it, there was Frank Hamilton leading the second half, singing 'Welcome Table' using what I was to find out later was a bass run on the guitar. Dawn Greening being gracious and wonderful serving homemade cookies; the Clancy Brothers dropping by to do a few songs; and I knew Fleming Brown, the great banjo player, wasn't far away — I was in heaven! — Fred Anthony

"I would get on the North Avenue bus at the Naraogisett depot, on the edge of suburbia, in a world dull and familiar to a discontented teenager of 1961, and then the Saturday afternoon Odyssey would begin. I found myself surrounded by babushkaed women,

calling S.R.O.s, spending many days sitting and reading on park benches, dazzled at least one bourgeois teen-ager I must admit I often skipped the second half to hang out over there.

"And above all, in my memories of the school there was Dawn. I actually met her before I took classes at the school. I had started a folk music club at Oak Park High School; Lance and Leslie, two of Dawn's children who were students there, had told me of a house where Pete Seeger and Cisco Houston and Sonny Terry and other mythological creatures would hang out on their travels. They invited me over, and I discovered a place where a teenage rebel could let down his guard a few minutes. I learned there that you could escape Oak Park and all it symbolized to me without ever leaving it, and I also learned from Dawn and Nate and the others that even if they didn't come from a remote and exotic place like India or Africa or Kentucky or Mississippi, and even if they weren't introduced into our consciousness from the mythic world of media like Pete Seeger, and even if they didn't belong to a remote generation like the Proletarian Party folks, some grown-ups were still able to hang on to the dream. — Frank Koplin

Clearly, the school was a welcome answer to the city's growing interest in folk music — an interest that had kept the Gate of Horn thriving, and now was feeding all kinds of new folk clubs around the north side; the Bulls, the Azteca, the Saddle Club, the Quiet Knight, Poor Richard's, the Earl of Old Town. A full-blown folk revival was on in Chicago, and the Old Town School was at the heart of it. A wonderful symbiosis transformed the music scene. Students and teachers would hang out at the clubs, which helped keep those small establishments going — then they started to perform in them.

"Actually, it started at the Bulls. It may have been the beginning of what is now known as 'Open Mike' entertainment in Chicago. We had absolutely no intention of entertaining anyone then, just wanted to get together and pick and sing with ourselves after class on Thursday nights. And we hated it when people came to hear us and the Bulls had to put in microphones and amps, so we left and went to the Azteca, then left there and settled in at the old Saddle Club on North Avenue. But we had to muck up the crowds that kept following, and used mikes and amps; it got to be on-stage entertainment every Thursday night for years." — Richard Germon

The School was nurturing and launching a generation of professional musicians (see the photos and text on pages 23-24). For example, OTS alumnus Roger [Jimmy] McGuinn, formerly of the Byrds

"The first time I heard about the Old Town School of Folk Music was in the winter of 1957, just after Bob Gibson had played a concert at my high school. I had a guitar and was teaching myself to play. That morning, Bob just played the five-string banjo, sang some folk songs, and blew me away. I'd never heard music like that before; I wanted to know more about it. My music teacher at the Latin School told me that a new folk music school had just opened and that I should go over and look into it. The following Saturday I walked up to North Avenue from my house on East Division Street. The School was on the third floor of an old brick building. I climbed the stairs and was greeted by Dawn Greening. She introduced me to Win Stracke and Frank Hamilton. Frank asked me if I knew the circle of chords. I told him that I didn't, and he proceeded to demonstrate an incredible chain of barre chords.