

Dylan surprise Mariposa visitor

Martin, Robert

The Globe and Mail (1936-Current); Jul 17, 1972; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Globe and Mail

pg. 1



—Thomas Barnes

MARIPOSA MEETING

American folksinger Bob Dylan and Canadian Gordon Lightfoot met yesterday when both attended the Mariposa Folk Festival. Another picture and a story on Page 14.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.



Dylan arrived unannounced, had to leave abruptly when crowd became over-eager.

Dylan surprise Mariposa visitor

By ROBERT MARTIN

Seldom-seen Bob Dylan, an almost legendary figure of folk music, made an unannounced appearance at the Mariposa Folk Festival last night, but was mobbed by an overly-enthusiastic crowd shortly after his arrival and had to return to the mainland on the private launch on which he arrived.

The Mariposa gathering spotted him as he headed to a stage and rushed toward him. Security guards with him led Dylan to the cordoned-off area where he waited behind a steel fence for about 15 minutes until the boat arrived.

Dick Flohill, a Mariposa director, said Dylan had intended to make an event of his visit by performing in public, something he seldom does any more. (His last pub-

lic performance was in New York at the Concert for Bangladesh a few months ago.)

Dylan showed up with Adam Mitchell, a former member of the Paupers, who had been performing earlier on the weekend at the festival.

All tickets for yesterday's performances were sold by noon and at 5 p.m. the gates were opened to let in the hundreds of fans who had been waiting outside for hours.

Dylan wasn't the only big-name performer to show up at Mariposa, although the famous names tended at first to just blend with the crowd.

Gordon Lightfoot, wearing a pair of rose colored glasses, sat virtually unnoticed on the grass among a crowd watching a new American folk singer, John Prine, perform.

It's understandable that Lightfoot went unnoticed because Prine kept everyone's eyes strictly on him. He has a voice like the early Dylan, all late nights and cigaret butts, the easygoing delivery of Kris Kristofferson and a repertoire of funny-sad songs about various aspects of losing that are all his own.

Everything was quiet as long as guests passed quietly through the crowds. However, when Joni Mitchell joined her friend, Murray McLauchlan, for a few songs during his set, people started to go a little crazy.

Their joy at seeing and hearing Joni Mitchell perform live was understandable because it is not something she does very often any more. But enthusiasm led to fired-up imaginations and in half an hour, if you listened to the rumor mongers, Woody Guthrie himself had risen from the grave and was at Mariposa.

The announcement that Salome Bey would appear at Stage Four, one of the six stages providing continuous entertainment, started a general stampede in that direction. The event that was supposed to take place then was a workshop on the roots and traditions of blues. The size and expectations of the crowd turned it into a group concert which included, besides Miss Bey, who did in fact show up, Bukka White, Roosevelt Sykes and Taj Mahal, all of whom were wildly applauded.

Then the rains came. There had been showers on and off throughout Saturday, but at 5 p.m. the skies opened up as though they intended to wash the island into Lake Ontario. Suddenly, whole audiences became wrapped in plastic,

Trench coats, yellow slickers, green garbage bags with holes cut for arms and heads and immense sheets of white plastic emerged from picnic hampers and rucksacks.

The hardihood of the crowd was admirable; very few people left, most of them simply huddling under whatever was handy and trying not to get rain down their necks.

But there were not many places to go for shelter: not enough trees on the site to provide cover for 10,000, and catching a ferry could mean a 20-minute wait in the open. So most just sat around until the rain soaked through whatever their protection was, then threw it aside and danced in the puddles.

Many remained in the hope of seeing more superstars. The rumor at the Dave Bromberg concert was that Neil Young was coming. He did not show — at least not until later — but was not missed because Bromberg put on a fine show of his own.

Bromberg is one of a new generation of white blues singers whose sufferings have not made him lose his sense of humor. Songs like You've Got to Suffer if You Want to Sing the Blues were firmly tongue-in-cheek.

When Young showed up for Bruce Cockburn's concert, there was an initial hysterical reaction, then the audience quieted down to listen to him sing a new song, Sugar Mountain, and an old one, Helpless, which he dedicated to the Pickering airport.

Yesterday the sun turned out and so did the same large crowds that came on Saturday. In some areas, the grass had turned to mud, but most of the site was in pretty good shape, if wet.

Generally, the 12th version of Mariposa can be counted a rousing success. The acts were good—many were great—nobody seemed seriously put out by the weather and the festival actually made money for the third time in its history.

Dick Flohill, one of the festival directors, announced on Saturday that the festival had broken even at this point and that Sunday's receipts would all be profit.

This compares favorably with last year's Mariposa which lost \$4,000. The new multiple-stage, continuous-entertainment format has been accepted by folk fans and will be continued next year.

The only improvement festival organizers would like to see next year, they say, is three days of sunshine.