DOC COOPER

A SON RECALLS

The true life story of Maine’s legendary large animal veterinarian

As told and performed by Maine’s legendary masked storyteller

MICHAEL COOPER

A childhood fascination with the wild animals and sprawling ranches of his native western Canada, followed by a teenage love of dogs, horses and adventure, eventually led my father to veterinary school, and then across the continent and into his long and storied career caring for the sick and injured animals of rural Maine. Dad may have been “from away”, but through sixty years of dogged tenacity, and two and a half million miles driving his signature red truck to hundreds of homes and farms across the western foothills of his beloved adopted state, he managed to earn, in the hearts of countless practitioners of the country life, the oh-so-rare title of Honorary Mainer.

The very first masks were probably animal masks worn by prehistoric hunters as they danced around the evening’s fire re-enacting the details of their encounters with the mighty beast. It was the wonder of this timeless idea, as well as the beauty and power of the “transformation masks” made by the Northwest Tribes of coastal British Columbia and first exposed to me by my parents, that led me to my own thirty five year career of maskmaking and performing. And that is why, in the wake of my father’s passing, I consider it a perfect fit and a perfect time to use my stories, my songs and especially my masks to portray this “last of a dying breed” and the animals he loved, in the way I know best.