MEETING THAT WAS THE FIRST THING I DID. SURE ENOUGH JIM IS STILL HANGING IN THERE AND STILL PLAYS THE BONES. HIS ADDRESS:

638 COLLEGE AVE. ROCK HILL, S.C. 1-803-377-3896.

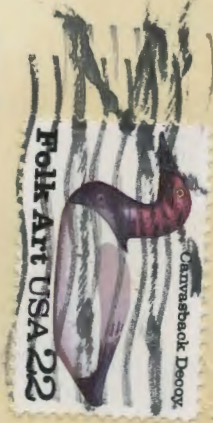
TODAY I HAVE MAILED TO YOU A SET OF EXTRA THICK RHYTHM BONES. STRAUSS + CO, MY MOLDER, MADE ABOUT TWENTY PAIRS FOR ME AND THIS IS THE ONLY SET I HAVE EVER GIVEN TO ANYONE

THANKS FOR A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE -

SINCERELY

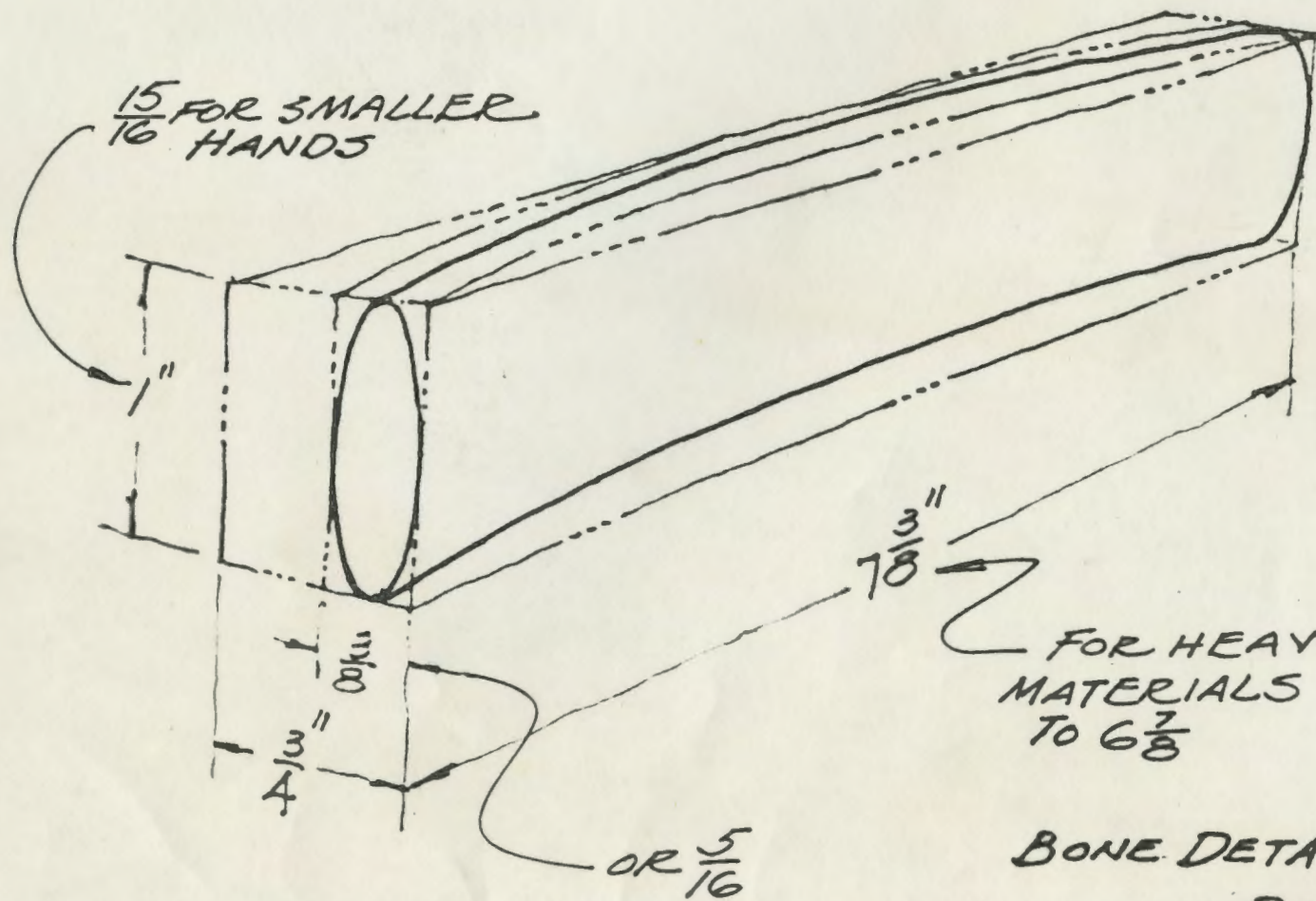
Joe Bill

MR PERCY DANFORTH
1411 GRANGER AVE
ANN ARBOR, MICH
48104



BIRL
557 DEVEREAUX ST
PHILA, PENNA, 19111

13



FOR HEAVIER MATERIALS THIS CAN GO TO $6 \frac{7}{8}$

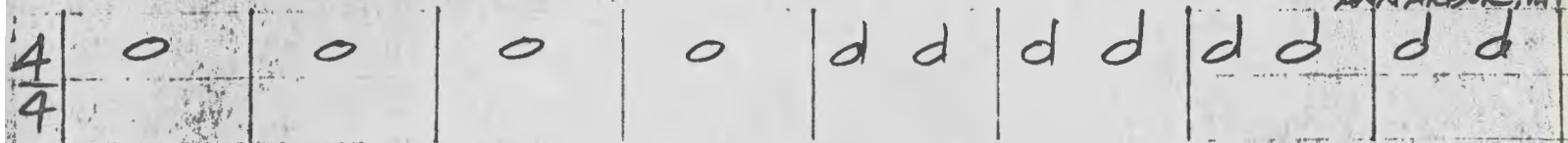
BONE DETAIL - DANFORTH

PRACTICE SHEET

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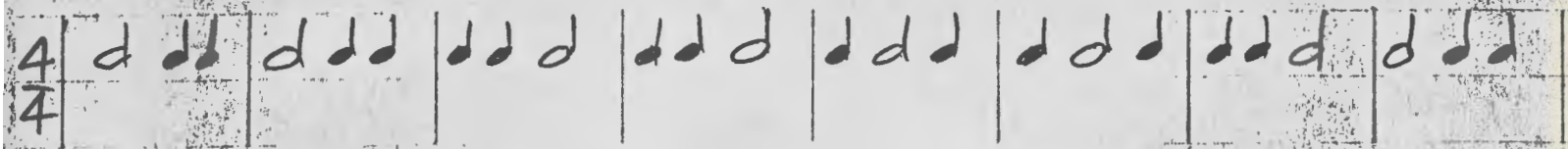
PERCY O. DANFORTH
1416 GRANGER AVENUE
ANN ARBOR, MICH.

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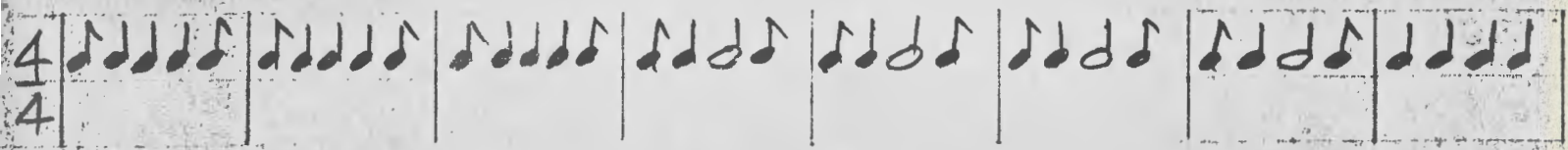
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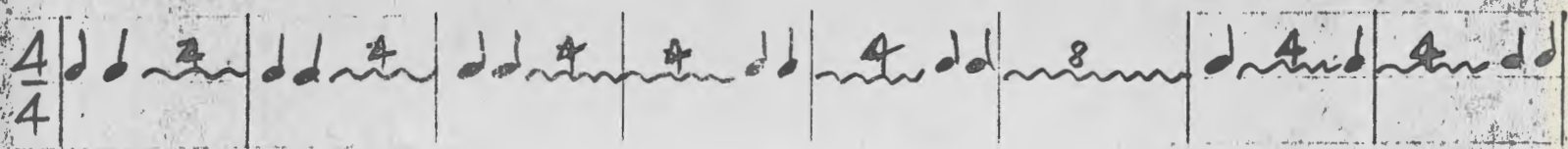
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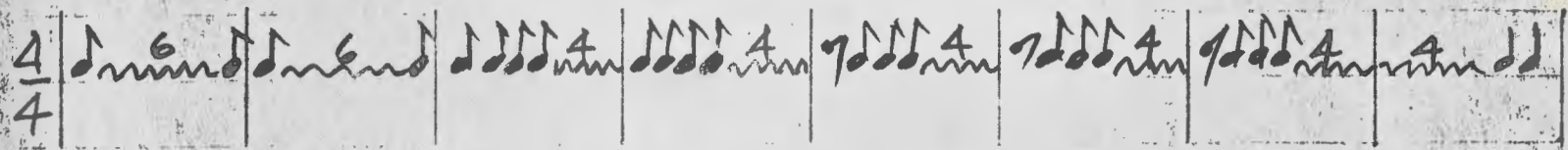
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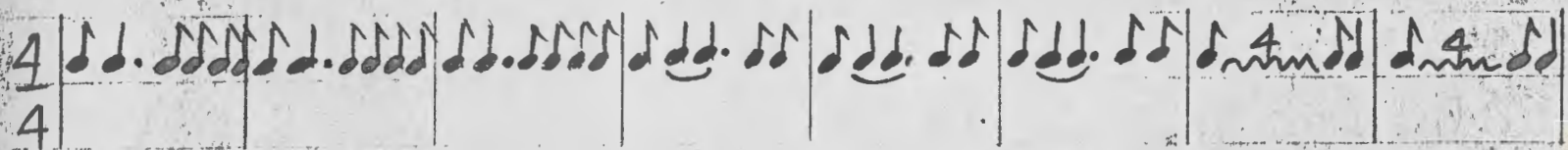
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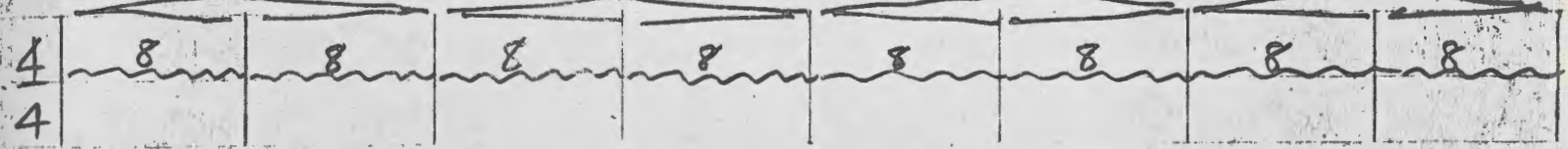
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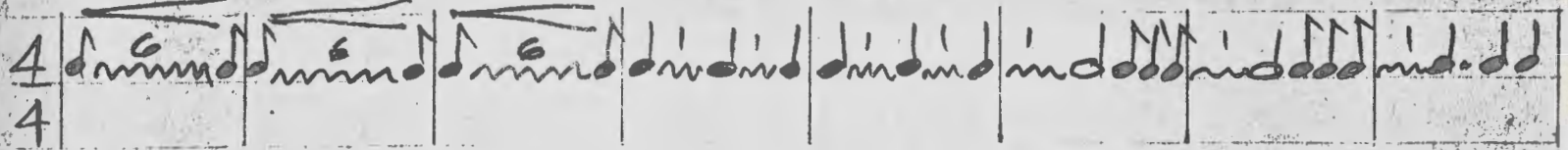
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4/4 e f g a g f e d c d e f g f e d c

Blank musical staff

3/4 ||| ||| |||
2/4 | | | | | |

single tap exercises:

RH
LH

repeat w/ L.H.

etc.

triplet exercises: the most inst. figure in bone playing -

triplet roll

{ RH.

Repeat w/ L.H.

as above

etc. (continue with rolls of various lengths)

stroke roll

repeat w/ L.H.

etc.

double tap exercises:

RH
LH

repeat alternating lines -

etc.

- Rhythm Patterns -

Reel $\downarrow = \text{C}$

Sig $\downarrow = \text{6/8}$

Rag $\downarrow = \text{C}$

MARCH $\downarrow = \text{C}$

RH
LH

Handwritten musical notation on two staves. The top staff has two lines, with notes on the upper line and rests on the lower line. The first four notes are circled. The bottom staff has two lines, with notes on the lower line and rests on the upper line. The notation is handwritten and somewhat sketchy.

RH.
LH.

Handwritten musical notation on two staves. The top staff has two lines, with notes on the upper line and rests on the lower line. The bottom staff has two lines, with notes on the lower line and rests on the upper line. The notation is handwritten and somewhat sketchy.

Dev. Single Stroke -

② C RH LH

① RH LH
(Repeat with L.H. only)

③ RH

Repeat w/ L.H.

④ RH

Repeat w/ L.H.

⑤ RH

Repeat w/ L.H.

⑥ RH

Repeat w/ L.H.

⑦ FLAM

⑧ Both hands tog

25th ANNUAL FLORIDA FOLK FESTIVAL

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at

Stephen Foster Center

White Springs, Florida

SEPTEMBER 2, 3, 4, 5, 1977



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Frank Shore, Billy Bowlegs, Josie Billie

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WORKSHOPS AND SONG SWAPS

During the Florida Folk Festival Workshops and Song Swaps will be scheduled beginning 9:30 A.M., on the Old Marble Stage. Visitors are encouraged to attend a workshop of their choice and take part.

OLD MARBLE STAGE (See Map For Location No. 6)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1977

- 9:30 A.M. — INDIAN LORE WORKSHOP Boy Scout Troop No. 4, Tampa, Ross Ferlita, Scoutmaster
10:30 A.M. — FIDDLING WORKSHOP Larry Older, Lake Hamilton
11:30 A.M. — PSALTERY WORKSHOP Robert Dixon, Miami; Betty Smith, Marietta, Ga.
12:30 P.M. — RHYTHM BONES WORKSHOP Percy Danforth, Ann Arbor, Michigan
1:30 P.M. — PSALTERY & DULCIMER WORKSHOP Barbara Muller, Lake Mary; Betty Smith, Marietta, Ga.
2:30 P.M. — LIAR'S WORKSHOP Gamble Rogers, St. Augustine
3:30 P.M. — GUITAR FOR BEGINNERS WITH SONG Lee Kelly, Palatka; Graham & Betty Kash, Cookeville, Tenn.

SHADY MUSEUM LAWN (See Map For Location No. 11)

- 3:30 P.M. — STORYTELLING WORKSHOP Peggy Smith, Jacksonville

OLD MARBLE STAGE (No. 6 on enclosed Map)

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 1977

- 9:30 A.M. — INDIAN LORE WORKSHOP Boy Scout Troop No. 4, Tampa, Ross Ferlita, Scoutmaster
(Location No. 11)
10:30 A.M. — STORYTELLING WORKSHOP (Museum Shady Lawn) Peggy Smith, Jacksonville
11:30 A.M. — GAMBLE ROGERS WORKSHOP - TALES & SONGS Gamble Rogers, St. Augustine
12:30 P.M. — RHYTHM BONES WORKSHOP Percy Danforth, Ann Arbor, Michigan
1:30 P.M. — PSALTERY WORKSHOP Robert Dixon, Miami; Barbara Muller, Lake Mary
2:30 P.M. — GUITAR FOR BEGINNERS WORKSHOP WITH SONG Lee Kelly, Palatka
3:30 P.M. — BAVARIAN ZITHER Herbert Dahm, Tampa
4:30 P.M. — SONG SWAP Graham & Betty Kash, Cookeville, Tenn.

OLD MARBLE STAGE (No. 6 on enclosed Map)

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1977

- 9:30 A.M. — INDIAN LORE WORKSHOP Boy Scout Troop No. 4, Tampa, Ross Ferlita, Scoutmaster
10:30 A.M. — GOSPEL WORKSHOP Rev. Robert Williams, Tallahassee; Rev. Richard Williams, Newberry
11:30 A.M. — GUITAR FOR BEGINNERS WITH SONG Lee Kelly, Palatka
12:30 P.M. — RYHTHM BONES WORKSHOP Percy Danforth, Ann Arbor, Michigan

.....

ADMINISTRATION AUDITORIUM (See No. 7 on Map for Location)

10:30 A.M.

"EDIBLE WILD PLANTS OF FLORIDA" Michael Lee Frame, Jacksonville
Special slide presentation entitled "Edible Wild Plants of Florida" will be shown Saturday, Sunday and Monday, September 3, 4, 5, 1977, in the Administration Auditorium beginning 10:30 A.M. by Michael Lee Frame, Jacksonville, author of the book by the same name. Michael Frame has lectured to over 17,000 people in the past four years and appeared on network television and radio. This is his first FFF.

UNIVERSITY THEATRE PROGRAM

presents



BREAD and ROSES

a new play
by Donald Hall

FEBRUARY 5, 6, 7, 8, 1975 8:00 P.M.

THE POWER CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS



Jacobson's



CAST

GUEST ARTIST:
WALTER RHODES

(In alphabetical order)

James Curt Bergwall

Peter D. Brown

Bethany K. Carpenter

Kathleen Conlin

Jeffrey Guyton

Benita Hofstetter

John Mason Hooker

Evan Jefferies

Beverly Lloyd

Jennifer A. McLogan

Cathleen Nesbitt

Maria Ricossa Olds

David Paymer

Michael L. Pinkney

Steve Reynolds

Elizabeth Starrs

Jack Van Natter

Susan Wall

Ken Ward

MUSICIANS

Piano

William Bolcom

Drums

Jack Livingstone

Bones

Percy Danforth

Guitar and Piano

Michael Roth

The Smithsonian Institution
and
The National Park Service

*Recognize the Significant
Cultural Contribution of*

Percy Danforth

As a Participant in the

**Festival of
American Folklife**

*held on the National Mall,
Washington, D. C.*

on the occasion of the

Bicentennial

of the

United States of America



S. Dillon Ripley

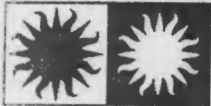
S. Dillon Ripley
Secretary, Smithsonian Institution

Gary Everhardt

Gary Everhardt
Director, National Park Service

BEVERLY J. ROBINSON
PARTICIPANT COORDINATOR
REGIONAL AMERICA

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20560



DIVISION OF PERFORMING ARTS
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20560
(202) 381-4231

Your invitation is for the
week of July 7 - July 11.

Dear Friend:

The Smithsonian Institution and the National Park Service are pleased to invite you to participate in the Tenth Annual Festival of American Folklife—a Bicentennial celebration—to be held on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

Throughout the year experienced folklorists have been gathering information about the locales, peoples, customs and life styles of the United States. Through careful research we have identified many of those individuals who demonstrate the rich cultural traditions of your region. After meeting hundreds of musicians, cooks and skilled craftsmen, we selected approximately one hundred people who we feel represent the multi-traditional heritage of your region. The decisions were difficult to make, but we will have succeeded if individuals like you come to Washington and share your unique experience with your countrymen from around the nation and the world.

We want very much to help you personally in any way we can to arrange your participation. Please fill in the enclosed forms and return them to us in the enclosed envelope, so that we can begin to make arrangements for your comfort and enjoyment while you are in Washington. If there is anything you would like to discuss, please call our Participant Coordinator, Beverly Robinson, person-to-person collect at (202) 381-4231.

James Morris, Director of the Smithsonian Division of Performing Arts, and Ralph Rinzler, Festival Director, join us in extending this invitation in the hope that we may have the pleasure of working with you. The Smithsonian Institution is proud to present the Festival and we will do everything possible to make your participation an enjoyable and memorable experience for you.

Sincerely,

Alan M. Lester
Program Coordinator
Regional America

Barbara LaPan Rahm
Folklorist
Regional America

Beverly J. Robinson
Participant Coordinator
Regional America

Signature

1976 festival of american folklife

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION • NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**PROGRAM
SUPPLEMENT
Schedule and
Participant
Information**

July 1-5

July 7-11



Sponsored by
**American Airlines
General Foods**

For detailed information, consult call-boards in each performance area.
c., concert; d., discussion; w., workshop

WORKING AMERICANS	REGIONAL AMERICA	NATIVE AMERICANS	FESTIVAL STAGE	
<p>The Working Americans program presents work traditions, particularly the skills and stories found in any occupation. You are invited to join in the story-telling, song swaps, and selected skill demonstrations, and to share your own occupational folklore with others.</p> <p>Participants in the "Workers Who Build" theme celebrate the skills and folklore of people in the building and construction trades. The following groups will be demonstrating their skills continuously throughout the day:</p> <p>Bricklayers and Allied Crafts Carpenters and Joiners Electrical Workers Iron Workers Laborers Operating Engineers Plasterers and Cement Masons Plumbers and Pipe Fitters Sheet Metal Workers</p> <p>The Narrative Center will feature special music and story-telling sessions that will highlight on-the-job experiences:</p> <p>Song Swap 11:00 a.m., 2:30 p.m., 4:30 p.m. Workers' Story Swap: "The Way I See It" 1:00 p.m. Union Organizers' Lore 3:00 p.m.</p>	<p>c. Clog Dancing * c. Mines, Miners, and Music ** w. Banjo Styles ***</p> <p>w. Dance Styles *</p> <p>w. Banjo & Bones ***</p> <p>Roadside Theater—Folktales **</p> <p>c. Sacred Music * w. Old-Time Fiddling ***</p> <p>c. Carper Family Gospel Singing ** c. Old Time String Band * w. Family Music ***</p> <p>c. Unaccompanied Ballad Singing * c. Perry County Music Makers ** w. Guitar Styles ***</p> <p>Fiddlers' Jamboree * c. Sacred Harp Sing ** w. Song Swap ***</p>	<p>Despite differences in origin, language, and social organization, the tribes of the Southern Plains were traditionally united in a way of life in which the buffalo and horse played essential roles. The Southern Plains tribes are the Comanche, Kiowa, Kiowa Apache, Omaha, Pawnee, Ponca, and Southern Cheyenne.</p> <p>Southern Plains Indians traditionally made ingenious use of buffalo hide; most household utensils and clothing were crafted from hide. Women spent much time making and decorating hide with quill work, and later, with glass beads from traders. Recently, quill work has enjoyed a revival.</p> <p>Both bead and quill work will be demonstrated by Native craftspeople, as well as bow and arrow making, drum making, flute making, and hide tanning. The Gourd Dance, Round Dance, and Comanche Straight Dance will be performed and explained. In the Learning Center and We Speak area, visitors can learn about the ways that Southern Plains tribes celebrate their Indian heritage.</p>	<p>w. Family Music Traditions</p> <p>c. String Bands</p> <p>c. Ballads in the British Isles & the United States</p> <p>w. World Dance Traditions</p> <p>5:00-6:00 w. Vocal Groups</p> <p>EVENING CONCERT 6:00-8:00 Working Americans—Workers Who Build</p>	<p>11:00</p> <p>11:30</p> <p>12:00</p> <p>12:30</p> <p>1:00</p> <p>1:30</p> <p>2:00</p> <p>2:30</p> <p>3:00</p> <p>3:30</p> <p>4:00</p> <p>4:30</p>
<p>Evening Concert on Festival Stage</p>	<p>* stage ** assembly hall *** shady grove</p>			<p>Evening</p>

For detailed information, consult call-boards in each performance area.
c., concert; d., discussion; w., workshop

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	<p>c. Sacred Music *</p> <p>w. Old-Time Fiddling ***</p>		<p>c. Childrens' Games & Songs</p>	1:00
				1:30
	<p>c. Carper Family Gospel Singing **</p> <p>c. Old Time String Band *</p> <p>w. Family Music ***</p>		<p>c. Fiddlers' Convention</p>	2:00
				2:30
	<p>c. Unaccompanied Ballad Singing *</p> <p>c. Perry County Music Makers **</p> <p>w. Guitar Styles ***</p>		<p>w. Chordophones (Stringed Instruments)</p>	3:00
				3:30
<p>Fiddlers' Jamboree *</p> <p>c. Sacred Harp Sing **</p> <p>w. Song Swap ***</p>		4:00		
		4:30		
	<p>Evening Concert on Festival Stage</p> <p>* stage ** assembly hall *** shady grove</p>		<p>5:00-6:00 c. Ballads in the British Isles and the United States</p> <p>EVENING CONCERT 6:00-8:00 Regional America: Upland South</p>	Evening

For detailed information, consult call-boards in each performance area.
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	<p>w. Banjo & Bones ***</p>		<p>w. Processional Music</p>	12:00
	<p>Roadside Theater—Folktales **</p>			12:30
	<p>c. Sacred Music * w. Old-Time Fiddling ***</p>		<p>c. String Bands</p>	1:00
				1:30
	<p>c. Carper Family Gospel Singing ** c. Old Time String Band * w. Family Music ***</p>		<p>c. Occupational Music & Songs</p>	2:00
				2:30
	<p>c. Unaccompanied Ballad Singing * c. Perry County Music Makers ** w. Guitar Styles ***</p>		<p>w. World Dance Traditions</p>	3:00
	<p>Fiddlers' Jamboree * c. Sacred Harp Sing ** w. Song Swap ***</p>			3:30
		4:00		
		4:30		
	<p>5:00-8:00 c. Family Music Traditions</p> <p>EVENING CONCERT 8:00-8:00 African Diaspora: Haiti, United States</p>	Evening		
<p>* stage ** assembly hall *** shady grove</p>				

For detailed information, consult call-boards in each performance area.
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	<p>* stage ** assembly hall *** shady grove</p>		<p>EVENING CONCERT Old Ways in the New World: English, Scottish, Irish, and Anglo-American 5:00-6:30 Old Ways in the New World: Portuguese and Portuguese American 6:30-8:00</p>	<p>Evening</p>

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	<p>Fiddlers' Jamboree *</p> <p>c. Sacred Harp Sing **</p> <p>w. Song Swap ***</p>			2:30
			<p>w. Processional Music</p>	3:00
			<p>FESTIVAL SAMPLER CONCERT Continues until 6:00</p>	3:30
		4:00		
	<p>* stage ** assembly hall *** shady grove</p>			Evening

SUNDAY BREAKFAST CLUB

PHILADELPHIA

J. A. LIVINGSTON, Chairman of Meetings

CHARLES W. LOCKYER, JR., Secretary
The Fidelity Bank
Broad & Walnut Streets
Philadelphia, Pa. 19109
Phone: 985-7011

October 14, 1977

Dr. William Albright
608 Sunset
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103

Dear Bill:

I'm delighted that Percy Danforth and you will put on a program before the Sunday Breakfast Club on Wednesday evening, December 7, entitled "A Little Light on American Music: Rags, Bones, and a Hank of Jazz."

The meeting will take place at the Union League, 140 S. Broad Street, and we have arranged to have rooms for Percy and you there.

The roster of the Sunday Breakfast Club comprises bankers, businessmen, lawyers, college presidents, deans, physicians, etc. It's a highly sophisticated, knowledgeable group and on this evening wives will be invited.

We have a set schedule: Cocktails at 5:30 P.M., dinner at 6, program starting at 7, and adjournment at 8:30. Perhaps this might be stretched because this program is a departure.

Normally, we have a speaker who takes from 25 to 40 minutes to present ideas and then answer questions. However, I suspect that you and Percy will want more time, probably 45 minutes to an hour before opening the meeting to questions.

I'd like very much to have biographies of both you and Percy.

The fee is \$1,000 and we will provide \$250 towards your expenses.

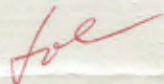
*Percy gets 250
+ 125 towards expenses
~~125~~*

Page 2: Dr. William Albright

I'm enclosing a brief history of the club.

As I told you over the phone, Rosalie and I will be in Ann Arbor for the Ohio State game. Would there be any chance of the six of us getting together on the evening of Friday, November 18 or Saturday, November 19?

Sincerely,



J. A. Livingston
c/o Philadelphia Inquirer
Philadelphia, Pa. 19101

P.S. If you find you want to change the title, there's still time.



Lincoln Center

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts / March 1983

Alice Tully Hall

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts

Sunday Afternoon, March 6, 1983 at 3:00

by arrangement with HAROLD SHAW

Bolcom and Morris

JOAN MORRIS

Mezzo-Soprano

WILLIAM BOLCOM

Pianist

With Guest Artist

PERCY DANFORTH

Bones

In "Standards & Rarities"

Performing the Works of:

IRVING BERLIN

EUBIE BLAKE

JAMES BLAND

WILLIAM BOLCOM

JOE HOWARD & IDA EMERSON

CHARLES IVES

JEROME KERN

STEPHEN SONDHEIM

HARRY WARREN

KURT WEILL

and others

Miss Morris and Mr. Bolcom will announce the program from the stage.

There will be one intermission.

Baldwin Piano

Nonesuch, Columbia and RCA Records

Exclusive Management:

SHAW CONCERTS, INC.

1995 Broadway

New York, NY 10023

(212) 595-1909

Personal Representative:

LEE WALTER

1995 Broadway

New York, NY 10023

(212) 873-9546

In consideration of the performing artists and members of the audience, those who must leave before the end of the performance are asked to do so between numbers, not during the performance.

The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are not allowed in this building.

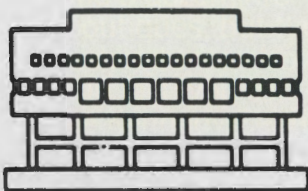
Boston, Miami, the Palm Beach Festival, the Wolf Trap Center in Washington, D.C. and England's Bath Festival. Bolcom and Morris have appeared with the Boston Pops as part of their bicentennial series for television, have appeared on two consecutive evenings of "The Dick Cavett Show" and in February taped an "hour-long special" for station WXXI-TV in Rochester, New York for the National PBS Network.

William Bolcom and Joan Morris are known internationally via their recordings, beginning with the best-selling Nonesuch release *After The Ball: A Treasury of Turn-of-the-Century Popular Songs*, for which Miss Morris received a Grammy nomination for the best vocal soloist performance on a classical album. The other Nonesuch releases are *Vaudeville: Songs of the Great Ladies of the Musical Stage*, *Other Songs by Leiber & Stoller and Songs by Ira and George Gershwin*. They have also recorded *Wild About Eubie*, the songs of Eubie Blake, on Columbia Records and on RCA, *These Charming People* with Max Morath, *The Girl on the Magazine Cover*, songs of Irving Berlin and *The Rodgers and Hart Album*. Mr. Bolcom's solo albums include *The Piano Music of George Gershwin*, a Nonesuch best-seller.



Percy Danforth will be eighty-three years old on March 11, and doesn't rattle or shake his bones. He plays them! Educated in chemical engineering, architecture and art education, Percy Danforth has been playing the bones since 1908. During a professional

life that has included his own architectural firm, the designs for parts for B-24 bombers during World War II, and mechanical engineering for numerous corporations in Ann Arbor, he has continued to play the bones internationally. Percy Danforth never travels anywhere without a full compliment of bones, which were a part of the early minstrel shows in this country. Some of these bones are handsome specimens made from animal rib bones like those which Zulu tribesmen used centuries ago in deep Africa. The marrow in real bones makes the hollow sound. But most of Danforth's bones are made of wood, such as hickory, walnut, white pine and balsa. "Doing the bones made music that entranced the audience" is how one critic described Percy Danforth's hobby that turned into an art form. The art of the bones as perfected by Percy Danforth has delighted audiences in places as varied as the Royal Festival Hall in London to Tony Pacos in Toledo, with virtually every international festival in between. He has appeared on national television and radio as the pre-eminent exponent of the bones.



Alice Tully Hall

Staff

Robert L. Turner, *General Manager*
 Delmar D. Hendricks, *Booking Manager*
 Edmund T. DeBoges, Jack L. Kirkman,
Associate Managers
 Ira Simmonds, *House Manager*
 Willard Bucklin, *Box Office Treasurer*
 Paula Gibbs, *Head Usher*

Steinway is the official piano of Alice Tully Hall.
 The 4,192 pipe organ in Alice Tully Hall was built by
 Th. Kuhn, Ag. of Männedorf, Switzerland.

Directory of Facilities and Services

Booking Information. All persons and organizations interested in using Alice Tully Hall auditorium or public areas should contact the Booking Manager at 580-8700.
Box Office Plaza level. Southeast corner. Telephone EN 2-1911.

Centercharge. Tickets for performances in Avery Fisher Hall and Alice Tully Hall may be purchased by phone. Major credit cards accepted. 874-6770.

Coat Lockers Lobby level, East and West.

Green Room Take stairs at bottom of East stairwell.

House Doctor Contact nearest usher.

Lincoln Center Gift Shop Telephone 799-2442.

Lost and Found Telephone 874-0515.

Public telephones Box office lobby; bottom of West stairwell; Ladies' & Men's Rooms, East stairwell; Ladies' Room, West stairwell.

Rest Rooms Loge East side; Orchestra East & West stairwell.

Tour Guide Service 877-1800.

Wheelchair accommodations Call for information: 580-8700.

The management is not responsible for personal apparel or other property of patrons unless these items are checked. Patrons are advised to take wraps with them whenever they leave their seats.

Doctors who expect to be called during performances may give their seat locations to an usher, who will then advise the Manager's office.

The photographing or sound recording of any performance or the possession of any device for such photographing or sound recording inside this theater, without the written permission of the management, is prohibited by law. Offenders may be ejected and liable for damages and other lawful remedies.

FIRE NOTICE. The exits indicated by a red light and the sign nearest to the seat you occupy are the shortest routes to the street. In the event of fire or other emergency, please do not run—walk to that exit.

PERCY DANFORTH



Percy Danforth has done for the spare-rib what Segovia did for the guitar. A master player of the bones, Percy — who turned 85 this year — learned to play as a youngster in Washington, where his black neighbours used to "sand-dance" (soft-shoe) on the sidewalk under the gas street lamps to the fascinating rhythms of the bones. Now, after more than 70 years and careers as an architect, industrialist and educator, Percy can still "do the bones" like nobody else, and he's eager to teach anyone who wants to learn how to play. Look for him in the Folk Play area.

BLIND JOHN DAVIS



Mariposa welcomes a living blues legend! Blues singer and pianist John Davis grew up in the 1920s in Chicago, where his father owned a club. The young John, blinded as a child, was thus able to hear all the leading blues pianists of the day and to learn the characteristics of each of their styles. John's own recording career began in 1938, and over the next 15 years he worked with just about every significant blues artist in Chicago. He plays a broad range of styles with great verve and conviction, and there's no one to match him for a deep, rolling piano blues.

CURTIS DRIEDGER AND THE CEE DEES



What's a Queen Street dance band doing at a folk festival? To call the Cee Dees a rock band is to miss the fact that their roots lie hidden under all kinds of musical terrain, including many past Mariposa Festivals. Since it was formed in 1979 the group has become a thriving part of Toronto's street/art culture. 26 musicians can lay claim to having been in the Cee Dees at one time or another, but right now the Cee Dees are Curtis Driedger (founder, writer, singer, guitarist), Merrie-Ellen Wilcox (bass guitar) and Nick Kent (drums). Their original music features incisive, often humorous lyrics set to a stimulating beat, drawing on everything from reggae to rock-a-billy, hick to heavy metal.

ART ELLEFSON AND THE HURON BROTHERS



This upbeat jazz trio is a welcome addition to the Festival lineup. Born in Saskatchewan and now living in Gravenhurst, Art Ellefson is a "post-bop" tenor sax player who has performed and recorded with Johnny Dankworth, Maynard Ferguson, Phil Nimmons and the Beatles! He's also worked as a member of the BBC Radio Orchestra and numerous symphonies. His style and tone invite comparisons with Stan Getz and Zoot Sims. Art is accompanied by the Huron brothers: Peter on bass and Joe on guitar.

THE FIDDLE PUPPETS with STEVE HICKMAN



What has eight legs and clogs? The bug we found in the drain at the Mariposa office, yes, but it also describes the phenomenal Fiddle Puppets. Not only are they fast and furious southern cloggers, but they teach and call dances from a wide range of traditions, from waltz to jive. Eileen and Eddy Carson, Amy Sarlie, and Rodney Sutton hail from Maryland and win flat-footing converts wherever they go. They will be accompanied at Mariposa by Steve Hickman, a remarkable fiddler who will be playing for performances, dances and teaching sessions. Steve is a mainstay of the dance scene in the northeastern U.S., and plays for hoofers of many different traditions and styles. Look for the Fiddle Puppets in our dance area, at workshops, and even at the gospel sing.

CATHY FINK



Cathy Fink is a champion banjo player and concert performer of folk songs, country songs, swing tunes, Appalachian mountain songs, old-time fiddle tunes and yodelling songs (these make for great sing-alongs!). From 1974 to 1979 Cathy performed with the late Duck Donald, specializing in old-time duet singing, and in 1980 became the first woman to win the prestigious West Virginia State banjo contest. Not bad for someone who never even knew bluegrass existed until she was 20! Cathy lives near Washington, D.C., where she is actively involved in art education programs at the Smithsonian Institution, performing in concert and demonstrating the museum's collection of folk and popular instruments.

FRIENDS OF FIDDLERS GREEN



The Friends of Fiddlers Green are the resident singers of Toronto's Fiddlers Green Folk Club. Joining us for Mariposa will be Doug Creighton, Tam Kearney, Grit Laskin, David Parry, Lawrence Stevenson and Jim Strickland. The Friends play an amazing array of instruments, including fiddle, guitar, mandolin, banjo, concertina, melodeon, Northumbrian smallpipes, drums, whistles, jew's-harp, harmonica and kazoo. Their repertoire ranges from songs old and new and recitations from the British Isles to mummers' plays, interspersed with a seemingly endless series of bad jokes. Everything they do is alive with joie-de-vivre and a wonderful (slightly twisted) sense of humour. Come and see for yourself!

GEORGIA SEA ISLAND SINGERS



Frankie Sullivan Quimby and her husband Doug offer a unique glimpse into the rich Afro-American heritage of the Georgia Sea Islands, a group of island communities off the east coast of the United States. The songs, games, dances, gospel music and stories they perform with such warmth and joy date back to the days of black slavery before the American Civil War, and have been handed down through the generations for over two centuries. Audience participation is the keystone of a Sea Islanders performance: each song has a chorus or clapping response, and often audience members are invited up on stage to learn a traditional dance or game. When the Sea Islanders are around, everyone gets involved!

GOAT'S HEAD MORRIS



If you hear the jingling of bells wafting toward you at the festival, chances are it signals the approach of the Goat's Head Morris Dancers. This London, Ontario group performs the traditional dances of the Cotswold and Northwest regions of England. In addition to Morris dancing they perform other traditional styles including garland dances and clog steps. They will be dancing around the site over the weekend, and will be teaching their steps to young and adult festival-goers in the Dance and Folk Play areas.

THE GREENWOOD STEPPERS



From the waltz clog to the French reel, the Greenwood Steppers (Julie, 20; Paul, 18; and Jody, 14) have been stepdancing almost since they could walk. In 1983 they won the Canadian open group stepdancing championship in Dundalk, and appeared at Mariposa for the first time last year. The Greenwoods will be teaching as well as performing, so here's your chance to learn a few steps.

MARIE-LYNN HAMMOND



One of Canada's most talented singer-songwriters, co-founder and lead vocalist of Stringband, Marie-Lynn Hammond also performs (in English and French) on her own and has two solo albums to her credit. She is also a writer: her first play, *De beaux*

SOME RUDIMENTS OF RHYTHM BONES PLAYING

How to hold the bones
The tap
The roll
The roll with both hands
The roll accented
The tap with both hands
The flam
The alternate two tap
The two-hand triplet
Two taps left against three taps right
Two taps left against three rolls right
Two rolls left against three rolls right
Broken rolls right
The simple triplet
Triplet patterns
The seven-beat roll
The thirteen-beat roll
The low-pitch/high pitch shift
Tuning for ensemble
Tuning for sound quality
To play softly
To crescendo
Continuo with big beat
Continuo with pattern variety
The over-lap four tap
The delayed four tap
Basic approach to 2/4 and 4/4 time
Basic approach to 3/4 and 6/8 time
Effect of various bones materials on mood

Leroy Danforth
1411 Granger Avenue
Ann Arbor, Mich. 48104 (313-662-3360)

Bones have several possible functions:

Color in Background

Set down rhythm track

Bones of "Budder Bones" (performance)

Samples of Bones playing

Chieftains ✓

Louis B.

When you wore a tulip ✓

Blues

Indian Love call

Sonny ✓

George Gilmore ✓

Generally an
interest in being

loud - slow

Bone

strong

Balsa

white pine

maple

Example of Bones in ragtime. (Mississippi Rag)

With ragtime have been able to look at the
music for determining what to do with
Bones!

Texture

Sound color

etc.

I have known that whoever played the number
it would just like the music.

Jim's observation re. country tops familiar with bones imitating rhythms on ^{blocks} drum rim

With jazz, as you know by now, there is
the matter of improvisation.

When I knew Jim would be with us
tonight, told him it would help me

stevens Reel of Music in the Glen
growing old man of cackling old woman
Waste to the Wedding of Lark in the morning

Introduction:

Several asked for Bones session

1- Story of operation of Bones

2- Bones as part of Jazz styles

Have had: drums, Bands, pianos, etc.

Will show what bones do.

Jim of Black Bottom Stomp. Will take you to this

But thru 5000 years

Africa to Ireland

Reference 1165 Book

Minstrels of troubadours

Shake spears

Some samples of How bones can fit into that music
stevens reel of Music in the Glen
growing old man of cackling old woman
Waste to the Wedding of Lark in the morning

This kind of music must have influenced our
early American & Canadian music.

Country music & Minstrel show music.

Briefly on Minstrel show. Pars Pictures

Minstrel show start with 4 in New York 1842

Further history to 1898

How I learned the Bones.

if I could look at the music if he has copies.
Jim said he thought that wouldn't be
helpful because he doesn't play it the same
way twice.

So we have three samples of bones with jazzy
style music.

Blues
Spanish
straight jazz

Jungle stomp
The crane
Big foot ham

Chieftains

Louis B

when you were a tulip

Blues

Indian Love Call

Sonny

George Gilmore

Harlem Rag

Solace

Magnetic Rag

Rhythm Bones How to get started playing them

Bones are used in several kinds of music situations. However, these instructions will apply basically to what we can call "performance bones". This style was used by Mr. Bones, End Man in the eminently popular minstrel show of an era spanning at least seventy years starting about 1840. It is apparent from old prints of Mr. Bones performances that he felt rhythm patterns with all of himself, and that he danced, and that bones were a further means for outward expression of what the music was helping him to feel. This we call performance bones.

In order to be able to do anything with the bones we must know at the start that they are not operated like chopsticks, that we do not manipulate them, but simply hold them a certain way and move the hand and arm certain ways letting the bones do what they do under these circumstances. So first we will learn how to hold the bones; second, we will do the simple, single tap; third, we will do the rattle. With these two rhythm elements, tap and rattle, we can build very satisfying patterns, especially after we have gotten the feel for accenting, hesitating, and working rattles into smooth rolls. Then too, a pair of bones in each hand greatly increases the possibilities.

Only one of the bones moves. This is the one shown in Plate I. This bone is set between the middle finger and the one - lets call it the ring finger - next to the little finger. The bone sticks out in back as you see in Plate II. The ring finger presses on the side of the bone anchoring it to the meaty cushion between the two fingers at their base. The pressure of the ring finger on the bone has to be moved back as far as possible to keep the bone from touching the palm of the hand. You can best see this clearance in Plate III. Although this bone is tightly anchored in the finger location the free end can be moved, but springs back to the original position when released.

The other bone, shown in Plate II, is the stationary one and simply provides an anvil for the moveable bone to strike against. It is held firmly between the



PLATE I

PLATE II

middle and index fingers, with the middle pressing on the side of the bone jamming it into the fleshy part of the palm at the base of the thumb. Reach well over the index finger with the thumb to move this fleshy area toward the moveable bone. Both the index finger and the thumb help anchor this bone in good operating position with the back end extending beyond the moveable one a bit as shown in Plates III and IV.

The bones in the plates are shown farther apart than is best for playing. This was done for illustrative purposes; the clearance works well at about $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch.

We are now ready for the first tap. Look at Plate III and notice that the elbow is down, the hand is up, and the arm is bent so that the point where the bones can make contact is just half way vertically between the tip of the elbow and the point where the moveable bone is

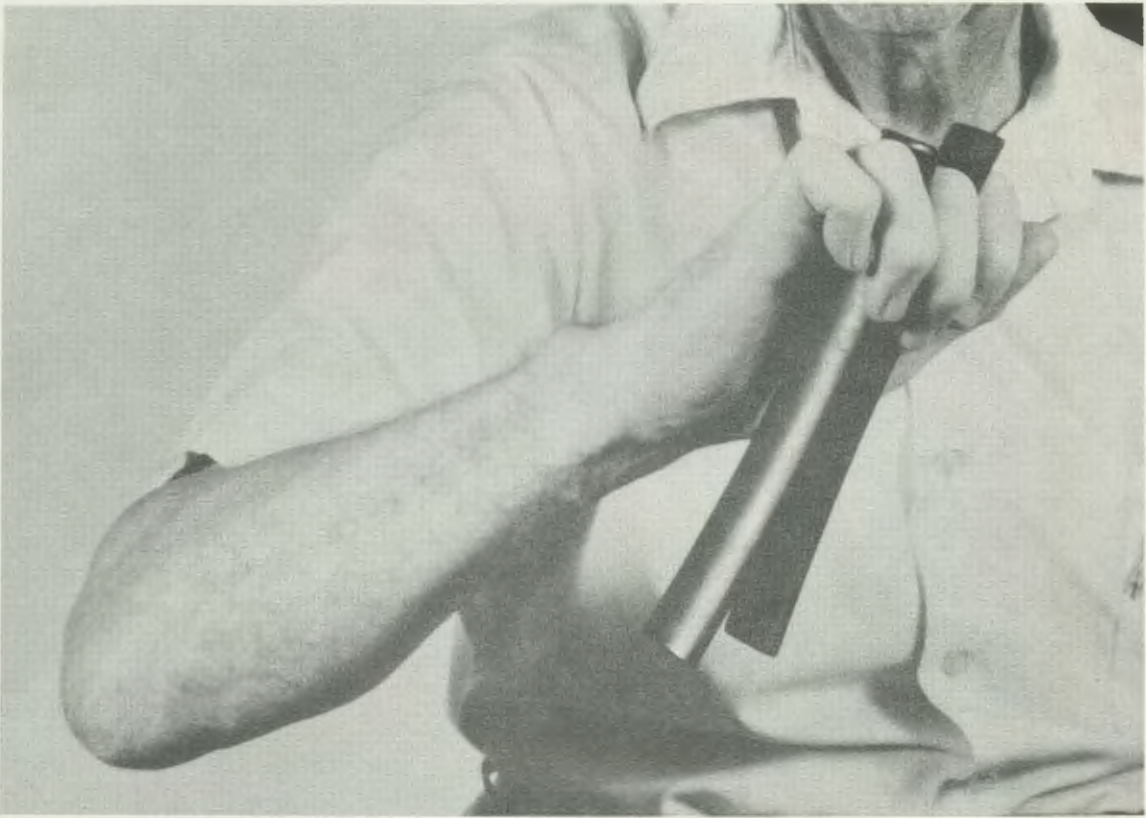


PLATE III



PLATE IV

③

anchored between the middle and the ring fingers. When we have assumed this Plate III position, relax the arm and wrist, and snap over to the position of Plate IV. The whole motion rotates around a point just above the lower ends of the bones, so that these ends seem to sit fixed in this center-of-rotation position while the hand rotates over, and the elbow rotates under to the positions shown in Plate IV. A snappy stop at Plate IV position will produce a tap.

A relaxed, snappy continuation of swings from position III to IV to III to IV, etc. gives us the rattle.

Notice that the location of the end of the moveable bone remains the same relative to the third button down on the shirt although the hand and elbow have rotated as indicated in Plates III and IV.

Experiment with the tap and rattle for making rhythmic patterns. If there is enough interest in the many ramifications of bone playing we may well make available further help. Some of these possibilities are: fitting bones pattern texture to changes in the music texture; manipulation for crescendos and off-beat accents; manipulation for changes in pitch and color of sound; quality of sound from various materials; design of simultaneous but different rhythms hand to hand.

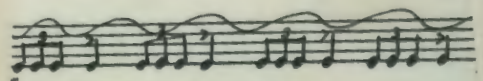
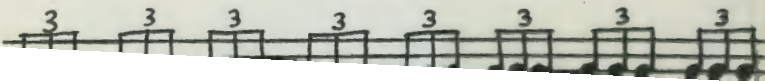
MR.

Bones



Percy Danforth

PERCY DANFORTH



SEB Enterprises



Sue E. Barber

(313) 881-1308 Writer, Producer,
Public Relations Specialist, Announcer

2 September 1981

Hi, Percy.

Here's the layout as proposed by one of my colleagues. I think it will be very effective and dramatic. I have also enclosed revised copy. The topic headings on the copy correspond to the headings in the layout. My art director looked at the photos, including the one you had wanted to use on the cover, and concluded that the one he used is best. The one in color will not convert well to black and white; it would get all mushy and indistinct. So, he chose the one you see. Take a look at the piece and give me a call. We can go ahead with printing when you are ready. I'll do some nosing around and see about getting you some estimates on printing costs and try to get a good deal via some of my contacts.

I've also enclosed Mike's invoice for the layout. I've made a xerox of the layout, but this is the original, so please, guard it carefully.

I'll talk to you soon. Let me know what you think.

All is well here. Busy with K mart and Christmas and working on a big promotion for next spring, too.

How are you? Besides busy.

XO,

Sue

(cover)

Mr. Bones

Percy Danforth

Bones are a percussion instrument, an ^{idiophone,} ~~idiophone,~~ to be academically precise. They make music, with the assistance of a skilled performer, of course. They are portable, inexpensive to buy or make, and vastly entertaining to hear and watch ^{& play.} They are not a skeleton in the closet, although said skeleton ~~might conceivably have contributed~~ some of his ribs to the making of the instrument in its original form.

This ancient instrument was once made of just what the name implies -- bones -- scraped and dried in the sun. Contemporary bones are most often made of wood. They consist of slightly curved pieces of pine, balsa, birch, or other materials, cut to about 7 inches long and 5/16 inch thick. When struck together, these bones produce a musical click. This simple, single click is ^{the basis for all the music that follows.} ~~just the beginning.~~ Pairs of bones, two held between the fingers of each hand, strike together as the player manipulates his wrists and arms, producing an intricate variety of rhythmic patterns, rolls, tempi, volumes, and variations. Various types of musical accompaniments add flavor and style to bones renditions.

Although their origins are shrouded in the mists of prehistory, bones of one sort or another have been found in excavations from ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Greece. References to ^{musical} bones and bones playing appear from time to time throughout the extant art and literature of medieval Europe. During the early Middle Ages, they had a more ghoulish function, too: lepers were obliged to sound bones as a warning of their approach. Bones probably migrated to the New World with immigrants from Northwest Europe, who played them in pub bands and at dances and festivals. American slaves saw bones being ^{played} ~~played~~ by white settlers and quickly adapted them for their own

purposes, adding new layers of rhythmic syncopation that were remnants of African musical traditions.

From the plantations and street corners, bones playing became an integral part of the 19th Century blackface minstrel show. "Mr. Bones" was one of the stock characters in these variety show productions, along with

Mr. Tambo and Mr. Interlocatur. Mr. Bones was a singer/dancer/musician/comic who entertained delighted audiences by tossing his bones in the air, juggling them, even standing on his head while playing. He could imitate running horses, reveille, drums, and a variety of other phenomena; his bones rhythms also added solidity and variety to the ensemble's musical numbers.

This flamboyant style of bones playing migrated from the minstrel show stage to market places, street corners, playgrounds, and social gatherings all over 19th and early 20th Century America. But, as the minstrel show lost its appeal and musical styles began to change, bones playing virtually disappeared from the American scene. It was preserved for many years by a handful of grandfatherly types, like Mr. Bones, Percy Danforth, who had learned a little bones playing in their youths.

Today, largely ^{because of} the efforts of Percy, American bones playing is enjoying something of a renaissance. Mr. Bones' artistry and enthusiasm are infectious -- audiences leap to their feet when he plays, anxious to clap hands and dance. Why? Because bones playing is unexpected; it's fun music that invites people to laugh and be happy. 'Come on,' it says; 'let's smile, and sing, and enjoy!' And they do, thanks to the magic of the modern Mr. Bones, Percy Danforth.

He prances. He dances. He clicks and clacks and rolls. He dazes, he amazes, astounds, confounds -- behold, PERCY DANFORTH, bones player extraordinaire.

Percy Danforth learned to play the bones at the age of nine, under a carbon gas lamp, on a street corner in Washington, D.C. The year -- 1909. On summer evenings, Percy and his young friends gathered in front of Isaac Clayman's grocery store. Black youths from a nearby part of town drifted to the same corner. They threw sand on the sidewalk and danced, accompanying themselves with the bones. These masters of the art were Percy's teachers. Over the years, octagenarian Danforth, virtually single-handedly, kept the tradition of bones playing, minstrel show style, alive. And since the early 1970's, he has spearheaded a revival of interest in bones playing that has brought audiences from California to Cambridge (the English one) to their feet, laughing and cheering.

Part of the charm of a Danforth bones performance is Percy himself. "Everybody is just ahh-mazed," says Percy, "when this silver-^{haired}~~haired~~ old bunny gets up and starts jumping around with a batch of sticks in his hands." But jump around he does, with a verve and energy that are ^{astounding}~~astounding~~ ~~of many a fraction of his age~~. His hands are ablur, his arms are aware, and his music is a fresh, ~~amazing~~, unusual experience.

Danforth is also a serious student of the history and technique of bones playing. He has researched the instrument to its ancient roots, and eagerly seeks out other bones players as he travels around the country. He enthusiastically passes along his original techniques to avid students in hundreds of workshlops each year. "It's really ^{incredible}~~astounding~~," marvels Percy, "How something so old could be so new. A lot of people have never heard bones played before. Others ~~re~~ remember their grandfathers playing a little bones. But most people have no idea what they can do or how they are played or how

much fun they really are."

Mr. Bones, Percy Danforth is the man to show them. Whatever the musical medium -- from American ragtime to Irish jigs to classical Baroque -- Percy Danforth and his bones are lively, entertaining, and unique.

PERCY DANFORTH

At the age of 80 years plus, Percy Danforth has more energy than most people a fraction of his age. His avocation, bones playing, keeps him as busy as many full-time jobs. Besides playing bones, he oversees the manufacture and distribution of his chosen instrument via a company called, not surprisingly, Danforth Bones. Percy still holds a full time job, too, as Personnel Manager at Balance Technology, in Ann Arbor, Michigan. His first formal academic training was in architecture; ~~he~~^{he} earned ~~his~~ a degree from the University of Michigan in the early 1920's. Later, he received a Master's degree from the U of M in Education ~~wa~~ and was working toward his PhD when World War II ~~changed~~^{at various times,} his plans. He was worked, ^{always} with great enthusiasm and success, as artist, architect, teacher, curriculum designer, engineer, and businessman.

Although Percy learned to play bones as a child, he nearly lost track of the art over the years. He was ^{too} busy with his ~~job~~^{career} and family (two sons), although he did occasionally pick up a couple pencils or rulers and practice a bit. His concentration on bones playing began in 1973, when his wife of more than 50 years (she's a musician, pianist, and composer) bragged about his abilities and urged him to do a public demonstration. That initial performance was a smashing success, and since then the bones have taken on a life of their own. Percy makes hundreds of bones playing appearances each year at folk festivals, schools, seminars, churches, concerts, lecture/demonstrations, and on radio and television. He has tracked down other bones players all over the country, sharing experiences and playing ^{already} ~~teac~~ techniques. He has ^{already} produced two instructional manuals and has plans to do another. Mr. Bones has also devoted himself to a serious study of the art of bones playing, devising a multitude of new techniques. He constantly

b

experiments with new sounds, musical accompaniments, and playing styles.

"Retire?" asks Percy in amazement. "I'm having too much fun!"

In Concert

PLAYING DATES

Since Percy Danforth began playing semi-professional bones, after rediscovering them ⁱⁿ ~~along~~ ^{about} 1973, his bones playing activities have transported him many thousands of miles from his home in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Playing dates include folk festivals, radio and television appearances, concerts, workshops, ^{Seminars} demonstrations, two instructional books, and many a spontaneous performance with whatever musical forces might be available. (One of the great advantages of the bones ~~is~~ their portability. Percy always manages to have a couple pair in his pocket, ready for action at any moment.) Percy's activities include:

- "Over Easy" with Hugh Downs, Public Broadcasting System.
- "The Bones", interview and demonstration, National Public Radio.
- WXYZ-TV, Detroit, demonstration and concert.
- WUOM, Ann Arbor, Michigan -- Christmas Ragtime Bash.
- Library of Congress, Coolidge Theatre, Folk Music Archives, video tape demonstrations.
- New World Records, "Authentic Minstrel Show Music"
- Royal Festival Hall, London, England, lecture/demonstration
- Guild Hall, Bath, England, performance.
- Festival at Rothbury, Northumberland, England.
- The Great Hudson ^River Revival, Croton on Hudson, NY.
- Philadelphia Folk Festival.
- Mariposa Folk Festival.
- Fox Hollow Festival.
- Black Swamp Festival, Bowling Green, Ohio.
- San Francisco Bothin Festival.
- Smithsonian Folk Life Festival.
- Concerts with the Ars Musica Baroque Orchestra.
- Improvisation for Bones and Modern ^DAnce, University of Michigan.
- ~~Good Sam~~ Concert Music for ^{WGU} Percussion Ensemble & Bones.

-Triworks House, New Bedford, Mass.

and

-"How to Make-~~an~~ Play the Bones", in How To Play Nearly Everything.
Oak Publications, 1977.

-"How To Play the Bones", book and cassette, Front Hall Records, 1978



For additional information and scheduling, contact:

PERCY DAN FORTH

1411 Granger

Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

313/769-2100 (business hours)

313/662-3360 (home)



"The Bone Player" painted by William Sidney Mount in the 1850's, from *Black Magic* by Langston Hughes and Milton Meltzer, 1967.



Percy Danforth demonstrates the bones

Bones Player
Extraordinaire

COVER LETTER

At At last!

Something different, Somebody new, presenting entertainment that's old-fashioned fun, an act guaranteed to get your audience on its feet, laughing and cheering and clapping.

The source of all this pleasure? A lively octogenarian who dances around the stage with wooden sticks in his hands; He is Mr. Bones, Percy Danforth, and he makes music.

A bones performance a la Danforth is indeed a spectacle to behold. Percy approaches his instrument and his audience with a ~~flair~~ ^{flair} and gusto that are infectious. As he "tunes up" his bones, prior to actually playing them, spectators wonder what in the world this elderly man is going to do with four curved wooden sticks. They soon find out. When the music begins -- ragtime, jigs, reels, marches, pop tunes, even a little baroque -- Perc~~e~~ goes into action. His arms and hands become a blur as his wooden sticks are transformed into percussion instruments that produce an astonishing barrage of rhythmic patterns. The seemingly endless variety of sounds includes everything from single taps to complex syncopations, all carefully co-ordinated with the musical style of the moment. But as he plays, it's not enough for Percy to simply raise his arms and ~~manipulate~~ ^{manipulate} his wrists. He becomes an extension of his instrument, literally ~~dancing~~ ^{dancing} his way through the performance. And Percy does love to perform. He's at his absolute best when he can smell the crowd; Toe tapping, hand clapping, and other forms of enthusiastic audience participation are definitely encouraged.

In addition to being an excellent performer, Percy Danforth speaks articulately about "this bones thing" as he calls it; and why not? He's probably done more to revive interest in bones playing than anybody else in America. He loves teaching about bones, too, and will conduct an impromptu workshop at the mere suggestion of interest. ^{exploring the seemingly endless rhythmic & musical possibilities of his instrument.}

In addition to playing techniques,

No wonder Percy Danforth, the modern day Mr. Bones, can bring your
crowd alive. He's vibrant, lively, enthusiastic, ~~amazing~~,
amazing, engrossing, and he's good. Put Percy Danforth and his
bones on your entertainment schedule now.

Intro to Danforth

He prances. He dances. He clicks and clacks and rolls. He dazes, he amazes, astounds, confounds -- behold, PERCY DANFORTH, bones player extraordinaire.

Percy Danforth learned to play the bones at the age of nine, under a carbon gas lamp, on a street corner in Washington, D.C. The year -- 1909. His teachers were black youths, masters of bones playing techniques that dated from the 19th Century halcyon days of the black-face minstrel show. Over the years, octagenarian Danforth, virtually single-handedly, kept the tradition of bones playing, minstrel show style, alive. And since the early 1970's, he has spearheaded a revival of interest in bones playing that has brought audiences from California to Cambridge (the English one) to their feet, laughing and cheering.

Separating "Mr. Bones" from ~~the-in-~~ his instrument -- yes, the bones are a musical instrument -- he handles so well is always something of a challenge. Still, a few distinct words about each are in order. First the bones.

Originally, this ancient instrument (they date from prehistoric times) consisted of just what the name implies -- bones. After being scraped and dried, bones produce a musical click when struck together. This simple, single click is just the beginning. Pairs of bones, two held in each hand, produce intricate patterns of rhythms, rolls, tempi, volumes, and variations. ^{Various types of musical accompaniments add flavor and style to} In the hands of a master, the musical possibilities are bones renditions. virtually endless. Percy Danforth is without doubt, a master of the art of bones playing.

Part of the charm of a Danforth bones performance is Percy himself. "Everybody is just ahh-mazed," says Perc, "when this silver-haired old

bunny gets up and starts jumping around with a bunch of sticks in his hands." But jump around he does, with ^averve and energy that are the envy of many a fraction of his age. He hands are a blur, he arms are awake, and his music is a fresh ~~;-unusual-treat;~~ astounding, unusual experience. Danforth is also a serious student of the history and technique of bones playing. He has researched the instrument to its ancient roots, traced its progress through the Middle Ages, followed its use as an integral part of the American minstrel show, and now, passes his original techniques along to ^{avid} students in hundreds of workshops each years. "It's really something," marvels Percy. "How something so old could be so new. A lot of people have never heard bones played before. Others remember their grandfathers playing a little bones. But most people have no idea what they can do or how they are played or how much fun they really are."

Mr. Bones

Percy Danforth is the man to show them. Whatever the musical medium -- from American ragtime to Irish jigs to classical ~~Scandinavian~~ ^{various} --

~~Mr-Bones-Percy-D-anforth~~
 entertaining, and unique.

Percy Danforth and his bones are lively,

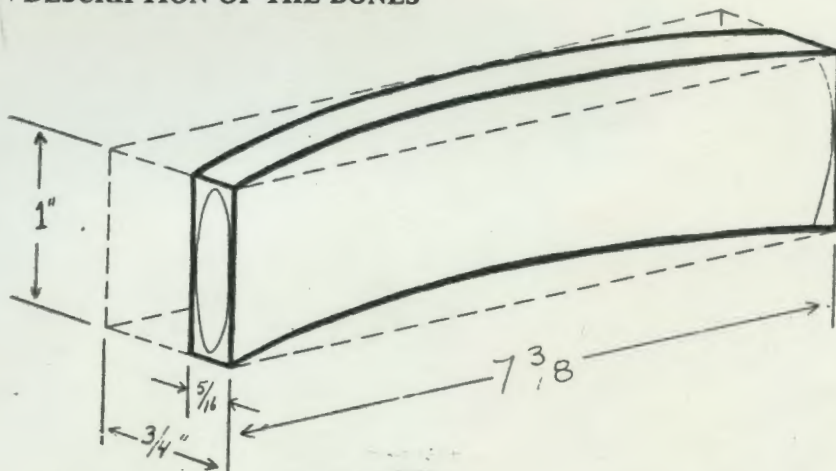
THE BONES

Bones are a percussion instrument, an idiophone, to be academically precise. They make music, with the assistance of a skilled performer, of course. They are also portable (~~in a pocket~~), inexpensive to buy or make, ~~relatively easy to play~~, and vastly entertaining to hear and watch. They are not a skeleton in the closet, although said skeleton might conceivably have contributed some of his ribs to the making of the instrument in its original form.

Contemporary bones are most often made of wood. They consist of slightly curved pieces of ~~wood~~ ^{of pine, ~~sassa~~ balsa, birch or other materials cut to a length}, about 7 inches long and 5/16 inches thick. They are held between the ~~fin~~ fingers of the hand, two

DESCRIPTION OF THE BONES

bones per, and strike together, as the player manipulates his wrists and arms producing a variety of rhythmic patterns.)



Bones were once made, as their name implies, of bone, scrapped and dried in the sun. Although their origins are shrouded in the mists of prehistory, bones of one or sort or another have been found in ^{excavations} excavations from ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Greece. During the early Middle Ages, lepers were obliged to sound bones as a warning to a frightened populace of their approach.

References to bones and bones playing appear from time to time, ~~in~~ throughout the extant art and literature of medieval Europe. Bones probably migrated to the New World with immigrants from Northwest Europe, who played ~~them~~ bones in pub bands and at dances and festivals. (They still do.) ^{Slaves} American slaves saw bones being played by white settlers and quickly adapted them for their

junction too

own purposes, adding new layers of rhythmic syncopation that were remnants of African musical traditions.

From the plantations and street corners, bones playing ^{he came} ~~played~~ ^{to become} an integral part of the 19th Century blackface minstrel show. "Mr. Bones" was one of the stock characters, along with Mr. Tambo and Mr. Interlocatur, (in these variety show productions, ^{he was}) a singer/dancer/musician/comic who entertained delighted audiences by tossing his bones in the air, juggling them, even standing on his head while playing. He could imitate running horses, reveille, drums, and a variety of other phenomena; his bones rhythms ^{also} ~~was~~ added solidity and variety to the ensemble's musical numbers.

This flamboyant style of bones playing migrated from the minstrel show stage to market places, street corners, playgrounds, and social gatherings all over 19th and early 20th Century America. But, as the minstrel show lost its appeal and musical styles began to change, bones playing virtually disappeared from the American scene. It was preserved for many years by a handful of grandfatherly types who had learned a little bones playing in their youth (like our own Mr. Bones, Percy Danforth.) Today, thanks largely to the efforts of Percy, American bones playing is enjoying something of a renaissance. Octagenarian Danforth travels all over ^{across the US} ~~the country~~ and abroad, making appearances at folk festivals, schools, seminars, and entertainments of all sorts. ^{he is constantly offering the} His workshops, demonstrations, ^{myriad musical possibilities of this ancient percussion instrument.} and instructional writings have introduced thousands of aspiring virtuosi to the skill of bones playing. Most of all, Mr. Bones-Danforth--'s artistry and enthusiasm are infectuous -- audiences leap to their feet when he plays, anxious to ~~to~~ clap hands and ~~stamp feet~~ and dance. Why? Because bones playing is unexpected -- it's fun music that makes people laugh and be happy. "Come on and create the good times," it says. "Let's smile, and sing, and enjoy." ^{And they do} Enjoy, ~~indeed~~, thanks to the magic of the modern Mr. Bones, Percy Danforth.

BIOGRAPHY

At the age of 80 years plus, Percy Danforth has more energy than most people a fraction of his age. His avocation, bones playing, keeps him as busy as many full-time jobs. Besides playing bones, he oversees the manufacture and distribution of his chosen instrument via a company called, not surprisingly, Danforth Bones. Percy still holds a full time job, too, as Personnel Manager ~~an-~~ at Balance-Comp Techbology in Ann Arbor, Michigan. His formal academic training was in architecture, with degrees from the U of M in 1921(?) He-wa-w--- He has worked at various times, ~~among other things~~, as artist, architect, teacher, and engineer. ~~He~~ ^{H Percy} learned to play bones as a child, about 1909, on a street corner in Washington, D.C. His teachers were black youths who danced in the sand on the sidewalk, accompanying themselves with bones. Over the ensuing years Percy was too busy with his job, ^{and} family (two sons), to play much bones, although he did occasionally pick up a couple pensils ^{rulers} or ~~pensils~~ ^{practice} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~play~~ ^{them} a bit. His ~~total~~ ~~full~~ ~~time~~ concentration on bones playing began in 1973, when his wife of more than fifty years ^{pianist} (she's a musician ^{and} composer) bragged about his abilities and urged him to do a public demonstration. From there on the bones took on ^{bones play in} something of a life of their own. ^{Percy makes hundreds of appearance} ~~He plays~~ ^{each yr.} for folk festivals, schools, ^{at} church ^{concerts, lecture/demonstrations and on} ~~events,~~ ^{gives lecture} ~~and~~ ^{on} ~~television,~~ ^{He has tracked down} ~~and~~ ^{other bones players} ~~radio,~~ ^{all over the country, Sharing experiences & playing techniques.} ~~television,~~ ^{Mr. Bones} ~~and he~~ ^{has devoted himself to a serious study of} ~~how to teach others the~~ ^{also} ~~art of bones playing.~~ ^{techniques} "Retire?" , asks Percy in amazement. "I'm having too much fun!"

PLAYING DATES

Since Percy Danforth began playing semi-professional bones, after rediscovering them ⁱⁿ ~~around~~ ^{about} 1973, his bones playing activities have transported him many thousands of miles from his home in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Playing dates include folk festivals, radio and television appearances, concerts, workshops, ^{Seminars} demonstrations, ~~two~~ instructional books, and many a spontaneous performance with whatever musical forces might be available. (One of the great advantages of the bones are their portability. Percy always manages to have a couple pair in his pocket, ready for action at any moment.) Percy's activities include:

- "Over Easy" with Hugh Downs, Public Broadcasting System.
- "The Bones", interview and demonstration, National Public Radio.
- WXYZ-TV, Detroit, demonstration and concert.
- WUOM, Ann Arbor, Michigan -- Christmas Ragtime Bash.
- Library of Congress, Coolidge Theatre, Folk Music Archives, video tape demonstrations.
- New World Records, "Authentic Minstrel Show Music"
- Royal Festival Hall, London, England, lecture/demonstration
- Guild Hall, Bath, England, performance.
- Festival at Rothbury, Northumberland, England.
- The Great Hudson ^River Revival, Croton on Hudson, NY.
- Philadelphia Folk Festival.
- Mariposa Folk Festival.
- Fox Hollow Festival.
- Black Swamp Festival, Bowling Green, Ohio.
- San Francisco Botham Festival.
- Smithsonian Folk Life Festival.
- Concerts with the Ars Musica Baroque Orchestra.
- Improvisation for Bones and Modern Dance, University of Michigan.
- ~~Bones Sem~~ ^u ^u Concert Music for Percussion Ensemble & Bones.

-Triworks House, New Bedford, Mass.

and

-~~"How to Make~~ "How to Play the Bones", in How To Play Nearly Everything.
Oak Publications, 1977.

-"How To Play the Bones", book and cassette, Front Hall Records, 1978.

For additional information and scheduling, contact:

PERCY DAN FORTH

1411 Granger

Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

313/769-2100 (business hours)

313/662-3360 (home)

862-3874
Steve Walele

NEFFA on SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 1984

TIME	MAIN HALL	LOWER HALL	AUD. STAGE	CAFETERIA	SMALL HALL	MUSIC ROOM	COURTYARD
12:00	TED SANNELLA Sqs., Contrs & Triplets (E) Fiddleheads	KEN KANAGAKI Easy Folk Dances (A)	KARIN GOTTIER German, Swiss Austrian Dances (B)	SCHAFFER (E) FAMILY STRING BAND	FAMILY DANCE (E) B. Butenhof (A) Woods Hole Folk Orch. (E)	NOVICE FIDDLERS WORKSHOP April Limber Vince O'Donnell (A)	MORRIS DANCING
1:00	PERFS: Polish (E) Latvian	NEW ENGLAND STYLE WORKSHOP Marianne Taylor (B) Tod Whittemore (D)	LEO KRETZNER Song & Dance (E) Tunes for Dulcimer & Guitar	RAPPER-PLAIN BR.	MIME PERF. & WORKSHOP (E) Alice Wood	FIDDLE ENSEMBLE Donna Hinds (B)	
2:00	German Irish Chinese	"WHERE AM I?" DANCES Susan Elberger Carol Kaufman Doug Reiner Roberta Sutter	LITTLE Concert SINGERS OF GR. BOSTON (E)	SPRING FEVER TUNES Betsy Anderson Pat Disque Fran Hendrickson	PHILIPPINE DANCE WORKSHOP (B) Gerri Korten (D)	AUTOHARP WORKSHOP Pam Roberts (A)	
3:00	RALPH PAGE Sqs. & Contrs for All (E) Festival Orch.	WOMENS DANCE WORKSHOP (B) Cindy Green Louise Brill	YUGOSLAV DANCE WORKSHOP (B) Andrea Ader (D)	MASSED MORRIS DANCES (if rain)	FAMILY STORYTELLING with songs (E) Doug Lipman	SEAL IN CONCERT (E) HARMONICA FOR DANCES (E) Ken Sweeney/	MASSED MORRIS DANCING (3:00-4:00 in cafeteria if rain)
4:00	Tony Saletan (E) Peter Barnes Vince O'Donnell Mary Lea	ISRAELI FOLK DANCE Workshop & Party Susan Roth (A)	HALF MOON LONGSWORD	KENJE OGATA SINGS (E)	BONES WORKSHOP Steve Brown (A) Percy Danforth John Burrill	MORRIS DANCING	
5:00	INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCES for All (E) Mary Ann & Michael Herman	ENGLISH DANCE PARTY for All (A) E. Ferguson Bare Necessities	CONTRAS NOT MADE IN NEW ENGLAND E. Butenhof 2 Penny Loaf (B)	JACKSON PIKE SKIFFLERS Tunes (E)	DANCE CALLERS' DISCUSSION (B) Susan Elberger Tony Parkes Ted Sannella Roger Whynot	COMPOSING DANCE TUNES Bob McQuillen (E)	
6:00	TRADITIONAL CONTRAS & SQS. Culver Griffin Dudley Laufman Festival Orch.	FOLK DANCING FOR FOLK DANCERS Jan Sacks Marty Schafer (C)	PADDLEDOO CONCERT (E)	FOLK & COUNTRY BANJO & SONGS Debbie Fish Diane Sanbria (E)	NORWEGIAN FOLK SONGS Sonja Savig Neal MacMillan (E)	GUITAR WORKSHOP Peter Kairo (E)	
7:00	40th ANNIVERSARY PRESENTATION PERFS Estonian (E) Indonesian Lithuanian Scots Polish Irish	NEW JERSEY CONTRAS (E) Steve Schnur & Jersey Lightning	VERMONT CONTRAS (B) Rich Blazej Tobin's Fav.	NEW ENGLAND TRADITION CONCERT (E)	SING-A-LONG (E) Sharon Trace	NEIL MACMILLAN ANN SCHUNIOR In Concert (E)	
8:00	WALTZING AROUND THE WORLD (E) Marianne Taylor (B)	CHIP HENDRICKSON Contrs & Sqs Jackson Pike Skifflers (E)	LIBANA, A WOMENS CHORUS performs (E)	BONES CONCERT (E) Percy Danforth	TALES FOR ADULTS (D) Doug Lipman	DANCE PIANO WORKSHOP Peter Barnes (B)	
9:00	SQUARES & CONTRAS for all (E) Tony Saletan Roger Whynot Ted Sannella Festival Orch.	NEW ENGLAND CONTRAS (B) Mary DesRosiers N.E. Tradition	Minutemen PERFS New Caledonians (E)	DANCE COMPOSERS' WORKSHOP (B) Parkes, Sannella and Whynot (E)	DANCE COMPOSERS' WORKSHOP Parkes, Sannella and Whynot (B)	SONG WRITERS' WORKSHOP Dave Kaynor (E)	
10:00		FOLK DANCE PARTY (B) Framingham International Folk Dance Club	Israeli Armenian Cloggers & CLOGGING WORKSHOP Tom Hinds Stump Jumpers (E)	PLAYER PIANO TUNES FOR DANCING (E) David Levin	SWEDISH FIDDLE CONCERT (E) Matt Fichtenbaum Jane Orzechowski	FOLK SONG SWAP (E) Folk Song Society of Greater Boston	
11:00							

GUIDE TO PARTICIPATION — AUDIENCE WELCOME AT ALL EVENTS
 ☺ Families especially welcome (B) Some experience suggested
 (E) Everybody welcome (C) For experienced dancers only
 (A) Beginners especially welcome (D) Not appropriate for pre-teens

PERCY DANFORTH

MR BONES

- IN -

DULCIMER GROVE

THE ARK Presents



DOORS OPEN 8:30 SHOW STARTS 9:00
1421 HILL STREET 761-1451

Barry O'Neill

Canadian and British Isles folk music –
accompanied by the concertina.





and Percy Danforth

MASTER OF THE BONES
Jigs, Reels, & Lots of Rhythm.

ALL PROCEEDS GO TO THE MICHAEL COONEY TRUST FUND

4.00
NOVEMBER 16, 17
FRIDAY, SATURDAY

HOOTENANY WEDS. NIGHT \$1.00

The
Black Hawk
Folklore Society



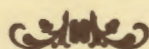
and

The Quad City
Arts
Council



present

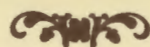
"SOME RAGS, SOME BONES AND A HANK OF JAZZ"



“ Classic Ragtime Piano Accompanied
by the “Bones”

featuring

WILLIAM ALBRIGHT PERCY DANFORTH



Saturday, December 9, 8:30 p.m.
Centennial Hall, Augustana College
Rock Island, Ill

All Seats Reserved

ADVANCE TICKETS: Adults \$3.50 , Children/Students \$3.00

Available At

- Quad-City Arts Council
- Augustana College - Office of Public Events
- Co-op Tapes and Records
- Black Hawk College Book Store
- By Mail: Doug Stevens, 6600 - 34th Avenue, Moline, Illinois

ALL TICKETS THE NIGHT OF THE CONCERT: \$5.00

INTERLOCHEN ARTS ACADEMY
Interlochen, Michigan
152nd, 153rd Programs - 20th Season

*

A DAY OF PERCUSSION

Schedule

8:30 - 9:15 a.m.	Registration	Corson Auditorium Lobby
9:30 - 11:30 a.m.	Percussion Clinic Charles Owen	Corson Auditorium
11:30 - 1:00 p.m.	LUNCH	Student Center Cafeteria
1:15 - 2:00 p.m.	IAA Percussion Ensemble John Alfieri, Conductor	Corson Auditorium
2:00 - 2:15 p.m.	Presentation by Douglas Fair Director of Admissions, IAA	Corson Auditorium
2:30 - 3:30 p.m.	University of Michigan Percussion Ensemble Charles Owen, Conductor	Corson Auditorium

*

*

JOHN ALFIERI, Conference Coordinator
Percussion Instructor, Interlochen Arts Academy
CHARLES OWEN, Professor of Percussion, The University of Michigan

INTERLOCHEN ARTS ACADEMY PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE
John Alfieri, Conductor

Monday, April 19, 1982

1:15 p.m., Corson Auditorium

- Overture for Percussion Ensemble John Beck
- Toccatà for Percussion Instruments Carlos Chavez
Allegro, sempre giusto (1916-1978)
Largo
Allegro - Moderato - Vivo
- One Notch Higher Bill Molenhof
Gregory Smith, vibes, Lathrup Village, Michigan
Eric Dickey, marimba, Oregon, Ohio
- Streams Warren Benson
(born 1924)
- Ku-Ka-Ilimoku Christopher Rouse
JOHN ALFIERI, conducting (born 1949)

*

*

INTERLOCHEN ARTS ACADEMY PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

Gregory Smith, Michigan	Shaw Walker, Michigan
Eric Schweikert, Illinois	Owen Davis, Florida
Gregory Barnes, Michigan	Eric Dickey, Ohio
John Mitvalsky, Florida	Maria Vom Lehn, Arizona
Peter Flamm, Illinois	Lisa Housholder, Saudi Arabia

PROGRAM NOTES...

In Hawaiian mythology, Ku is perhaps the most fundamental and important of gods, occupying a place similar to that of Zeus in Greek mythology or Odin in Norse legend. Ku is manifested in several forms: as Ku-Ka-Ilimoku he represents the god of war. Thus, this work for percussion ensemble is best viewed as a savage, pulsive war dance.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

Charles Owen, Conductor
Percy Danforth, Guest Artist

Monday, April 19, 1982

2:30 p.m., Corson Auditorium

FanfareJohn O'Reilly

Chamber Music IV Robert Suderberg
(born 1936)

Ogoun Badagris Christopher Rouse
(born 1949)

INTERMISSION

Charleston Rag George Hamilton Green
Dan Armstrong, xylophone (born 1930)

Triplets George Hamilton Green
Michael Woods, xylophone
Percy Danforth, bones - Guest

Rondo Ala Turk Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Percy Danforth (1756-1791)

Rainbow Ripples..... George Hamilton Green
John Zidar, xylophone
Percy Danforth, bones

Pythagoras and Four Hammers Andrew Thomas
CHARLES OWEN, conducting (born 1939)

* *

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

Daniel Armstrong
Jane Botkin
John Dorsey
Brian Prechtl

David Wanuga
Michael Woods
John Zidar
Trent Hellerstein, assisting

CHARLES OWEN, distinguished guest artist, is professor of percussion at The University of Michigan. Owen headed the percussion section of the Philadelphia Orchestra for 18 seasons. He was tympanist and marimba soloist with the U.S. Marine Band. He taught at Amber Institute, Saratoga School of Orchestral Studies and at Temple University, where he directed the percussion ensemble. He was a member of the Philadelphia Percussion Ensemble. In addition to his duties at The University of Michigan, Owen is an artist-faculty member of the Aspen Music Festival and a member of the Casals Festival Orchestra in Puerto Rico.

PERCY O. DANFORTH, guest "bones" artist, studied chemical engineering in Ann Arbor in 1918. He later switched his major to architecture and received his degree in that field in 1927. From 1927 to 1934 Danforth had his own architectural firm in Monroe. He joined the Monroe Schools and designed an elementary art curriculum for the school system. He also taught art for five years there.

He returned to The University of Michigan and received a master's degree in art education. World War II interrupted his plans for a Ph.D. and he spent the war years designing various components for B-24 bombers. Following the war, Danforth became supervisor of mechanical engineering at Bendix Corporation's Industrial Metrology Division. He is now Personnel Manager at Balance Technology in Ann Arbor.

Despite his age, Danforth has no intention of retiring. Throughout his career he has continued research on the art of the bones. Since 1908, when he first became fascinated with the rhythmic "bones," which were part of early minstrel shows in this country, Danforth has experimented with special techniques for playing them. Originally, the bones were actually spareribs used as "clackers" to create dancing rhythms which were imitated later in tap dancing.

Percy Danforth never travels anywhere without a full compliment of bones, some of them handsome specimens made from animal rib bones like those which Zulu tribesmen must have used centuries ago in deep Africa. Marrow in real bones makes the hollow sound but most of Danforth's bones are made of wood, such as hickory, walnut, white pine and balsa.

NISKAYUNA FESTIVAL
March 18 and 19, 1977

Schenectady N.Y.

CONCERTS
8:00 P.M.
Auditorium

Friday
March 18

Percy Danforth "Mr. Bones"
Roy Harris
Folktellers
Mark Cushing & Allanah Fitzgerald
Charlie Sayles

Saturday
March 19

Alistair Anderson
Eli and Madelaine Kaufman
Priscilla Herdman
Bristol Olde Tyme Fiddlers
Bob White

FESTIVAL SERVICES

Free babysitting will be provided by the Theta Sigma Sorority, Friday and Saturday nights, 7:30 to end of concert, and Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00.

Soda and snacks will be sold by the NICS at both concerts and throughout the day.

Luncheon will be sold in the New Cafeteria from 11:00 to 2:30 by the NICS.

OPEN STAGE

The open stage is designed for musicians not booked as performers; each may sign up to perform three songs. Sign-up begins at 10 a.m. Saturday. The open stage will be open throughout the day, Saturday at the Crossroads.

WELCOME

We would like to welcome and thank the Poking Brook Morris and Sword Dancers. They will be performing during intermissions in the night concerts, and during the day Saturday. Percy Danforth has made a special effort to be at Niskayuna. Thanks to him for coming and to Andy's Front Hall for assistance in bringing him. Mr. Danforth will demonstrate the playing of "bones" at Andy's Front Hall booth. Harmonicas for Charlie Sayles' workshop are also available at Andy's Front Hall.

WELCOME~

TO THE
10th ANNUAL

AUGUSTA
FESTIVAL



PRESENTED BY THE

AUGUSTA HERITAGE ARTS WORKSHOP

CO-SPONSORED BY DE DAVIS & ELKINS COLLEGE AND

RANDOLPH COUNTY CREATIVE ARTS COUNCIL

WITH FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE

WEST VIRGINIA ARTS AND HUMANITIES DIVISION

FESTIVAL EVENTS

Daytime Music Events

Main Stage, 4th & Kerens St.
(Rain location, American Legion)

Inside YMCA, 1st floor

11:00--Michael Kline, Gerry Milnes,
Dwight Diller

To be announced

11:30--"Flying Crow"

To be announced

12:00--To be announced

Kids' Music: Michael Kline,
Joe Mirena, Nan Hoffman

1:00--Claudia Schmidt / Ralph
Gordon & Lorraine Duisit

" " " "

1:30--Nan Hoffman

2:00--Christian Harmony Singers /
Nick Blanton (Hammered Dulcimer)

Yodeling Workshop: New
Prairie Ramblers

2:30--Norma Troy

Kids' Storytelling & Games:
Cheryl Harshman & friends

3:00--John Lilly

" " "

3:20--Craft Fair Door Prize Winners
Announced

3:30--Clogging Workshop: Ralph
Gordon

, Percy Danforth: Bones
Workshop

4:00--Public Square Dance: Larry
Edelman, Caller

" " " "

All these and many more surprise performances will be taking place continually during the daytime portion of the Festival - All Free!



**Michigan Council
for the Arts**

1200 Sixth Avenue
Detroit, MI 48226
313 256-3731

October 2, 1978

Mr. Percy Danforth
1411 Granger Ave.
Ann Arbor, Mich. 48104

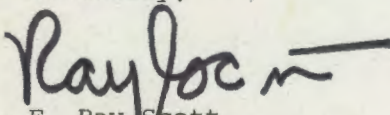
Dear Mr. Danforth:

The First Michigan Congress on the Arts with its Celebration of the Arts is now history. It was a gargantuan effort made possible by the enthusiastic assistance of many, many organizations and people.

You are among those whose participation was essential to the achievements of the Congress and Celebration. We are proud to forward the enclosed "Certificate of Appreciation" from Governor Milliken as a token of his and our appreciation of the contribution you made toward the success of this event. The many complimentary comments which we have received are a direct reflection of the effectiveness of our work together.

The Council has now turned its attention to devising methods of implementing the one hundred and six Resolutions that grew out of the Congress. In this process we may be calling upon you once again. In any case you will be advised periodically of any progress.

Sincerely,


E. Ray Scott

ERS/mmc

William G. Milliken
Governor

Walter R. Boris
Chairman

E. Ray Scott
Executive Director

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Vice Chairman
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Theodore E. Troff
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The Council for the Arts is a
Division of the State Department
of Management and Budget,
Gerald H. Miller, Director.

Governor William G. Milliken

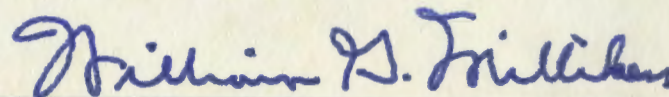
presents this

CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

to

PERCY DANFORTH

FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE ARTS CELEBRATION OF THE
FIRST MICHIGAN CONGRESS ON THE ARTS, DETROIT,
JUNE 15 - 18, 1978.



Governor — State of Michigan

NEWSLETTER

MAY 1976



Our spring luncheon meeting will be held May 19, 10:00 a.m. at Marjorie Leach's, 1309 Algonac, 563-2385 (see card). We will have a business meeting, election of officers and a very special demonstration by Percy Danforth who will play the bones. This is our last meeting of the season and will be a fun get-together to wind up the public spring semester. Those people who have played or are trying bones are listed below, if you have not signed up for a dish, contact Sarah Johnson, 761-5864.

Soloists	With Dish	Instruct	Other
Linda Burkett	John Wiggover	Judy Spring	Pats Robbin
LeVonne Daniels	Christelle Woodruff	Elaine Sly	Haldie Pyle
Sue Kistner	Wendy Norvick	Judy McCornick	Virginia Robinson
Antoinette Kubas	Carolyn Fullock	Maude Little	Ing Sardin
Frances Danforth	Walter Sord	Janette Clark	
Barbara Durgison		Carol Albright	
Janet Taylor		Carol Kenney	
Paula Ann			

LIST OF OFFICERS

The present list of officers is:
 President - Marjorie Leach
 Vice President - Barbara Durgison
 Secretary - Barbara Durgison
 Treasurer - Janet Taylor

May 1976
 Piano Teachers Guild
 The Ann Arbor Area Piano Teachers Guild will meet for lunch at 10 a.m. Wednesday at the home of Marjorie Leach, 1309 Algonac. Percy Danforth and Carol Kenney will present "Playing the Bones."

Our dues this year will be \$13.00 for full membership, \$6.00 for associate membership plus \$1.00 for new NWA members, and \$2.00 for inactive members. Please pay our treasurer at the May meeting. The list of full members will be made up then and distributed to the schools and music shops before our fall meeting.

PERCY DANFORTH

In his retirement Mr. Danforth's hobby is going back to his first love music in an unusual way. He plays the bones. When he was a youth in Washington D.C., he would watch the Black boys come to corner near his house, sprinkle sand on the pavement and do soft shoe while playing the bones- he ricked it or from them.

Frances Danforth was taking a class at Eastern when the instructor was putting together a program of American folk music.

The instructor asked if any one played the spoons or bones and Frances volunteered her husband. He was so good playing 2 against 3 etc. the word got around to William Albright who asked him to accompany him in some music. As the result of that he's played 5 or 6 times at the Episcopal Church. WUCM then latched onto him for a musical program. Oakland University asked him to come and demonstrate. He's taught a couple of workshops on how to make bones and play them.

He has become interested in doing research, and trying to figure out a notation. He has been working with a percussion instructor at the U once a week on notation and composing a piece for bones and percussion.

Frances says when he practices he goes upstairs to the

RHYTHM BONES' REVUE

(LOST ART OF OUR AMERICAN HERITAGE)

Art Worlds

213½ south main
ann arbor, michigan 48108

Phone: 668-6244

ONE NIGHT ONLY

A SPECIAL
ANN ARBOR SESQUICENTENNIAL
PERFORMANCE OF

"The Bones"

LIVE BANJO ACCOMPANIMENT

by Mr. Percy Danforth on "The Bones"

HERB HODGE - "old time" BANJO PLAYER

FREE ADMISSION!!

SUNDAY, MAY 5, 4:00 p.m.
at ART WORLDS

come one, come all!

lesque Opera Troupe, and a Pleasing Soloist Orchestral Ensemble. Enjoyable Programme has been Selected for this. This is a genuine Minstrel Novelty, Original in content. Rejecting the Old Fashioned, Old Foggy Ideas repertoire of Select Minstrel Specialties.

RHYTHM BONES

P. DANFORTH

Two of the many unique contributions by our Black Community to our culture are the Rhythm Bones and the Banjo. For over a century these two instruments played a significant part in our world of entertainment. The complex rhythm of the Bones, by "Mr. Bones" of the many minstrel groups that traveled the country, made a sparkling background for the lively music of a past era. But little is remembered of our Bones' heritage--we seem almost to have forgotten the rhythm potential of a pair of dry rib bones with the relaxed whipping of the wrist.

This workshop will demonstrate how easy it is to make a set of Bones out of bone or wood and to learn how to do the basic rhythm elements to musical recordings. After that, practice and imagination are the only requisites toward beating elaborate rhythmic patterns, quiet for a soft shoe dance, or sharp enough to cut through a fair sized band. 2 weeks. 4 sessions-Wednesdays and Fridays, 8:00-10:00 PM. \$12. Plus 50¢ per set - "Bones" material charge.

Starts: Wednesday, May 15, 8:00-10:00 PM

THE CREME DE LA CREME OF



BY THE GRACIOUS PATRONAGE
 OF THE CURTEOUS AND FAYRE
 LADY SARAH LAVOIE
 IN THIS YEAR OF OUR LORD ~
 1979
 LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN

JUGGLER

Mario Lorenz

FAIRE CHARACTERS

Students from UWL Speech/Theatre Department
Acting Class - 316
The Theatre of the Medieval World - 200
The University Theatre

MR. BONES

Percy Danforth

AQUINAS MADRIGALS

Tom Doering, Director
Mary Branson
Monica Felker
Monica Gorman
Suzie Hoch
Patty Johnson
Bob Kachel
Sara Munk
Tim Orcutt
Ken Paul
Sue Schaettle
Kate Speltz
Pat Thorson
Toni Valentini
Joe Weigel
Joe Winrich

MEDIEVAL MEDICINE AND HERBS

Constance Arneson
Bill Fleming
Frank Italiano
Dean Whiteway

EMERSON SIXTH GRADE DANCERS

Geraldine Brueggeman, Director

FLORAL GARLANDS

Town and Country Garden Club

HORSE JOUSTING

Sandy Cleary
Janice Hoeschler
Nancy Losching
Joan Monroe
Jean Novak
Jan Wiggert



This Faire is taking place because of the time, energy and talents graciously given by all the above members of this university and this community. Many others are assisting this weekend in a great variety of ways. Also, within the university, invisible but essential help has come especially from the following persons:

Joe Brieske
Wilford Buchholtz
Larry Dittman
Edward Fluekiger
Barbara Gardner
Bob Goodno
Laurie Hamre
Calvin Helming
Ginger Hopkins Jentz
Roger Johnson

Christine Koukola
Margaret Larson
Larry Lebiecki
Dale Montgomery
Robert Mullally
Erhardt Oertel
Bill Ormsby
Hedy Otto
Eileen Polizzotto
Dick Rasmussen

Robert Sawyer
Harold Shaw
Diane Schumacher
Dick Snyder
Len Stach
Robert Voight
Sue Weibel
Mary Fran Winrich
Hal Young

THANK YOU - EVERY ONE!

1
Niskaryuna



D. Coher '71

Folk Festival

NISKAYUNA FESTIVAL
March 18 and 19, 1977

CONCERTS
8:00 P.M.
Auditorium

Friday
March 18

Saturday
March 19

Percy Danforth "Mr. Bones"
Roy Harris
Folktellers
Mark Cushing & Allanah Fitzgerald
Charlie Sayles

Alistair Anderson
Eli and Madelaine Kaufman
Priscilla Herdman
Bristol Olde Tyme Fiddlers
Bob White

FESTIVAL SERVICES

Free babysitting will be provided by the Theta Sigma Sorority, Friday and Saturday nights, 7:30 to end of concert, and Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00.

Soda and snacks will be sold by the NICS at both concerts and throughout the day.

Luncheon will be sold in the New Cafeteria from 11:00 to 2:30 by the NICS.

OPEN STAGE

The open stage is designed for musicians not booked as performers; each may sign up to perform three songs. Sign-up begins at 10 a.m. Saturday. The open stage will be open throughout the day, Saturday at the Crossroads.

WELCOME

We would like to welcome and thank the Poking Brook Morris and Sword Dancers. They will be performing during intermissions in the night concerts, and during the day Saturday. Percy Danforth has made a special effort to be at Niskayuna. Thanks to him for coming and to Andy's Front Hall for assistance in bringing him. Mr. Danforth will demonstrate the playing of "bones" at Andy's Front Hall booth. Harmonicas for Charlie Sayles' workshop are also available at Andy's Front Hall.

A CELEBRATION OF TRADITIONAL MUSIC AND DANCE
IN THE UNIQUE SETTING OF
GREYSTONE PARK
BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA

*5th annual summer solstice
dulcimer & traditional
music festival*



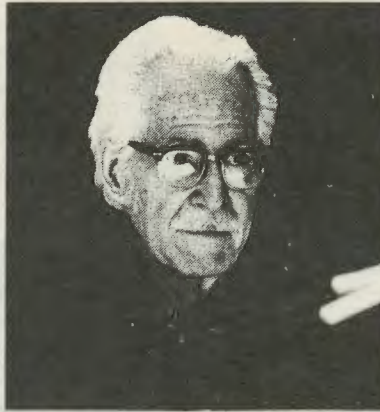
Saturday & Sunday, 22 & 23 June 1985
8:30 am to 5:30 pm

Presented by
ELAINE & CLARK WEISSMAN
CALIFORNIA TRADITIONAL MUSIC SOCIETY
in association with
BEVERLY HILLS SYMPHONY

Lifetime Achievement Awards



JANETTE CARTER is the youngest daughter of A.P. and Sara Carter, who with Maybelle were the original Carter Family of Hiltons, Virginia. The Carter Family made their first recordings in 1927, but they had been playing and singing their songs about the love, sorrow, and hardships of the people around the Clinch Mountains for years. Janette first performed with the family at about age six and took up the autoharp at age 12. Many of the performances were in peoples' homes, where they would often play all night. When the family went to the local homes to listen to music, they would write down the words and Janette would remember the tunes in her head. A.P. called her his tape recorder. In this way, they set down and recorded the songs of the area for the first time. When A.P. died in 1959, Janette retired to devote her time to raising her family. She is now active once again, making appearances on radio and at schools, colleges, craft shows, and clubs throughout the U.S. and Canada. Janette and her brother Joe have founded "The Old Time Music Show" at the original Carter store near Hiltons, Virginia. A powerful singer and writer, she has recorded her own albums on Country, Traditional, and Birch labels. Janette Carter remains a simple country woman, playing the songs of her family as she learned them.



PERCY DANFORTH, who turned 85 this year, started on rhythm bones 76 years ago. For the past 12 years, he has experimented, taught, composed, and played in a variety of places ranging from the Blind Pig Tavern in his home of Ann Arbor, Michigan to the Purcell Room of London's Royal Festival Hall; with "Mad Cat" Ruth's harmonica at The Ark to unaccompanied bones solo in Alice Tully Hall of New York's Lincoln Center. Besides being on National Public Radio and television, on video and recorder tapes now in the Congressional Library and Smithsonian Institute, Percy has performed with the Plymouth Symphony Orchestra and at many festivals in the U.S., Canada, and England. His recordings include: Minstrel Show Music on New World Records, Footloose Band on Mud Hen Recordings, and How to Play Rhythm Bones on Andy's Front Hall.



SAM HINTON has been performing for 60 of his 68 years, and has accrued a repertoire of over 1,000 songs. He has presented his programs and explications of traditional music, using voice, guitar, harmonica, pennywhistle, jaw-harp, etc., in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, and Europe, as well as on more than a dozen LP records. Sam grew up in Oklahoma and East Texas, fascinated by the music around him. His mother, a classical pianist and teacher, encouraged Sam's interests. He played the harmonica at five and the push-button accordion at eight.

Sam entered Texas A and M College as a zoology major, but forsook his formal education temporarily in 1937. In that year, after winning a prize on the Major Bowes Amateur hour in New York, he went on the road with one of the Major's vaudeville units. Billed as Texas Sam Hinton, Folksinger and Novelty Instrumentalist, he traveled through 46 states during the next two years, after which he went back to college, this time at UCLA, still majoring in zoology. Sam spent 18 years as Director of the Aquarium-Museum at Scripps Institution of Oceanography and held the post of Director of Relations with Schools for 16 years. Since retiring from full-time university work in 1980, he devotes his time to concertizing, teaching for UC Extension, writing and drawing.

Festival Personalities



Since 1980, ROSS ALTMAN has made his living as a folk singer, inspired like others before him by romantic images of the wandering minstrel and the songs and lives of Woody Guthrie, Leadbelly, Pete Seeger, and Burl Ives. The reality is less romantic. Ross is too busy performing, doing 375 shows a year for schools, clubs, camps, churches, festivals, conferences, and nursing homes to spend much time "Blowing Down that Old Dusty Road."



THOMAS AXWORTHY has performed and taught early music for the past 20 years. He is the director of the Collegium Musicums for Rio Hondo College and the Claremont Graduate School, as well as serving as the assistant director of the Isomata Early Music Workshop in Idyllwild. Thomas is the musical director of the Southern California Early Music Consort and performs with Canto Antiquo and the Renaissance Players. He has recorded for the Musical Heritage as well as appearing on the sound tracks of several major motion pictures. He also edits and publishes arrangement of early music.



BRENDA BADDERS, known as "The Spoon Lady," started playing spoons four years ago, and has performed in The Occasional String Band and at Ima's Cafe. She also plays mountain dulcimer, hammered dulcimer, and sings. Brenda is currently employed on board "The Buccaneer Queen," a square-rigged sailing ship, where she sings sea shanties with her partner Geoff for dinner cruises and teaches spoons to willing customers.



JANITA BAKER has been playing, teaching, and performing banjo, autoharp, and dulcimer for the past 13 years, primarily in California's Central Coast region. Her first solo album, Fingerpicking Dulcimer, was released by Kicking Mule in 1982, and emphasizes her focus on playing songs not usually considered to be "traditional" dulcimer material. Janita is co-owner of Blue Lion Musical Instruments.

CONCERT

The Holly & The Ivy

MASTER OF CEREMONIES SATURDAY PERFORMERS

Bill Mason	10:15-10:35	... NONESUCH	Bev Erickson Larry Hall Marlene Horn
Bill Mason	10:40-11:00	... ALBERT D'OSSCHE ROBERT FORCE ROSS ALTMAN	
Annabelle Heiferman Councilmember & Former Mayor of Beverly Hills	11:05-11:25	... JEAN RITCHIE	
Ruth Berrett and Cynthia Smith	11:30-11:50	... SAM HINTON	
Judy Nahman-Stouffer and Marcia Harris	11:55-12:15	... NEAL HELLMAN KIM ROBERTSON	
Johannie Walker	12:20-12:40	... RUSSELL COOK DENIS MURPHY	
Johnnie Walker	12:45-1:05	... BUDDY MAC MASTER DAVE MAC ISAAC	
Judy Wilkins	1:10-1:30	... BARBARA MAC DONALD MAGONE	
President of PTA Beverly Hills HS	1:35-1:55	... REDMOND O'COLONIES JANETTE CARTER	
Pam Johnson Cultural Affairs Officer	2:00-2:20	... MARK NELSON	
Canadian Consulate General Pam Johnson	2:25-2:45	... CATHY BARTON DAVE PARA	
Redmond O'Colonies	2:50-3:10	... LIZ CARROLL BARBARA MAC DONALD MAGONE	
Michelle Merrill Beverly Hills Recreation and Parks Department Recreation Services Manager	3:15-3:35	... JAY LEIBOVITZ RICK RUSKIN LEWIS ROSS	
Norma Libaw & Beri Hollandar Board of Directors, Beverly Hills Symphony	3:40-4:00	... MAGICAL STRINGS	Pam Boulding Philip Boulding
Rick Putnam	4:05-4:25	... JOEMY WILSON MIAMON MILLER	
Beverly Hills Recreation and Parks Department Director	4:30-4:50	... BECKY BLACKLEY KEITH & RUSTY MC NEIL	
Holly Tannen	4:55-5:15	... RUTH BARRETT CYNTHIA SMITH RICK RUSKIN KAREN WILLIAMS	
Holly Tannen		... MICK MOLONEY LIZ CARROLL LISA ORNSTEIN	
Bill Mason		... LOS GALLEROS MARIACHI PAUL VAN ARSDALE	

MASTER OF CEREMONIES SUNDAY PERFORMERS

Merk Egerman	10:15-10:35	... BECKY BLACKLEY KEITH & RUSTY MC NEIL	JOEMY WILSON MIAMON MILLER
Beverly Hills Board of Education	10:40-11:00	... RUTH BARRETT CYNTHIA SMITH RICK RUSKIN KAREN WILLIAMS	
Bill Mason	11:05-11:25	... MICK MOLONEY LIZ CARROLL LISA ORNSTEIN	
Edward I. Brown Mayor of Beverly Hills	11:30-11:50	... LOS GALLEROS MARIACHI PAUL VAN ARSDALE	
Michel Zerib	11:55-12:15	... LARKIN BRYANT	
Deputy French Cultural Attache Bernice Hutter	12:20-12:40	... LINDA RUSSELL	
Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce	12:45-1:05	... PERCY DANFORTH ROBERT WEY	
Charlotte Spadaro	1:10-1:30	... PAMELA ROBERTS DANIEL HERSH DEBORAH SANDLER	
Vice Mayor of Beverly Hills	1:35-1:55	... MICHAEL RUGG BILL MASON	
Johnnie Walker	2:00-2:20	... BEVERLY HILLS SYMPHONY QUARTET	
Bev Erickson, Larry Hall & Karen Williams	2:25-2:45	... THE CHINCHILLAS	Calvin Gravatt Dan McMullen Cindy Pierce Cathy Traut
Donna Ellman Councilmember and former Mayor of Beverly Hills	2:50-3:10	... CALVIN GRAVATT DAN MCMULLEN CINDY PIERCE CATHY TRAUT	
Russell Levi Lisison to Beverly Hills Community and Board of Directors, Beverly Hills Symphony	3:15-3:35	... THE CHINCHILLAS	
Sam Hinton	3:40-4:00	... CALVIN GRAVATT DAN MCMULLEN CINDY PIERCE CATHY TRAUT	
Johannie Walker	4:05-4:25	... THE CHINCHILLAS	
Johannie Walker	4:30-4:50	... THE CHINCHILLAS	
Cathy Traut	4:55-5:15	... THE CHINCHILLAS	
Debbie Grossman President, Beverly Hills Symphony		... THE CHINCHILLAS	
Bill Mason		... THE CHINCHILLAS	

Sound by Scott Fraser
Bill Mason, Concert Coordinator
Stage Crew
Don Minkoff and Jeff Mason

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THE COURTYARD OF MERCHANTS

AEOLUS MUSIC	Handmade Guitars and Fretted Dulcimers,.... Albums and Cassettes	Ruth Barrett Cyntia Smith Dale Foye Carol Barham
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DANFORTH BONES	Playing Thereof	
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ENAMELING ON COPPER	Paintings	
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INSIGHT OUT PRODUCTIONS	Performed by Jay Leibovitz	
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LARK IN THE MORNING	Services	
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PILLOWS, POUCHES, & PERCUSSION	Instruments	
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STAINED GLASS ARTS	Stained Glass Boxes and Giftware	
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THE HOUSE OF GLASS	Stained Glass	
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WOOD N' STRINGS	Hammered Dulcimers and Accessories	
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The University of Michigan

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING
DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES

525 EAST UNIVERSITY
ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN 48109

(313) 764-1420

764-1428

August 25, 1976

Mr. Percy Danforth
1411 Granger
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

Dear Percy,

Once again the school term is upon us and that is the reason for this letter. I mentioned to you that I would like it very much if you would come into my American folklore class and talk about yourself, how you learned to play bones, why you do to this day, what it means to you, etc., etc. Would you still be interested in doing this? I am a little embarrassed to ask this of you because there is no financial remuneration. However, if there is anyway I can repay the favor, I would be more than happy to do so. I must impress upon you, that if you do not care to or cannot come, please feel free to say so. I thought that October 20 (or possibly the 22nd) might work out in terms of lecture schedule. Are either of these days good for you? I look forward to hearing from you. Please write me at the above address, or call me at my office during the day or at home in the evenings (662-3460).

Sincerely yours,

Yvonne

Yvonne R Lockwood

P.S. I forgot to mention that the lecture is at 2 p.m.



STATE OF MARYLAND - DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HYGIENE
REGIONAL INSTITUTE FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS-Baltimore

605 S. CHAPEL GATE LANE
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21229

301-455-6000

~~411~~

301-455-7473

301-270-3815 Home by 11:00
June 15, 1976

Mr. Percy Danforth
1411 Granger Avenue
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

Dear Percy:

Enclosed are the tapes a staff member here made for you. Please bring them with you because they are the only copies we have.

As per our discussion, we at RICA are eagerly awaiting your arrival on July 12, to July 14, 1976. As I need to schedule children and staff for those days, I would appreciate your sending me an outline of what times you think would be best. Our staff changes at 2:30 p.m. and I'd like the evening staff to have time with you too. So, optimally the sessions would start in the morning and run into the children's dinner hour (5:30 p.m.).

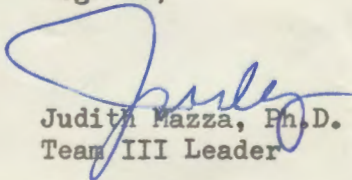
There are thirty children on the unit. It is one of five teams. I would like the thirty children to have the extensive workshop experience you provide, but thought perhaps you could do a short demonstration for the entire Institute.

Essentially, July 12, to July 14, 1976, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. is yours to schedule! Don't feel you need to fill all the time, just let me know what times you want and the materials you might need and I'll do the rest!

I'm greatly looking forward to seeing you.

Take care. Please let me know your schedule as soon as possible.

Regards,


Judith Mazza, Ph.D.
Team III Leader

JM/lh

Enclosures: 2

festival program
the 4th annual



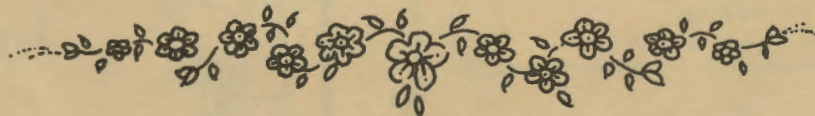
FESTIVAL

sunday, july 29, 1984

at riverfront park
Lansing

stage schedule

Noon - 12:30pm LADY OF THE LAKE
12:30 - 12:45pm PERCY DANFORTH
12:50 - 1:20pm JOEL MABUS
1:20 - 1:50pm KITTY DONOHOE
1:55 - 2:10pm UNCLE CLIFF and AUNT ALICE
2:10 - 2:40pm IOWA ROSE 'N RIFF RAFF
2:45 - 3:15pm "MADCAT" RUTH
3:15 - 3:45pm HAPPENDANCE
3:50 - 4:05pm PERCY DANFORTH
4:05 - 4:35pm JOEL MABUS
4:40 - 5:10pm LOS CAPITOLINOS
5:10 - 5:25pm UNCLE CLIFF and AUNT ALICE
5:30 - 6:00pm LADY OF THE LAKE
6:00 - 6:30pm QUACKGRASS
6:35 - 7:05pm FLYING TIGERS
7:10 - 7:40pm "MADCAT" RUTH
7:45 - 8:15pm IOWA ROSE 'N RIFF RAFF



The Looking Glass Music and Arts Association is a non-profit group organized in 1980 after recognizing the need for an association of area people who are committed to presenting music, dance, arts and crafts once common in our country, now overlooked by everyday mass media. Our members are of many different ages and backgrounds, professionals and not-so-professionals.

Your participation and ideas are welcome!

Stop by the information tent and sign up to get involved in LGMAA activities!

Workshops

1:00pm BONES Percy Danforth

2:00pm AUTOHARP Wanda Degan and John Kelly

3:00pm SONGS: WILD WOMEN DON'T GET THE BLUES

Kitty Donohoe, Karrie Potter, Jan Schultz,

Mary Sue Wilkinson

4:00pm HARMONICA "Madcat" Ruth

5:00pm BANJO Joel Mabus

Children's Area

There will be activities going on all day in the Children's Area beginning at 1:00pm and ending at 6:00pm.

SCHEDULED PERFORMANCES

1:30pm CHILDREN'S CONCERT Laura Stein

2:00pm NEW GAMES

2:45pm STORIES AND SONGS Tiyi Schippers

3:15pm NATURE COLLAGES

3:45pm PUPPETRY

4:15pm MOVEMENT WORKSHOP Happendance

The Looking Glass Music and Arts Association will be sponsoring a SQUARE and CONTRA DANCE on the 3rd SATURDAY of every month at FOSTER COMMUNITY CENTER, 200 N. Foster, Lansing, beginning in September. Callers will be BOB STEIN and JAN FOWLER with music by the HARDYTACK BOYS. Admission is \$3.00, dances will run from 8:00pm until 11:00pm. All dances will be taught. BEGINNERS WELCOME!



8-222 Osborne St. S., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3L 1Z3
Telephone (204) 284-9840 or 284-8487

ROSIE
GRP. 142 BOX 2 R R 1
VERMETTE, MAN. R0G 2W0

Percy Danforth

This is your personal invitation to appear as a guest to the 1983, 10th Annual Winnipeg Folk Festival Handmade Village. The dates are July 8, 9, 10.

Two very special people have offered their home & hospitality to you. They will give you a Warm Winnipeg Welcome

Let me know when you plan to arrive. We look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Rosie'.

PHILO RECORDS

means the finest in traditional and
contemporary folk music:

Margaret MacArthur

Utah Phillips

Owen McBride

Kenny Hall

Mary McCaslin

Jim Ringer

Bodie Wagner

Jay Ungar and Lyn Hardy

The Boys of the Lough

Rosalie Sorrels

Louis Beaudoin

Jean Redpath

and the latest releases of

Jean Carignan and

John McGreevy & Seamus Cooley.

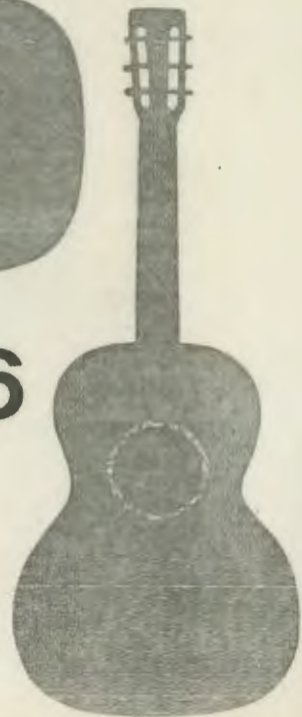
Philo Records are available in Mystic, Connecticut at "We
Connecticut Yankees"

Send for our free catalogue: Philo Records, Inc., The Barn,
North Ferrisburg, Vermont 05473



Connecticut Family Folk Music Festival

Elizabeth Park
Hartford, Conn.



Aug. 14&15, 1976

Festival Program

Free

Schedule of Events

SATURDAY, AUGUST 14

10:00 AM Workshops

See detailed schedule on next page

12:00 PM Children's Concert — Main Stage

Sandy and Caroline Paton
Barbara Freeman & Connie Regan
Jerry Jacques
Michael Cooney

1:00 PM Workshops

6:00 PM Concert — Main Stage

Johnnycake Mountain String Band
Barbara Carns
Portable Folk Festival
Bob Zentz and Ken Hicks
Sandy and Caroline Paton

SUNDAY, AUGUST 15

12:00 PM Workshops

2:00 PM Ancient Fife and Drum Music — Main Stage

2:30 PM Concert — Main Stage

Rick and Lorraine Lee
Barbara Freeman and Connie Regan
The Morgans
Arwen Mountain String Band
Michael Cooney

SPECIAL EVENT

— Saturday at 3 PM, Sunday at 1 PM, Children's Play Party Games for grades 1-5. Games that children played in colonial America will be taught by Floy Marks. Meet in the grassy area between the Pond House and Asylum Ave.

For the past three years the Connecticut Family Folk Music Festival has been free. Please help us keep it that way. During the Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon concerts, you will be asked to make a donation to help defray Festival expenses. Please give whatever you can. It will help keep the music flowing.

Workshops

Area A—Pond House stage

Area B—Main stage

Area C—Pond House pavilion

SATURDAY

	a	b	c
10:00	Guitar Michael Cooney John Davidoff	Banjo Bob Zentz Reese Griffen	Appalachian Dulcimer Lorraine Lee Jan Domler (2 hours)
11:00	Banjo Michael Cooney Rick Lee Don Sineti	Guitar Bob Zentz Chris Morgan	
12:00		Children's Concert The Patons Barbara Freeman & Connie Regan Jerry Jacques Michael Cooney	
1:00	Ballads The Patons	Folk Music In Education Jim Douglas	Pocket Instruments Tom Callinan Percy Danforth Tony Morris
2:00	The Bob Zentz Theory of Music Bob Zentz	Concertina Michael Cooney Jim Douglas	Supernatural Folk Music Bob Rodriguez
3:00	Sea Chanties Don Sineti	Fiddle Tony Morris	Bagpipes Workshop leader TBA

SUNDAY

12:00	Hymns Barbara Carns	Bluegrass Jam Session Arwen Mountain String Band	Music of the British Isles The Patons Chris Morgan
1:00	Music of the American Revolution Jim Douglas	Country & Western Rick & Lorraine Lee	Contemporary Music Ken Hicks & others TBA

OPEN HOOT STAGE — Got an urge to perform. The open hoot stage is open to anyone who wants to sing or play from 10 AM to Noon and 1 PM to 4 PM on Saturday. Located just south of the main stage area.



RATTLING BONES — Part of Bushnell Park crowd gets lesson in old-time music-making with "bones" made of pine. Demonstration took place during the folk music

and craft fair Sunday.

(Staff photos by Richard Spafford)

THIS MONDAY THE ARK PRESENTS



Doors open at 8:30

Starts at 9:00

Percy Danforth
FREE Workshop

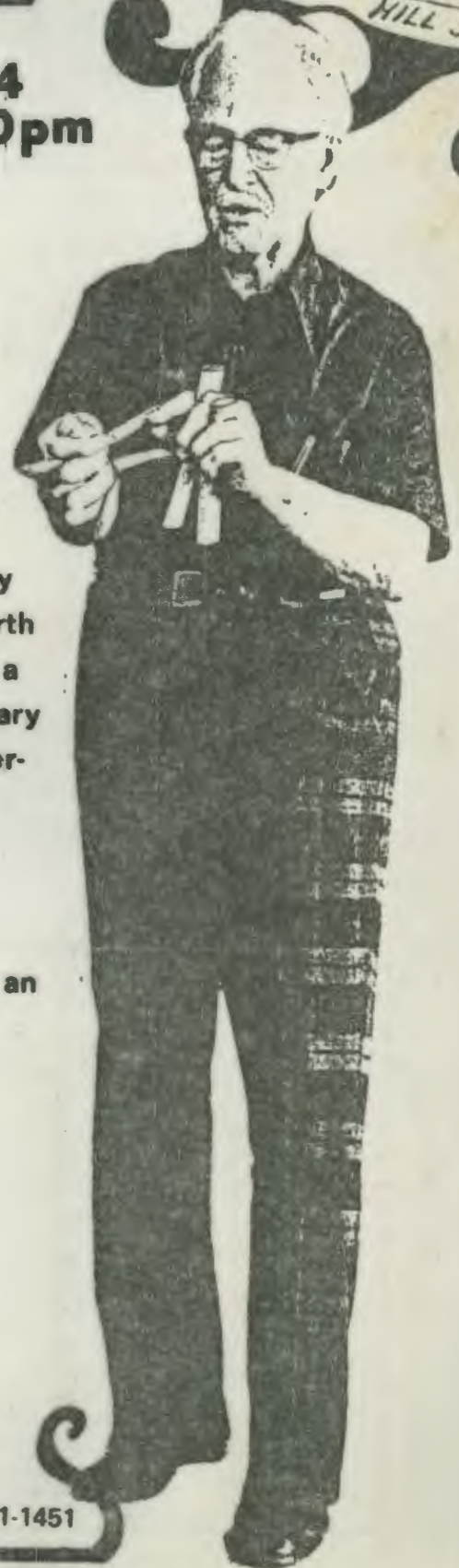
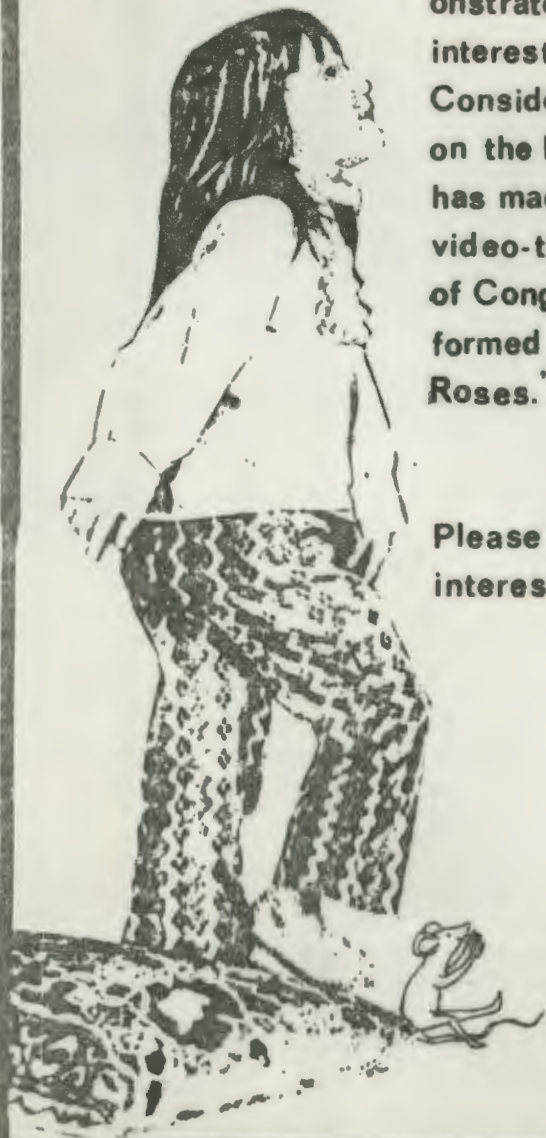
**NOV.24
7:30pm**

**"HOW TO PLAY & MAKE THE
BONES"**

Mr. Danforth will demonstrate and teach all interested people.

Considered an authority on the bones, Mr. Danforth has made a record and a video-tape for the Library of Congress, also he performed in "Bread and Roses."

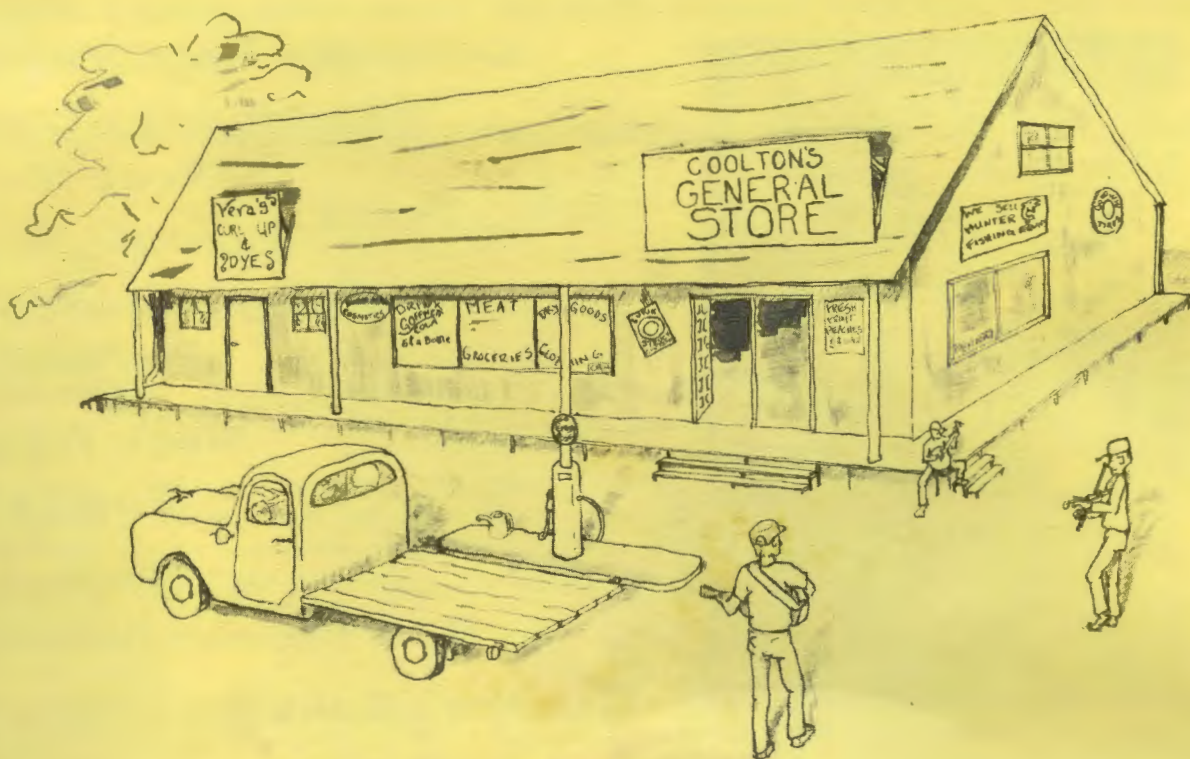
Please come it will be an interesting evening.



761-1451

Made possible in part by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts
and the Michigan Council of the Arts

WHEATLAND MUSIC ORGANIZATION'S



ANNUAL FESTIVAL

REMUS

1981

MICH

SUNDAY

MAIN STAGE

2nd STAGE

3rd STAGE

WORKSHOP LANE

*IN THE PINES

10:30 Gospel Time

11:15 Rich & Maureen
Del Grosso

12:00 Ken Bloom

12:45 Wilma Lee
Cooper & the Clinch
Mountain Clan

1:30 De Danaan

2:15 Dick TARRIER

2:35 Percy Danforth

3:00 BREAK

3:45 Bosom Buddies
with the Costa-
bella Cloggers

4:30 Fiction Brothers

5:15 Hotmud Family

6:00 Wilma Lee
Cooper & the Clinch
Mountain Clan

6:45 Henrie Brothers
with the Fiddle
Puppets

Music will finish at 7:30

11:00 FIDDLE CONTEST -

JUDGES: David Prine,
Andy Rogers
Paul Winder
Kerry Blech

12:30 BANJO CONTEST -

JUDGES: Howie Tarnower
Tyler Wilson
Bruce Zeeuw
Andy Cohen

2:00 MANDOLIN CONTEST -

JUDGES: Carrie Potter
Bruce Gartner
Bob McCloy
Joe LaRose

3:00 ADULT CLOG & FLAT-
FOOT DANCING CONTEST -

JUDGES: Fiddle Puppets
MUSICIANS: Henries &
friends

3:30 JUNIOR & ELEMENTARY
DANCE CONTEST -

JUDGES: Fiddle Puppets
MUSICIANS: Henries &
pick up band

MUSICIANS DURING FILL
TIME OF CONTESTS:

Mike Ross,
Footloose,
National Recovery Act

12:00 CAJUN MUSIC:

Henries,
Alan Senauke,
Gerald Ross

1:00 ACTIVITIES

FOR CHILDREN:
Ron & Jan Fowler

2:00 MAGIC

FOR CHILDREN:
Peter Schilling

2:30 MUSIC

FOR CHILDREN:
Sally Rogers
& friends,
Wilma Lee Cooper

3:00 MUSIC &

STORIES FOR
CHILDREN:
Dick TARRIER

4:00 SONGS &

TALES OF
MICHIGAN -
Bob Moy & Sally
Rogers, Chris
Ferrer & Tim Joseph

2:00 DOBRO:

Rich & Maureen Del Grosso,
Gene Wooten

2:00 GUITAR:

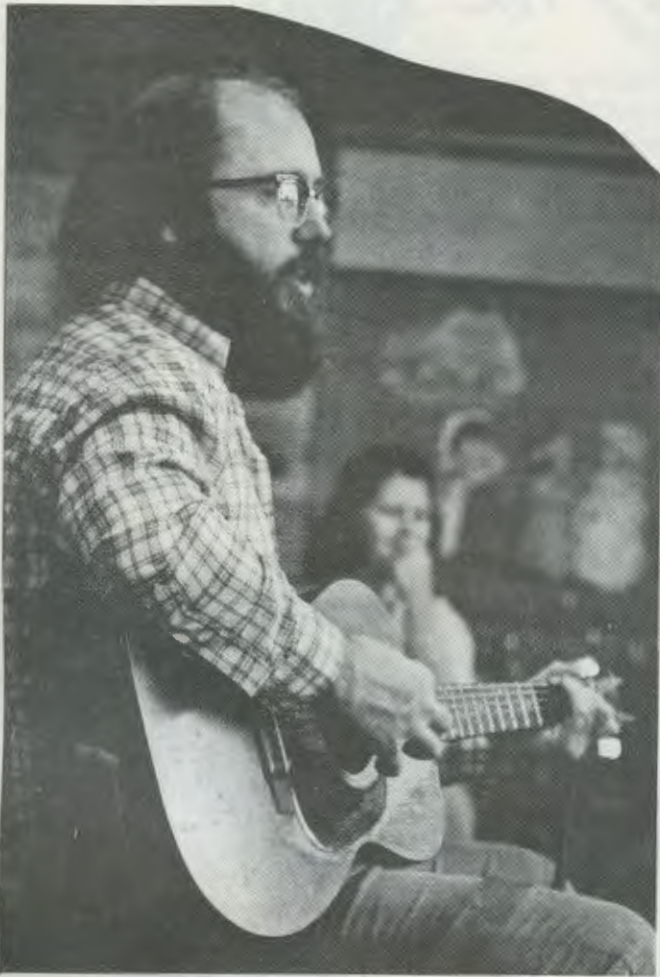
Ken Bloom, Fiction Brothers

3:00 ACCORDION:

Jackie Daley

BONES: Ongoing workshops
with Percy Danforth will
be taking place in the
tent beside 2nd Stage
on Saturday & Sunday
afternoons

DULCIMER: Ongoing work-
shops with the Sinclair
Brothers will be taking
place in the tent beside
2nd Stage on Sat. & Sun.
afternoons also



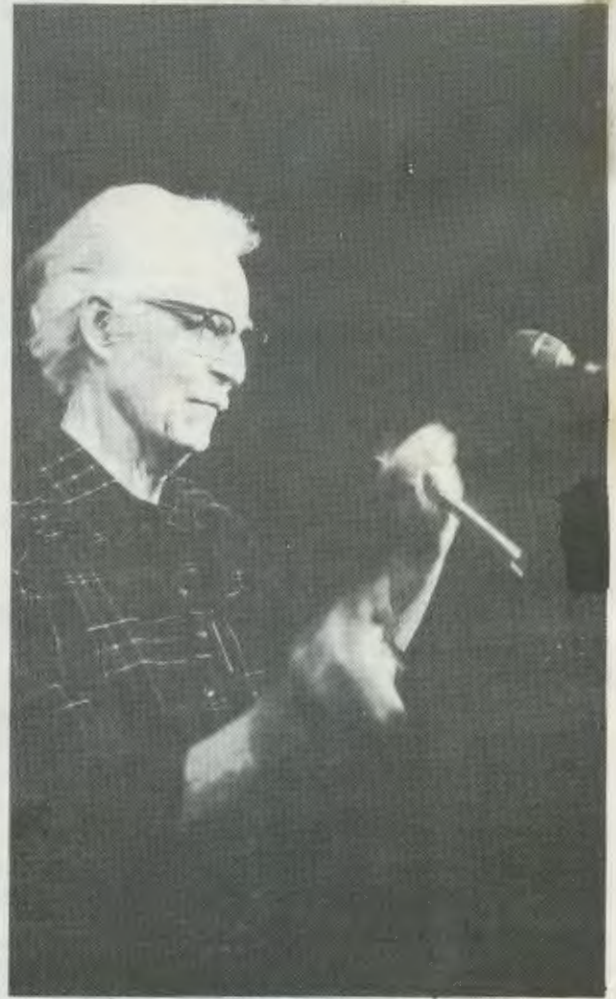
DICK TARRIER

Dick TARRIER is a musician and storyteller who specializes in children's programs. His programs contain activity songs and games, story songs, dance, and motion and movement for younger kids; and a wider range of material including traditional ballads, songs, instrumentals and stories for the older set.

Dick's programs are a valuable educational experience, but what stands out is the immediate, open communication between him and the children.

His first children's album, "Songs for Kids" (Wheatland label 003, children's series) was selected as one of the 15 "most notable" children's recordings of 1978-79 by the American Library Association.

Young and old alike are sure to enjoy Dick TARRIER on the main stage and at the workshops.



PERCY DANFORTH

Percy Danforth doesn't rattle or shake his bones. He plays them!

Despite his age, Danforth has no intention of retiring. Throughout his career he has continued research on the art of the bones. Since 1908, when he first became fascinated with the rhythmic bones, Danforth has experimented with special techniques for playing them. Originally, the bones were actually spareribs used as "clackers" to create dancing rhythms which were imitated later in tap dancing.

Percy Danforth never travels anywhere without a full compliment of bones. Most of Percy's bones are made of wood, such as hickory, walnut, white pine and balsa.

Wheatland is proud to present and pay tribute to such a fine, long-standing musician as Percy Danforth.

new & vintage

Elderly
INSTRUMENTS

folk music

541 East Grand River, P.O. Box 1795, East Lansing, MI 48823 (517) 332-4331

Your Complete Folk Music and Bluegrass Center

Since 1972

Since 1972 we've provided the Lansing Community with the best in acoustic instruments and repairs, as well as the largest selection of jazz and folk records anywhere.

In 1975 our first mail order catalog was printed. We've mailed out over 50,000 copies since then and now people all over the country (and the world) look to us as their neighborhood music store.

An enormous selection of

Guitars, Banjos & Kits, Mandolins, Dobros, Dulcimers & Kits, Harmonicas, Recorders, Autoharps & Fiddles

and undoubtedly the largest collection of

Fine used and vintage stringed instruments in the Midwest. - We Buy, Sell & Trade.

plus, believe it or not,

Bodhrans, Ukuleles, Irish Harps, Concertinas, Button Accordions, Pennywhistles, Ceramic Flutes
Musical Saws, Limber Jacks, Tabor pipes, Flexatones, Woods, real Bone-Bones,
Old-Time Postcards & Note Cards, Thumb Pianos, and Electric Guitars.

not to mention thousands of

Hard to find Books, Albums, Accessories and Much More!

expert repair and restoration - free estimates

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to use this coupon

Elderly

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just bring it along and show it to us, or
send us a tracing of it.









377. 13-18
15-160

A₅ F11 Sun

FRIDAY EVENING, JUNE 29, 1984
7:15pm PRE-CONCERT SCOTTISH PIPING. Mark Cushing

7:30pm CONCERT. Master of Ceremonies: Mark Schmidt
(Order subject to change.)
HEATHERBREEZE BERTRAM LEVY
MICHAEL COONEY SOLOMON'S SEAL
WALT MICHAEL & COMPANY GORDON BOK
FAITH PETRIC

11:30 pm COUNTRY DANCE. Callers: Michael McKernan, Jim Kimball, & John Kirk
Music: The Big Band Sound of Fennig's All-Stars

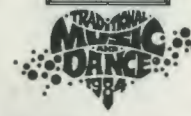
OLDSONGS FESTIVAL



SATURDAY EVENING, JUNE 30, 1984
7:15pm PRE-CONCERT SCOTTISH PIPING. Donald Lindsay

7:30pm CONCERT. Master of Ceremonies: Bill Spence
(Order subject to change.)
ELIZABETH COTTEN BURUNDI AFRICAN DANCE TROUPE
DONALD LINDSAY LISA NEUSTADT
GEORGE WILSON & ALLAN BLOCK LOUIS KILLEN
ANNE HILLS ERITAGE
CILLA FISHER & ARTIE TREZISE

OLDSONGS FESTIVAL



-SATURDAY, JUNE 30, 1984
-THREE PERFORMANCE AREAS & THREE PARTICIPATION AREAS-

#1: MINI CONCERTS	#2: REGIONAL TRADITIONS	#3: MUSICAL TRADITIONS	#4: PARTICIPATORY DANCING (Bring your dancing shoes)	#5: LEARN HOW! Participation: Bring your voice and instrument.	#6: CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES
10:00					Continuous activities at the tent; schedule is posted there.
10:30	10:30 - 11:15 WALT MICHAEL & COMPANY	10:30 - 11:15 SQUEEZING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR CONCERTINA L. Killen, B. Levy, G. Ward*, Mr. Whipple		11:00 - 11:45 HOW THE BAGPIPE WORKS D. Lindsay M. Cushing	
11:00	11:00 - 11:45 WOMEN'S SONGS THE LIGHTER SIDE Hoffman, Mangsen Hills* & Petric		11:30 - 12:30		
11:30	11:45 - 12:30	11:45 - 12:30 FIDDLE FIDDLE Comler, Block, Orzechowski, Broiles, Wilson*, & Levine	SQUARES Caller: John Kirk Music by: Double Decker String Band	12:00 - 12:45 MOUNTAIN DULCIMER Lorraine Lee	
12:00	12:00 - 12:45 TALES ... SHORT & TALL Graber, Neustadt* Killen, Bok, P. & M.A. Amidon				
12:30	12:00 - 12:45 MICHAEL COONEY				
1:00	1:00 - 1:45 NATURAL AND UNNATURAL DISASTERS Cooney, Kimball Ward, & Petric	1:00 - 1:45 NOT JUST ANOTHER BANJO WORKSHOP Double Decker, B. Levy, G. Wilson, R. Lee*, L. Lee	1:00 - 2:00 CONTRAS FOR BEGINNERS Caller: M. McKernan Music by: Brattleboro Brass Band	1:00 - 1:45 TIN WHISTLE Sarah Bauhan Mark Cushing	1:00 - 2:00 DAS PUPPENSPEIL PUPPET THEATRE "Little Red Riding Hood" (In sheep barn)
1:30	1:30 - 2:15 BURUNDI AFRICAN DANCE TROUPE	2:00 - 3:00 "WHERE'S THE MELODY?" Duets and Harmony R&L Lee, Mangsen, Hills, Michael & Co., Fisher & Trezise*, Cushing Fitzgerald, Gibson	2:30 - 3:30 STEP DANCING SIMPLE TO COMPLEX Caller & Music: Eritage	2:00 - 2:45 ANGLO CONCERTINA Bertram Levy	2:30 - 3:15 STORIES... Becky Graber (Children's tent)
2:00	2:15 - 3:00 SONGS OF THE MARITIMES Gordon Bok Raymond Phillippe				
2:30	2:45 - 3:30 MORRIS DANCING				
3:00	3:30 - 4:15 DOUBLE DECKER STRING BAND	3:30 - 4:30 IRELAND IN AMERICA Heather Breeze J. Burke*, A. Block		3:00 - 3:45 HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN MINSTREL SHOW Jim Kimball Betsy Gamble	3:30 - 4:30 DAS PUPPENSPEIL PUPPET THEATRE "Little Red Riding Hood" (In sheep barn)
4:00	4:30 - 5:15 BAG AND WIND (The Pipes of Scotland) Lindsay & Cushing Fisher & Trezise			4:00 - 4:45 12-STRING GUITAR G. Bok, M. Cooney, G. Wilson	
4:30	4:45 - 5:30 ERITAGE	5:00 - 6:00 INFLUENCES OF THE GRAND OLD OPRY Double Decker, G. Wilson, B. Levy, A. Hills, R&L Lee	5:00 - 5:45 CONTRA DANCING Caller: M. McKernan Music by: Brattleboro Brass Band	5:00 - 5:45 AUTOHARP Bonnie Phipps	
5:00	5:30 - 6:15 JOE BURKE			5:45 - 7:15 OPEN STAGE (Sign up at info. booth; drawing at 4:30 mainstage)	
5:30	6:00 - 6:45 MORRIS DANCING				

* Indicates workshop leader.
ALL PROGRAMS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

SUNDAY, JULY 1, 1984
-THREE PERFORMANCE AREAS & THREE PARTICIPATION AREAS-

#1: MINI CONCERTS	#2: REGIONAL TRADITIONS	#3: MUSICAL TRADITIONS 10:00 - 10:45	#4: PARTICIPATORY DANCING (Bring your dancing shoes)	#5: LEARN HOW! Participation: Bring your voice and instrument.	#6: CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES
10:00					Continuous activities at the tent; schedule is posted there.
10:30	10:30 - 11:15 GOSPEL SONGS A. Hills L. Neustadt* W. Michael & Co.	10:00 - 10:45 SACRED HARP M. McKernan M.A. & P. Amidon		11:00 - 11:45 BUTTON ACCORDION J. Burke R. Duelliet	11:00 PUNCH AND JUDY
11:00	11:15 - 12:00 CONCEALABLE INSTRUMENTS Phillippe, Baker Danforth, Kimball* Finley	11:15 - 12:00 TOPICAL SONGS M. Cooney*, A. Hills N. Hoffman, F. Petric	11:15 - 12:00 SINGING AND PLAY PARTY GAMES Graber, Neustadt P. & M.A. Amidon	12:00 - 12:45 GUITAR Scott Bennett	12:00 PUNCH AND JUDY
11:30	11:30 - 12:15 SOLOMON'S SEAL		12:15 - 1:15 REGIONAL DANCES OF QUEBEC Eritage	1:00 - 1:45 THE VOICE: IT'S CARE AND FEEDING Hoffman, Hills	12:30 - 1:15 P. & M.A. AMIDON (Children's Tent)
12:00	12:15 - 12:45 MORRIS DANCING			1:30 - 2:15 BRUCE HUTTON (Children's Tent)	1:00 PUNCH AND JUDY
12:30	12:30 - 1:15 GORDON BOK	12:30 - 1:15 IN MY OTHER LIFE R. & L. Lee* Trezise, Killen Storey, Fisher		2:00 - 2:45 TAKING THE MUSIC TO CHILDREN B. Phipps, G. Ward	1:30 - 2:15 PUNCH AND JUDY
1:00	1:30 - 2:15 CILLA FISHER & ARTIE TREZISE	1:30 - 2:00 MORRIS DANCING	1:30 - 2:30 CONTRA DANCE Caller: M. McKernan Music: Brattleboro Brass		2:00 PUNCH AND JUDY
1:30	2:00 - 2:45 SONGS OF MINES AND MINING Killen*, Hills, Mangsen, Cooney	2:00 - 2:45 PIPE DREAMS: SCOTTISH & IRISH T. Finley D. Lindsay* M. Cushing			
2:00	2:30 - 3:15 TIN PAN ALLEY Double Decker* Kimball & Gamble L. Neustadt Brattleboro Brass	3:00 - 4:00 19TH CENTURY BALLROOM DANCING Bertram Levy			
2:30	3:15 - 3:45 MORRIS DANCING				
3:00	3:45 - 4:00 PIPING: Cushing				
3:30	4:00 - 6:30 CONCERT MC: Marc Waggener Bonnie Phipps Ensemble Joe Burke Double Decker String Band Cushing, Fitzgerald, & Gibson Fennig's Big Band and the Karner Blue Cloggers	3:15 - 4:00 DAVEY JONES LOCKER G. Bok* L. Killen A. Trezise F. Petric			
4:00					

* Indicates workshop leader.
ALL PROGRAMS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

OLD SONGS FESTIVAL

of traditional music & dance

JUNE 29, 30, JULY 1, 1984

"In the Grove" at the Altamont Fairgrounds
Rt. 146 Altamont, NY

FRIDAY

ARTISTIC AREAS WEST GLADE

FOLK-PLAY AREA PERFORMANCE LEARN+DO

DANCE AREA

11:00	BACK-UP GUITAR :15 HOWS, WHYS, DO's and DON'TS :30 Hints + ideas from some experts :45 = Bill Garrett - Bob Frank	ONTARIO TRADITIONS The Schryer Family The Greenwood Steppers	SIMPLE STRING GAMES Camilla Gryski	CONTRA DANCING FOR BEGINNERS :15 LANIE MELAMED :30 MUDDY YORK :45	11:00
12:00	RHYTHM BASICS What's "on the beat" "off the beat" 2/4, 3/4, 4/4 time etc. Learn from - Eric Nagler	MORRIS DANCING WHAT and WHY Thames Valley Morris	HOW TO PLAY THE BONES Percy Danforth	THE ROMANCE IN DANCE :15 Kissing Dances, etc. :30 Sandy Bradley and the Small Wonder String Band :45 Tony Barrand	12:00
1:00	RECITATIONS and MONOLOGUES Some funny, some serious, some old some young All good. * Tony Barrand David Parry Jim Payne	MAKE ME LAUGH Sam Hinton Al Simmons	HOW TO DO A MORRIS DANCE	INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING :15 Lanie + Andy Melamed :30 Electricity :45	1:00
2:00	HARMONY WORKSHOP What is harmony What different kinds sound like, how to start learning, etc. Jan Robb Grit Laskin + Friends	THE REAL "SLEEPING BEAUTY" Whole Loaf Theatre	STEP DANCING THE GREENWOOD STEPPERS Show you how	PLAYING MUSIC FOR DANCING Tips, ideas, hints, do's, don'ts, etc. Sandy Bradley and the Small Wonder String Band	2:00
3:00	AUCTIONEERING How you learn to do it. Sandy Bradley	ONTARIO FAVOURITES Muddy York	ALL ABOUT DRUMS Bill Schwartz	BEGINNERS: Come learn what some of the calls mean for TONIGHT'S DANCE Cathy Reid The Schryer Family	3:00
4:00	EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE GUITAR Hints, ideas, history, demonstrations, simple repair, answers questions... Eric Nagler Bob Frank	ONCE UPON A TIME Stories with Sam Hinton Reed Needles Sandy Byer	HOW TO PLAY THE HARMONICA Chris Whiteley	OPEN DANCE Sign up to call...	4:00
5:00		CRANKY MOVIES Whole Loaf Theatre	SMALL AND UNUSUAL INSTRUMENTS Sam Hinton Eric Nagler		5:00
6:00		ERIC NAGLER	ALL ABOUT ACCORDION, CONCERTINA and PIPES		6:00
		Chris + Ken Whiteley			
		MAORI DANCERS	SQUARE DANCING		
		ECLECTICITY!			
				Toronto Country Dance Band	

REAS

FOLK-PLAY AREA

WEST GLADE

PERFORMANCE

LEARN + DO

DANCE AREA

HARMONICA WORKSHOP
Hints, ideas, history, styles, how to start learning, answers, questions...
Sam Hinton

JIGS, REELS, HORNPIPER, ETC. - THE DIFFERENCES
You always wanted to know, right? Here's a very pleasant way to find out.
* Eric Nagler
- The Schryer Family
- Rufus Guinchard

CALLING A DANCE
How - To's
There's an art to calling a dance. Here are tips + ideas.
* Sandy Bradley
- Tony Barrand

ELEMENTARY BLUEGRASS BANJO
What's bluegrass, the elements of the banjo styles, construction, etc.
John Saunders and Friends

AL SIMMONS
Who, what, why, how

EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE 5-STRING BANJO
Hints, ideas, history, demonstrations, simple repair, answers, questions...
Michael Cooney

WHOLE LOAF THEATRE
Who we are
What we do
How we do it
Come ask + listen.

LA BOTTINE SOURIANTE

MAORI DANCERS

DICK SMITH
shows all about
DRUMS, DRUMS, DRUMS

THE REAL "SLEEPING BEAUTY"

WHOLE LOAF THEATRE

PLAY-PARTY GAMES
LANIE MELAMED

LEARN A MORRIS DANCE

THAMES VALLEY MORRIS

SING ME A STORY TELL ME A SONG

SAM HINTON SANDY BYER

SONG-SWAP
Greg + Dere Canote
Jackie Washington
Eric Nagler

MORE STRING-GAMES
Camilla Gryski

MORE MORRIS DANCING
Caroline Parry

MAYPOLE DANCING!
Caroline Parry

HOW TO PLAY THE BOWES
Percy Danforth

EASY-TO-PLAY INSTRUMENTS
you play 'em
Eric Nagler shows you how.

HOW TO PLAY THE DULCIMER II
Caroline Parry

How A Guitar Is Made
Grit Laskin

ABOUT OUR PUPPETS
Whole Loaf Theatre

STEP-DANCING II
Learn how from
The GREENWOOD STEPPERS
RUFUS GUINCHARD

THE LOOK OF THE MUSIC
THE SOUND OF THE DANCE
* Tony Barrand and John Roberts
- Greenwood Steppers
- Thames Valley Morris
- Schryer Family

BEGINNERS:
Learn what the calls mean for some of tonight's dances.
LANIE MELAMED

QUÉBÉCOIS KITCHEN DANCE
Andre Arsenault
La Bottine Souriante

FOLK DANCE FROM EGYPT
The Traditional Arabic Music Ensemble

PLAYFORD DANCES
Lanie Melamed
Muddy York

OPEN DANCE
sign up to call

SCHRYER FAMILY

11:00

:15

:30

:45

12:00

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1:00

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2:00

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4:00

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5:00

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6:00

'Mr. Bones' turns 80 in style

By Rich Quackenbush

ARTS EDITOR

"Eighty's such a nice round number."

That's the word from Percy "Mr. Bones" Danforth, who turned 80 in style Tuesday.

The internationally known rhythm man was honored by fellow workers at Balance Technology, 120 Enterprise Dr., where he's worked full-time since 1968.

A full-time job at 80?

"OF COURSE I work full-time," Danforth said. "I've worked full-time for always."

"One of the things that keeps you remembering you're young is coming into an office with young people bouncing around. As personnel director out here, I've hired a lot of these people; we've grown up together."

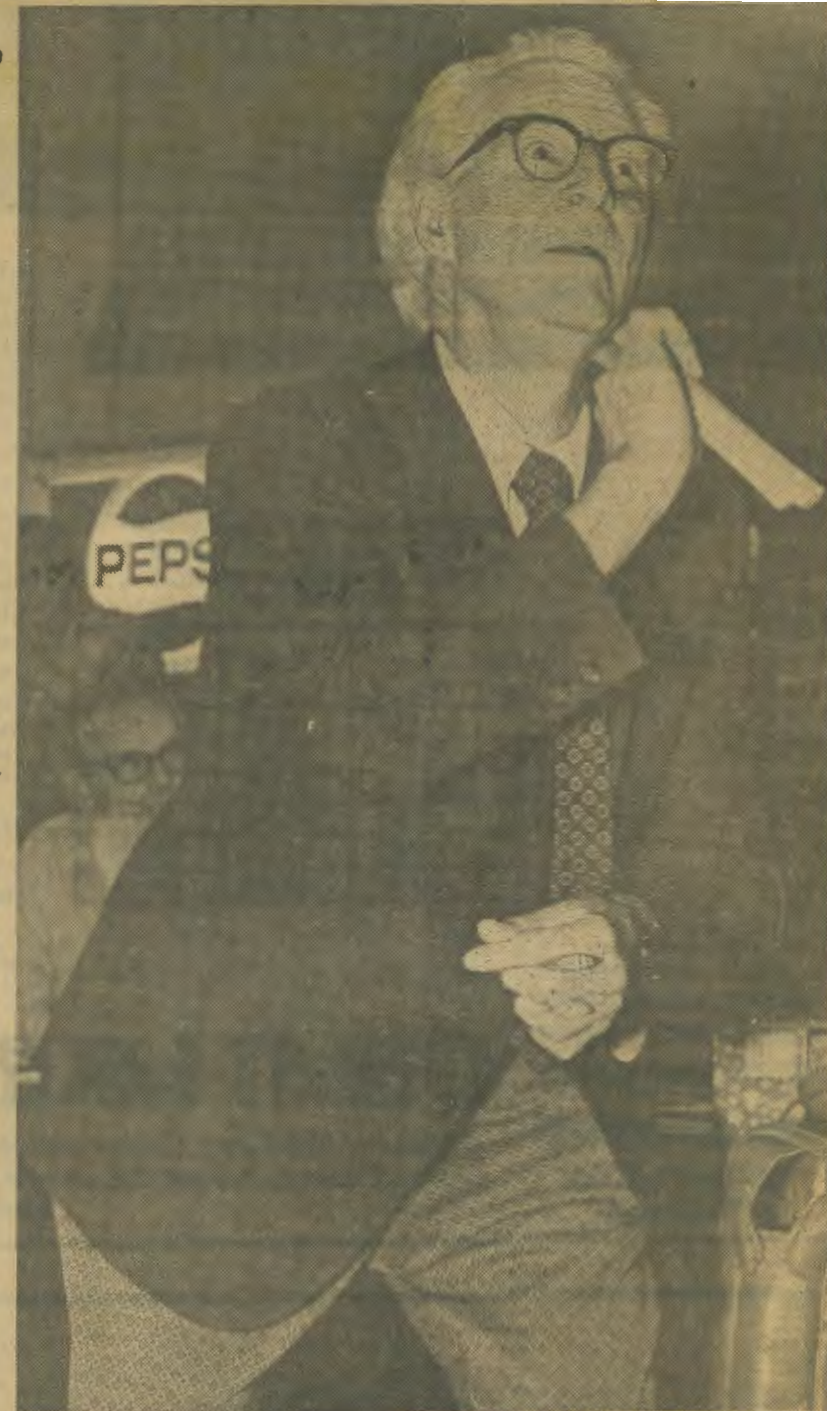
But when the Balance "gang," as Danforth calls his fellow workers, gathered for a surprise party for Danforth at noon on Tuesday, it was clear they were honoring a musician as well as a personnel director.

The top tier of the birthday cake was a piano and the cake's inscription said "Happy Birthday, Mr. Bones," complete with a pair of bones in icing.

TO TOP THAT, the "gang's" gift to Danforth was luggage and a round-trip plane ticket to London, England, where Danforth the musician will give a bones concert-lecture in July.

"I've reached a point where those bones seem to be wagging the rest of my life," Danforth said.

But that shouldn't be all that surprising. His emergence as a bones expert has been somewhat spectacular. While he



NEWS PHOTO BY DEBORAH QUELLETTE

Percy Danforth going clickety-clack at his party

played the bones as a youth and periodically over the years, clickety-clacking rhythms as little more than a hobby, it wasn't until the early 1970s that he began performing in concert and at folk festivals.

AND IT WASN'T all that surprising either that to thank his fellow workers at Balance on

Tuesday, Danforth became the entertainment at his party.

"I have a half-a-dozen or so pairs of bones on the corner of my desk," Danforth said. "One of my associates felt it would be nice to play at the party."

"I guess people just don't get tired of seeing a white-haired old coot pick up those bones and go at them."

By Norman Gibson

In addition to all its other virtues, Michigan is the hammer dulcimer capital of the world.

I learned this while talking with Warren Steel, who plays the instrument and will do so at the Nov. 12 session of Katherine Gotshall's Brunch on the Terrace at the Michigan Union.

Steel says the hammer dulcimer was on the verge of becoming an extinct instrument when it was rescued by the Dulcimer Players Club.

THIS IS a group formed by hammer dulcimer players in Sears and Mantont villages in Wexford County near Midland.

Henry Ford I, however, may deserve most of the credit for rescue of the instrument from oblivion. He put a craftsman who made the instruments and a musician who played them on the payroll of LeVitt Hall in Greenfield Village.

When Ford Motor Co. workers were invited to Greenfield Village for afternoons of enlightenment and entertainment, they would be treated to pieces on the hammer dulcimer.

OF COURSE, they should get nothing more than soft drinks and milk to sooth their parched palates, for Ford was a dedicated abstainer but think of the culture they absorbed.

Steel and his hammer dulcimer will appear in concert with Percy Danforth, who plays the bones, and Vincent Tufo, who plays the fiddle, at the Nov. 12 concert.

They will play dances which are traditional in the British Isles, America and Ireland.

"ALL MIX well," Steel says.

The group plays New England style dances each month at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church.

Tufo, in fact, began fiddle-playing in Ireland.

He, naturally, has a feeling for and access to music of this country.

DANFORTH'S playing of the bones is compelling for those who see him in action for the first time.

He can play solo or with other musicians.

With ragtime musicians, Danforth plays ragtime. With Steel and Tufo, he plays another variety of music.

THE BONES Danforth plays are made of pine.

He became interested in them when he heard "some black fellas" playing them under the gas street lights in Washington D.C. when Danforth was a boy.

They used sparerib bones, Danforth says.

AT ONE period in American history, bones were played in slave quarters. In another period, they were played in minstrel shows.

Danforth has come up with a design that allows the wooden bones to be mass-produced.

He has played the bones off and on through the years.

HOWEVER, it was only three years ago that he started performing in public.

His wife Frances was taking a musical heritage course at Eastern Michigan University. The subject of musical bones came up.

Mrs. Danforth mentioned that her husband played them. It was not long before Danforth was asked by the course's instructor to give a demonstration.

WORD GOT around and Danforth was invited to perform at a folk music concert given in EMU's Pease Auditorium.

Danforth was hardly ready for the reception.

He brought the house down.

AT ABOUT this time, he acquired the name "Mr. Bones."

The bones he uses are seven inches long, one inch wide and less than half an inch thick. His collec-

Mr. Percy O. Danforth
1411 Granger
662-3360

tion of 60 sets of different bones includes some of white pine, balsa, black walnut, hard birch, rosewood, ivory, plastic and even sparerib bones.

The wrist, arm and shoulder are important in playing the bones. Each hand holds two sticks. The sound is produced by letting one stick do the flopping while the other acts as an anvil.

FOR TONE color he adjusts the length of the bones. He puts rosin on the sticks to keep them from slipping.

They will play at from 10:40 to 11:15 a.m. Nov. 12 after a brunch at 10 a.m. They will play a second concert from 10:40 to 1:15 p.m. with brunch at noon.

Special menus for the popular brunches are worked up each Sunday by Christian Hubert, manager of the University Club.

*not Dal about Wm Steel Show + Game. Not
Kathy of Program + Dal's Comment to Danforth
not show me. Bones 100 of SR bones?
can guitar come?*

D'em Bones, D'em Bones . . .

Editor, The News:

Your recent (December 25, 1977) article on Fran and Percy Danforth, two of Ann Arbor's amazing people, was of particular interest to us at Eastern Michigan University.

Dr. Gilbert B. Cross of the English Department at EMU recently invited Percy Danforth to visit a class to discuss the history of, and demonstrate the use of "bones" as musical accompaniment.

Mr. Danforth discussed some of the history of the bones in minstrel shows, showed some samples of different types of bones, and "played" the bones to several different musical selections.

The interest created by your article about the Danforths can be further stimulated by seeing and hearing Percy Danforth on cable TV (Cable 9 in Ann Arbor) on Monday, February 6th at 8:15 p.m. and on Tuesday, February 7th at 9:00 p.m., in a program called "D'em Bones, D'em Bones."

This will be one of the few opportunities your readers will have to see on TV one of the many interesting local personalities who surface in this community. You are to be thanked for bringing these persons to the attention of Ann Arbor.

Verne W. Weber,
Eastern Michigan University
Television

'Doing the bones' made music that entranced city audience

By MARIAN MITCHELL
Standard-Times Staff Writer

A life-long addiction to "the bones" began for Percy Danforth, 76, of Ann Arbor, Mich., on a sultry summer evening on the wrong side of the railroad tracks of Washington, D.C.

The macadam expanse in front of Claymans Grocery Store at the corner of 15th and F Streets was the favorite playground for Danforth as a small boy and his friends. Once the old-fashioned

has reached that point, he may try both hands together with undulating movements of the body.

Percy Danforth never travels anywhere without a full compliment of bones, some of them handsome specimens made from animal rib bones like those which Zulu tribesmen must have used centuries ago in deep Africa. Marrow in real bones, he explained, gives a hollow sound.

Most of his instruments however, are

audience of varied ages at Tryworks. Danforth is a popular performer in solo or in ensemble, wherever he goes. He has made frequent appearance on television, and the University of Michigan's TV station has made tapes

of him which are shown in public schools. Thousands saw a recent performance in the large auditorium in the Ann Arbor Center for the Performing Arts.

He has worked with graduate students at the university's School of Music who have done historical research and written theses on the bones as a primitive instrument.

While he was in New Bedford, Danforth accompanied Organist Martha Pline for the prelude and postlude of the Sunday morning service at First Unitarian Church, New Bedford.

To Scott Joplin's "Elite Syncopation" and "Weeping Willow" Danforth contributed the haunting rhythms he had learned as a boy of 8 from the young blacks of shantytown.

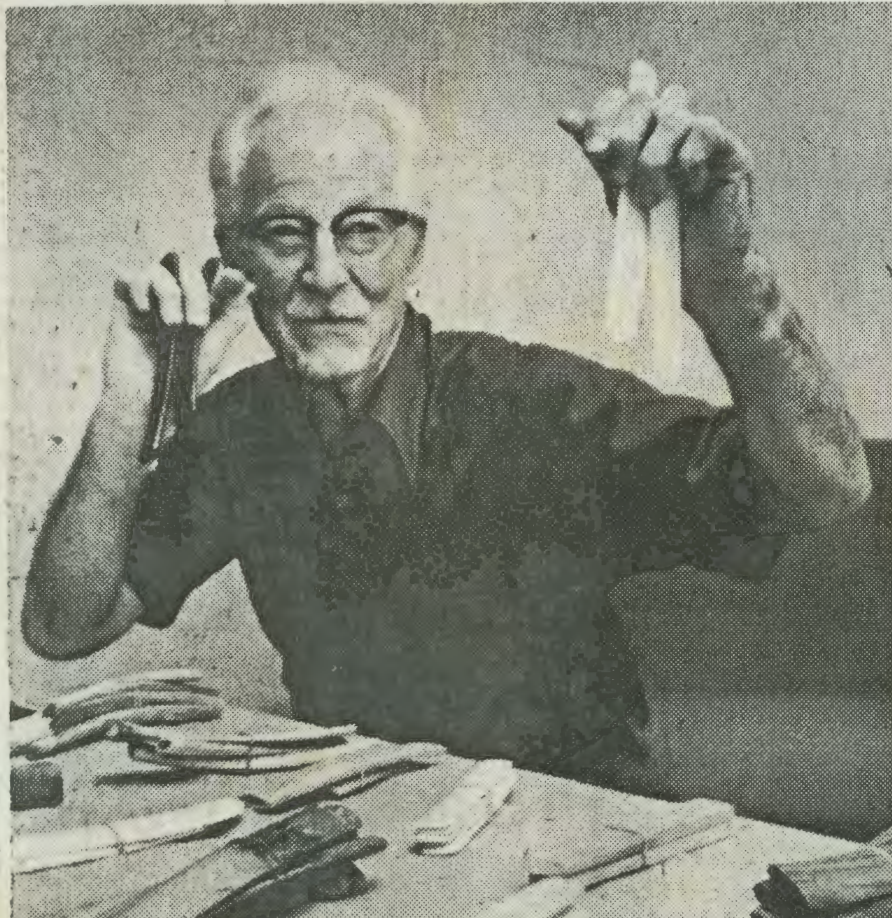
"When you put your whole heart into it, it becomes a kind of dance and it flows through your bones."

Observatory open to public

NORTON — The Wheaton College Observatory will be open on Thursday and on May 13, 20 and 27, if the weather is clear for viewing astronomical objects. The observatory, open from 9 to 10:30 p.m., is located east of Clark Center and the tennis courts; parking is available in the staff parking lot.

During May, the objects visible are Mars, Saturn, and the globular cluster M3. The moon will be visible only Thursday and May 13.

The public is invited to attend and should dress warmly.



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DANFORTH AVENUE

“DOING THE BONES” — Percy Danforth of Ann Arbor, Mich., shares with a New Bedford audience an ancient rhythmic art which probably originated in equatorial Africa. (Staff photo by Ron Rolo)

gas lamp on the corner was lit in the early evening, it became the shadowy theater for the young blacks of the neighborhood.

“They would throw sand on the sidewalk, get out the bones and do a soft shoe dance. It had the same quality as their singing of spirituals,” Danforth said in wistful reminiscence.

During a weekend here in early April, Danforth told New Bedford audiences about those summer evenings when he watched entranced the fluid, rhythmic movements of young bodies to the accompaniment of the bones.

“Their performance came close to what we call ‘soul,’” Danforth explained. “The young men seemed to be made out of India rubber. There was no conversation or music — only a lovely flow of rhythm.”

This resident of Ann Arbor finds it easier to demonstrate than to describe “doing the bones.” He showed audiences at New Bedford’s Tryworks, the East Fairhaven school and in the home of his hosts — Kenneth and Maggi Peirce — how to use a relaxed, clockwise, rotating movement, holding two wooden bones in one hand, with the ends of the bones acting as pivots.

“I start with a simple click, then a double and a triplet, then a triplet followed by a click.” when the learner

made of wood, Rosewood, lignun vitae, white pine, balsam — each produces a different sound color, ranging from the strident to a soft castinet-like quality. Although not authentic, bones made of wood — fashioned to order with “optimum geometry,” a phrase of which Danforth is fond — are a lot easier to find than the right shape of rib bone.

Percy Danforth has worn many professional hats. Originally an architect, he has found himself at different eras of his life as designer of elementary art courses for Monroe, Mich. schools, as art gallery lecturer, a 5th and 6th grade teacher in a university laboratory school, an artist, engineer and currently, in personnel work for an engineering firm.

Half way between 70 and 80, he has no intention of retiring. Throughout his career, there has been unremitting research on the art of the bones.

His wife, Frances, an ethnomusicologist, is sometimes dubbed “Mrs. Bones.”

Wherever he goes, Danforth is hard on the trail of other bones buffs, who appear to be a vanishing breed. When he came to New Bedford, another enthusiast made the trip from Washington to meet him.

Together, the two entranced an



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PERCY DANFORTH and his musical bones entertained guests at the 10th annual Pioneer Craft Fair held in Dexter last weekend. Making

his first appearance on the instrument is, at left, Dexter council trustee Jon Rush.



'Bones' Player Is Augusta Festival Hit

Arriving Friday afternoon at the Augusta Heritage Arts Workshop — and immediately gathering a crowd of people anxious to learn his art — is Percy Danforth of Michigan (left), America's premiere, old-time "bones" player.

Here, Danforth offers instruction to a few of the dozens of people who

crowded around to learn his technique.

Danforth will be among dozens of musicians, singers, dancers, craftspersons and artists who will be filling downtown Elkins with the tenth annual Augusta Festival. That festival climaxes five weeks of workshops in the traditions of Appalachia which opened in mid-July.

Isra S

WASHINGTON — Defense Minister Ariel Sharon said his nation has been studying the sophisticated tanks captured in the Sinai. "We know about which is still a threat to the Soviet tank — in the western world," Sharon said in a television broadcast.

Earlier, Sharon said that no T-72 were captured. The interview was conducted more than a year ago by columnist Jack Anderson on the syndicated television program, Jack Anderson's News.

Sharon did not say whether the Israelis captured the tanks may have been sophisticated weapons. He said they were taken into eastern Lebanon in 1974. He said they were used by the PLO against the Israeli army.

He said the Israelis had been studying the Soviet tanks since they were captured by Israeli personnel anti-tank weapons in 1974. He said the tanks were captured in Sam 6, Sam 9 and Sam 10. He described them as advanced surface-to-air missiles.

Sharon said the Israelis are studying the weapons to see if they can be used in the free world to fight terrorism in the future.

Anderson noted that the Pentagon has been studying the captured weapons since they were captured in 1974. He said the weapons are being studied to see if they can be used in the free world to fight terrorism in the future.

"I think we are studying the weapons ourselves," Sharon said. "We are ready to learn."

Then, noting that the Israelis have delayed delivery of the tanks to the PLO, he said:

Bones meets the piano man today and Saturday at the Blind Pig Cafe, 208 S. First St. Percy "Bones" Danforth, the Ann Arbor resident who's one of the few bones players still performing, clicks and clacks his bones at 9 p.m. both days with jazz and blues pianist Jim Dapogney's Easy Street Blue Five. Admission is \$3.

Gala 10th opening of Ars Mu

By Edith M. Leavis-Bookstein
MUSIC CRITIC

Ars Music Gala Benefit Concert

Concerto in C Major for two harpsichords and strings J.S. Bach
Cantata No. 304 "Mich bin in mir vergnueg" Bach
Intermission entertainment: Irish folk music
Capriccio Stravagante, 1626 Carlo Farina
Concerto in A minor for four harpsichords and strings Bach

(Ars Musica, with guest artists Percy Danforth, Elizabeth Humes, Marilyn Mason, Edward Parmentier, Tom Pixton, Warren Steele, Eric Sutherland, Vincent Tulo, and Evans Miragosa, opened its tenth season Friday evening at 8 o'clock in the Ballroom of the Michigan League.)

Ars Musica opened its 10th season with a gala evening of diverse and unusual entertainments Friday evening. The festivities included a J.S. Bach cantata, an intermission overflowing with Irish folk music and a slightly wacky quodlibet sandwiched between two specular harpsichord concerti also by Bach.

It was a feast. Very seldom does an audience get to hear four harpsichords at once, hardly ever on the same program with hammered dulcimer, fiddle, and bones.

The highlights of the evening were these two harpsichord concerti. They are wonderful pieces — glorious writing with idiomatic

passages for the solo instruments and intricate textures for the support ensemble. Four performers of the caliber of Crawford, Mason, Parmentier and Pixton are the stuff of which an audience dreams. They played superbly with virtuosic keyboard techniques while remaining in an authentic eighteenth-century context.

THE CANTATA was somewhat less successful. It was flawed by the problems inherent in positioning soprano Elizabeth Humes in the midst of the instrumentalists. This worked quite well in terms of ensemble, not so well in terms of audibility: her voice was simply covered up at times. This was a real loss. Humes, perhaps best known for her work with the Phillidor Trio, has a lovely voice, light, clear, flexible, capable of silvery pianissimi. At times, especially in the recitatives, accompanied only by continuo, the voice showed to good advantage, exhibiting a full, expressive dramatic range. But when immersed in the instruments the effect was that of an invariant mezzo-piano.

Those long dance-like phrases can be murderous enough for a singer without having to joust for

acoustical space as well. The ensemble was not weighty — the lyrical solo passages for two oboes and again for flute were quite buoyant. The arrangement was the main problem, one not easily solved without a clear conductor.

During the intermission the group provided a delightful change of pace. Some of the players switched instruments and with some guest artists provided the

audience with a half-hour of rollicking Irish folk tunes. All of the performers were talented, but the hit of this part of the evening was undeniably the bones player, Percy Danforth. Danforth will soon be making his debut at Royal Festival Hall in London. He captivated audience and fellow performers alike with his supple-wristed fireworks.

THE STRANGEST work on the

program was the piccio. It is a quodlibetous piece which juxtaposes known or ridiculous manner incongruous manner. Particular work contains effects, simulated flutes, fifes, and an Ars Musica audience has never heard this one before, but it even in the repetition intriguing to note the

Folk Musician Makes No Bones About His Skill

By KATHLEEN SALUK

"Do you know the bones?" Percy Danforth, 76, asked his young audience Saturday at the Connecticut Family Folk Music Festival.

Danforth, a folk musician and manufacturing executive from Ann Arbor, Mich., is one of many performers teaching about traditional folk instruments this weekend at the festival in Elizabeth Park.

Several hundred persons from throughout New England, New York and the East came Saturday to lie in the grass, wander by the lily pond and sit under shade trees, while listening to sea chanties, love songs and supernatural tales.

Danforth first learned to play the bones in 1908 from a minstrel showman, who taught the eight-

year-old beneath gas lights on Washington, D.C., streets

"I'll go anywhere to play the bones," said the white haired man, who will have performed at 15 music festivals before the summer is over.

Clacking together the two pine sticks honed in the shape of bones, Danforth began to dance. "You feel these rhythms and they just come out," he said.

Sporting a fine collection of bones, made from the real thing — cow shins and ribs, Danforth said the instrument can be used in dance routines for all musical tastes.

The third annual free music festival is sponsored by the Greater Hartford Folk Music Society, Hartford Parks and Recreation Department.

Sounding Board Coffee House and the portable Folk Festival.

There will be noon workshops today in hymns, bluegrass, fiddle, and ballads of the British Isles.

Ancient fife and drum corps music will be played on the main stage at 2 p.m. Colonial American children's games will be taught at 1 p.m. in the grassy area between the pond house and Asylum Avenue.

The festival will end with a concert, starting at 2:30 p.m. on the main stage, featuring The Morgans, the Arwen Mountain String Band and others.

"After the rock concert this is beautiful. And they're paying me for this," said Hartford Policeman Alan Avery, working at the festival.

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City Folk

By Jim Rigby

Julian, the Elizabeth Park grounds keeper, couldn't believe it. "There's nothing to do," he said after inspecting the area where several hundred people had gathered the night before to hear a concert at the Connecticut Family Folk Music Festival. "I went over the whole place and only picked up two pieces of paper."

If you were there to enjoy and take part in a musical experience at the festival, however, there was plenty to keep you occupied. If you didn't know the difference between a fiddle

song and a halyard chanty, someone could explain it to you. And no matter whether you wanted to hear blues or bluegrass, there was someone performing it, talking about it or selling records of it at the festival.

The music was hardly the innocuous "New Christy Minstrels" stuff that most people think of when folk music is mentioned. At Saturday's concert, Bristol's Johanycake Mountain String Band closed their set with a medley combining a French Canadian fiddle tune with the Grateful Dead's "Friend of the Devil." Bob Zentz and Ken Hicks sang a lively tune describing in vivid detail the plot

to rip-off peanut butter and sardines from the local Seven-Eleven store. Rick and Lorraine Lee performed songs written by flashy country music star Porter Waggoner on dulcimer and electric piano.

Although the concerts were the main

Conn. Family Folk Music Festival

minstrel show performer had taught him to play the bones in Washington's gas-lighted streets in 1908. At the other end, the goldfish in the park pond headed for deep water when Don "Moose" Sineti of the Morgans bellowed out a whaling song. Things were

"At one end of the Park, a 78 year-old former business executive demonstrated how a minstrel show performer had taught him to play the bones in Washington's gas-lighted streets in 1908. At the other end, the goldfish in the pond headed for deep water when Don "Soose" Sineti of the Morgans bellowed out a whaling song."

attraction, inducing some 2,000 people to come to Elizabeth Park on Sunday afternoon, they were hardly the only events to captivate festival visitors.

Many workshops were well attended by enthusiastic followers. Some sessions, especially those hosted by "stars" of the festival became mini-concerts. Others were almost academic, with one workshop leader distributing handouts on music theory and using a blackboard to illustrate his points. Still others were casual meetings of a few people on the grass to listen to the quiet plucking of a dulcimer or to hear someone tell a Cajun folk tale in Louisiana dialect.

People came to the park to participate as well as listen. A steady stream of local performers, some amateur, some semi-professional came to the open mike stage, where anyone who could gather an audience could sing, play an instrument, or tell a joke.

The diversity of people attracted to the festival ranged from retired couples dragging their lawn chairs to concert areas to Communist Party workers seeking signatures on a petition for Presidential candidate Gus Hall. At one end of the park, a 78-year old former business executive demonstrated how a black

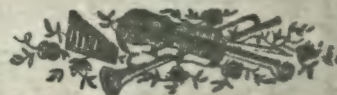
placid enough that a Hartford police officer making his regular rounds of the park had

See Folio's, Page 21

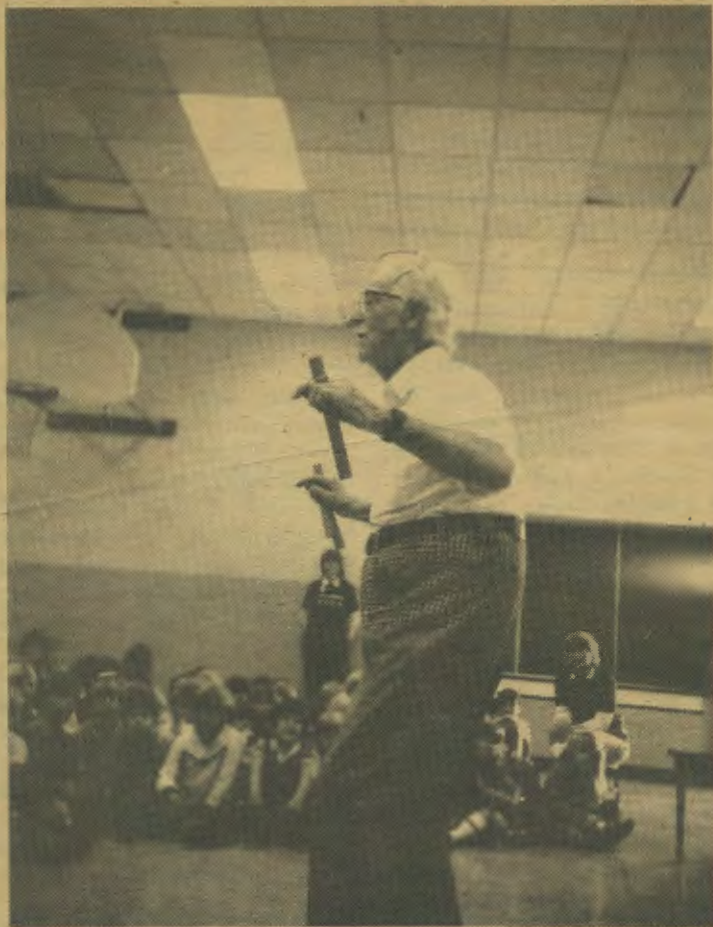


Joel Gordes of Colebrook and Lorraine Lee play a dulcimer duet on the grass at Elizabeth Park, while 78 year old Percy Danforth of Ann Arbor, Michigan shows two festival visitors how to play the bones.

(Jim Rigby photos)



"Bones" Concert At Klager



On Friday, October 5th at 2 p.m., Mr. Percy Dansforth came to Klager School and put on a mini-concert on the old and rare instrument, the "Bones."

More than 300 students and about a dozen parent visitors were delighted with the special opportunity to meet and hear "Mr. Bones." Some students even

had a chance to try to play the "Bones" themselves.

Percy's father gave him his first set of Bones in 1907, when he was seven years old. From that time on he has continued to play the Bones. In the last eight to ten years he has played the Bones professionally.

He is truly a Master of his profession.

Fete fills hills with old music

By Bennett Roth
Staff Writer

ALTAMONT — There was some rattling of bones at the Altamont Fairgrounds this weekend.

Percy Danforth, his white hair blowing in the wind, shook the two wooden sticks — known as bones — to the fiddling of the country music in the background.

"Me and these bones have been all over," said the 80-year old Danforth as he instructed two young ladies in the art of bone-playing.

The exotic combo was just one slice of musical life at the fourth annual Old Songs' Festival of Traditional Music and Dance.

For three days musical groups, dancers and craftsman are keeping the tradition of old music alive.

"It's a way of handing down traditional materials," said festival chairman Andy Spencer of Guilderland, who said artists are encouraged to play traditional works, not original ones.

See HILLS / B-10



Times Union photo by Skip Dickstein

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m left,
Kim Salvail, of Bennington, Vt.; Pam McCarthy, of Syracuse, and Jim Stone, of Bennington, enjoy lawn seats at the Kool Jazz Festival at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center Saturday. **Related stories, more photos on B-10, 11.**



Times Union photo by Mai Do



Times Union photo by Skip Dickstein

'Them bones, them bones, them young bones'

by Terry Hanna

There are 76 names for it, apparently, but I can only find two - Rhythm Bones and Unbelievable.

For a man as old as the Century itself to appear in the Guild Hall for close on two hours, knocking off musical demonstrations of the potential and history of the Rhythm Bones must take some doing.

"There are only two things you've got to know," claimed 80-year-old American Percy Danforth, "how to hold them, and how to click them. Some people confuse it with Chinese chop sticks... all we do is hold the bones and move the body."

With concert pianist and Oxford graduate Clare Jones providing the music, he proceeded to do just that. And despite there being only about 40 people in the huge Guild Hall, everyone watched enthralled and listened attentively.

Percy learned to play the bones from black soft-shoe sand dancers on the street corners of Washington, D.C. in the summer of 1908. But its

only the last five years that he's devoted so much of his time to it. He's been an educator, a registered architect, and is presently engaged as Personnel Director for a manufacturing corporation.

Four weeks ago he appeared with a group of people from Ghana and Nigeria at the Clear Water Revival Festival in Hudson, New York State, and "had to use Maple Bones to make sure the bones came through."

Not bad going when at his age he continues to perform at folk festivals across the States, on National Public Radio, and even on Hugh Downs's National TV 'Over Easy' show.

As if that's not enough, rumour has it that British TV are showing a keen interest. So perhaps we'll see him there for his 85th!

The Bones, not surprisingly, was the beginning of jazz. It evolved from all cultures in primitive times, but really

came to the forefront with the significant jazz breakthrough in 1931 on Broadway.

"They donned the material that gave the sound that fitted into the situation," and whirring, clicking and scraping blended into the Afro-American situation setting off hit songs such as The Peanut Vendor.

The blacks in the South had this bones background, but preferred their drums. They used them as signals, and although the Spanish and French were more easy-going, plantation owners banned their slaves from playing the drums.

"So they went back to the bones, invented the banjo, and in 1840 combined the two with the fiddle and the tambourine. Four men groups began doing the kind of things which developed into The Minstrel Show. They got to be so good that they were invited into plantations to play at parties. Now

that's what I call playing it real cool when the chips are down!"

What about his chips, I asked! Wasn't it a bit dicey at his age to switch from numbers which are "slower so that you can see what goes on" to ripping 'bee-bop' and more complicated numbers like Old Adam Chicken Scratch?

"I've been involved in it ever since the age of eight. Those soft-shoe sand-dancers were some sight. It got under the rib cage right into the heart. I found myself joining them in playing from the souls of their shoes, right on up. And that's quite a nice feel."

Therapeutic no doubt, and long, long lasting.

Clare Jones and Percy Danforth are touring London, Oxford and Cambridge. Duck, Son and Pinker sell bones at reasonable prices and judging by the audience's re-action to his after-show tuition training, they're selling well!



NEWS PHOTO BY LARRY E. WRIGHT

BONES AWAY — Old bones never die, they just keep on shaking and rattling away. That's what Percy O. Danforth (Mister Bones) did during his 81st birthday celebration at the Ark Wednesday. The bones are actually curved pieces of wood he uses to make rhythmic effects. He has been playing the bones in the area and at different places throughout the nation since 1973. The woman at the left is an unidentified bones buff.

J-P

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BONE TRY —
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from 'Mr.
Bones' himself,
Percy Danforth
at Kerrytown
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scheduled for
Nov. 2.

NEWS
PHOTO • COLLEEN
FITZGERALD

unforgettable character you never meet



MUSICAL BONES —
Students at North
Elementary in Chelsea got
a chance to try their
hands at playing the
'bones' last week after
learning some pointers
from Percy Danforth
(right).

NEWS PHOTOS • ROBERT CHASE



MR. BONES

If the Reaper can't find him,
it's because he's seldom home

By JEFF MORTIMER
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

*God knows
everybody gotta go
sometime.*

— Barbara Keith

You know it and I know it and God knows it, but sometimes it's possible to wonder if Percy Danforth knows it.

The 83-year-old Danforth, universally known as "Mr. Bones" after the hand-held, hardwood strips from which he wheedles the most amazing music, suffered two heart attacks last October, was hospitalized for 5½ weeks and still attends a cardiac rehabilitation program twice a week.

"My ticker missed a click," he says.

In mid-May, he was on his way to perform at the Strawberry Festival at Pioneer High. "I tripped over a bum place in the curbstone and knocked my shoulder out of joint," he says, "but I got right up and went in and played the concert, then dashed over to emergency at Saline Community Hospital to see whether I'd busted anything or not."

He hadn't. "But has that been a toughie to get rid of," he says.

Almost as tough as the after-effects of pneumonia, which put him in the hospital again shortly after his fall. "I can't tell whether the pneumonia put the seat of my pants a little close to the sidewalk or not," he says. "I haven't quite gotten my strength back."

He has, however, gotten enough of it back to perform at the Winnipeg (Manitoba) Folk Festival this coming weekend. He has also managed, since his heart attacks and in between bouts with bum shoulders and pneumonia, to perform at a festival in upstate New York, in addition to the Strawberry Festival, and he plans to purvey his percussive prowess in Philadelphia, Elkins (W.Va.) and possibly Louisville before the summer is out.

Percy Danforth is going, all right, but all his desti-

See MR. BONES, A4



Percy Danforth put on a late evening jam Tuesday for a News photographer, in bad shape know he's still in action

Wouldn't testify again, 'Student D' says a

By JOHN DUNN
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

head. No.

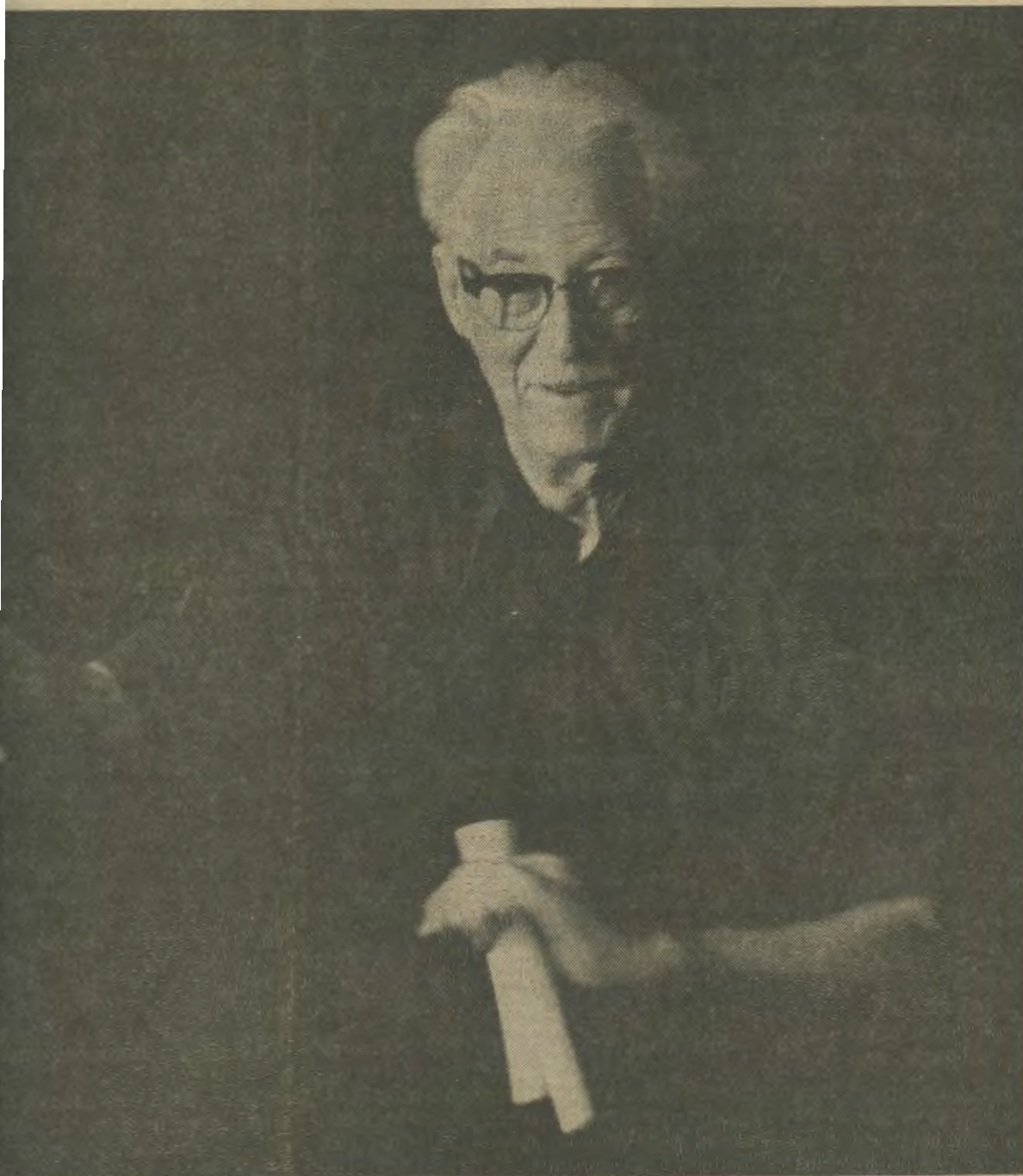
The youngster had spoken in a

mates who figured out that he was

one of the students who testified

presenting Caruso and sch

ministrators.



NEWS PHOTO • RICK LIEDER

on a late evening jam Tuesday for a News photographer, just to let all the folks who heard he was
e's still in action

Plan would cut weather service

FROM WIRE AND STAFF REPORTS

WASHINGTON — A National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration-sponsored study, released last week, recommends creating a new, automated national weather service by the year 2000, cutting in half the number of employees, closing 90 percent of weather stations, eliminating the weather radio channel and encouraging private companies to provide weather services.

If adopted, the plan would slash the weather service, but spokespersons in Ann Arbor and elsewhere were skeptical that the proposals would ever be put into effect.

According to the report, the new high-technology weather service would take 15 years to put in place and would cost about \$680 million. But the report said the proposal will eventually result in savings of about \$38 million a year by transferring or firing 1,700 weather service employees, cutting the number of observation stations that monitor local conditions and alert communities to weather problems from 269 to between 25 and 50 and eliminating the weather radio channel now used by 3 million to 5 million people, primarily boaters, but including others who want to keep track of weather continuously or in detail.

NOAA spokesmen said the 150-page report, prepared by the consulting firm of Booz Allen & Hamilton Inc. at a cost of \$235,000, has not been adopted and won't be for as long as a year.

NOAA already has made plans independently of the report to begin cutting back its staff and turning over some weather service functions to private companies.

The staff of the field offices would be cut almost in half, from about 3,950 to about 2,190. All 300 or

'Student D' says after hearing

ates who figured out that he was presenting Caruso and school administrators. Commission. As of Tuesday, Ann Arbor school administrators had



NEWS PHOTO • RICK LIEDER

Percy Danforth put on a late evening jam Tuesday for a News photographer, just to let all the folks who heard he was in bad shape know he's still in action

ify again, 'Student D' says after hearing

mates who figured out that he was one of the students who testified
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presenting Caruso and school administrators.
The board — which acted as a Commission. As of Tuesday, Ann Arbor school administrators had not received word of any appeal

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'Mister Bones' With Young Admirer Avril Harvey

He Makes No Bones About It!

**BY JIM KANE
News Staff Reporter**

Seventy-five-year-old Percy O. Danforth doesn't rattle or shake his bones. He plays them!

In fact, Danforth has been gaining quite a reputation lately clackety-clacking and clackety-clicking his way about town. His "bare bones" of the musical profession are actually four pieces of wood he uses to make rhythmic effects.

According to Danforth, the bones date back at least to ancient Egyptian days and probably even further. However, his association with the bones only goes back some 65 years to Washington D.C.

He recalls his family lived on the fringe of the city near a black community then.

"Some black fellas used to come over to our neighborhood at night and dance under the gas street light. They didn't have any street lights in their part of town."

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"Some black fellas used to come over to our neighborhood at night and dance under the gas street light. They didn't have any street lights in their part of town."

As Danforth sat on a bread box in front of the local grocery store, he remembers the dancers would throw some sand on the sidewalk, do a slow shuffle and play the bones. They used sparerib bones, not wooden ones.

Danforth notes the bones were played in slave quarters throughout the south and were later made popular in minstrel shows. He says this instrument is part of American folklore and of our nation's cultural heritage.

He is the only known bones player in this area. However, there are two other fellow performers he knows of in Michigan.

As a youth Danforth tried his hand at playing the bones and periodically played them through the years. However, he really didn't get into his performing until two years ago. Then, his wife Frances was taking a musical heritage course at Eastern Michigan University. When the subject of the bones arose, she mentioned her husband played them. Shortly thereafter, Danforth was invited by the instructor to visit the class and give a demonstration.

"Before I went to the class, I wondered about the potential of the sounds and I developed some clicks," he said.

His first public performance was at EMU's Pease Auditorium during a folk music concert.

"My playing really brought the house down. I was just flabbergasted. I didn't play too well then," he recalled. It was about this time he acquired the name "Mister Bones."

The bones are pieces of curved wood. They are seven inches long, one inch wide and less than a half-inch thick. His collection of 60 sets of different bones include some made of white pine, balsa, black walnut, hard birch, rosewood, ivory, plastic and of course the real thing — sparerib bones. His wooden varieties are made by an area farmer.

The technique behind playing the bones is a matter of dexterity and relaxation, he says. Each hand holds two sticks. The sound is produced by letting one stick do the flopping while the other stick acts as an anvil. The whole process involves moving the wrist, arm and shoulder.

When the bones sound the same, he has the desired rhythmic coloring. For different tone color, he adjusts the bones' length. Rosin is applied to the sticks to prevent them from slipping.

Although the bones are usually played along with a piano, they have also been played with hammered dulcimers, organs and banjos. Danforth also has done a few solos.

"Before I do a piece, I listen to a recording of the selection and look at the sheet music. I must feel the beat for a tune in order to play it. I don't know how to read music, so I figure out the time mathematically."

Although Danforth has played various types of music with his bones, he enjoys performing ragtime the most.

There's a lot of subtle qualities and different textures to ragtime. You can do a lot of variations."

Since his debut two years ago, Danforth has been in great demand. He performed at the jazz-ragtime festival in Detroit last June, the Ann Arbor Street Fair last July and the Saline Fair last September. He played during the University Players' production of "Bread and Roses" and at the Unitarian Church's ragtime orgy last winter.

"This is all relatively new. It's just a deluge of interest all of a sudden. There's nothing professional about my playing. It's just a hobby."

Although he is not from a musical background, his family is very musically-inclined. His wife gives piano lessons at their home, 1411 Granger. Their son, Malcolm, is band director at Saline High School. A second son, Douglas, although not a professional musician, plays the clarinet and guitar.

Danforth's background is as fascinating and varied as his talent.

He came to Ann Arbor in 1918 and studied chemical engineering. Danforth served a brief stint as a member of the Student Army Training Corps (SATC) from September to December, 1918. He later switched his major to architecture and received his degree in that field in 1927.

Danforth had his own architectural firm in Monroe from 1929 to 1934. He joined the Monroe Schools and designed an elementary art curriculum for the school system. He also taught art for five years there.

Spurred by his great interest in art, Danforth returned to the U-M and later received a master's degree in art education. His plans to obtain a Ph.D. in education were interrupted by World War II. The ensuing war years were spent helping to design the various components for B-24 bombers at the Willow Run bomber plant.

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A beautiful article - Congratulations - Enjoyed very much

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Following the war, Danforth later became supervisor of mechanical engineering at Bendix Corporation's Industrial Metrology Division. Since 1968, he has been working at Balanced Technology Inc. off Enterprise Drive in Scio Township. There he "wears all kinds of hats" including sales and engineering.

Despite his age, retirement is definitely not in Danforth's plans. He and his wife have a house in Cape Coral, Fla. which they built seven years ago as a retirement spot. However, they have been so busy and having so much fun in Ann Arbor, they haven't gotten around to using it.

"Playing the bones is a lot of fun. I keep on discovering new possibilities with rhythm and tone colors. Eventually I'd like to invent a nomenclature to make possible notation for the playing of the bones. There's no record or written description of bones playing now," Danforth says.

He has worked extensively with Sue Dunn, a graduate student in ethnomusicology at the U-M's School of Music on a study of the history of the bones.

"The bones are more than just a percussion instrument. It's an art form," Danforth says.

Somehow you feel in your bones he's right.

Kindest regards to you and Fran - Geraldine

Join the Danforths for an eclectic

By CONSTANCE CRUMP
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Marimbas and xylophone, piano and bones — the variety of instruments reflects the diverse music on the program Saturday night at The Ark as Frances and Percy Danforth present a joint concert.

The Danforth collaboration, **PREVIEW** musical and otherwise, has lasted well over a half-century. They celebrated 60 years of marriage last summer. Their offspring — two sons — are both clarinetists and music educators.

Percy Danforth, 87, (also known as "Mr. Bones") plays the instrument known as the bones, a pair of shaped and polished wood sticks, that combines simple rhythms in complex patterns to accompany music from Mozart to ragtime.

The bones look easy, but it takes skill to do more than tap the two sticks together.

"All you need to know is the staccato tap and the triplet," Mr. Bones explains. "The problem is holding the bones, if you're going to use 'em as a musical instrument."

His hands fly through the air, bonelessly gesturing.

"When I'm showing people the bones, I like to show a series of tap patterns," he continues. "If you know those things, you can get into improvisation. I kind of like to roll with the punches."

Frances Danforth, 84, (known as Fran, not "Mrs. Bones") is an internationally recognized composer of contemporary music.

She says, "I don't care two cents about performing in public. I love to teach and I like to compose — when I get the time and I'm in the mood." Her compositions will be performed by pianist Carol Leybourn and timpanist Eric Scorce on Saturday night.

She retired last year after 50 years of teaching private piano students. In an interview last week, she recalled her first piano student, in Monroe at the beginning of the Great Depression.

"I had one student then," she remembers. "I charged 50 cents a lesson."

"And when that student came,

Percy Danforth is the more outgoing of the pair — 'Everybody falls for him,' says Mrs. D. 'I can't blame them. I did myself' — but she's no piker.

we had 50 cents," her husband confides.

She was a prime mover in organizing the Piano Teachers Guild in Ann Arbor in 1961 and attracting a branch of the National Piano Teachers Guild to town the same year. She was the first Ann Arbor teacher to be certified by the Michigan Music Teachers Association.

"I'm a percussion *nut*," Fran Danforth says. "If I have a chance in another life, I'm going to be a percussionist. A piano always sounds like a piano. An organ always sounds like an organ. Percussion music is so colorful, on such a variety of instruments. Think how helpful that would be for me composing."

"Rain Forest" was her first successful composition, she says. Written in 1982, to show that percussion instruments can be subtle, it's based partly on African rhythms, partly on Australian aboriginal themes. It was selected for performance by the Percussive Arts Society at the Charles Ives Center in Rochester, N.Y.

Challenged to draw a picture of the sound she wanted to create with a piece, Danforth wrote "Into the Vortex," inspired by a stuntman going over Niagara Falls in a barrel.

"Swishy and whirly, then bumping down over tree stumps, over the falls, whirling down and up, and up, and up into the ether," she describes the short piece that combines electronic tape and live performance.

"Into the Vortex, a Dialog for Timpani and Tape" will be performed at Saturday's concert. Leybourn will play Fran Danforth's 12-note system "A Suite for Piano" in

three movements and "Karelian Light," a short piece that's been performed in the Piano Teachers Guild concert series.

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The accessible nature of his music puts her cerebral compositions at a slight disadvantage.

"Here I am, formally trained, with a masters degree, (from Eastern Michigan University)" Fran Danforth complains mildly. "He doesn't read music but he has a following, not only for his charisma, but for the way he plays the bones."

"A couple of rags and Mozart's 'Turkish Rondo'" is Percy Danforth's casual plan for Saturday evening. He'll perform accompanied by the U-M School of Music Marimba Ensemble. "Dizzy Fingers," a duet with Leybourn, will be part of the show as well, spotlighting Danforth's different styles.

The bones, he says, were first documented more than 5,000 years ago on a vase from the eastern Mediterranean. He's in the process of documenting the ancient art of the bones with video, photos, cassettes and a notation system.

"He turns it into a dance," Fran Danforth observes. Her familiarity with the bones bred only contempt until a few years ago, when a joint musical venture between Percy Danforth and choreographer Liz Bergmann led to a noteworthy dance improvisation.

Bergman had heard Percy Danforth practicing and remembered the music for two years, until a chance meeting led to a three-month collaboration.

"Up to that time," Fran Danforth recalls, "I must confess, I'd turned my nose up at the bones. After that, I could see that the bones had a place. When we got home from a rehearsal, I said, 'You know, I've never really appreciated the bones, but *that* was beautiful.'"

'An Evening with Fran and Percy Danforth' will take place Saturday at 8 p.m. at The Ark. Tickets are \$7.50; \$6.50 for members and students.



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NEWS PHOTO • JIM JAGDFELD

Percy and Frances Danforth celebrated over 60 years of marriage last summer. The two have pursued different routes musically, with 'Mr. Bones' a popular performer and Frances Danforth an accomplished composer. The Ark will host an evening of each Danforth's musical specialty Saturday

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PORTER

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ANN ARBOR NEWS PHOTO BY CECIL LOCKARD

Percy Danforth started playing the bones as a boy of 9 in Washington, D.C.

Big bash to mark number 82

How you can start rattling the bones

By Norman Gibson
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Cavemen probably were the first to discover that dried bones hitting each other would make pleasing musical clicks. It must have seemed to them a good diversion as they tried to warm themselves by the fire in the cold dank caves.

Other cavemen, no doubt, liked the sound, so the first bone musicians were born. If the bone players insisted on playing their new instruments too late at night, maybe the other cavemen, who were trying to sleep took out after them, and war was born. But that's another story.

BY HOLDING THEIR hands higher or lower on the bones, they could make the pitch sound higher or lower. By varying the short silences between the clicks, they could vary the rhythms. They might even have had bone bands with everybody clicking together in time or in counterpoint.

When Africans were shanghaied to this country as slaves, they found the bones close at hand and cheap musical instruments. On the plantations or in the ghettos where they were forced to live in suffering, some of them became quite proficient.

MAYBE DANFORTH'S performances are so enthusiastically received because bones playing looks so simple, can create such complex and exciting rhythms in the right hands. Even different tones can be created.

Danforth says there are three basics — three things you have to know to get started.

"You have to know how to hold them to play them," he said. "You put one between the first and second fingers and the other between the second and third fingers. Sometimes you will put the second bone between the third and fourth fingers to give a softer click. You hold one bone like an anvil and use the other to whiplash against it.

Next, you do a simple little staccato tap. Danforth said you imagine something is on the end of the anvil bone you are holding rock steady between your first and second finger and that you are trying to pluck it off with the other bone.

THEN YOU LEARN to move your fingers up and down the bones so that different tones are created. You learn to do the roll.

After you have become fairly proficient in these basics you learn the right, left and accented roll, the right and left tap, the flam, two-tap, random pattern, three/four, two/four-three-four patterns, the two/four tap-three-four roll, the two-four roll/ three-four roll.

After these, you can go on to broken roll patterns, roll and tap patterns, the triplet, triplet patterns, seven-beat roll, 13-beat roll, the low pitch-high pitch shift.

Then you learn to crescendo, tune for sound quality and dynamics, continuo with big beat and a variety of patterns, the long roll, the delayed four-tap roll and moods through various materials for bones.

"You don't play the bones with the fingers," Danforth said. "You play them with your wrist. You play them with your whole arm—your whole body, from the soles of your shoes upward!"

THERE ARE BONES players and there are "bone rattlers," Danforth said

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When he goes to a folk festival, he takes a supply of bones with him. When they want to know how he plays the bones, he just happens to have some to sell. He gives them a few instructions and they clack the bones together.

They rattle the bones.

But they are not bones players.



PHOTO BY CECIL LOCKARD

'You have to know how to hold them'

Happy birt

By Norman Gibson

NEWS STAFF REPORTER

Percy Danforth has a snappy routine.

He goes clickity-clickity, hundreds of times a second, like a whirling dervish, and that's why they call him Mr. Bones.

Bones is still doing his act, though he's almost 82.

In fact, they will have a big party for him at the Ark on Tuesday, March 11, the very day of his birthday anniversary. It will be a big bash for Old Bones.

And Bones will play the bones, with all the energy and enthusiasm he has had during the past 72 years — he started as a boy of nine in Washington, D.C.

He did the same thing on his 81st birthday and they tried to pay him. He contributed his fee to the Ark.

Mr. Bones is going better than ever.

He will work only about half time at Balanced Technologies, where he had been working full time as personnel director.

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Until then, he never would have thought about retiring.

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"They see this white-haired old bunny get up there and they wonder, 'what's he going to do with those things?' I guess I surprise them with what I can do."

playing the bones," he declared.

Danforth was on the way to play at Heritage House. He was going to click and snap the bones to the works of such revered composers as C.P.E. Bach and Scarlatti, with Margaret Bow at the piano.

Taking on the classics is a more recent accomplishment of Mr. Bones-Danforth.

"In the last year and a half, I have found a nice challenge with the likes of Scarlatti and Mozart," he said. "I have played a lot of folk festivals. I played jigs, reels and other music. Ragtime is fun, too. It is different from jigs and horn pipes."

At his birthday party, he will play with the Brown Bag, which features an accordion, clarinet, Bulgarian drum and a couple of fiddles.

He listens to tape recordings over and over, while in the bath, walking around the house and absorbs the pattern of the music in

his mind so he will know where to come in and what rhythms to play while performing.

THERE ARE A COUPLE of large tape recorders in the Danforth home because Mrs. Danforth is a composer of electronic music. She was working on her latest composition in the other room, timing and making adjustments on the recorders.

"I'll finish it if it's the last thing I do," she said as she sat next to the piano she gives lessons on.

They traveled through England and Scotland last year and Mrs. Danforth was honored by the Royal Academy of Music for her first-place composition. Danforth not only gave concerts but he got to meet some of the bones players on the island.

He was given some rosewood bones by the Chieftans, an Irish group. He already had bones of maple, white pine, walnut, hickory and oak but none of rosewood. All

make different clicks, have different timber and tone.

Ray Schairer, a Dexter farmer, makes bones for Danforth. Schairer has made 10,000 bones in the past five years but still considers it a hobby.

DANFORTH'S BONE-snapping career started here in 1973 when Mrs. Danforth was taking a musical heritage course at Eastern Michigan University. They got to talking about the bones and Mrs. Danforth mentioned she had a player at home.

He reluctantly got up before the class and was surprised when he was invited to appear at a folk festival at EMU's Pease Auditorium. He was flabbergasted at the overwhelming reception he got.

In fact, he usually gets a spontaneous standing ovation wherever he performs.

It is difficult to account for the striking impact of his bones performances and Danforth doesn't exactly know himself why he is such a sensation.

"They see this white haired old bunny get up there and they wonder, 'what's he going to do with those things?'" he said. "I guess I surprise them with what I can do."

It's a very delightful surprise, almost everybody agrees.



PHOTO BY CECIL LOCKARD

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Music in his bones



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Danforth 'jams' on the bones at the Blind Pig in Ann Arbor.



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Danforth shows the correct way to hold the bones.



Danforth 'jams' on the bones at the Blind Pig in Ann Arbor.

In 1907, Percy Danforth recalls, the blacks in his Washington neighborhood would gather under the gas lanterns, sprinkle some sand on the sidewalk, reach into their pockets for rib bones and start to play and dance.

"There was no music, no conversation, no nothing," says Danforth, "just the rhythm of the bones and soft-shoe sand dancing."

Danforth, now 83, lives in Ann Arbor with his wife, Frances, who teaches piano and composes music. Of his talent with the bones, Mrs. Danforth says, "Percy is a musician like a bird is — I'm a trained musician."

Danforth likes to talk about the rich history of musical bones. "Did you know that the bones date as far back as 3000 B.C. and that there are over 76 different names for the bones depending on the culture?" As further



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/ SUSAN TUSA

Danforth 'jams' on the bones at the Blind Pig in Ann Arbor.



'Steppin' out' with his wife, Frances.



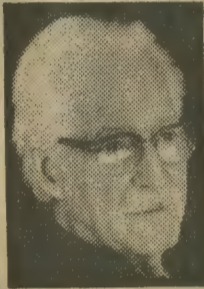
Danforth enters the Arc, an Ann Arbor nightspot where he performs.

Danforth shows the correct way to hold the bones.

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Danforth likes to talk about the rich history of musical bones. "Did you know that the bones date as far back as 3000 B.C. and that there are over 76 different names for the bones depending on the culture?" As further proof, he quotes Bottom in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: "I have a reasonable good ear in music: let us have the tongs and the bones."

The bones Danforth uses today are actually small wooden slats shaped like spare ribs that are held between the fingers and used as clappers. With them, he plays anything from Mozart to an Irish jig and anywhere from Ann Arbor's bars to New York's Lincoln Center. He laughs when he thinks about the latter engagement. "I could see the audience thinking, 'What's that old coot going to do with a couple of sticks, for God's sake?'" But when he had finished, he received a standing ovation and played an encore.

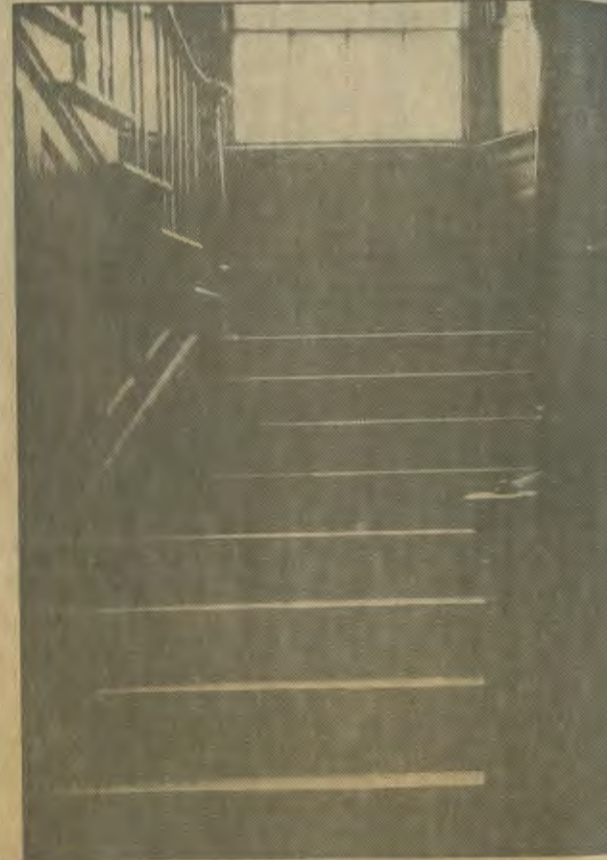
Danforth will teach and play the bones Sept. 10 and 11 at the Wheatland Music Festival near Remus, Mich.

NEWS PHOTOS & TEXT / SUSAN TUSA

Danforth 'jams' on the bones at the Blind Pig in Ann Arbor.



'Steppin' out' with his wife, Frances.



Danforth enters the Arc, an Ann Arbor nightspot

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662-5341

1296-1276 mac

mm

SO PLAY THE MUSIC BONES

mm

500

SO PLAY THE MUSIC BONES

For several centuries ^{people} ~~the~~ have rattled the bones.

~~Bones have been rattled.~~

However,

~~but~~ no one has wondered ^{the bones}

about their potential as a

musical instrument, ~~that~~

~~is~~, an instrument that ^{musically}

~~will~~ can fit into a wide

Several centuries ago people began

For several centuries people have
making simple rhythmic patterns by
rattled the bones. Of course the
clapping them. That's natural. But even
natural way to make rhythm
walker some smarty found that after
patterns is to clap them when you
he had gnawed the meat off a couple
don't have any other way,
rib bones, he could make a sharper

variety of music situations.
The manipulation of the bones
has not developed ^{until recently,} much
beyond the discovery of the
staccato tap and the triplet ^{until recently.}
^{but} we know from ^{experiments} the artifacts that
bones were used ^{even} in prehistoric
times, probably as claves in
view of clapping, then as
tappers with a pair held
appropriately in one, ^{then} ~~or~~
^{both} ~~each~~ hands. Finally, the
^{when someone found himself doing a}
roll, which ^{appeared} a series of triplet
triplet ~~appeared~~ ^{appeared}

These two rudiments have
passed along through the ages
being, by demonstration; there

has been
no documentation, and, of
course, no recordings until
recently. ^{we can determine} The status of bones
technique ~~technique~~, though, ~~some~~ when
we read that the ~~acclaimed~~ ^{acclaimed}
world champion manipulator
of the bones (1872) could make
them sound like a horse
race, or a marching army.
Brother Bones of the minstrel
shows could toss one of the
bones and catch it without
missing a beat, or could do
the bones while standing on
his head. ^{He used four or stone bones for a sharp}
sound that could cut thru fiddles and banjos.

The earliest documentation
of bones are happened some
five thousand years ago
when a potter in Asia Minor
made a vase which he
decorated with a woman
who accompanied her dance
dancing and accompanying
with a pair of bones held in each
hand. ^{We} ~~the~~ know the
troubadors and jongleurs of
the Middle Ages used bones
with their other instruments.
Lutes were ~~also~~ required
to rattle bones for warming

to keep away. Celtic writings
of 850^{AD} mentions the bones, and
~~that~~ another reference written
in 1165 not only mentions the
bones but ^{describes} associates the people
using ~~the~~ ^{them} bones as members
of the rabble. Shakespear
has Tom Bottom in Midsummers
Night's dream (act I scene 4)
say ~~that~~ he has an ear that
appreciates music; ^{and says} "Let's have the
tongs and bones".

The Pilgrims and Puritans
in Northeast U.S. state
were not bones-playing people.

In the South, however were the blacks from Africa ^{who} ~~they~~ enjoyed rhythm patterns ^{that} which they produced on drums. When ~~one~~ black groups began communicating ^{exciting} with black groups of neighboring plantations with ~~exciting rhythm patterns~~, plantation owners were concerned. Drums ~~became~~ ^{were then} prohibited. ~~So the black~~

~~But the people from Africa~~

~~But many cultures including those of Africa had discovered the bones potential for making rhythm patterns. The~~
So the blacks, ^{who}, like the people of many other cultures knew about the bones as a rhythm instrument, began using bones ~~for~~ ^{to} for accompaniment ~~with~~ banjos

and whatever other instruments they had or could devise.

Blacks who escaped into the northern part of the ^{U.S.} country took the bones with them and introduced them to white folks, or at least reminded the whites of them.

Out of all this developed the minstrel show with its famous character, Mr., or Brother Bones.

By the end of ^{the 19th century} 1800's the minstrel show was the major form of entertainment in ^{the U.S.} ~~this~~ country. It had even spread to the British Isles and ~~and~~ other countries.

And with all, the character
of Brother Bones became
generally
familiar.

When my family moved
to Washington, D.C. in the
summer of 1908 <sup>we came from the hinterlands of North Dakota
where minstrel shows had not yet reached</sup> ~~and~~ I started
to school that fall ^{and at} ~~in the~~
recess time
that grade some kids took
spare-rib-like bones out
of their pockets and began
rattling them. I told my dad
about this. He told me about Mr.
Bones of the Minstrel show, and
showed me how to hold the bones
for a starter.

Again, everybody knew

about the bones in terms of rattling them.

But rattle-bones have ~~these~~ further possibilities.

They can be made of a variety of materials for differences in quality of sound for compatibility with the mood of ensemble.

~~They~~ The dynamics of their output can be controlled in such a way that crecendos can be played. ^(see over)

The pitch can be changed over an octave ^{range}. Control of this change in pitch is important for making possible tuning the two

for example

Besides, if the bones and

guitar are playing a duet, the

bones would be only a ^{can}percussive ^{light}sparkle in the background.

But ^{when} the guitar ^{returns} might feel like dropping out for a bit so that

the bones ^{can} solo. There,

of course, the bones dynamics ~~would~~ increase during the solo.

pairs ~~to~~ to the same pitch when
~~the~~ pairs ^{are} held in ^{both} each hands.
Also, there are times when
change in pitch is felt necessary
at places during a performance.

Bones ~~can~~ are used with
music of all time signature.
An ambidextrous operator
can do ~~in~~ different time
signatures with each hand
for interesting rhythm-counter-
rhythm patterns. At least a
two taps ^{in one hand} against three ^{in the other} taps
pattern ~~is~~ refreshing in some
situations.

→ (are sometimes invited by
the music)
There are the continuous rolls
with and without accents,
(accented rolls with tap patterns,) and
continuous of repeated
seven-tap rolls.

By now it is apparent
that the bones are something
that have
having potential far beyond
the rattle. The bones are an
~~music~~ instrument for making
music.

Let's look in detail at
what we have to know and be

able to do in order to use the bones as a musical instrument;

~~First~~ To begin with there are the three rudiments which make possible the variety of rhythm patterns ~~that~~ the bones are capable of contributing to any music situation:

- 1- The ~~stance~~ ^{manner} ~~manner~~ of holding the bones; ~~(photos)~~
- 2- The staccato tap; ~~(strobe)~~ ~~(photos)~~
- 3- The tap triplet. ~~(strobe)~~ ~~(photos)~~

Circled numbers
indicate photo required

Number is the number of
the photo

Bone Dope

The manner of holding the bones:

Obviously, since sounds are produced by the bones only because one bone strikes the other, one bone is stationary ^{the anvil,} and the other is ^{moves} ~~movable~~.

The anvil is held between the index and middle fingers ^①. While the thumb reaches across the bone to touch the second joint of the middle finger. ^② ~~over~~ The middle finger presses on the bone's edge to force it into the cushion at

(note amount of bone appearing
above middle finger - apx ~~2 1/4"~~ 1 1/4")
Reason (X)

At the same time the ~~to hand~~ ^{thumb}
~~wraps itself~~ takes hold of +
the bone so that the bone
is held tightly against
the middle finger

The index finger sticks
straight out, (C) but presses
down on the bone to force
it against the middle
finger.

(Describe tuning Bones)

the base of the thumb. (3)

This bone is now essentially a part of the hand and so moves precisely as the hand moves.

The ^{striking} ~~movable~~ bone is held between the ^{finger} ring and the middle ~~middle~~ finger. (note: attachment of bone showing above finger approx. 1/4 in) It is held in place by the ~~the~~ ring finger pressing on the edge of the bone (4) at a point directly over the web between the middle and ring fingers.

This stance makes it possible to move the bone from ^{the} touching

The striking bone is held
firmly enough in place, ^{that is, spring loaded,} that
when the hand is held ready
to play, this bone ~~can~~ ^{can}
be pushed a quarter of
an inch farther from the
anvil, ~~but~~ ^{and} when released
springs back, not only to
its original position, but
carries beyond to strike
the anvil.

(Clarify this)

the palm through an angle
of thirty degrees ^{with} ~~from~~ the palm. (5)

~~The~~ This adjustability is necessary
for aligning the striking bone
with the anvil and for other
~~adj's~~ position adjustments
to come up ~~later on~~ in de-
scriptions of playing details.

One more important
adjustment is ^{for} the distance
between the bones. Three
^{of an inch} sixteenths is a good basic
distance and is maintained
by the little finger pressing
against the ring finger. (7)

Dianne — 665-8984

Vicki — 662-5341

Charlotte — 973-2185

(1.2967276) mac.

(note: approx. $\frac{1}{4}$ " spacing above the
of middle bit)

Staccato Tap

Now that we know how to hold the bones let's look at the second of the rudiments, the tap. It works like this: the anvil suddenly moves ahead with the movement of the hand and arm, but because the tapper bone is spring loaded ^{it lags} ~~it doesn't~~ behind, then springs over (whiplashes) and taps the anvil. ⑦

Remember; none of this sequence happens because

of movement of the bones with the fingers.

There are two ways of describing the hand-arm snap for both of these require a relaxed arm producing the tap; one is the fly swatter analogy; the other is flicking something from the end of the curvilinear bone. (8) (9)

The third rudiment,

The triplet - ~~There are also~~

~~two ways of approaching the~~
the approach!

triplet: one is to draw a series of circular arcs, with the end
apex $\approx 45^\circ$

of the protruding index finger of which the arcs are apart.
The center of the circles is at

end of the bones, i.e. the radius
(10)
of the circle is the length of the
The center of the circle is at the ends of
the bones, so the end of the bones sit still.
bones. Again, the arm to the
shoulder
~~elbow~~ is utterly relaxed ~~so~~
with
~~that~~ its movement ~~is~~ whip-
like. ^{so that} ~~when~~ the elbow is moving
in opposite direction from
the hand. ^{same movement as cracking}
^{a whip, or snapping a towel.} (Arm utterly relaxed)

When you repeat this move-
ment two or three times a
second you make a roll that
is made up of a series of triplets.

The single triplet is made
by doing a single tap, then
whipping the hand up and over

to the chest to produce the
other two taps. ⑪ stroke

AFC#[AFC 1976/002
AFS#[
M/B/RS#[

TITLE[Percy Danforth collection

COLLECTORS [

DONORS [

INCLUSIVE_YEARS [1975-1976]
ACQUISITION_TYPE [
ACCESSION_DATE []
ACCESS [

QUANTITY/FORMAT:
RECORDINGS [
PHOTOGRAPHS [
MANUSCRIPTS [
MOVING_IMAGE [3 7" open-reel videos (b&w), 3 U-matic videocassette copies
OTHER [

LOCATION[Deck 50
REF.TAPES? [
CATALOGERS [jg 1/11/99

DESCRIPTION[2 open-reels of interview with Percy Danforth at Wolf Trap Folklife Festival (8/20/76); with Russ Meyers, Gus Meade (Bob Carneal in background). Topics: DC childhood, African instruments, learning the bones, history of the bones, efforts to re-popularize bones. 1 open-reel of Danforth at Regional Institute for Children and Adolescents in Baltimore, July 1976, teaching inner city children the bones (to ragtime and rock music).

See other Danforth and Meyers materials.

SOUND DUPLICATION (MAYBE ALSO VIDEO)
JERRY HATFIELD MOTION PICTURE BROADCASTING SOUND (MBS)
202/707-5623

AFC#[
AFS#[AFS 18,099-18,101
M/B/RS#[LWO 8661, LVR 145

TITLE[Percy Danforth Reminiscences on Bones-Playing and Sand Dancing
COLLECTORS[Archive of Folk Song

DONORS[Same

INCLUSIVE_YEARS[1975]
ACQUISITION_TYPE[AFS Recording Project
ACCESSION_DATE[03/76]
ACCESS[Standard

QUANTITY/FORMAT:
RECORDINGS[1 10" FT tape @ 7.5 ips
1 10" Stereo tape @ 7.5 ips
PHOTOGRAPHS [
MANUSCRIPTS [
MOVING_IMAGE[1 7" video tape @ 5 ips

LOCATION[
REF.TAPES?[1 U-matic videocassette of LVR 145
CATALOGERS[C. Moran 05/16/95

DESCRIPTION[Percy Danforth, who learned to sand dance and play the bones
from black teenagers in Washington, D.C., circa 1916, reminisces and
nstrates his skill. Recorded (FT) in Studio B, 8/20/75. Recorded (Stereo)
& Video taped in Coolidge Auditorium 8/21/75. Gerald E. Parsons, interviewer.
AFS Recording Project.
See also AFC 1976/001 and 1976/002.

LOC/FC

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LOC/PA

Bones artist Danforth enlivens Union crowd

Arts

By GEORGE LOBSENZ

Noon - time loungers were treated to a truly unusual musical event at the Pendleton Center in the Union yesterday, as "master of the bones" Percy Danforth held forth with an exhibition and explanation of ragtime's classic rhythm instrument.

Perhaps best known to University concertgoers as the central rhythm performer at the recent Professional Theatre Program production of *Bread and Roses* and William Albright's second annual Ragtime Orgy, the affable, mustachioed Danforth easily re-

created — if only briefly — the age of Scott Joplin and Zez Confrey.

"Bones" are just that — two rib bone-shaped pieces of wood about three to four inches in length. They are held in between the first three fingers of the hand, somewhat like chopsticks.

By keeping one "bone" firmly against the heel of the hand and leaving the other one free to swing about, the two "bones" knock together, producing a clacking noise. And when done properly, bones can be used to create rhythmic patterns amazing in both speed and variety.

Although bones originated during the 18th century, they were not frequently used until ragtime emerged in early 20th century popular music. And it was at this advent of ragtime that the elderly Danforth first took up this unique form of percussion, picking up much of his technique on Washington, D.C. street corners during his youth.

But yesterday's performance showed just how much the white-haired bones wizard had refined his uncommon hobby into an art over the intervening years. Waving his hands about in palpitating patterns, Danforth resembled a frantic

conductor leading an invisible orchestra.

Accompanied on piano by Jim Ford, Danforth opened the afternoon with *Raggin' Scale*, a lilting little piece designed to attract attention. Danforth then followed up with a mini-lecture which included such other ragtime numbers as *Ragtime Revelation*, *Twelfth Street Rag*, and *Sweetie - Pie*.

But the best part was saved for last: Danforth came equipped with a whole pile of bones and distributed them to the audience, leaving all concerned happily wriggling their wrists and tapping their toes as the light - hearted program came to a close.

Feb. 28, 1978, P. 5 Michigan Daily (M. Arber)



Daily Photo by KEN FINK

Percy Danforth

EN
write
ED
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Percy Danforth—"Mr. Bones"

by Rebecca B. Holmes

Percy Danforth, of Ann Arbor, Michigan, has become known as "Mr. Bones" as he crisscrosses the country from folk festival to folk festival playing the bones and teaching his audiences how to play them and make them.

In 1907, when he was seven years old, Percy moved to Washington, D. C. He lived on F Street, near the intersection of 15th St., N.E. and Tennessee Avenue, which was then the edge of town. Beyond that intersection, living in a row of frame houses, was a black community. In the evening, young black men would congregate under the gas lamp in front of Clayman's grocery store at that intersection. They'd pick up some sand from the street, sprinkle it on the sidewalk; and then to the accompaniment of the bones and a Jew's harp, they would do a soft shoe dance on the sand. That was the first time Percy ever saw anyone play the bones. He just watched until he was finally able to do it. From then on, until about four years ago, he'd pick up anything there was a pair of and simply "do the bones"!

Then about four years ago, his wife was doing graduate work in ethnomusicology, and the subject of "bones" was mentioned in one of her classes. Nobody seemed to know anything about them; but when Mrs. Danforth volunteered that her husband played the bones, he was invited to demonstrate them to her class. Percy was amazed at the reaction of the class to the bones. They were flabbergasted that "an old silver-haired coot could come out with a couple of pairs of sticks like this and beat out these rhythms". His demonstration for the class was really a turning point in his bones-playing career. He was invited to play in a music program at Eastern Michigan University, at folk festivals, for school children, etc. He was also invited to play at The Ark, a coffeehouse in Ann Arbor, and there met other folk musicians and even other bones players. Through his meetings with them, he was invited to play and teach at various folk festivals. One of the highlights of his playing with other folk musicians was when Martin, Bogan, and Armstrong invited him to play bones with them. Said Percy of this event, "That was the one time I thought the bones were in just exactly the atmosphere I thought they should be."

Percy's demonstrations are always in three parts. First he plays the bones either solo, along with a ragtime record, or accompanying other musicians. Then he teaches his audience how to play. He usually brings a bunch of bones with him and passes them out to his audience. It is difficult to describe how to hold and play the bones (Figures 1 & 2). Percy says he is most successful when he works with one person and actually holds the person's hands and moves both hands together. One trick is to be able to relax while holding the bones firmly. The first movement is the "flip". The movement is clockwise--or to put it another way, the opposite of shaking down a thermometer. Percy is considering doing some slow-motion videotape as a means of demonstrating, because even he can not do it in slow motion. After the flip, he will go on to demonstrate other movements--the triplet, the rattle, the roll--and in different combinations of rhythms. Once a person gets the right feeling for bones, he doesn't have to "learn" the fingering (although Percy has written some notation showing the fingerings); it seems to come naturally going from one fingering to another. Once his audience has learned a few basic movements, they try accompanying a slow record; and then after more practice and a certain degree of efficiency, some of his audience will graduate to playing two pairs of bones at one time--one pair for each hand.

The final step in Percy's bone demonstration is teaching his audience to make their own pair of bones. First you need a 3/4" wide board, 1" thick, and 7" long. Starting 3/8" from the corner, you scribe a circular arc tangent to the back side of the board. Now you come back to the corner and scribe another arc parallel to the first one (Figure 3). The highest point of the arc is at the midpoint. Using a bandsaw, saw this blank out. Then you contour the edges to an elliptical cross-section (Figure 4). Soft woods are easiest to work and have the quietest tone. Hardwoods have different sounds, depending on which kind you use. Real bones are very sharp sounding, rib bones being the most commonly used.

The hands in the pictures are attached to Louise Diamond; the bones were made using Percy's plans. Photos and drawings by MIH.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

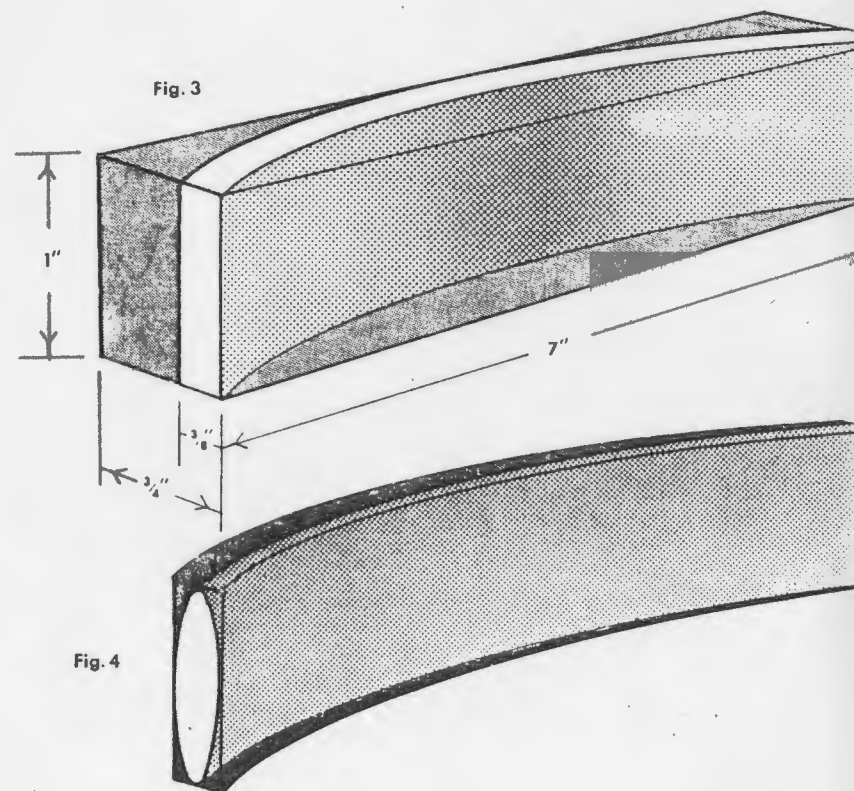


Fig. 4

LOC/PC

THE GUNTIMPS

Vol. 5, No. 4

Spring, 1977



MR. BONES: DOING WHAT THE MUSIC INVITES

by Eric Freedman



Photo by Robert Barclay, Mt. Pleasant

"Mr. Bones", Percy Danforth

Percy Danforth is a missionary, a true believer who preaches — no, rattles — the gospel of the bones.

From folk festivals to concert halls, from classrooms to retirement homes, "Mr. Bones" is more responsible than any other individual for reviving American interest in these ancient instruments that last saw their glory in the age of the minstrel shows.

One moment the traditional "Turkey

in the Straw," the next Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever," on to a Scott Joplin rag, then over to Schubert. The bones belong with all of them and, as Danforth put it, "They do what they're invited to do." Composers such as Mozart "did some nice things for the bones, but they didn't know it when they were composing," the Ann Arbor entertainer observed.

For the uninitiated, the bones are small curved percussion instruments, deceptively simple-looking. The player holds a pair in each hand, one bone anchored to the hand, the other moving. Once made from spareribs, they're now almost exclusively wooden, generally white pine, maple, chestnut, cherry, oak or hickory. Different woods have different sounds appropriate for different

types of music. Whatever the material, they rattle in Danforth's grip with 5,000 years of tradition.

**"Well, you heard how they got the bones talking to each other.
You saw how they painted sound on the air.
You watched how they moved as smooth as willows in the wind,
while their hands sparked like lightning in a storm!"**

From "Song for Percy" by Laszlo Slomovits, copyright 1981 ASCAP

Danforth's performing career — and his crusade for recognition of these instruments of choice — began in 1970 when he appeared at Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti, where his wife Fran, a classical pianist and composer, was doing graduate work. It happened at a music history course when the professor mentioned the bones and said nobody plays them anymore. Fran promptly disagreed, and the next thing Danforth knew, he was invited to demonstrate. Afterwards, Danforth was asked to perform at EMU's Pease Auditorium and there, for the first time on stage, accompanied by a fiddler, was Percy "Bones" Danforth.

"Nobody had seen the bones at EMU when this white-haired guy came out with some sticks. They were flabbergasted," he recalled. Soon the invitations were rolling in.

"The Smithsonian Institution got wind of it," for example, and so he spent a week at a Washington folk arts festival. He performed at London's Royal Festival Hall and Manhattan's Lincoln Center. "I was interested in seeing a New York audience, sophisticated as they are, when I came out with a pair of things that looked like sticks," he said. They gave him a standing ovation.

One of his proudest moments came in an appearance with the Plymouth, Mich., Symphony Orchestra. That meant a seal of respectability, a rebuff to critics, skeptics and know-nothings who snobbishly argued that the bones were merely gimmicks, not musical instruments.

"Nobody heard tell of such a thing. They hadn't been thought of as having the musical potential they do," he said of that concert.

The bones continue to gain popularity at folk festivals, and Danforth has just released a \$39.95 instructional video, "Mister Bones: How to Play the Bones." It is produced by the Institute for Traditional Studies and distributed by Lark in the Morning (Box 1176, Mendocino, CA 95460).

**"Well, you said how you were born when the minstrel show was just
about fading out,**

5,000

But the memories were still strong enough that many kids still carried spare ribs in their pockets.

And they'd take them out and rattle them.

Yes, they knew how to make that noise."

Although Danforth's professional career was late in starting, his fascination with the bones began in childhood. It all started when the North Dakota-born son of an itinerant journeyman printer — "that meant we didn't stay very long at any one place" — found himself in a new elementary school in a new city, Washington, D.C.

"Recess came and I went out, and kids took something from their pockets that looked like spareribs to me. They rattled them."

Puzzled, Danforth went home. "My dad said they're from old minstrel shows. That was the epitome of entertainment," just before the turn of the 20th century, and "everybody knew about minstrel shows." So father helped son get slats out of an old shutter for a demonstration, and young Percy was hooked. On summer evenings, he watched his neighbors in Washington gather under the gas lanterns, sprinkle sand on the sidewalk, and take out their bones to dance and play. "There was no music, no conversation, no nothing, just the rhythm of the bones and soft-shoe sand dancing."

"They'd sprinkle sand on the sidewalk and begin to dance the bones. At the same time they'd soft-shoe dance under the soft light of the gas streetlamps."

The years following his initiation into the bones were busy. The U.S. Army thought some academic study would prepare Danforth for service as a field artillery officer, so off he went to the University of Michigan to study chemical engineering. Instead, he stumbled across architecture.

Then came 1929, the eve of the Depression. The dreams of many young architects crashed with the stock market. But Danforth's knowledge of painting led him to set up an art exhibition in the Monroe, Mich., public library. That, in turn, led to an assignment to design an elementary school art curriculum, a job he carried out over a summertime with "an awful lot of sitting on the beach and thinking." And that was followed by an art teaching position. "There wasn't any architecture to do, and I was tickled to get a job," he said. Meanwhile, he did graduate work in education at U of M and taught in the university's laboratory school.

Events interceded once again. World War II loomed, and a federal agency figured someone with Danforth's technical skills in engineering and architec-

ture ought to do something of greater national importance than "working with a bunch of fifth and sixth-grade kids."

So Danforth received cloak-and-dagger-style instructions to report to a Chrysler tank plant in Detroit. He pulled a no-show — "I didn't get off the bus" — but a persistent Uncle Sam wouldn't take no for an answer. He became a stress engineer at a bomber factory at Willow Run. After the war, he held engineering and related positions until a heart attack forced his retirement at age 82.

All in all, a "very checkered background" for a folk musician, he observed.

**"Ah! Mr. Bones, Ah! Mr. Bones,
Ah! Mr. Bones, Ah! Mr. Bones."**



It's summertime a few years ago, and a thin, stooped man with white-white hair and mustache set a heavy cassette player under a spreading pine at Cobblestone Farm, a park in Ann Arbor. Children

crowded around, while others watched curiously from their perches in the tree.

The man pulled sticks from his pockets and handed them around. The cassette player switched on, loud. An impromptu lesson began. Musician and teacher, performer and sharer, preacher of the gospel of the bones.

"It's virtually impossible to learn to play the bones by correspondence," he said. Beyond that; there's a zeal, a faith, a belief in the bones which Danforth transmits to his students in the spirit of other traditional music handed down from generation to generation.

That approach is appropriate, given the ancient legacy of the bones. "Some musicologists and historians have the feeling that the bones were one of the first musical instruments that were invented." More than 76 names for them have been found, according to Danforth, who quotes Bottom in Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream:" "I have a reasonable good ear in music; let us have the tongs and the bones."

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"Ah!
Ah!

On average, Danforth says a beginner can play basic taps and rolls within a half-hour. However, "it takes a while for the bones to become an extension of the physical being, but when that place is reached the fun can really begin. The mechanics of 'holding' are incidental, and the dance feeling is there to be enjoyed."

Over the years, Danforth has gathered bones students across the country. One well-known disciple is Sandor Slomovits, half of the Ann Arbor-based duo "Gemini." Their paths first crossed in 1976. Slomovits said, "It was one of those things where I learned literally everything I know from him." They've played duets together, and Slomovits has made the bones an integral part of Gemini's own repertoire. His twin brother and musical partner, Laszlo, wrote "Song for Percy" for a birthday party honoring Danforth at the Ark.

**"Ah! Mr. Bones,
You can make and shake and rattle them bones,
Prance and dance and enhance the bones.
You're quite a feast for eyes and ears, Mr. Bones!"**

Danforth can wax philosophical.

On the public's fascination: "It's such a simple looking thing, and you can do things with changing the color and dynamics of sound and changing tempos. It surprises people, from an instrument as simple as the bones appear to be.

"The feel of playing the bones is a dance feeling with the music inviting the bones to participate in a variety of rhythm patterns, changes in dynamics, tempos, time signatures, colors of sound, mood. For example, the response to 'Turkey in the Straw' will be altogether different from that to 'Rondo alla Turca' of Mozart, or Scott Joplin's 'Solace.' You would dance differently to each of these."

On advice for the would-be player: "You have to be utterly relaxed. Play from the seat of your pants right on up, even from the soles of your feet."

On why he doesn't play any other instruments, although he's "piddled around" with the harmonica and recorder: "Each time I've gotten involved with something else, I realize there's more I have to find out about this bones stuff."

**"Ah! Mr. Bones, Ah! Mr. Bones,
Ah! Mr. Bones, Ah! Mr. Bones."**



(Eric Freedman is an East Lansing writer
and an editor of *Michigan Folk Notes*.)

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SUE E. BARBER AND PERCY O.
DANFORTH



Sue Barber was born in Iowa and has lived in all parts of the country, staying long enough in Denver to earn a degree in languages and teach there for four years. But her first love has always been music, and she went on to complete a master's degree in ethno-musicology at the University of Michigan. Besides her great interest in the bones, she is a violist and enjoys symphonic and chamber music. She has also studied Chinese music and culture, as well as American folk music. Her current research project and thesis is an in-depth study of the Philadelphia Orchestra's exchange trip to the People's Republic of China in 1973. Sue's other interests include sewing, knitting, reading, travel and art.

Percy Danforth learned to play the bones in Washington, D.C. in 1908. In those days bones playing was more common than it is now. He and his friends gathered in front of Isaac Clayman's grocery store on summer evenings

under the soft light of the gas streetlamps. Young black men from a nearby part of town drifted to the same corner. (There were no streetlights in their section of town.) They danced and accompanied themselves with the bones. These masters of the art were Percy's teachers. After this early instruction, Percy set the bones aside and played them only at odd moments and often with odd equipment, like two rulers. He pursued careers as student, architect, teacher and engineer at various times and in various places. He currently works full-time for Balance Technology in Ann Arbor, Michigan, as personnel director and general doer-of-all-things.

He began concentrating on his bones playing in 1973 when his wife of fifty years bragged about his abilities and urged that he do a public demonstration. From there on the bones took on a life of their own. He has been playing for folk festivals, schools and church groups and

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(WIFE IS FRANCES)

making video tapes, tracking down other bones players, and devoting himself to a serious study of how to teach others the art of bones playing.



HOW TO MAKE AND PLAY THE BONES

By Sue E. Barber in collaboration
with Percy O. Danforth

What folk instrument is eminently portable (fits in a pocket), inexpensive to buy or make (from various scrap materials), easy to play (compared to many other instruments), entertaining to hear and watch (evoking laughter and hand-clapping), prehistoric in origin but still played (especially at folk and ragtime festivals), and relatively little known? One last hint. The generic name identifies the scraps from which the original models were made. Ah, yes. . . . This must be "the bones."

Despite their many appearances at various places and times during man's sojourn through history, the bones have not been widely known or played in the past fifty years or so. Fortunately, the recent renewal of interest in folk music and ethnic cultures has generated something of a bones revival as well. We invite you, in these next few pages, to participate in this revival. Your role is a pleasant one. First read the historical section of this chapter so that you can fully appreciate the antiquity of your recently-discovered interest. Then get yourself a pair of bones and carefully follow our instructions for playing them. Within a few weeks, you too should be on your way to becoming

part of an informal fraternity of bones players that stretches back into the mists of pre-history.

History

Bones are a percussion instrument. They are defined in scholarly terms as idiophones. ". . . the substance of the instrument itself, owing to its solidarity and elasticity, yields the sounds. . . . Concussion idiophones or clappers are two or more complimentary sonorous parts struck against each-other." (Von Hornbostel and Sachs 1961: 14) The two "complimentary sonorous parts" were originally, indeed, two pieces of bone. Later, various types of wood were used to make bones. Whatever material they are made of, such instruments are extensions of clapping hands and stamping feet.

Bones are always played in the plural. They consist of two parts, held between the fingers of the hand. They strike together as the player manipulates his wrist and arm to produce various rhythms. The bones shown in the photographs are 7 3/8 inches long, 1 inch wide, and 5/16 to 3/8 inches thick. The length and thickness may vary slightly with the material of which particular bones are made. The pieces are usually slightly curved, allowing greater ease in holding them and greater flexibility of movement.

Research reveals that the bones in some form date back almost as far as man himself. The specific origins of the instrument are unknown, but they are probably among the earliest musical instruments made by man. Bones have been found in graves excavated in Moldavia (in southeastern Europe), dating from the Second Millennium, B.C. Mosaics found in the ruins of the ancient city of Ur in Mesopotamia show the bones. Egyptian vases dating from 3000 B.C. depict female dancers playing bones. In ancient Greece, bones were associated with the worship of the goddess Hathor, goddess of heaven, joy and death.

During the Middle Ages jongleurs wandered throughout Europe singing, dancing and playing various instruments, including the bones. Book illustrations and miniatures from the 9th

century onward show the bones in combination with various other contemporary instruments. In addition to their musical functions during these centuries, the bones were also used as signals by lepers, who sounded them to warn others of their approach (Marcuse 1964: 105).

By the 12th century, bones seem to have centered themselves in northwestern Europe. A reference from the *Book of Leinster* (ca. 1160) summarized the prevailing attitude of the Irish toward bones players.

Pipes, fiddle, men of no valour, bone-players and pipe players, a crowd hideous, noisy, profane, shriekers and shouters.

(quoted in McCoullough 1976)

Three centuries later Shakespeare mentioned bones in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Inigo Jones used them in his 17th century court masques. (A masque was a lavish stage production that combined poetry, music, dancing and acting.) Bones are still played in the pubs of northern England and Ireland in ensembles to accompany dancing. They also remain a popular children's toy in both Britain and Holland.

In the United States, bones playing has been associated most commonly with slavery and minstrelsy. Some writers have conjectured that bones came to the States from Africa and were part of African musical traditions which were continued in the slave quarters of America. Available evidence documents the existence of the bones primarily in South Africa, however, and black South African bones players have admitted that they derived the idea from European missionaries (Kirby 1934: 10). This information, coupled with the fact that most slaves were abducted from West Africa, not from the southern part of the continent, makes an African origin of the instrument unlikely. More feasible is the notion that the bones came to the New World with immigrants from Northern Europe. Slaves saw the bones being played by these white settlers. Because the materials were readily available and the techniques of playing were easily learned, the blacks appropriated the bones. In the process of adaption, the slaves added layers of rhythmic syncopation that were remnants from their African musical traditions. Letters and other accounts during the 18th and 19th centuries describe slave bands on plantations and roving

street bands, the latter sometimes made up of freemen, tootling for pennies on street corners. Both groups used bones as part of the ensemble.

The first blackface minstrel show was presented in 1843 in New York City. The four original blackface performers combined singing, dancing and joking into a fast-paced variety show format that was an instant success. Their instruments were fiddle, tambourine, banjo and bones; a combination similar to that often used in itinerant black bands. One of the standard characters in the show was Brudder Bones. He was a comic as well as a musician. For the entertainment of his audiences, he tossed his bones in the air, juggled them, even stood on his head while playing. He could imitate drums, marches, reveille, and horse races with his bones. In his more musically-oriented moments, he used his bones to provide a steady beat for the singing and dancing. He could also create intricate rhythm patterns that elaborated the overall complexity of the musical texture.

As the minstrel show evolved into an extravaganza later in the 19th century, the bones were shunted aside in favor of other instruments. But they continued to be played on street corners, in markets, schoolyards, parlors and in dance halls, by both black and white musicians. Many of today's players, including Percy Danforth, are elderly men who learned the art of bones playing many years ago from the performers whose roots go back to the showmen of minstrelsy days.

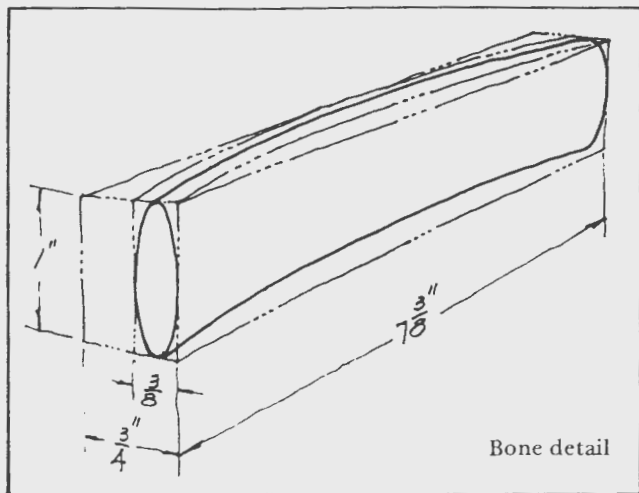
Where To Find or How To Make Your Own Bones

Before you can begin to play the bones, you must have a pair to work with. Actually, you need two pairs. The American school of bones playing requires that the performer stand while playing and use a pair of bones in each hand. British bones players on the contrary, generally play while sitting down and use bones in only one hand.

Bones are available commercially from some music stores and by catalog order. They are frequently on sale at folk festivals, especially if

you are fortunate enough to encounter Master Bones Artist Percy Danforth.

You can also make your own bones. Simply cut slabs of anything you want, to the dimensions described in the diagram.



Different materials will yield different sound colors. Hardwoods such as rosewood, birch or ebony have a piercing, shrill quality. Softer materials, pine or walnut, are softer in tone. Or you may want to make the real thing . . . bone bones. In that case, cut the rib bones of sheep or cattle to the desired length. Rib bones are best because they have the proper natural curvature. Scrape the bones clean and allow them to bleach and dry in the sun. Sand and polish them with emery cloth until they are smooth.

Some Helpful Hints on Bones Playing

One often hears the phrase "rattle the bones" used as a description of bones playing. Actually that characterization is a misnomer. Good bones playing is far more than a noise and clatter produced at random by waving the hands and arms around in the air with pieces of wood or bone stuck between the fingers. There are certain basic movements that you must master carefully before you can begin to combine them into more interesting forms. Your eventual goal as a bones player is to be able to do more than merely reinforce the beat of a piece of accompanying music. You want to be able to enhance the texture of that music with

your playing by elaborating a continuous series of rhythmic patterns. This sophisticated patterning that is the mark of the true bones virtuoso requires precision, discipline and practice. Remember, the bones are, above all, a musical instrument, and they must be used with respect and played with understanding and skill.

As you begin to play the bones, there are several things to keep in mind in order to produce successful results:

1. Practice is a must. The practice sessions needn't be long, and they should be enjoyable, but you do need to keep at it on a regular basis.

2. American style bones playing requires a high degree of ambidexterity. Most people are more facile with one hand than the other. Nevertheless, start using bones in both hands from the outset. Otherwise the tendency is to allow your less facile hand to lag behind in its development, and that will slow down your progress in general. It will probably take more time to build up real control with your "other" hand. But the real secret of great bones playing is the ability to produce different rhythms with each hand at the same time. It takes time and practice to develop this high level of coordination, but keep working towards that goal.

3. Thoroughly learn the rudiments we describe in the following pages. Try combining them in as many ways as you can. Don't just string the rudiments together time after time. Variation of order, accent and dynamic level are all important. Be creative. Experiment.

4. Most important of all is to **STAY LOOSE**. RELAX your whole body as you play. The bones are really an extension of the body itself. The virtuoso player does not merely play; he dances the bones. Get your whole body moving and play from the soles of your feet to the tip of your cowlick.

5. While the previous statements concerning the dedication and discipline required to master the bones are all true, playing them should be FUN. In spite of its long history, this is not a stately, prissy instrument. Its masters and carriers of the tradition have usually been the folk, not the mannered gentry. Play the bones in the spirit of festivity and celebration that surrounded medieval feast days, pub dancing, village weddings and minstrel shows.

Holding the Bones

When observing a virtuoso in action, you will see only a plethora of rapid movement and hear a lot of intricate patterning. But don't let all the sound and fury intimidate you. Those rhythms are built upon the few basic movements or rudiments which follow. As you work, study the accompanying photographs carefully and imitate them precisely for best results.

First, you must know how to hold the bones properly. (Actually there are variations in the ways bones are held, but the method described here has proved to be the easiest for beginners to master.) In performance the bones move so rapidly that it is impossible to see that only one bone moves. The moving bone is held between the third and fourth fingers with the end extending about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch above the knuckles. Pull the ring finger back, place it on the edge of the bone, and press the bone firmly into the pad between the ring and middle fingers.

Position of the moveable bone:



The bone must *never* touch the palm of the hand. If it does, you will not get any sound because the bone cannot move. Press your little finger against your ring finger to help hold the bone in place. This bone is a spring; you must maintain the tension on it at all times.

The other bone is held stationary between the second and third fingers of the hand. It should extend above the knuckles $\frac{1}{2}$ inch higher than the moveable bone. Jam the stationary bone against the heel of the hand and cup the hand around it. Press the thumb against the first finger to help hold this bone in place.

Position of the stationary bone:



When both bones are in the proper position, the tips are not quite parallel horizontally. The tips should be $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{16}$ of an inch apart. The convex sides of the bones face inward.

Both bones in proper playing position:



When appropriate movements of the wrist and arm are made, the spring-like tension maintained on the moveable bone allows it to move slightly, striking the anvil bone, and thus producing sound.

Contrary to what you might expect, the bones are not played by moving the fingers. The fingers in fact, must not move at all. Their function is simply to keep the pieces of the instrument in proper alignment. Movements of the wrist, arm and shoulder actually produce the sounds. When you play, extend your arms away from your body; keep your elbows bent. At first your arms will tire easily, but as you continue practicing, you will build up your muscle tone for longer and longer playing ses-

sions. Remember to RELAX. That will improve your playing and lessen the fatigue at the same time.

Playing the Bones

The Tap (The Single Tap)

The simplest form of rhythm is a single tap. Align the bones properly in your hand and extend your arms. Tilt your hand toward the center of your body as shown in the photo.

Before snap of hand:



After snap of hand:



Snap your hand outward from the wrist, a quick, sharp movement. At the same time your forearm will move slightly toward your body. You should hear a tap as the moving bone strikes the anvil. If your tap doesn't happen, check for the following: Are the bones too far apart? Are they touching? Are you allowing the bones to move? (If so, the tips will miss each other when you move your arm to tap.)

Practice the tap many times, slowly, with each hand, until you have mastered the feel of the movement. Then try alternating taps with both hands.

Single Tap

The musical notation is for a piece titled "Single Tap" in 4/4 time. It consists of two systems of notation. The first system shows the Right Hand (RH) and Left Hand (LH) with notes and accents. The second system shows the RH and LH with notes and accents, including some notes with wavy lines underneath.

As soon as you master even one or two movements, you will want to begin working with musical accompaniment. Playing the bones without music is like trying to dance without music. . . . It just isn't very satisfying. Many types of music make good background for bones playing. The bones accommodate most readily to music with a 2/4 or 4/4 meter. Percy works most often with ragtime. Minstrel show tunes, marches, jazz, pop tunes and string band music are possibilities. Jigs, reels, waltzes and Spanish numbers present different kinds of rhythmic challenges. Start with songs that are relatively simple rhythmically, and graduate to more complex pieces as your skill develops. At the same time, begin with simple movements,

single taps and rolls, and work up fancier routines as you feel able to create them. You don't have to know how to read music to play the bones, but you must always be sensitive to the underlying meter or pulse of a particular song. Feel this beat and elaborate on it in your playing. Different meters require varied types of bones patterns, however. The chart below should help to illustrate the differences between a march rhythm and a jig rhythm, for example. Sing the basic beat to yourself and then try tapping the bones to each beat. You will sense immediately that the feel of the two meters is not the same and that you must adjust your playing accordingly.

The image contains four musical staves, each representing a different rhythm. Each staff has a label on the left: 'Reel', 'Jig', 'Rag', and 'March'.
 - The 'Reel' staff is in common time (C) and shows a sequence of eighth notes with accents, including triplets of eighth notes.
 - The 'Jig' staff is in 6/8 time and shows eighth notes with accents, including a triplet of eighth notes.
 - The 'Rag' staff is in common time (C) and shows eighth notes with accents, including triplets of eighth notes.
 - The 'March' staff is in common time (C) and shows eighth notes with accents, including triplets of eighth notes.
 All staves end with a double bar line and repeat dots (:||).

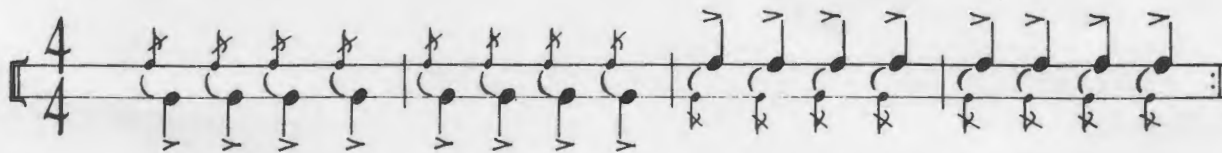
Building Your Skill

The Double Tap (The Flam)

There are several ways of producing a double tap. The easiest is to combine two single taps,

one executed with each hand, one right after the other. In other words, tap once with each hand, compressing the temporal space between the two, to an instant. An alternate

method of double tapping is to reverse the motion of the single tap. Instead of snapping your hand outward, snap it toward the center of your body. In addition to the single tap, the recoil as your hand returns to its neutral position will produce a second tap or backlash.



The Extended Roll

The roll or trill sounds like a continuous series of very rapid taps. The arm movement is the crucial element. Hold your bones so that their tips are halfway between your elbow and the tops of the bones. Keep the tips in that same position and move your hand across the front of your body *at the same time* that you move your elbow away from your body. Then do the reverse movement and keep alternating. Actually, the top of the hand describes an arc with the tips of the bones as the center of rotation.



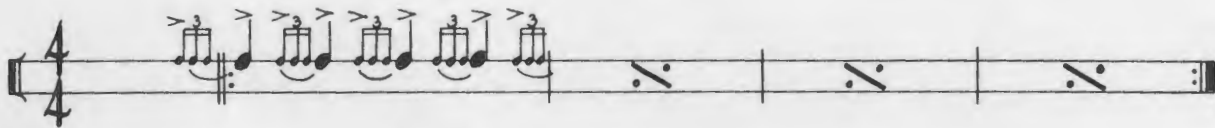
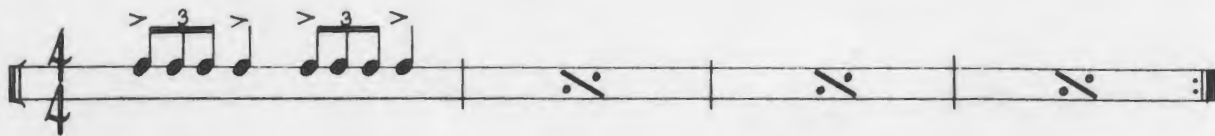
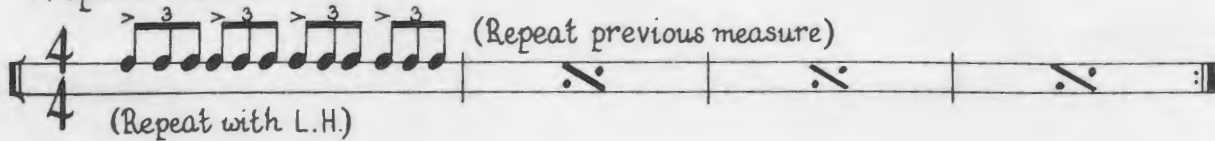
Note: The tips of the bones remain in virtually the same place as the arm and wrist rotate.

To learn the movement, try holding the tips of the bones stationary with your free hand, so there is no sound. Then move your wrist and arm in the prescribed manner. Now release the tips, allowing them to sound. Start slowly and gradually increase the speed of the wrist-arm rotation. The whole thing is a whip-like motion

originating in the shoulder and travelling down through the arm through the tips of the bones. Be careful as you build up speed. The tendency is to want to suspend movement along the shoulder-arm-wrist axis and degenerate into rotation of the lower arm. Watching yourself in a mirror will be helpful as you master this

movement. Keep your eye on your wrist and elbow, and be sure they are always moving in opposite directions. Listen carefully to the sound you produce as you build up speed. Just like a violin trill, your bones trill needs to be fast but not muddy-sounding.

Triplet Roll



The Triplet

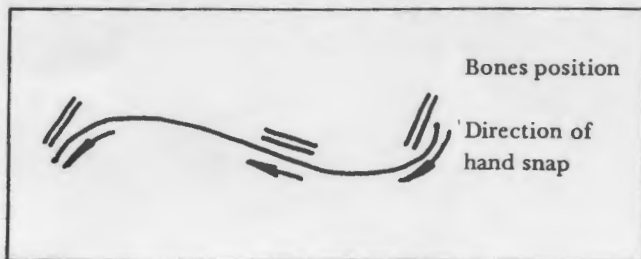
The triplet is really a reduced roll. There are three taps on a single beat, just as in notated music. It involves a crosswise motion of the hand in front of the body. Extend the arm to the side of the body and pull it sharply in towards the center of the body. As the arm snaps

across the body, the moving bone should spring against the anvil three times, once at the outer edge of the motion, once in the center (really the recoil from the previous tap), and once at the inner edge.



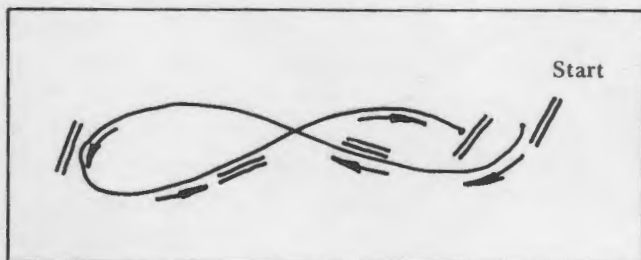
Relative hand position for each of the three taps of the movement.

The movement resembles an "S" on its side, as the picture indicates.



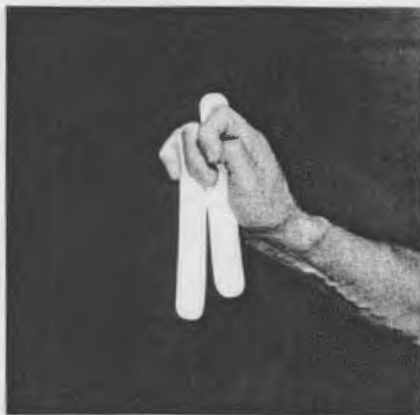
The Four-Beat Roll (The Four-Beat Ruff)

Here you combine a triplet with a final tap. Use the same movement as for the triplet above, but complete the "S" to form an "8." Add a final tap as you complete the sweep of the arm.



The Crescendo

It is possible to produce a crescendo by controlling and manipulating the relative positions of the two bones. To begin softly, the bones are held so that they strike high up, near the fingers of the hand. As the crescendo builds, gradually change the position of the moveable bone, so that it strikes the anvil lower and lower down.



Relative position of the two bones, pianissimo to fortissimo.

The crescendo reaches full volume when the bones are aligned so that their tips are in normal playing position. These adjustments of alignment are also the proper method of varying the dynamic level of your playing.

Accents

Accents are stresses of certain beats. To accent any motion or any point in a roll, snap the hand harder than you would normally. The harder snap will cause the bones to strike with additional force on that beat (or off-beat), thus making it stand out from those around it. You will normally want to strike the strong beats of a piece with a little more force in order to reinforce the underlying rhythm.

Accents are also essential to the development of syncopated rhythmic patterns. A syncopation is the deliberate displacement of the normal pulse of a piece of music. To syncopate, you may shift the accent from a strong beat to a weak beat, or you may divide a beat into several smaller parts, perhaps holding one of them over to the next beat. Accent your syncopations to make them more audible. They add interest to the progression of the tune and the texture of the music.

Making Music

It is impossible to describe in this short chapter every syncopated rhythmic pattern a bones virtuoso can produce. All rhythms are variations of the single, double and triple taps, and the roll. By altering the regularity of the taps or by extending or delaying them, you can rearrange the order of sonic events into complex rhythmic patterns. The possible combinations are virtually endless. As we mentioned before, you will want to create patterns that elaborate on the meter, not merely reinforce it. These elaborations are the element that makes bones playing fun to do and enjoyable to hear and watch.

As you gain dexterity, you will want to begin using cross rhythms. This involves starting a pattern in one hand, picking it up with the other, and perhaps tossing it back to the first. You will also want to try executing different patterns simultaneously in each hand. Work up your coordination gradually and increase the

complexity and ambidexterity of your patterning as your skill evolves.

Due to the mingling of a number of influences particular to America with earlier bones playing technique, a unique style has emerged here. American-style playing is flamboyant, elaborate, and complex in use of rhythmic patterns and syncopated elements. As it has emerged in the American milieu, bones playing is a stand-up art form. This is performance bones; the player is really a soloist and a center of attention in the best sense of the word. He is an entertainer, a dancer, and a musician who merges his being and his instrument into one unit as he plays.

As any entertainer knows, the smell of the crowd is a significant element of his dedication and his willingness to spend hours practicing and perfecting his art. As a bones player in the American tradition of entertainment, you too, will want to seek out fellow performers and an audience. As soon as you begin to perfect your skills, locate performers on other instruments (piano, fiddle, guitar or banjo, for example) and begin making live music together. You will find that kind of playing much more rewarding than performing at home for your cat. You and your fellow musicians will soon want to graduate to performing for an audience, even if it's only a gathering of family and friends. You will quickly find that the bones are a real show-stealer. Your audience will be amazed that you can produce so many intricate rhythms with four little sticks. Many of them will have never heard bones before, so you and your playing will be a delightful surprise.

Now you have the basic instruction you need to begin to develop your own expertise as a bones virtuoso. So get busy. Practice. Play. Create. And above all, enjoy yourself and your new art.

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HOW TO PLAY NEARLY EVERYTHING

from Bones and Spoons to the Washtub Bass
Compiled and edited by Dallas Cline

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'Mister Bones' With Young Admirer Avril Harvey

He Makes No Bones About It!

BY JIM KANE
News Staff Reporter

Seventy-five-year-old Percy O. Danforth doesn't rattle or shake his bones. He plays them!

In fact, Danforth has been gaining quite a reputation lately clackety-clacking and clackety-clicking his way about town. His "bare bones" of the musical profession are actually four pieces of wood he uses to make rhythmic effects.

According to Danforth, the bones date back at least to ancient Egyptian days and probably even further. However, his association with the bones only goes back some 65 years to Washington D.C.

He recalls his family lived on the fringe of the city near a black community then.

"Some black fellas used to come over to our neighborhood at night and dance under the gas street light. They didn't have any street lights in their part of town."

As Danforth sat on a bread box in front of the local grocery store, he remembers the dancers would throw some sand on the sidewalk, do a slow shuffle and play the bones. They used sparerib bones, not wooden ones.

Danforth notes the bones were played in slave quarters throughout the south and were later made popular in minstrel shows. He says this instrument is part of American folklore and of our nation's cultural heritage.

He is the only known bones player in this area. However, there are two other fellow performers he knows of in Michigan.

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As a youth Danforth tried his hand at playing the bones and periodically played them through the years. However, he really didn't get into his performing until two years ago. Then, his wife Frances was taking a musical heritage course at Eastern Michigan University. When the subject of the bones arose, she mentioned her husband played them. Shortly thereafter, Danforth was invited by the instructor to visit the class and give a demonstration.

"Before I went to the class, I wondered about the potential of the sounds and I developed some clicks," he said.

His first public performance was at EMU's Pease Auditorium during a folk music concert.

"My playing really brought the house down. I was just flabbergasted. I didn't play too well then," he recalled. It was about this time he acquired the name "Mister Bones."

The bones are pieces of curved wood. They are seven inches long, one inch wide and less than a half-inch thick. His collection of 60 sets of different bones include some made of white pine, balsa, black walnut, hard birch, rosewood, ivory, plastic and of course the real thing — sparerib bones. His wooden varieties are made by an area farmer.

The technique behind playing the bones is a matter of dexterity and relaxation, he says. Each hand holds two sticks. The sound is produced by letting one stick do the flopping while the other stick acts as an anvil. The whole process involves moving the wrist, arm and shoulder.

When the bones sound the same, he has the desired rhythmic coloring. For different tone color, he adjusts the bones' length. Rosin is applied to the sticks to prevent them from slipping.

Although the bones are usually played along with a piano, they have also been played with hammered dulcimers, organs and banjos. Danforth also has done a few solos.

"Before I do a piece, I listen to a recording of the selection and look at the sheet music. I must feel the beat for a tune in order to play it. I don't know how to read music, so I figure out the time mathematically."

Although Danforth has played various types of music with his bones, he enjoys performing ragtime the most.

There's a lot of subtle qualities and different textures to ragtime. You can do a lot of variations."

Since his debut two years ago, Danforth has been in great demand. He performed at the jazz-ragtime festival in Detroit last June, the Ann Arbor Street Fair last July and the Saline Fair last September. He played during the University Players' production of "Bread and Roses" and at the Unitarian Church's ragtime orgy last winter.

"This is all relatively new. It's just a deluge of interest all of a sudden. There's nothing professional about my playing. It's just a hobby."

Although he is not from a musical background, his family is very musically-inclined. His wife gives piano lessons at their home, 1411 Granger. Their son, Malcolm, is band director at Saline High School. A second son, Douglas, although not a professional musician, plays the clarinet and guitar.

Danforth's background is as fascinating and varied as his talent.

He came to Ann Arbor in 1916 and studied chemical engineering. Danforth served a brief stint as a member of the Student Army Training Corps (SATC) from September to December, 1918. He later switched his major to architecture and received his degree in that field in 1927.

Danforth had his own architectural firm in Monroe from 1929 to 1934. He joined the Monroe Schools and designed an elementary art curriculum for the school system. He also taught art for five years there.

Spurred by his great interest in art, Danforth returned to the U-M and later received a master's degree in art education. His plans to obtain a Ph.D. in education were interrupted by World War II. The ensuing war years were spent helping to design the various components for B-24 bombers at the Willow Run bomber plant.

Following the war, Danforth later became supervisor of mechanical engineering at Bendix Corporation's Industrial Metrology Division. Since 1968, he has been working at Balanced Technology Inc. off Enterprise Drive in Scio Township. There he "wears all kinds of hats" including sales and engineering.

Despite his age, retirement is definitely not in Danforth's plans. He and his wife have a house in Cape Coral, Fla. which they built seven years ago as a retirement spot. However, they have been so busy and having so much fun in Ann Arbor, they haven't gotten around to using it.

"Playing the bones is a lot of fun. I keep on discovering new possibilities with rhythm and tone colors. Eventually I'd like to invent a nomenclature to make possible notation for the playing of the bones. There's no record or written description of bones playing now," Danforth says.

He has worked extensively with Sue Dunn, a graduate student in ethnomusicology at the U-M's School of Music on a study of the history of the bones.

"The bones are more than just a percussion instrument. It's an art form."

Danforth says.

Somehow you feel in your bones he's right.

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Percy Danforth could be lolling on a Florida beach, sipping a tall, cool something. Instead, the 75-year-old Ann Arbor resident still works and even took up an unusual hobby that has earned him the name "Mister Bones." Page 41.

On a misty, moisty May morning, a group of Ann Arborites — young, old and in-between — set out for the wooded back acres of Nichols Arboretum. What were they looking for? And what did they find? Turn to Page 15.



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(Details Page 3)

No. 145

THE ANN ARBOR NEWS

Ann Arbor, Michigan, Sunday, May 25, 1975

LOOSE

Bones

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Bolcom and Morris's America, in Pop and Classics

By ROBERT PALMER

WILLIAM BOLCOM and Joan Morris are giving their first New York concert in almost three years on Sunday at 3 P.M. in Alice Tully Hall, and the program, called "Standards & Rarities," is the sort of thing their fans have learned to expect from them — songs by Charles Ives and Jerome Kern, Irving Berlin's rare "At the Devil's Ball," Harry Warren's "Jeepers Creepers" and six new "Cabaret Songs" composed by Mr. Bolcom. There will be a guest appearance by Percy Danforth, an 82-year-old architect, who is recognized the world over as a virtuoso player of a uniquely American percussion instrument, the bones. Somehow, at a Bolcom and Morris concert, not even a bones virtuoso is entirely unexpected.

In private life, William Bolcom and Joan Morris are husband and wife, and they teach at the University of Michigan. Mr. Bolcom, a composer and pianist, and Miss Morris, a singer, are classically trained, educated in Europe, a cosmopolitan musical couple. But since 1972, they have made a performing career by artfully straddling the worlds of classical and popular music. They perform songs, American songs, by composers who are generally considered classical (Ives), popular (Kern) or somewhere in between (George Gershwin). These boundaries of category are, they believe, largely artificial.

"We approach this music seriously, but not solemnly," Miss Morris said the other day. "To me, singing these songs has always been connected with wanting to say things in the simplest, most direct way. A songwriter has three and a half minutes to create a person and a story, and to say something emotionally, and that's true of all the songwriters whose work we perform. Why can't a recital of lieder



William Bolcom and Joan Morris will perform Sunday at Alice Tully Hall.

Cori Wells Braun

important. In the couple of centuries of songwriting here, which were basically oriented toward popular music, there are as many people who are known for writing just one great song as there are people with a whole body of work to their credit. And if a writer's one song is as moving and

touching and perfect as a song by, say, Irving Berlin, then it's accepted the way a Berlin song is accepted. That doesn't tend to be true in Europe.

"These songs!" Mr. Bolcom exclaimed, "It's like they're engraved in stone. They're so perfect, so right. And I really like hearing them for

what they are, the way the writers intended for them to go. I think a great many popular singers just impose their own style on everything they do, but we have this sort of more respectful attitude to the material, and out of that comes a style."

Another difference has to do with the rhythmic vitality of American English. "I'm an American singer, and I really enjoy singing in my own language," Miss Morris said. "I could get up on the stage and just sing beautiful tones, but that's an animal way to communicate; your intellect isn't engaged if you can't understand what a person's saying."

"And there's this particular lapidary quality of English as we speak it," Mr. Bolcom added. "There's a kind of rockiness or bumpiness, an... *unsmoothness*. And it derives from an emphasis on rhythm."

There will be even more emphasis on rhythm Sunday than at previous Bolcom and Morris concerts, and the reason is Percy Danforth. Though he will be 83 years old next Friday and has been head of his own architectural firm, a designer of B-24 bomber parts and a mechanical engineer for many corporations, Mr. Danforth has been busy in recent years playing his bones in European and American concert halls. He also manufactures his own bones, often using hickory, walnut and other types of wood.

The bones were originally a percussion instrument played by black Africans who had been brought to America as slaves. They were made from actual animal bones — beef ribs were particularly prized by bones players — and were probably a substitute for the drums and other loud instruments that were banned in most slaveholding states before the Civil War. But rhythm sticks or other instruments similar to bones are often found in traditional African music, where they keep up a basic though often syncopated rhythmic pattern, around which other rhythms seem to revolve. A

TOP POP RECORDS

These are the most popular albums and singles, compiled by Billboard. Singles and albums are determined by sales and radio-play reports. An asterisk indicates an especially fast-selling record.

Albums		Singles	
This Week	Last Week	This Week	Last Week
1	1	1	1
Thriller*		Bille Jean*	
Michael Jackson		Michael Jackson	

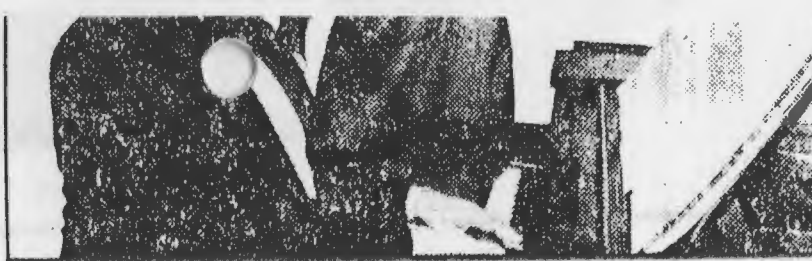
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The Degree of Modesty

William Bolcom was attracted to American songs and songwriters after having been heavily influenced, as a young American composer studying abroad, by the work of Karlheinz Stockhausen and Pierre Boulez. "One difference I began to notice between American and European music in general was the degree of modesty involved," he said. "In America, the reputation of the *auteur* hasn't been as



Cori Wells Braun

important. In the couple of centuries of songwriting here, which were basically oriented toward popular music, there are as many people who are known for writing just one great song as there are people with a whole body of work to their credit. And if a writer's one song is as moving and

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The bones entered American popular music through the 19th-century minstrel show, and Mr. Danforth's bones playing is based on this minstrel tradition. He lives near Mr. Bolcom and Miss Morris in Ann Arbor, Mich., and has performed with them on a number of occasions. But Sunday will be the first time they have appeared as a trio in New York. Tickets are \$8 to \$12 and are available at the Tully Hall box office in Lincoln Center, or by calling Centercharge, 874-8770.



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Albums			Singles		
This Week	Last Week		This Week	Last Week	
1	1	Thriller* Michael Jackson	1	1	Billie Jean* Michael Jackson
2	4	Frontiers* Journey	2	2	Shame on the Moon Bob Seger & Silver Bullet
3	3	H ₂ O* Hall and Oates	3	1	Stray Cat Strut Stray Cats
4	6	Business as Usual* Men At Work	4	4	Really Want to Hurt Me* Culture Club
5	5	The Distance* Bob Seger & Silver Bullet	5	5	Hungry Like the Wolf* Duran Duran
6	7	Rio* Duran Duran	6	9	Back on the Chain Gang* The Pretenders
7	11	Lionel Richie* Lionel Richie	7	11	You Are* Lionel Richie
8	9	Toto IV* Toto	8	8	We've Got Tonight* Rogers and Easton
9	2	Built for Speed Stray Cats	9	6	Baby, Come to Me Patti Austin
10	15	Pyromania* Def Leppard	10	15	Separate Ways* Journey

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New York Times

Fri March 4, 1983

p. C.19

'Doing the bones' made music that entranced city audience

By MARIAN MITCHELL
Standard-Times Staff Writer

A life-long addiction to "the bones" began for Percy Danforth, 76, of Ann Arbor, Mich., on a sultry summer evening on the wrong side of the railroad tracks of Washington, D.C.

The macadam expanse in front of Claymans Grocery Store at the corner of 15th and F Streets was the favorite playground for Danforth as a small boy and his friends. Once the old-fashioned

has reached that point, he may try both hands together with undulating movements of the body,

Percy Danforth never travels anywhere without a full compliment of bones, some of them handsome specimens made from animal rib bones like those which Zulu tribesmen must have used centuries ago in deep Africa. Marrow in real bones, he explained, gives a hollow sound.

Most of his instruments however, are

audience of varied ages at Tryworks. Danforth is a popular performer in solo or in ensemble, wherever he goes. He has made frequent appearance on television, and the University of Michigan's TV station has made tapes

of him which are shown in public schools. Thousands saw a recent performance in the large auditorium in the Ann Arbor Center for the Performing Arts.

He has worked with graduate students at the university's School of Music who have done historical research and written theses on the bones as a primitive instrument.

While he was in New Bedford, Danforth accompanied Organist Martha Pline for the prelude and postlude of the Sunday morning service at First Unitarian Church, New Bedford.

To Scott Joplin's "Elite Syncopation" and "Weeping Willow" Danforth contributed the haunting rhythms he had learned as a boy of 8 from the young blacks of shantytown.

"When you put your whole heart into it, it becomes a kind of dance and it flows through your bones."

Observatory open to public

NORTON — The Wheaton College Observatory will be open on Thursday and on May 13, 20 and 27, if the weather is clear for viewing astronomical objects. The observatory, open from 9 to 10:30 p.m., is located east of Clark Center and the tennis courts; parking is available in the staff parking lot.

During May, the objects visible are Mars, Saturn, and the globular cluster M3. The moon will be visible only



AT THE CIRCUS AND SPECIALS

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ST 30 thru SEPT. 4
P.M.—\$7.00, Tues.,
Thurs. 8 P.M., Sat.
M.—\$8.00, Fri. 8 P.M.,
P.M.—\$9.00

SEPT. 7 thru SEPT. 12
Tues., Wed., Thurs., 8 P.M.,
Sat. 5:30 P.M.—\$8.00,
Sat. 9 P.M., Fri., Sun.
8 P.M.—\$9.00, Sun.
3 P.M.—\$7.00

Wed. 2 P.M.—\$6.00



"DOING THE BONES" — Percy Danforth of Ann Arbor, Mich., shares with a New Bedford audience an ancient rhythmic art which probably originated in equatorial Africa. (Staff photo by Ron Rolo)

gas lamp on the corner was lit in the early evening, it became the shadowy theater for the young blacks of the neighborhood.

"They would throw sand on the sidewalk, get out the bones and do a soft shoe dance. It had the same quality as their singing of spirituals," Danforth said in wistful reminiscence.

During a weekend here in early April, Danforth told New Bedford audiences about those summer evenings when he watched entranced the fluid, rhythmic movements of young bodies to the accompaniment of the bones.

"Their performance came close to what we call 'soul,'" Danforth explained. "The young men seemed to be made out of India rubber. There was no conversation or music — only a lovely flow of rhythm."

This resident of Ann Arbor finds it easier to demonstrate than to describe "doing the bones." He showed audiences at New Bedford's Tryworks, the East Fairhaven school and in the home of his hosts — Kenneth and Maggi Peirce — how to use a relaxed, clockwise, rotating movement, holding two wooden bones in one hand, with the ends of the bones acting as pivots.

"I start with a simple click, then a double and a triplet, then a triplet followed by a click," when the learner

made of wood, Rosewood, lignun vitae, white pine, balsam — each produces a different sound color, ranging from the strident to a soft castinet-like quality. Although not authentic, bones made of wood — fashioned to order with "optimum geometry," a phrase of which Danforth is fond — are a lot easier to find than the right shape of rib bone.

Percy Danforth has worn many professional hats. Originally an architect, he has found himself at different eras of his life as designer of elementary art courses for Monroe, Mich. schools, as art gallery lecturer, a 5th and 6th grade teacher in a university laboratory school, an artist, engineer, and currently, in personnel work for an engineering firm.

Half way between 70 and 80, he has no intention of retiring. Throughout his career, there has been unremitting research on the art of the bones.

His wife, Frances, an ethnomusicologist, is sometimes dubbed "Mrs. Bones."

Wherever he goes, Danforth is hard on the trail of other bones buffs, who appear to be a vanishing breed. When he came to New Bedford, another enthusiast made the trip from Washington to meet him.

Together, the two entranced an

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Musician, 91, still has music in his bones — all 18,000 of them

By Latitia McCree
THE DETROIT NEWS

1991

At 91, Percy Danforth's bones are in demand — and in tune.

Danforth, who lives in Ann Arbor, said he has traveled as far as Europe to show off his "bones" — a musical instrument played between the fingers much like the spoons.

He has been playing the bones since 1907, and has appeared at the Royal Festival Hall in London, Lincoln Center in New York and the Scotland Festival.

Danforth said people regularly call, asking him to play or wanting to buy a pair of bones.

He has sold more than 18,000 of the instruments and currently has orders for 300 to 400 pair, he said.

"We make bones and ship them all over the world."

The bones comes in two sizes, children and adult. The adult bones are 7¼ inches long and 1½ inches wide. They can be made of different kinds of wood or ivory, but most of Danforth's bones are wood.

"I use various kinds of wood, depending upon what kind of sound I want," he said. "I use Ponderosa pine,

maple, cherry, walnut, even ebony."

Bones are so called because humans used real animal bones when the musical instrument was developed about 25,000 years ago, Danforth said.

Danforth does not actually make the wooden bones. He takes the orders, and Raymond Schiarer of Dexter, Mich., makes them.

Schiarer, 70, a retired farmer, met Danforth in 1976. He said Danforth found out he did woodwork as a hobby and called him up, and he has been making bones ever since.

Danforth gives buyers one free lesson and two instruction books. His first set of bones were a pair of spare ribs his father gave him to play with when he was in the third grade, he said.

Danforth said bones have been played for ages, and were particularly popular in the early 1900s.

"Everybody knew about bones because minstrel shows were popular," he said. Every minstrel show had a character who played the bones, known as Brother Bones, he said. Danforth said he played Brother Bones many times.

He loves to play for kids, he said. They really get involved.



AUDREY SHEHYN/
The Detroit News

Percy Danforth models a pair of "adult bones." He has been playing this instrument since 1907.

"Children always want to do it when they see me play," he said. "They are very anxious to try."

Danforth said he plays everything from classical music to rock 'n' roll, but favors ragtime, which he plays with a group called Mad Cat Ruth.

"The bones have become my life," he said.

Folk Hero 'Mr. Bones,' Percy Danforth Dies at 92

Percy Danforth, more familiarly known in this area as "Mr. Bones" died Wednesday, June 10 at age 92. He was universally acknowledged as a master of the bones, a rhythmic folk instrument consisting of two hand-held strips of wood.

Last summer, Danforth appeared on Chelsea's Concerts In the Park and Manchester's Gazebo Series with Chelsea resident musician-singer-songwriter Deborah Hinderer Rusinsky and The Westwood Swing Set. Rusinsky told *The Standard*, "It was a privilege and honor for me to perform with Percy. He was a loveable, dear man, and a fabulous musician. I already miss him very much." Danforth and Rusinsky had appeared as a duo in many concert settings. They played together at *Bottle Creek's* "Midnight at the Creek" New Year's Eve Festival last year and were slated to return this year as featured performers.

Wherever Mr. Bones played, whether at the Ark in Ann Arbor, the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C., the Royal Festival Hall in London, or Alice Tully Hall in New York, he entertained and educated audiences with his virtuostic playing and informative stories of the bones' history. Danforth always said, "I don't just rattle the bones, I make music."

And make music he did! Danforth learned to play the bones from his father in 1908 but did not start to play publicly until the 1970's. Since then, he played avidly and often, still going strong in his late eighties. Rather than settling for the usual technique of holding a pair of bones in only one hand, Mr. Bones perfected playing the bones with a pair in each hand, achieving startling and delightful multiple rhythmic effects that set him apart from other folk artists.

Danforth was labeled a "National Treasure" by the Smithsonian in 1976 after he gave a bones-playing demonstration at the nation's Bicentennial Festival. He was also the only musician to be asked to return 10 consecutive years to the prestigious Philadelphia Folk Festival. Last year, Mr. Bones made an appearance on the Nashville Network where he was hailed by bones player host David Holt as "without a doubt, the world's best bones player." Danforth leaves his bones legacy behind in the form of his recently produced video—"Mister Bones: How to Play the Bones"—to teach and assure continuing the art of playing the instrument he made famous.

Since 1976, local Dexter farmer and woodworker Raymond Schairer has

made all "Danforth Bones" instruments. Danforth needed a source of wooden bones since plastic bones "just didn't sound right" according to Danforth, and using real animal bones was impractical for obvious reasons. Danforth met Ray Schairer through Schairer's area leadership in the 4-H Woodworking Club, and the two went into bones-making partnership immediately. Over the years, Schairer has made and shipped over 17,000 pairs of "Danforth Bones." Schairer says, "I really enjoyed working with Percy to develop the current style of bones now being used. I hope to keep the production of bones going for a long time." Schairer will continue to fill the many orders that keep pouring in from all over the world.

Schairer, Rusinsky, and another Chelsea resident and bones player Bob Benedict will be appearing on a Lansing news show about the art of bones making and bones playing. Benedict was a student of Danforth and will continue to play the bones as Danforth taught him.

Percy Danforth was born in North Dakota and moved to Ann Arbor in 1918 where he attended the University of Michigan and earned a degree in Architecture. He also lived in Monroe, where he built the art program for the Monroe Public School System and served as an art teacher. Danforth was prevented from completing his doctorate in engineering at the U. of M. because he was drafted into World War I. During the second World War, Danforth worked in the bomber plant at Willow Run. After the war, he worked at Bendix Corp., and later at Balance Technology in Ann Arbor.

Danforth is survived by his wife of 65 years, Frances Danforth, a well known piano teacher and composer; two sons, Malcolm of Fraser, and Douglas of Weathersfield, Conn.; four grandchildren; and countless friends, fans, and admirers who will miss this talented performer. A memorial service is tentatively planned for later this month at Hillside Terrace Retirement Home where Danforth was residing at the time of his death.



PERCY "BONES" DANFORTH

The Percy Owen Danforth Memorial Garden

This garden and its creative energies are dedicated to the inspirational memories of Percy Owen Danforth, a.k.a. Mr. Bones. He passed away on June 10, 1992, at the age of 92. During his life, he was a teacher, artist, musician, engineer, architect, personnel manager, and devoted father and husband. Widely known as a rhythm bones player in his later years, he was labeled 'a National Treasure' by the Smithsonian Institute. Creativity, commitment, and hard work combined with warmth, acceptance, empathy for the interests of others, and a sense of the infinite, resulted in an extraordinary person. By generously giving of himself, he would try to help in whatever ways he could to help people achieve their fullest potential. Of all of the activities he undertook, he found that he was always practicing his first love, teaching. May his creative and empathetic spark continue to bloom and grow.

This memorial is found at <http://baymoo.sfsu.edu:4242/15120>