

Hello I Must Be Going

For my last **Whither Zither** I thought it only appropriate to feature an old photo of an old zither that appeared in the **Public Domain Review** I talked about in the last issue. Google translates the caption -- "Kone med Langleig fra Valdres" -- as "Wife with Langleig from Valdres." Valdres (the more common spelling) is a region in south central Norway about halfway between Oslo and Bergen.

The Langeleik or langleik is a droned zither, with one melody string and up to 8 drone strings (!) according to **Wikipedia**, which has more info on the instrument. These zithers have been around for awhile; in 1980 a langeleik dated as early as 1524 was uncovered on a Norwegian farm. Also pictured is a dansdukke or "dancing doll," which looks like it's attached somehow to the zither. I imagine it is related to the Appalachian dancing man or *limberjack*, also called a *jig doll*, among many other names.

Marcus Selmer took this photograph. He was an interesting fellow, born and trained as a pharmacist in Denmark, where he experimented with daguerreotype photography. In 1852, he travelled to Norway to visit his uncle's family in Bergen and never returned, setting up shop there as a photographer. His work became very popular and he was appointed the royal photographer in 1880. Selmer's photographs are by now in the public domain and reside in the **National Library of Norway**.

And I guess that's it for Whither Zither. This has been a spellbinding twenty year run for me, and as I said in the June episode, I owe a great debt of thanks to **Madison Folk Music Society** and its former president Mike Tuten and current president Darlene Buhler for allowing me to ramble on. And to all my dear faithful

readers and contributors, I will never be able to thank you enough. A special thanks is reserved for my wife Kristi Seifert, who not only encouraged and put up with me all along but came up with the name *Whither Zither* in the first place.

I'll leave a few years of columns online at louandpeter.com, and many are archived on the society's website (madfolk.org) within the back issues **Mad Folk News**. Some diehards have encouraged me to put out a book of selected columns so there is some movement in that direction; who knows? Meanwhile, my love to y'all, and thank you again. See you in the folding chairs.

