

30th June 2020

Wooing

"Frog went a-courtin', and he did ride, ah-ha!

Frog went a-courtin', and he did ride, ah-ha!

Frog went a-courtin', and he did ride,

With a sword and a pistol by his side, ah-ha!"

Traditional English Ballad, from the late 16th century

I'm in trouble! Having suggested a few days ago that I'd bagged my first "groupie" from the discerning ranks of Church of Scotland Guilds' women, I got set upon by my lovely wife. "I thought *I* was your first groupie," she remonstrated, "when you wooed me with your singing and guitar playing in the Coffee House on Iona." She was right, of course. And I now have lots of Brownie Points to catch up on – and maybe more wooing to do!

Wooing! That takes me back – to the exact time and place my wife was referring to. It was 1973, and Mary and I, on Iona for different purposes, fell madly in love very quickly. We were inseparable within days. Playing guitar in the Coffee House kitchen, singing love songs by Tom Paxton, Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger and others from the Folk revival of the 1960s and 70s, was the wooing part. It was youthful, naive, unremittingly romantic and, it appears, singularly successful. That young lady, who's been my wife for 46 years, was, indeed, my first groupie. Who needs Frog's sword and pistol when a battered old guitar can do the trick?

But I share this thought with you – before my wife says it for me. Wooing shouldn't be confined to the "winning" of a love. We need to be wooed regularly – aye, and not just women either. What's wrong with falling in love with the same person again and again? Where's the problem with being youthful and naive in your later years? Why don't we give ourselves to romanticism as if we were falling in love for the first time?

I've not always been good at that, and I've been guilty of taking my first and best groupie for granted. So, if you'll excuse me, I have a guitar to tune and a couple of songs to sing to someone I'd like to woo again.

A prayer for today

Tender God, you woo me with your love, and I fall happily into your arms.

Help me not to shrink from loving when I need to give my all, so that love might be known, and celebrated, and change our lives for ever. Amen

An original reflection by © Tom Gordon

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