

Volume 27  
Nos. 1-2  
Folklife Center News

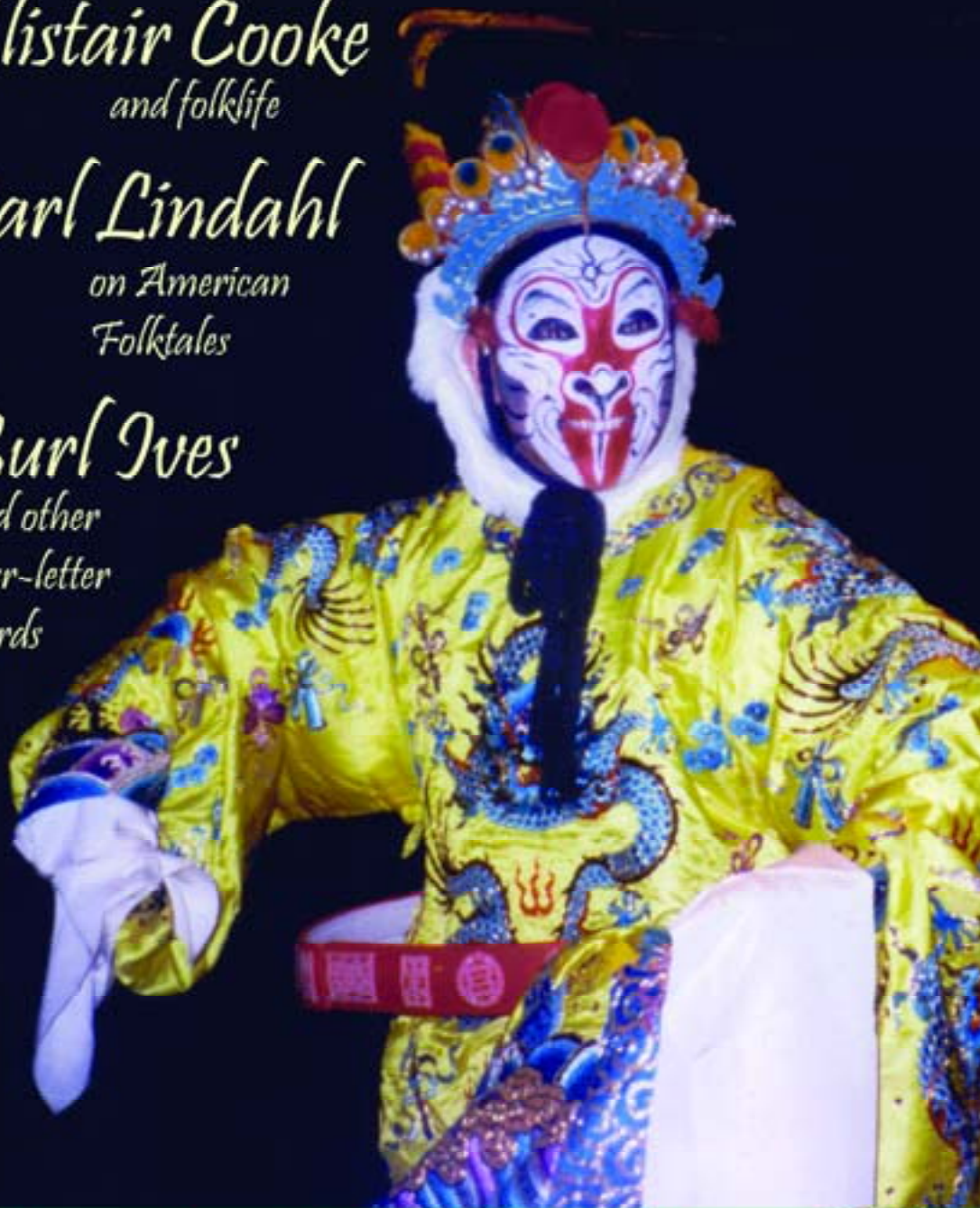
Arthur Miller  
*Works for the AFC*

Winter/Spring 2005

Alistair Cooke  
*and folklife*

Carl Lindahl  
*on American  
Folktales*

Burl Ives  
*and other  
four-letter  
words*



American Folklife Center  
*The Library of Congress*



The American Folklife Center was created in 1976 by the U.S. Congress to "preserve and present American folklife" through programs of research, documentation, archival preservation, reference service, live performance, exhibition, publication, and training. The Center incorporates the Archive of Folk Culture, which was established in the Music Division of the Library of Congress in 1928 and is now one of the largest collections of ethnographic material from the United States and around the world.

#### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

##### Librarian Appointees

Tom Rankin, *Chair, North Carolina*  
Jane Beck, *Vice-chair, Vermont*

Norma Cantú, *Texas*

Kojo Nnamdi, *District of Columbia*

##### Congressional Appointees

Daniel Botkin, *California*

Penn Fix, *Washington*

Mickey Hart, *California*

Dennis Holub, *South Dakota*

William L. Kinney Jr., *South Carolina*

Judith McCulloh, *Emerita, Illinois*

Marlene Meyerson, *New Mexico*

##### Presidential Appointees

Cynthia R. Church, *Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs, Department of Veterans Affairs*

Fran Mainella

*Director, National Park Service*

Sonya E. Medina, *Assistant Director of Projects, Office of the First Lady,*

*The White House*

##### Ex Officio Members

James H. Billington, *Librarian of Congress*

Lawrence M. Small, *Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution*

Dana Gioia, *Chairman,*

*National Endowment for the Arts*

Bruce Cole, *Chairman, National Endowment for the Humanities*

Michael Owen Jones, *President,*

*American Folklore Society*

Timothy Rice, *President,*

*Society for Ethnomusicology*

Peggy A. Bulger, *Director,*

*American Folklife Center*

#### ONLINE INFORMATION RESOURCES

The American Folklife Center's Website provides full texts of many AFC publications, information about AFC projects, multimedia presentations of selected collections, links to Web resources on ethnography, and announcements of upcoming events. The address for the home page is <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/> An index of the site's contents is available at <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/afcindex.html>

The Website for **The Veterans History Project** provides an overview of the project, an online "kit" for participants recording oral histories of veterans, and a brief presentation of some examples of video- and audio-recordings of veterans' stories. The address is <http://www.loc.gov/vets>

**The Folklife Information Service** is a cooperative announcement program of the American Folklore Society and the American Folklife Center. It is available only on the American Folklore Society's server: [www.afsnet.org](http://www.afsnet.org) The service provides timely information on the field of folklore and folklife, including training and professional opportunities, and news items of national interest.

#### FOLKLIFE CENTER NEWS

Stephen D. Winick, *Editor*

David A. Taylor, *Editorial Advisor*

Sheryle Shears, *Designer*

Peggy Pixley, *Production*

*Folklife Center News* publishes articles on the programs and activities of the American Folklife Center, as well as other articles on traditional expressive culture. It is available free of charge from the Library of Congress, American Folklife Center, 101 Independence Avenue, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20540-4610. *Folklife Center News* does not publish announcements from other institutions or reviews of books from publishers other than the Library of Congress. Readers who would like to comment on Center activities or newsletter articles may address their remarks to the editor.

#### STAFF

##### Administration

Peggy A. Bulger, *Director*

Gene Berry, *Assistant to the Director*

Doris Craig, *Administrative Assistant*

Michael Taft, *Head, Archive of Folk Culture*

##### Acquisitions and Programs

David A. Taylor, *Coordinator*

##### Research and Programs

Ilana Harlow, *Folklife Specialist*

Guha Shankar, *Folklife Specialist*

##### Processing and Cataloging

Sarah Bradley-Leighton,

*Processing Technician*

Catherine Hiebert Kerst, *Archivist*

Maggie Kruesi, *Cataloger*

Judy Ng, *Processing Technician*

Valda Morris, *Processing Technician*

Marcia Segal, *Processing Technician*

Nora Yeh, *Archivist, Coordinator*

##### Publications

Stephen D. Winick, *Editor*

##### Public Events

Theadocia Austen, *Coordinator*

##### Reference

Jennifer A. Cutting, *Folklife Specialist*

Judith A. Gray, *Folklife Specialist,*

*Coordinator*

Stephanie A. Hall, *Automation Specialist*

Todd Harvey, *Folklife Specialist*

Ann Hoog, *Folklife Specialist*

##### Audio Engineering

Matthew Barton, *Audio Engineer*

Jonathan Gold, *Audio Technician*

##### Digital Conversion

John Barton, *Specialist*

##### Reference Service

Tel: 202 707-5510

Fax: 202 707-2076

E-mail: [folklife@loc.gov](mailto:folklife@loc.gov)

##### Veterans History Project

Diane Kresh, *Director*

Peter T. Bartis, *Senior Program Officer*

Annelies Clump Behrend,

*Public Affairs Specialist*

Jeffrey Lofton, *Public Affairs Specialist*

Debra Murphy, *Special Assistant*

Sarah Rouse, *Senior Program Officer*

Timothy Schurter, *Program Officer*

Eileen Simon, *Archivist*

Taru Spiegel, *Program Officer*

**Cover:** The Washington Chu Shan Chinese Opera Institute performed scenes from *The Monkey King* and other Peking operas on May 18, 2005, in the American Folklife Center's 2005 Homegrown Concert Series. In this photo, Master Zhu Chu Shan performs as the Monkey King. For a full listing of Homegrown concerts, see p. 23 or visit us on the Web at [www.loc.gov/folklife](http://www.loc.gov/folklife). (Photo courtesy of Washington Chu Shan Chinese Opera Institute)

# ARTHUR MILLER—A VIEW FROM THE FIELD

By Matthew Barton

When the great playwright Arthur Miller died in February, obituary writers focused on his most famous work and his troubled marriage to Marilyn Monroe. Miller's life and work prior to *All My Sons* and *Death of a Salesman* received little attention, particularly his brief but memorable stint as a fieldworker for the Library of Congress in 1941.

In 1941 the twenty-six-year-old Miller was just another struggling, unemployed writer. As a student at the University of Michigan he had won a pair of drama awards, and in 1939 his political satire *The Pussycat and the Expert Plumber Who Was a Man* had been produced for CBS Radio's *Columbia Workshop* while he was making \$22.77 a week on the WPA Theater Project in New York. Since then, his career had stalled.

In December 1940 Miller's friend from the *Columbia Workshop* series, Joseph Liss, was hired as project editor for the Library of Congress's Radio Research Project, and he brought in Miller as a scriptwriter. The Radio Research Project was an ambitious foray into broadcasting conceived by Librarian of Congress Archibald MacLeish and funded by the Rockefeller Foundation. MacLeish saw it as an opportunity to use the Library's resources in a popular forum to educate the American public about the history of a free nation in a time when freedom was under fire.

Miller, Liss, and other writers took inspiration from raw material



**The playwright and fieldworker Arthur Miller, pictured sometime after the war. Source: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division**

such as the regional surveys of the Federal Writers Project, the holdings of the Library's Manuscript Division, and the collections of the Archive of American Folksong (the precursor of the American Folklife Center's Archive of Folk Culture). One of Miller's programs, called "Buffalo Bill Disremembered," featured an aging Buffalo Bill Cody looking back at his life, trying to separate fact from fiction. This program struck a chord, and many listeners wrote in with Buffalo Bill stories that had circulated in their families. Another Miller script dramatized the early history of New Orleans. Programs by other writers dealt with the building of the Erie Canal, the history of the tune "Yankee Doodle," and the story of a Polish migrant in the Jamestown colony.

It was only natural that folklore and folksongs would be used in such programs, but Alan Lomax, the twenty-six-year-old director of the Archive, sought a more active role for his division in the project. In a report to MacLeish, he described a documentary series based on new field recordings that would demonstrate "a new function for radio; that of letting the people explain themselves and their lives to the entire nation." To that end, Lomax, Liss, and others traveled the country in the summer of 1941 in a sound truck outfitted with new disc recording equipment. They interviewed people about their lives, homes, and work, and recorded their thoughts about the war in Europe, and if or when the United States would enter

the fray.

How Miller, who had no experience as a field collector, came to be responsible for collecting the material and writing the script for the sixth and final show is not quite clear, and at the time, Lomax questioned his qualifications. In a note to Radio Research Project director Phillip Cohen dated October 15, 1941, the day that Miller set out in a sound truck for Wilmington, North Carolina, with engineer John Langenegger, Lomax wrote:

"[Arthur Miller] making the trip means for the project to make other sacrifices. Mr. Miller is an awfully nice lad, but if his ability to handle regional materials is evidenced in the New Orleans script and in the Buffalo Bill script, I say he needs some more work before we spend \$400.00 on him."

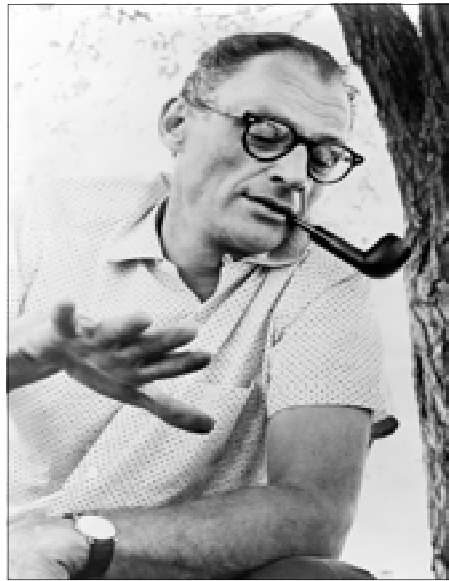
Apparently, the United States Department of Health wanted to borrow a sound truck from the Library for use on a mining safety film to be shot in Wilmington, North Carolina, and Miller and Langenegger were provided as a sound crew. Their main job was to interview the miners and safety engineers and gather sound effects.

In 2003 Miller recalled that he had been told to record as many different southern accents as he could on the trip, and there were a great variety in Wilmington. As a result of the new industries created by the demands of the U.S.-U.K. Lend Lease agreement, the city's population had doubled in less than two years, with workers and their families streaming in from all over the South.

The finished program included many accents, but its subject was really the people and the town of Wilmington. In a staged opening scene, Phillip Cohen tells Miller to "get on the Library Sound Recording Truck and go down to North Carolina. There's a boom on in a town called Wilmington . . . Ask the folks there what's going on, what they think is wrong and what's right. Talk to the people. Get records of their answers, their questions . . . get Wilmington, North Carolina into that sound truck."

Miller proved to be an exceptional field worker, asking intelligent and direct questions while keeping his informants at ease, whether it was the city manager of Wilmington, the newly arrived shipyard workers in the Wilmington shipyard, their wives in the trailer parks where they lived, or the now unemployed black laborers who had built the shipyard. One Sunday afternoon Miller was led indoors by the sound of singing. There he found twenty-five African-American women singing old spirituals that they had refashioned into songs of labor protest. A strike at a shirt factory was then in its fifth month, with no end in sight. Miller set about documenting the strike and its music, an experience he would remember for the rest of his life.

Miller and Langenegger returned to Washington on November 5. An undated typed note to Lomax from Miller offers a



**Arthur Miller in 1961. Source: New York World-Telegram & Sun Collection, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division**

fascinating glimpse of the young dramatist's mind at work:

"Just to remind you, Alan of our talk in the restaurant,—in the Negro jobless scene my aim was to keep their talk going in as spontaneous a fashion as was possible. So the dubs should be as close together as possible. In between cut pieces, of course, we don't want dead silence. Now I remember several pieces of the Negro records which were barren of voices and only the general street and outdoor noise was recorded. If those could be slipped in between the dubs, the realism of the scene could be maintained. Of course the sound of a car passing would do if the above is too difficult."

Joseph Liss's secretary Evelyn Young forwarded Miller's finished script to Lomax on December 11, which suggests that Miller, now back in his Brooklyn apartment, may have finished it just before the attack on Pearl Harbor. It timed out at thirty-two minutes, twenty-two seconds, a length that could easily be trimmed to the required broadcast length of twenty-nine minutes and thirty seconds—and an edited carbon copy timed out to just over twenty-nine minutes survives. But in an apologetic letter to Miller dated December 21, 1941, Lomax informed him that Phillip Cohen "for reasons which he will explain to you (considerations of National

Defense Policy) decided that the strike sequence, Negro unemployment sequence and material about the gay times of defense workers would have to come out of the show. That meant cutting the show down to twenty-four minutes and I saw nothing else to do but cut it further and make a fifteen-minute program out of it." In the end, all six programs were cut down to fifteen minutes, but it must have been quite a blow for the first-time field worker to see some of his best recordings hit the cutting room floor.

Nevertheless, Miller produced a tight fifteen-minute script, managing to keep some of the strike material, including two songs. The program ended with a ringing call for freedom:

MILLER: But there is no time for talk. The men have ships to build. One ship will slide into the water every twelve days. So this is the voice of the shipyard.

SOUND: SHIPYARD NOISES UP VERY FULL

MILLER: And this is Wilmington, North Carolina. A hundred voices talking free and one voice over all the rest, the voice that will keep men free . . .

The script called for further shipyard noise at this point, but secretary and typist Evelyn Young got the last word, at least in print, when she entered this bit of dialogue for herself at the very end:

YOUNG: And don't let me hear you birds ask for another Wilmington Script!! Merry Christmas!!

Miller never forgot his experience in Wilmington. In 1990 he ordered copies of his Radio Research recordings from the Library. Two years before his death, he reviewed and commented on them for Christopher Bigsby, author of "Arthur Miller: A Critical Study," which became the basis for the BBC Radio 4 program "Arthur Miller: The Accidental Music Collector."

His recollections were vivid: the mining safety engineer whose breakfast was three bottles of Coca-Cola and a bag of salted peanuts. The octagonal barrel of a shotgun aimed at him by a drunken man who told him to go back to Washington. The voice of a gospel

singer who "should have been singing at the Metropolitan." "Why do I remember all of this?" he asked Bigsby at one point.

Though he never again made field recordings, Miller's work retained some of the methodology. His 1955 play "A View From the Bridge" had its origins in a bit of Italian graffiti he saw on the New York waterfront: *Dové Pete Panto?* (Where is Pete Panto?) His inquiries among dockworkers initially met with silence, but piece-by-piece, he assembled the story of a young man murdered by the mobsters who controlled labor on the waterfront.

Miller's program aired on May 28, 1942. Later that year, in a report

to Archibald MacLeish, a once-doubtful Alan Lomax gave the rookie field worker his due:

"Mr. Miller shows the town of Wilmington which, since the beginning of the defense program has more than doubled its size. It is a ship-building town and full of the contrasts between the old leisurely way of life and the new trip-hammer tension that the defense program has brought on. Mr. Miller was more direct than we had been in other field efforts and simply walked up to people that he met in trailer camps, factories, and on the streets and interviewed them about what was going on in the city. From this material, we developed an inter-

esting script about this southern boom town. This script was written and narrated by Mr. Miller and it is up to now the most stirring program which we have completed."

*The field recordings made by Arthur Miller and John Langenegger can be heard in the American Folklife Center Reading Room. Miller's finished radio program on Wilmington, North Carolina, can be heard in the Performing Arts Reading Room of the Library of Congress.*

*Alan Gevinson's detailed history of the Radio Research Project appears in the 2002 Library of Congress Performing Arts Annual.*

---

## GRAMMY FOUNDATION AWARDS GRANT TO AFC

by Michael Taft

The Grammy Foundation, an arm of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, has awarded the AFC an archiving and preservation grant of \$38,414. This award is the Foundation's third to the AFC in the Center's continuing *Save Our Sounds* initiative to digitally preserve endangered sound recordings in the Archive of Folk Culture. The first two awards helped the AFC to fulfill the matching requirements of the *Save America's Treasures* grant that enabled the digital preservation of close to 3,000 recordings.

The present grant will go towards the preservation of five collections of disc field recordings:

- Henrietta Yurchenko's Mexican Indian recordings (1944–46): Indian music in the areas of Corahuichol in the States of Jalisco and Nayarit, the area of Seri in the State of Sonora, Tarahumara Indians recorded in the state of Chihuahua, and the Tzotzil and Tzeltal Indians recorded in the state of Chiapas, as well as other Indians in Mexico and Guatemala. Yurchenko made these recordings for the *Instituto Indigenista Interamericano*, the *Secretaria de Educación Pública*, and the Library of Congress.

- Ivan Walton's fieldwork in Michigan and Ohio (1938–41): Folksongs, including ballads and

shanties sung by sailors on the Great Lakes.

- Discoteca Publica Municipal of São Paulo collection, of Brazilian folk music (1937–38).

- Robert Sonkin collection of music and speech from Gee's Bend and Palmerdale, Alabama, and other places (1941): Conversations, interviews, prayer meetings, rhymes, and songs, recorded at various locations in Alabama and New Jersey.

- Helen Creighton collection from Nova Scotia (1943–44): Recordings of instrumentals, monologues, religious matter, shanties, songs, stories, and birdsongs from various communities in Nova Scotia, including African Canadian, German, Gaelic, French Canadian, and Micmac Indian material.

The project will save over 140 hours of recorded sound documenting a wide variety of traditions and cultures from the Western Hemisphere. Beyond the value of the material recorded on these discs, these collections represent the work of some of the pioneer folklore fieldworkers of the 1930s and 1940s. Henrietta Yurchenko, whose collecting career has spanned five decades, has recorded traditions, not only from Mexico, but from the United States, Ireland, Puerto Rico, Colombia, Ecuador, Spain, and Morocco, among other places. Ivan

Walton was one of the few to collect the songs of the upper Midwest, and his recordings of the Great Lakes mariners are early examples of documented occupational folklore.

The team of fieldworkers who recorded Brazilian songs and music for the Discoteca Publica Municipal of São Paulo represented a pioneering effort in group fieldwork (some of this collection was issued as part of the Library of Congress "Endangered Music Project" on Rykodisc 10403; see [http://www.rykodisc.com/Catalog/dump/rykoalbums\\_672.asp](http://www.rykodisc.com/Catalog/dump/rykoalbums_672.asp)). Robert Sonkin is perhaps best known for his collaboration with Charles L. Todd in recording in the migrant work camps in central California in 1940 and 1941 (see the American Memory presentation, *Voices from the Dust Bowl*, <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/afctshhtml/tshome.html>), but he also collected material in the South, New Jersey, and in New York City. Helen Creighton was one of the great Canadian folklore collectors. From the 1920s to the 1970s, she recorded the traditions of the people of the Maritime Provinces.

Through this generous grant from the Grammy Foundation, these valuable recordings will not only be permanently preserved, but they will become more accessible to researchers.

# *Alistair Cooke: A Radio and TV Icon in the Archive of Folk Culture.*



**Alistair Cooke (l.) interviews an unknown woman for the BBC program *I Hear America Singing* in 1938. The program was one of the first to air materials in the Archive of Folk Song. Courtesy of the estate of Alistair Cooke**

By Stephen D. Winick

When English-born journalist, broadcaster, and critic Alistair Cooke passed away on March 30, 2004, he left a remarkable legacy. Cooke's *Letter from America*, a BBC radio feature that ran as a virtually unbroken weekly series from 1946 until 2004, holds records as the longest-running spoken word radio program and the longest-running show ever presented by a single host: for fifty-eight years and almost three thousand fifteen-minute episodes, Cooke spoke to the world about American life. That's about 750 hours, or one full month of round-the-clock talking. And that's only one show among the many that Cooke presented

during his sixty-year career as a journalist and critic. The sheer number and length of extant recordings of his voice is matched by few presenters in the history of broadcasting.

The American Folklife Center is therefore pleased to note that a very early interview with Cooke, which we believe to be the first recording of his voice ever made, is held in the Archive of Folk Culture. The twelve-inch aluminum audiocassette, which is part of the American Dialect Society Collection, documents an interview conducted on January 14, 1934, during Cooke's first trip to America.

Cooke had come to the United States in 1932 to study drama on a two-year Commonwealth Fund

Fellowship that took him to both Yale and Harvard universities. At Harvard, Cooke enrolled in a course on the English language in America taught by Miles L. Hanley, who was at that time a fieldworker for the American Dialect Society and associate editor of the *Linguistic Atlas of New England*. Hanley interviewed Cooke about both drama and speech. During the interview, Cooke talked about his acquaintances in the world of American drama, many of them Englishmen working on Broadway or in Hollywood, such as Leslie Howard, Noel Coward, and especially Charlie Chaplin. He also praised what he called the "greater purity and consistency" of American vs. British speech.

The interview is all the more remarkable in that it is only one of several points of connection between Cooke's career and the Archive of Folk Culture. Because of his genuine love of folklore, Cooke visited the Library of Congress many times, particularly what was then the Archive of Folk Song. In 1936, while back in England, Cooke produced a very successful half-hour program of American hobo songs for the BBC, entitled *New York City to the Golden Gate*. After emigrating to the United States in 1937, he began pursuing his dream of a longer and more detailed program tracing the origins of American folksong. He discovered fairly quickly that there were few extant commercial recordings. He therefore journeyed to Washington from his home in New York and approached Alan Lomax, then Assistant-in-Charge of the Archive of Folk Song, for help. Lomax, always happy to promote folk music on the radio, helped him identify songs to use from the

archive's holdings. From these songs and a few others, along with his expert narration, Cooke stitched together *I Hear America Singing*, a series of thirteen half-hour programs. The series got excellent reviews in most British media outlets, with the *Times* of London sounding particularly enthusiastic, and suggesting that the show be expanded to an hour.

The *Times*, of course, has a long memory, and when Cooke died they commented on *I Hear America Singing* in his obituary, alluding to a great mystery surrounding the series: how had Cooke managed to borrow recordings from the Library of Congress, when no other broadcasters had yet managed to do so? It turns out not to be such a mystery after all: Cooke simply wrote an eloquent, charming, and persuasive letter to the Librarian of Congress, Herbert Putnam, a copy of which is held in the Archive of Folk Culture. "When I first became interested in American folk songs," Cooke wrote, "I had no idea so little had been done in recording, and



**This 1932 studio portrait of Alistair Cooke was taken just before he left for his first trip to America, which lasted two years. It was on this trip that he was recorded by the American Dialect Society, on a disc that now resides in the Archive of Folk Culture. Courtesy of the estate of Alistair Cooke**

how desperately hard it is for an amateur to get within earshot of the music he is interested in and excited about . . . I found that the Library, and only the Library, has recorded a score or more of the songs which can make my series possible." Cooke was able to persuade Putnam to grant the BBC one-time rights by promising to return to the Library not only the originals, but also all copies of the Archive's recordings. *I Hear America Singing* was therefore broadcast live, only once, and was to our knowledge neither commercially released nor even preserved in recorded form. Many of the recordings from the Library of Congress had never been heard before by anyone outside the Library.

During his trip to Washington to consult with Lomax about the program, Cooke made the acquaintance of blues and jazz pianist Jelly Roll Morton, by strolling into a bar where Morton was playing. Cooke, a blues and jazz fan since his university days, was thrilled to meet

one of his idols. He later recalled the evening on one of his recordings: "He was playing a sour piano in a really smelly café, the sort of place where they never serve a meal. Just a neon sign with two bulbs missing and a cab driver leaning up against a glass of beer. It was like meeting the President in a shoe-shine parlour." Coincidentally, Morton himself was planning to meet with Lomax for a series of recording sessions at the Library of Congress. Cooke sat in during the sessions, at which Lomax recorded Morton's repertoire of blues, jazz, and folksongs.

Alistair Cooke's dealings with the Archive were not always so successful. A plan for Cooke to borrow recording equipment for a 1941–42 BBC documentary tour of the United States seems not to have borne fruit. The plan is sketched out in letters among Cooke, Lomax, and Harold Spivacke, then Chief of the Library's Music Division. The use of expensive

equipment was more difficult to arrange than the use of recordings, and the letters reveal a complex process of negotiations once again involving the Librarian of Congress, at that time Archibald MacLeish. Moreover, no detailed account of what the trip was to entail seems to have survived. It is likely that the BBC's plan was something along the lines of the Radio Research Project for which Arthur Miller was working at the time, in which Cooke would ask for Americans' opinions about the war.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the fact that the BBC was part of the British government, which was already at war, while the Library was part of the American government, which was still officially neutral, made the negotiations more sensitive. Cooke, a newly naturalized American citizen, did not know how forthcoming he could be regarding his plans. "I didn't think it was proper for me to give an exhaustive account of what is, after all, a British government project to anybody until the first formal

negotiations were over between Mr. Lindsay Wellington [North American director of the BBC] and Dr. MacLeish," he explained, in a handwritten letter to Harold Spivacke, held in the Library's Music Division.

The surviving correspondence suggests that Lomax and Spivacke both supported Cooke's plan, but the time turned out to be inauspicious: Cooke's initial telegram, sent in October 1941, requested the equipment from January 15 until the end of March. Up until December 5, when Cooke was sent a telegram from the Library informing him that the equipment was spoken for until the fifteenth, it looked as though the plan would be feasible. But there the paper trail goes cold, and we have no record of Cooke receiving the equipment.

In all likelihood, the loan was cancelled due to World War II. When the last telegram was sent to Cooke on December 5, neither Cooke nor the Library could have known that The Empire of Japan would attack Pearl Harbor two days later. After the attack, the Library changed its plans and began to gather the "Man on the Street" interviews documented in our online exhibit *After the Day of Infamy*. (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/afcphtml/afcphtml.html>) Specifically, Cooke was setting out on his trip just as Lomax and the Library were recording the "Dear Mr. President" interviews, and it is likely that the equipment requested by Cooke was used elsewhere in this important effort. Nonetheless, the entry of the United States into the war made Cooke's trip all the more relevant, and he went ahead with it. According to his biographer Nick Clarke, he documented the trip primarily in notebooks.

The relationship of cordial respect between the Library and Cooke continued until a few years before Cooke's death; during the Library's 1999–2000 exhibition, *John Bull and Uncle Sam: Four Centuries of British-American Relations*, a printed version of one *Letter from America*, "Beer in Tins and Other Matters," was displayed prominently at the Library. The letter can now be viewed in the online version of that exhibition on the Library of Congress Website.

Outside his dealings with the Library, Cooke remained a lifelong aficionado of folk music and of folklife more generally. In *Letter from America* he often quoted the lyrics of hymns, ballads, and blues. He also produced programs on such folklife topics as: legends about the evolution of baseball in both America and the Soviet Union; jokes and legends about the iceman and other deliverymen; American regional celebrations of Christmas, May Day, and the Fourth of July; the culture of beauty pageants, parades, and world's fairs; mythic representations of the American West; and conspiracy theories about the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. All of these topics have since been studied by folklorists. Cooke passed his love of folk music on to his son, John Byrne Cooke, who became a professional bluegrass musician (with the Charles River Valley Boys) and a well-known photographer of the folk and rock music scenes in the 1960s.

Cooke was also held in great esteem by Congress itself, which he covered as a journalist from the 1930s on. He received the highest recognition possible from Congress in 1974, when he was asked to address the assembled body on the occasion of its two hundredth anniversary. Up to that time, the only foreign-born people to have made such an address were the Marquis de Lafayette and Winston Churchill. Cooke kept the mood light. He told Congress:

*Standing here now I feel as if I were just coming awake from some nightmare, in which I see myself before you unprepared and naked, as one often does in dreams, looking around this awesome assembly and blurting out "I accept your nomination for the Presidency of the United States!"*

Of course, Cooke was primarily known as a journalist and media personality. Throughout his career, he served as a BBC commentator on American affairs. A recognition of his prodigious talents as an essayist and broadcaster led to the creation of *American Letter* (later retitled *Letter from America*) in 1946. On the BBC World Service, *Letter from America* eventually reached audiences in over fifty countries. In

the era before global cable networks, Cooke's musings were thus one of the primary means by which English-speakers in Africa, Asia, Australia, Latin America, and Europe understood American politics and culture. He also served as the chief American correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian*.

Cooke's appeal soon made him a star on television as well. The cultural program *Omnibus*, of which he was the host, was a Sunday-afternoon staple on American TV for nine years during the 1950s, and remains one of the few shows ever to make the rounds of all three major networks. His NBC historical series *America: A Personal History* later ran on both PBS and the BBC, one of the few American commercial programs to do so. In 1971 Cooke began hosting the PBS anthology program *Masterpiece Theatre*, reversing his usual role to present British culture to American audiences. He would continue as host for twenty-two years, and this facet of Cooke's career is the one primarily remembered by Americans. Seated in a comfortable leather wingchair, Cooke looked the epitome of the English dramatist as he deftly contextualized dramatic renderings of Jane Austen and Henry James, as well as enthralling and delightful serials such as *Upstairs, Downstairs* and *Jeeves and Wooster*. Through his radio and television work, he became one of the world's most familiar voices.

A copy of the Alistair Cooke interview is available for listening in the Folklife Center Reading Room between the hours of 8:30 and 5 P.M., Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (excluding federal holidays); appointments are not necessary.

---

<sup>1</sup> Cooke's biographer, Nick Clarke, notes that the BBC's primary purpose was coordinating propaganda, and "convincing occupied Europe of the potential strength and invincibility of the American armed forces." Clarke identifies this field trip as a plan devised by Cooke and his supervisor at BBC, Lindsay Wellington, to document "how the war affected ordinary Americans from every walk of life." The surviving correspondence clearly indicates that the plan predated the United States entering the war, which makes the trip's aims very similar to those of the Radio Research Project.



# The Making of American Folktales



J.D. Suggs entertains folklorist Richard Dorson in Calvin, Michigan, in 1952. Watching from the window inside the Suggs home are Suggs's children Beatrice, Toka, and Wink. Suggs shared 175 folktales with Dorson. Although Dorson took down the great majority of Suggs's narratives in shorthand, he tape-recorded some of them, including some that had never been previously published. Fifteen of Suggs's tape-recorded tales, as well as this photo, appear in *American Folktales from the Collections of the Library of Congress*. Photo: George T. Kolehmainen

By Carl Lindahl

*Editor's Note: The American Folklife Center is proud to announce the publication of American Folktales, the first representative book of narratives ever published from materials in the Archive of Folk Culture. While the music and songs in the Archive get a lot of attention from both scholars and the media, our extensive collections of stories and storytelling are only now coming to be fully appreciated. In the article that follows, the book's author, Carl Lindahl, discusses the process by which American Folktales came to life. In the process he says a lot about the work folk-*

*lorists do and the importance of preserving our collections for the future. For readers who are not folklorists, "magic tales" and "märchen" are both synonyms for the kind of stories commonly known as "fairy tales." One kind of magic tale common throughout North America is the "Jack Tale," a story about a wily young man making his way in the world; "Jack and the Beanstalk" is the best-known old-world example. And for those who don't know, the Parsons Fellowship is a modest stipend awarded by the American Folklife Center to help scholars do research among the many collections at the Library of Congress.*

*American Folktales* emerged from a sense of unfinished business that had haunted me for decades. Long fascinated with Appalachian magic tales, I was troubled with the scant attention paid to them by folklorists, and especially by the fact that none of us seemed to be aware of the depth of the tradition or even of past scholarly attempts to assess it. In 1943 the first book-length anthology of Appalachian märchen appeared: *The Jack Tales* by Richard Chase. In the notes to that book, Herbert Halpert refers to Jack Tales he had recorded from Samuel Harmon in 1939. In 1997, while in residence at the University of



**(Left to right) Martha Suggs Spencer, Carl Lindahl, and Toka Suggs Saunders at the J.D. Suggs Freedom Festival, Vandalia, Michigan, August 2004. Martha and Toka are daughters of J.D. Suggs. Photo: courtesy of Carl Lindahl**

Virginia to study Appalachian *märchen*, I came to the American Folklife Center to listen to Sam Harmon's performances. Here it was, nearly sixty years since Halpert had recorded these tales, and over half a century since Halpert had published information about them, and the tales had still never been released in audio or transcribed form. It seemed as if no one had listened to them since Halpert recorded them.

From what Halpert had written about Sam Harmon's stories, I expected them to be important, but I was unprepared for how special they really were. Yes, the performances were marred by burdensome and imperfect sound technology. Yes, the technical shortcomings, combined with Harmon's thick accent, nonstandard vocabulary, and occasional lapses of memory and struggles to find the right word, often made these performances difficult to follow. Yes, most of these performances were a far cry from the slick and heavily rewritten texts that tend to find their ways into storybooks. But these were not merely historically important performances: they were

great performances. From the time that I first heard Sam Harmon's voice in the spring of 1997, I determined that I would do what I could to ensure that others would "hear" him too, in one form or another.

In 1998 I received a Parsons Fellowship to work specifically with the British- and Irish-American *märchen* in the AFC collections. While digging through these performances, I was aided by an enormously important finding aid that had been put together in 1983 under the inspiration of Kenneth S. Goldstein in collaboration with AFC interns Holly Cutting Baker and Amanda Dargan. This 211-page typescript was the closest thing to a comprehensive narrative catalogue then available at the AFC. As I read and re-read the entries on this list, I was stunned by the riches on deposit here: tales recorded by the Lomaxes, Zora Neale Hurston, Richard Dorson, and Sterling Brown, but unheard and unread outside the AFC's walls.

As I shared my excitement over these tales with Alan Jabbour (who was then the director of the American Folklife Center), the idea

for a book emerged. Fortunately, I began the research with a very circumscribed and finite goal in mind, or I would soon have been overwhelmed by the sheer volume of the collections. Because I simply could not predict which tapes and disks would bear the best tales, I would often spend hours digging through one given collection with little to show for it by the end of the day. I found out quickly that there was no way to know in advance which tellers and which tales would work best in print.

I knew about half of the tellers included in the book when I began my research on the project, at least by name and reputation: this was particularly true of the African American and Appalachian "superstars." As I continued to work on the Appalachian material that I knew best, I asked AFC specialists about their favorite collections and narratives. It was through Joe Hickerson that I first heard Sara Cleveland's tales, through Alan Jabbour that I heard Sterling Brown's recordings of Will Gilchrist, through Ann Hoog that I learned of the specific September 11 narratives found in the book, through Stephanie Hall that I learned of the great performances by Joshua Alley. Without the knowledge and guidance of the archivists and folklife specialists, this book could easily have taken decades to put together.

The areas of my greatest prior experience and knowledge were Appalachian and African American narrative. Fortunately for me, these are the two populations most richly represented in the AFC's narrative collections, and about half of the book's 215 tales come from these two groups. But it was my desire not only to highlight the greatest riches of the AFC's collection, but also to show something of its breadth—its representation of diverse ethnicities, regions, and so on. As a result, the book contains stories in English, French, and Spanish, and also contains tales told or set in forty-two of the fifty states, in every region of the country. This was the most difficult part of assembling the book because it took me out of the areas I knew best. There were many great collections that my own linguistic shortcomings prevented me from draw-

ing into the book: most of the great Native American collections were in their original languages: Zuni, Nisqually, etc.; there were great performances in Yiddish, Plattdeutsch, Italian, and other languages that I wish I could have represented.

The otherwise inclusive nature of the collection is based on conviction and modeled to some extent upon an earlier collection that I co-edited: *Swapping Stories: Folktales from Louisiana*. The conviction is that every great narrator embeds the stories of his or her life and community's life in every story that he or she tells. The more one

knows of the narrator's and the community's life, the richer the story becomes. Thus, as often as possible, I included autobiographical narratives and local history accounts along with the jokes, the märchen, the tall tales. Sam Harmon, J.D. Suggs, Aunt Molly Jackson, Jane Muncy, and Sara Cleveland each contribute nine or more stories representing a wide range of subjects and genres; each tale, in my opinion, adds to the richness of the others and shows us something of the importance of a great storyteller in articulating the values, concerns, and history of the storyteller's community.

Another of my chief interests was to flesh out the record of how storytellers had interacted with the folklorist-collectors of the past. In addition to such classic writings as Halpert's notes to Chase's *The Jack Tales* and Hurston's inexplicably neglected recordings of John Davis, I leaned on some of the most suggestive and tantalizing writings of



**This photo of the Hicks family includes Ray Hicks (far left, dancing), Frank Proffitt (center, with guitar), and Buna Hicks (far right, with fiddle). Ray and Buna Hicks are both storytellers appearing in *American Folktales from the Collections of the Library of Congress*. Source: American Folklife Center. Photo: Frank and Anne Warner**

recent years to guide me to particular stories. For example, in his biography of John A. Lomax, *Last Cavalier*, Nolan Porterfield describes a recording session during which J. Frank Dobie told stories to Lomax and John Henry Faulk in an Austin hotel. According to the memory of one of the men present at the time, John was continually sneaking out away from his wife Ruby to take nips from a whiskey bottle. I badly wanted to include this performance to complement Porterfield's interview concerning what was going on behind the scenes during the recording. But in the end I could not find the particular performance to which *Last Cavalier* alludes.

Similarly, I had been intrigued by a recent issue of *Journal of Folklore Research* in which Jesse G. Truvillion and Pat Mullen collaborated to write about Jesse's father Henry Truvillion's relationship with John A. Lomax [JFR 37,

nos. 2,3 (2000)]. Jesse's memories of Henry and John were so moving that I deeply wanted to include a narrative or two that could impart something of this narrator-collector relationship. But, as any folklorist who spends much time comparing oral and written texts soon discovers, there are many great oral performances that don't translate well to the page. The spoken prose that Henry Truvillion recorded for John Lomax included some great performances, but they were nevertheless untranslatable to written form. They simply didn't "read" anywhere near as good as they

sounded. So being unable to find a particular Dobie performance and not being able to use any of the recorded Truvillion performances were two of my biggest disappointments.

There are also some stories I am very happy about including. I am particularly fond of what I call "nested stories"—great tales in their own right, prefaced or followed by great narratives about what the story means to the teller. Of all the great stories in the AFC, none impresses me more than 91-year-old Joshua Alley's "The Bear's Tale," told to Margarite Chapallaz of the American Dialect Society in 1934. This performance runs to over twenty-five minutes; yet it comes from an era when recording narratives was severely hampered by disk-cutting technology: just to capture Joshua Alley's performance, Mlle. Chapallaz and her associate had to turn over or change disks six times in the course of Alley's performance. This kind of

interference could well have worn down the composure of even the greatest narrators, but Alley's own strengths as a storyteller, combined with Chapallaz's engaging manner as an interviewer, easily overcome the tech hurdles.

"The Bear's Tale" is unique in my experience: I am not aware of any other traditional story quite like it in plot, and Alley's understated oral style is stunningly effective. But the tale becomes doubly special when, after its completion, Joshua Alley describes the circumstances in which he first heard it:

*When I was a little fellow, about so high, I lived down on the Head Harbor Island . . . I was born, brought up down there, and there was an old fella come down there to buy some fish, of my father. I remember all these things. And he told the story, and it was a bitter cold day, and we sat outdoor. We walked down to the shore with him because he had paid his visit and bought his fish and was going to leave and said that he'd forgot to tell the old man, my father, this story before he left the house.*

*So we sat down on the bank where the wind raked right on to us. Oh, a bitter cold day. And he told the story. And father learned it, hearing him tell it.*

*And when we got up to the house, my father says to me, "You didn't learn that story, did you?"*

*And I said, "I think I did."*

*"Well," he says, "Go ahead and tell it."*

*I told the story. Says he "You got it all right."*

*Now, I was but a little fellow about so high, but I've always remembered it.*

Listening to "The Bear's Tale," I was effectively transported back a century and a half to the day when Joshua Alley first heard it told. After about 85 years, Joshua Alley still remembered the intensity and the direction of the wind when he first heard the tale told at harbor-side on a cold November day. Listening to the taped record of Alley's long-still voice, I felt that Alley had led me to the direct experience of a time and place otherwise impossible for me to know.

I often found that, as in Joshua Alley's case, the stories about how the tellers learned their stories

were as intriguing as the focal narratives themselves. Among the nested stories I like the best are Jane Muncy Fugate, whom I recorded in 2000, describing how she had learned "Merrywise" from her grandmother nearly sixty years before, as they slept in the same bed with Jane's ear pressed against her grandmother's back to listen to her heart beat as the story unfolded (pages 284–86); and Sam Harmon telling Herbert Halpert about how his grandchildren would "wear the life out of me" by prodding him to tell tales, and how Sam managed to escape back into sleep with his hypnotic tellings (pages 15–17).

Of course, in some ways, the book is almost as much about the collectors as about the storytellers. Only in very few cases was my estimation of the collector negatively affected by listening to the recordings. In listening to John A. Lomax at work, I learned that he was sometimes impatient to hear a teller tell a story almost exactly as John A. remembered it from an earlier telling. This fact spoke volumes about Lomax's remarkable feats of memory, but Lomax's desire to hear tales essentially repeated rather than re-created sometimes cramped the narrators and led to poor performances.

Much more commonly, however, I emerged from the listening experience with enhanced respect for the collectors and for the positive bonds they had forged with the storytellers. Perhaps the most pleasant surprise of this sort was Richard Dorson. Dorson has been roundly (and rightly) taken to task for many of his statements about the nature of African American narrative, especially his contention that it was a "borrowed" tradition—adapted from European sources rather than being "truly" African American. Such theoretical positions have long been discredited, but they have influenced many folklorists, including myself, to belittle Dorson's work with African American narrators and narratives. So I was astonished to find that the children of Dorson's favorite African American storyteller, J.D. Suggs, not only remembered Dorson, but cherished their memories of him. Their father had had a vision of "black and white coming

together"—and the Suggs children have interpreted that vision in terms of Suggs "coming together" with Dorson. When I drove up to the J.D. Suggs Underground Railroad Museum and Historical Site in Vandalia, Michigan, I was stunned to find two metal silhouettes—one of Dorson, painted white, and one of Suggs, painted black—facing each other. The silhouettes were fashioned on the model of a photo of Dorson and Suggs that Suggs had carried with him until the day he died. In August 2004, shortly after *American Folktales* had been released, I attended the J.D. Suggs Freedom Festival at the museum and emerged from my car to find the Suggs family gathered in a circle around the metal cutouts of Suggs and Dorson.

The recordings of Suggs and Dorson reveal a strong mutual affection based on the two men's common love of story. These and similar recordings from other storyteller-collector teams underline the importance and redeeming quality of fieldwork. We may get it wrong theoretically, our scholarship may sometimes seriously misrepresent our "informants," but as long as we can record their remarkable performances and deal with them personally, in an atmosphere of mutual respect, we have done something remarkably right. The recorded performances will survive our misperceptions and, through such archives as the AFC, be available for their grandchildren and ours. We justify our existence by prolonging that of the storytellers.

The Archive of Folk Culture is in many ways America's folkloric memory. There is no substitute for the wealth of oral art and wisdom to be found there. As proud as I am of my book, I know that written words cannot substitute for the voices of these remarkable storytellers. I feel lucky, even blessed, to have heard each and every one of them myself.

**For a 30% subscriber's discount on *American Folktales*, visit M.E. Sharpe on the Web at <http://www.mesharpe.com/americanfolktales.htm>**

# BURL IVES and Other Four-Letter Words

By Jennifer Cutting and Stephen D. Winick

What do you think of when you think of Burl Ives? A lot of people would say “Jimmy Crack Corn,” “Have a Holly Jolly Christmas,” “Little Bitty Tear,” and “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer.” On the other hand, you may also think of that lingering question about his voluntary cooperation with Sen. Pat McCarran’s Senate Internal Security Subcommittee (SISS) in 1952, when he ended his own blacklisting by turning in a list of other possible communists.

A 1950 American Folklife Center (AFC) recording, recently re-discovered by a New Jersey researcher determined to hear everything Ives recorded for the AFC’s Archive of Folk Culture, helps offset both notions of Burl Ives: the sugar-coated children’s troubadour on the one hand, and the artist who wouldn’t stand up for his beliefs on the other. The recording has been sitting on our shelves for fifty-five years, and for most of that time few people knew what it contained.

What the tape reveals is a decidedly adult and slightly defiant Burl Ives, standing up for free speech and lamenting censorship, then singing a set of very bawdy songs.

Ives’s introduction, preserved on the 16-inch disc numbered AFS 10,364, runs as follows:

*The time is ten minutes ’til one, March the 31st, nineteen hundred fifty. My name is Burl Ives, and this morning I looked in the paper here in Washington, D.C., and I saw where*

*some saloon keeper was having his license taken away because some man with a guitar strolled in and sang a song which had what they called “improper lyrics . . .” in other words, dirty words. And—the man’s going to lose his license, and I don’t know what will happen [chuckles] to the boy who sang the songs. So, that gives you an idea of how quiet you must be if you’re going to sing a song with some of the*

*sion, or even on recordings these days, because there’s a lot of the artificial that is sold, and these are some of the real things, I believe, in our country today; and I think they are worth recording.*

Ives went on to sing four bawdy songs in this session, namely “Brooklyn Town,” “The Meeting of the Clan” (a variant of “The Ball of Kerry more”), “Old John Henry’s Got a Story to Tell” (a variant of “The Sea Crab”), and “One-Eyed Reilly.” Ives introduced each song as well, commenting, for example, that “Old John Henry’s Got a Story to Tell” was “a song that we little boys used to sing in grade school when we were, oh, six, seven, and eight years old, down in southern Illinois. Of course, our parents didn’t know that we sang it, but we did. It was sort of our theme song, you might say, in school. The teacher didn’t know it either, thank goodness.”

The fifth and last song of the session is “Baby Did You Hear.” This is not a bawdy song, but a very reflective,

melancholy piece that was more agreeable to Ives’s family audiences at the time; in fact, Ives had recorded it commercially only six weeks earlier, on February 17, 1950.

Ives’s speech lamenting stringent indecency laws has re-emerged at a time when the U.S. Congress and the American people are again questioning what constitutes obscenity and what reactions to it are appropriate. New legislation on its way to the Senate would increase the individual fines paid



**In this 1940 publicity photo from the CBS Photo Department, Woody Guthrie (l.) and Burl Ives are acting the part of hobos, lying around in Central Park, New York, before a CBS radio appearance. Source: New York World-Telegram & Sun Collection, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division**

*four-letter words in it in nineteen hundred and fifty.*

*However, I am deep in the caverns of the Library of Congress at this moment, and all of the visitors have been shooed out; and I am a ballad singer by trade, and of course, having bummed around the country the hard way, I have come into contact with some of these evil influences, these songs with four-letter words in them.*

*However, I want to say that these songs have a lustiness, have a truth, have a vigorousness about them that you won’t hear on the radio, on televi-*

by an artist if bawdy material sung by that artist were to air on radio or TV. Like the bar owner mentioned by Ives, individual artists could get fined for actions taken by others, since artists often have no control over when and where their recordings are played on the air. The obvious solution for artists in the future would be to refrain from recording bawdy material at all.

The March 1950 session was only one incident in a long life

in folksong for the balladeer, Grammy-winning country singer, Broadway star, and Academy-Award-winning movie actor. Ives had been identified with bawdy material before, most famously in an incident in the early 1930s in which he was imprisoned for two nights in Mona, Utah, for singing a song the authorities considered risqué; the story is recounted in his 1948 autobiography. Ives's personal commitment to free speech was

well known to his friends, which only made his testimony to the SISS harder to understand.

Clearly, this tape can't solve the puzzle of Burl Ives. But it is, at least, another piece, and it attests once again to the unmined riches of the Archive of Folk Culture.

*A transcript of the Burl Ives bawdy song session, prepared by Jennifer Cutting, is available in the Folklife Center Reading Room.*

## *Burl Ives: A Long History with the Library Of Congress*

By Jennifer Cutting.

**July 1938:** Actor Will Geer and Ives were recorded by Alan Lomax and Kay Dealey. Ives sang three songs, "The Parson's Daughter," "Cod Liver Ile," and "Three Crows."

**September 1940–February 1941:** Alan Lomax hired Ives to play in his folk music radio series "Back Where I Come From," which ran for twenty-one weeks before it was cancelled by CBS. After that ended, CBS kept Ives on for fifteen-minute spots between other shows, paying him \$67 a week.

**March 31, 1950:** Ives visited the Library of Congress, where he recorded the bawdy song session preserved on the sixteen-inch aluminum disc numbered AFS 10,364.

**December 21, 1965:** Ives donated what is now called The Burl Ives Collection to the Folk Archive. At that time the Folk Archive was a part of the Music Division. When the archive joined the newly formed American Folklife Center in 1976, the Music Division retained most of the collection. They created a finding aid for the prodigious number of press clippings, radio and TV scripts and broadcasts, press releases, photo albums, and scrapbooks.

**November 16, 1978:** Ives returned to the Library of Congress to introduce the evening concert for the celebration of the Archive's fiftieth anniversary. According to former Archive Head Joe Hickerson, Ives recalled visiting the archive and seeing some catalog cards of his own performances with triangles on the cards. He asked what they meant, and then Head Duncan Emrich explained that the triangles meant "Delta" material, or material that had obscene or bawdy content. During the evening concert, Ives explained his understanding of the Delta label: "It's not to be heard until we are all gone fifty years. Then you can hear it!" There is currently no such restriction on hearing "Delta" material in the Folklife Reading Room.

**September 21, 1989:** At eighty years of age, more than fifty years after his first visit to the Library of Congress, Ives played a concert at the Library in honor of the Year of the Young Reader. At this time, he donated one of his three Hauser guitars to the Archive of Folk Culture. The guitar had been custom made for him in 1950, the year of the bawdy song session.

**April 14, 1995:** Burl Ives died at age eighty-five.



**Burl Ives publicity photo from the 1950s. Source: American Folklife Center**

# Cataloging, Preservation of Brazilian Chapbook Collection Nears Completion



AFC processing technician Sarah Bradley Leighton displays the work done by conservators to protect an original woodcut print made by José Francisco Borges. Literatura de Cordel Brazilian Chapbook Collection. Photo: Guha Shankar

By Sarah Bradley Leighton

The American Folklife Center's Brazilian Chapbook Collection is the largest collection of its kind in the world, and comprises 7,200 chapbooks, which are known as *literatura de cordel*. Recently, members of the Center's archive staff, along with specialists elsewhere in the Library, have devoted much effort to cataloging and conserving this unique collection.

To date, 5,000 chapbooks have been catalogued and entered into a database that soon will be available to researchers. In addition to the chapbooks, the collection contains 10 original woodcut prints created by one of Brazil's most famous, modern *cordelistas*, José Francisco Borges. Under the direction of con-

servator Beatriz Haspo, preservation technicians in the Library's Conservation Division are housing the prints in acid-free mattes and boxes that will enable AFC staff to safely store and display these one-of-a-kind items. This effort to conserve and catalogue the chapbooks and prints will provide researchers with access to a tradition that embodies Brazil's cultural heritage and modern popular opinion.

Descended from the medieval troubadour and chapbook tradition of Europe, *literatura de cordel* have entertained and informed the general public of Brazil for over a century, and offer insight into the popular culture of the country. In the markets of northeast Brazil, where *literatura de cordel* are most popular, local poets hang their little



An original woodcut print, captioned "money speaks the most loudly," expresses concern for the environment. Literatura de Cordel Brazilian Chapbook Collection. Photo: Guha Shankar

four by six-and-a-half inch chapbooks from strings, hence the name *literatura de cordel*, which literally means "stories on a string." The poets, known as *cordelistas*, then entertain the market crowd by reciting their narrative poems about current events, morality, or the adventures of a famous folk hero. Equally entertaining are the attractive woodcut prints, often done by the cordelista himself, that appear on the covers of the chapbooks to vividly illustrate the theme of the verses inside. An article on the collection was published in *Folklife Center News*, vol. 22, no. 4, Fall 2000, 9–11.

# State Department Tour with Center Staff Highlights the Alan Lomax Collection

By Folklife Center Staff

American Folklife Center staff traveled through Europe in February and March, presenting materials from the Archive of Folk Culture at U.S. embassies in Europe. The presentations, titled *African-American Heritage and the Legacy of Alan Lomax*, were given in celebration and honor of African-American History Month. Originally there were two embassies requesting the program, but as preparations began, seven other embassies joined the list and the program was finally scheduled in the following countries: Luxembourg, Romania, Slovenia, Austria, Northern Ireland, Sweden, Hungary, England, and Poland. The presentations utilized multiformat PowerPoint technology with audio clips and film footage, with a script lasting about one hour to be shared by two presenters, one from the American Folklife Center and one from the Association for Cultural Equity, an organization established by Lomax in the 1980s to promote access to his collections and equitable representation of the cultures they represent. In addition, the AFC presented descriptive materials and CDs at each venue to describe the work of the AFC and the LOC. The tour took over four weeks, with three teams dividing the work.

The presentation was created jointly by the two organizations and included text, sound recordings, still images, and video images. It highlighted African-American culture as documented by Lomax, whose career as a folklorist spanned more than sixty years and who died in 2002. In 2003 the Alan Lomax Archive and the American Folklife Center formalized a cooperative agreement that



**A poster in Polish, announcing the presentation made by the AFC's Michael Taft and the Lomax Archive's Don Fleming. Source: American Folklife Center. Photo: Stephen D. Winick**

brought the original materials in the archive to the American Folklife Center.

Folklife Center director Peggy Bulger was paired with Anna Lomax Wood for the first four venues. They visited a number of interesting sites, including the national library of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the Village Museum in Bucharest, Romania, the medieval castle at Ljubljana, Slovenia, and the Haus der Musik

in Vienna, Austria. Bulger was impressed by the level of interest she found wherever she went. In Luxembourg, most people spoke English and had great interest in folklife in general and in American materials specifically. "The Luxembourgers seem genuinely amazed at our collections and the fact that the Library of Congress has put so many cultural materials online," Bulger said. In Romania, blues was appreciated not only by academics but by ordinary people as a popular music choice; Bulger saw a performance by Berti Barbera's ensemble, a local blues band who performed Delta blues with an accuracy that was almost eerie. In Slovenia, not only the people but the landscape impressed Bulger: "Slovenia is one of the great undiscovered gems in the former Soviet Union. It was the farthest west of the nations, situated on the Adriatic Sea and with the Alps to the northeast, and it has retained its old world architecture and charm." And in Austria, Bulger admired an exhibit in which the National Library confronted its Nazi past. Bulger also discovered unexpected connections: the U.S. ambassador to Slovenia, Tom Robertson, attended graduate school at Princeton, where he was a research assistant for one of his professors: Dr. James H. Billington, now the Librarian of Congress!

Todd Harvey of the American Folklife Center, curator of the Alan Lomax Collection, visited Hungary, Sweden, and Northern Ireland. In Hungary and Sweden, his presenting partner was the Lomax Archive's Nathan Salsburg. In Hungary the audiences were small, but very enthusiastic, and asked thoughtful and engaged questions after each presentation. Sweden proved to be very respon-



sive to the blues, and on one night generated an audience of two hundred people who asked many questions and talked informally with the presenters; one of those present was Stockholm resident Israel "Izzy" Young, a stalwart of the Greenwich Village folk scene in the 1950s and 1960s, and the founder of the Village's famed "Folklore Center" at 110 MacDougal Street. In Northern Ireland, Harvey was joined by the Lomax Archive's Don Fleming, and the two presented to an audience of over three hundred people in Belfast's historic Lyric Theatre. Their presentation was enlivened by music from Belfast bluesman Rab McCullough and from Francis McPeake, an uilleann piper from a well-known musical family.

To complete the tour, Michael Taft, head of the Archive of Folk

Culture, traveled to England and Poland, partnered with Fleming. In England, audiences were relatively small but extremely knowledgeable, and their questions showed a great depth of understanding of the subject. In fact, sometimes there were people in the audience better able to answer a question than Taft or Fleming. A question about Lomax's influence on British blues scholar Paul Oliver, for example, was answered from the audience by Oliver himself, and a question about the dangers encountered by Lomax when collecting in the south in the 1950s was answered by Shirley Collins, who was with Lomax on one of his major southern field trips. In Poland, Taft and Fleming visited with scholars and archivists, including Ludwik Bielawski, director of the Ethnomusicology Archives at the Polish

Academy of Sciences, who recalled for them his own meetings with Alan Lomax. Their presentations were well attended, and very well received, despite the need for translation into Polish.

At each stop on this tour, the staff members of the American Folklife Center and the Alan Lomax Archives met with many of the most important folklorists and ethnomusicologists in Europe, interacted with large numbers of European and American citizens, and brought the richness of African-American culture to new audiences. Peggy Bulger was particularly happy with the reception they received in each country, commenting, "we were treated like rock stars!" The staff of the American Folklife Center would very much like to see more tours of this nature in the future.

## A TALE OF THREE SISTERS

By Jennifer Cutting

In May of 1940, the young Greek-American girls and boys of the Byzantine Choir sang a lively program of Greek folk songs to mark the dedication of the Philoptochos (Friends of the Poor) Society in Tarpon Springs, Florida, a town settled by Greek sponge fishers in 1905. Prominent in the program that day singing solo, duo, and trio were three sisters from the Kavouklis family: Evelyn, Katherine ("Kitty"), and Magdaline ("Maggie"), ages 11, 15, and 16. The sisters sang and introduced the songs in Greek, performing community favorites such as *To proto filli* ("The First Kiss"), *Zylevo* ("I Am Jealous"), and *Oi vounisioi* ("The Mountaineers"). Luckily, these wonderful performances were captured on disc recordings by WPA worker John Filareton as part of the WPA's larger effort to document traditional culture in the state of Florida. Stetson Kennedy, the project's director (who was also present when the Kavouklis sisters were recorded), later remembered the project fondly:



(Left to right) Andrew and Julie Nichols; Jennifer Cutting; and former Senator and Mrs. Connie Mack listen to recordings of Andrew's mother Magdaline Kavouklis in the Folklife Reading Room on March 15, 2005. Source: American Folklife Center. Photo: Guha Shankar

*We traveled backroads the length and breadth of the Florida peninsula, toting a coffee-table-sized recording machine into turpentine camps, sawmills, citrus groves, the Ever-*

*glades, out onto railroad tracks, and aboard shrimp trawlers—wherever Florida folks were working, living, and singing . . . Ethnically speaking, this meant documenting the predominant*

*Cracker and African-American cultures, as well as major Latin (Cuban, Spanish, Italian), Jewish, Bahamian, Greek, and Arabic communities, and smaller pockets of Seminole, Czechs, Slovaks, and others.*

Among the Greek community, they found the Kavouklis sisters.

Sixty-five years later, Kitty Kavouklis Arvanitis called the American Folklife Center to request copies of those same recordings to play at the celebrations planned to honor her on her eightieth birthday. Kitty knew about the recordings because, in July of 2000, AFC staff had contacted the sisters to secure their consent for these performances to be placed on the

World Wide Web as part of the AFC's online presentation *Florida Folklife from the WPA Collections 1937–1942*. In September of the same year, AFC provided the family with a cassette tape copy of the recordings. It was in December of 2004 that we heard from Kitty again. She was calling to request a CD copy of the recordings to replace the old cassette because she "wore it out by playing it so many times."

On March 15, 2005, Kitty's nephew (and Maggie's son) Andrew Nichols and his wife Julie visited the Folklife Reading Room with former senator and Mrs. Connie Mack, and enjoyed hearing the voices of his mother and aunts

that had been recorded such a long time ago. Not long afterward, the family sent for our files a copy of the eightieth birthday poster and invitation, featuring a photo of 14-year-old Kitty in Greek traditional costume that bore the slogan: "Captivating Audiences for 80 Years!" Nichols's visit with former Senator Mack, together with the family's contribution of Kitty's photo, added to the Folklife Center's archives yet another chapter in this ongoing tale of three sisters.

*Florida Folklife from the WPA Collections 1937–1942* is online at: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/flwpahtml/flwpahtml.html>

---

## AFC Hosts *Sound Directions*—A New Initiative in the Digital Preservation of Sound Recordings

by Michael Taft

On March 14 the AFC hosted a conference of experts in the field of sound digitization, who met to plan for a new initiative in the digital preservation of ethnographic field recordings. This initiative, named *Sound Directions*, will digitize a portion of the recorded sound holdings of two of the most significant academic ethnomusicology archives in the country: the Archives of Traditional Music at Indiana University and the Archives of World Music at Harvard University.

In the words of the project, *Sound Directions* will:

- a) Develop best practices and test emerging standards for archival audio preservation and storage in the digital domain and report our findings back, in detail, to the field;
- b) Establish, at each university, programs for digital audio preservation that will enable us to continue this work into the future, and which will produce interoperable results;
- c) In the process, preserve critically endangered, highly valuable,

unique field recordings of extraordinary national interest.

[from <http://www.dlib.indiana.edu/projects/sounddirections/>]

The AFC was particularly interested in hosting this group because of the obvious shared interests between *Sound Directions* and the AFC's own *Save Our Sounds* project. In fact, the AFC supported and worked with the planners of *Sound Directions* on their application for a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the NEH subsequently awarded the project a grant of almost \$350,000.

Sitting around AFC's conference room table were some of the best minds on the subject of the digital preservation of sound: Dan Reed, director, and Mike Casey, coordinator of recording services, at the Archives of Traditional Music; Jon W. Dunn, associate director for technology, Indiana University Digital Library Program; Virginia Danielson, curator of Harvard's Archive of World Music, and Dave Ackerman, audio preservation engineer at Harvard;

George Massenburg of George Massenburg Labs; Clifford Lynch, director of the Coalition for Networked Information; Adrian Cosentini, chief audio engineer, and Chris Lacinak, audio production manager, at Vidipax; Peter Alyea, digital conversion specialist in the Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division at the Library of Congress; Carl Fleischhauer of the Library's Office of Strategic Initiatives; and Michael Taft, head of the Archive of Folk Culture at the AFC. Deanna Marcum, associate librarian for Library Services at the Library of Congress, offered opening remarks, and the group was welcomed by the director of the AFC, Peggy Bulger.

The group discussed all of the major issues in the digital preservation of sound, including the proper treatment and preparation of original sound recordings, the setting of calibration tones, pitch fluctuations, equipment needs, the storage of digital files and the format of those files, the curatorial role of different players in the digitizing workflow, metadata stan-

dards, and quality control. These issues, among others, need careful consideration before any initiative—such as *Sound Directions* or *Save Our Sounds*—can proceed.

In many respects, this mini-conference is an outgrowth of the *Folk Heritage Collections in Crisis* (<http://www.loc.gov/folklife/fhcc/fhcc>

[top.html](#)) symposium organized by the AFC in 2000. As more and more ethnographic archives realize that their recordings are in danger of irreversible deterioration, they must begin the complicated and expensive process of digital preservation. With the financial help of the NEH, and the advice of experts

such as those that attended the March 14 meeting, Indiana and Harvard Universities have begun this important and necessary task.

[Thanks to Carl Fleischhauer for his detailed notes on the meeting.]

---

## Alan Dundes: a Pioneering Folklorist Dies at 70

By Stephen D. Winick

Alan Dundes, the renowned professor who for many was the face of American folklore scholarship, died Wednesday, March 30, in Berkeley, California. He was 70.

Dundes collapsed in the middle of his graduate seminar, in Giannini Hall on the University of California campus. Students dialed 911, and Dundes was rushed to a nearby hospital, where he was pronounced dead on arrival.

Dundes has been important to the field of folklore for over forty years as a theorist, a teacher, and the director of an archive. In the theoretical sphere, he is best known for structuralist and psychoanalytic approaches to the analysis of folklore. An early champion of the work of Russian folktale analyst Vladimir Propp, Dundes helped bring European structuralist approaches to the study of folk narratives, not least through his own dissertation on Native American tales. He continued to publish structuralist analyses of items such as proverbs and riddles. But Dundes is even more famous for Freudian and other psychoanalytic modes of analysis. In such works as *Life Is Like a Chicken Coop Ladder*, "Into the Endzone for a Touchdown," and *Two Tales of Crow and Sparrow*, Dundes argued that folklore is frequently the expression of psychosexual impulses such as latent homosexuality or oral and anal fixations. These arguments were controversial, and Dundes gained in notoriety through his ability to steadfastly defend premises that



**Alan Dundes. Source: University of California, Berkeley. Photo: Deborah Stalford**

many found not only unlikely, but reductive and even offensive. He was also known for the exhaustive nature of his research, and even those who did not agree with him frequently admired the thoroughness of his work.

Dundes's controversial positions made him a noteworthy figure with the media, and he was frequently discussed, refuted, and consulted by newspapers, radio, and TV. In her March 13, 2005, column, *New York Times* columnist Maureen Dowd revealed that, after being embarrassed by a joke made by President Clinton, she wondered why men resorted so often to castration imagery to describe her. To find out, she contacted not

a psychologist but a folklorist: Alan Dundes. This was only one incident in Dundes's long media history, which made him quite possibly the best-known folklorist in the world.

As a teacher, Dundes has had an enormous impact on folklife studies. His undergraduate courses in folklore were among the most popular at Berkeley. In four decades of teaching there, Dundes reached literally thousands of undergraduates. Some of those stayed for a master's degree, and some went on for their Ph.D., either from Berkeley (in anthropology) or from Indiana University or the University of Pennsylvania, where he regularly directed students to pursue folklore degrees. The result is that the past several generations of folklorists have included many people mentored and encouraged by Dundes. He made such an impact on students that in 2000, one former undergraduate (who had not gone into folklore) sent him a check for one million dollars, which he used to establish a distinguished professorship in folkloristics.

At a memorial service for Dundes held at the University of Pennsylvania, American Folklife Center director Peggy Bulger spoke about Dundes's impact on the world of folklore archives. "The University of California at Berkeley Folklore Archive contains over half a million folklore items of all kinds. Many of the archivists who catalog the materials and who staff the archive are undergraduate and graduate students. What this means is that a good many folklorists enter the field with an

appreciation and experience of archive work. Even if they don't become archivists, we really appreciate working with scholars who understand the challenges and processes involved in running an archive." Former AFC director Alan Jabbour also spoke, remembering that Dundes had an impres-

sive reputation even while he was in graduate school. University of Vermont folklorist Wolfgang Mieder (whose statement was read by AFC editor Stephen D. Winick) offered the most personal assessment from the field, calling Dundes "the best of all possible friends."

Dundes is survived by his wife Carolyn, son David, daughters Lauren Dundes Streiff and Alison Dundes Renteln, and six grandchildren. He is also survived by many caring colleagues and by thousands of students.

---

## W. K. "Bill" McNeil (1940–2005)

By Michael Taft

W. K. McNeil, director of the Ozark Folk Center, has died at the age of 64. Bill, as he was known to his friends, was a consummate folklorist, and he devoted the last three decades of his professional life to the exploration of Ozark Mountain traditions. In this respect, McNeil was a fitting successor to that other great documenter of Ozark folklore, Vance Randolph (see *FCN* 23, ii:3-4). Like Randolph, McNeil was not a native of the Ozarks—he was born near Canton, North Carolina—but his upbringing in the Smoky Mountains undoubtedly prepared him for his later work with the Southern mountain folk of the Ozarks.

McNeil's links with Randolph were more than coincidental. He wrote the introduction to two of Randolph's major works, the revised edition of *Ozark Folksongs* (1980), and *Ozark Folklore: An Annotated Bibliography* (1987). But also like Randolph, McNeil's interests and prolific writing extended well beyond the borders of the Ozarks. McNeil was an important scholar of American folk and popular music traditions in general, and was also an expert on the history of American folklore scholarship.

Among his colleagues, he is perhaps best remembered for his prodigious memory. He knew hundreds of songs by heart, and could give detailed histories of



**Undated photo of W. K. McNeil. Courtesy of the Ozark Folk Center and the McNeil family**

popular songs in print, on recordings, and in films. His photographic memory made him a human folklore bibliography—storing in his head exact citations to scholarly articles and books. Many folklorists called on McNeil's great knowledge to help them discover sources and resources for their own studies.

Among McNeil's books are *Sights and Sounds in New York State*

*History* (1968), *The Charm Is Broken: Readings in Arkansas and Missouri Folklore* (1984), *Ghost Stories from the American South* (1985), *Southern Folk Ballads* (1987–88), *Ozark Mountain Humor* (1989), *Appalachian Images in Folk and Popular Culture* (1989), *Southern Mountain Folksongs* (1993), and *Ozark Country* (1995).

## American Folklife Center

# HOMEGROWN 2005

*The Music of America*

The Homegrown concert series presents the very best of traditional music and dance from a variety of folk cultures thriving in the United States. The concerts are being held once a month from April through December; this year's remaining concerts are listed below. All concerts are free of charge and will not require tickets for admission. Concerts will be presented from noon to 1 P.M. in Coolidge Auditorium, Thomas Jefferson Building (10 First St. S.E.) or in Madison Hall, Madison Building (101 Independence Ave. S.E.), as specified below.

**Margaret MacArthur**—Ballads and songs from Vermont  
June 21, 2005, at noon  
Coolidge Auditorium



Since settling in Vermont in 1948, Margaret MacArthur has traveled through the state and throughout northern New England, recording old songs that have been passed down through generations and giving them new life through her own performances. Margaret is a marvelous singer and a serious scholar and collector of the traditional songs of New England. She has been honored by both the state of Vermont and the New England Council on the Arts for her role in preserving the traditional arts of the region.

**D.W. Groethe**—Cowboy songs and poetry from Montana  
July 20, 2005, at noon  
Madison Hall

D.W. Groethe is the genuine article, a working cowboy who writes and sings about the everyday life of a rancher on the northern Great Plains. The descendent of Norwegian immigrants who homesteaded in Williams County, North Dakota, Groethe has a deep respect for and knowledge of those who came before him, Native and immigrant alike. He draws on the long-standing and vigorous traditions of cowboy songs and poetry, which continue to thrive in the American west.

**Benton Flippen and the Smokey Valley Boys**—Old Time music from North Carolina  
August 17, 2005, at noon  
Madison Hall

**Margaret MacArthur**  
Photo: Robert Corwin



**D.W. Groethe**

Benton Flippen, one of the icons of old-time fiddling in America, was born and raised in a musical family in Surry County, North Carolina. Born in 1920, Flippen comes from a generation of great players at the epicenter of Southern mountain music. Flippen has been very influential, and he received the 1990 North Carolina Folk Heritage Award. He has served as a mentor for several wonderful musicians, notably NPR newscaster, music producer, and banjo player Paul Brown, who will be playing with Flippen at this concert. Benton Flippen is still an active musician, playing at fiddle contests and square dances throughout his home region. The Smokey Valley Boys consist of Paul Brown on

banjo, Verlen Clifton on mandolin, and Frank Bodie on guitar.

*NEA National Heritage Fellow*  
TBA

September 20, 2005 (time and place TBA)

**Negrura Peruana**—Afro Peruvian music and dance from Connecticut  
October 12, 2005, at noon  
Coolidge Auditorium

Negrura Peruana performs the music and dance of Peru's African and criollo population from the coastal region just to the south of Lima, the nation's capital. Group members emigrated from Lima to the Hartford area of Connecticut about ten years ago and formed Negrura Peruana in 2002. Group members learned their music, dances, and songs in their neighborhoods in Peru, where music was an important part of celebrations, gatherings, and informal competitions. Since its founding Negrura Peruana has become a popular attraction at events held by the growing Peruvian community in Connecticut.

**Dineh Tah Navajo Dancers**  
November 16, 2005, at noon  
Coolidge Auditorium

Founded in 1993, the Dineh Tah Navajo Dancers promote the understanding of the rich cultural traditions of the Navajo "Dineh" people. Their performances include dances and songs such as the Corn Grinding Act, the Basket



### **Birmingham Sunlights**

Dance, the Bow and Arrow Dance, and the Social Song and Dance. The group is made up of young dancers from throughout the Four Corners region of the Southwest that comprises the Navajo nation. Cosponsored with the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian.

**Birmingham Sunlights**—African American Gospel quartet from Alabama  
December 7, 2005, at noon  
Coolidge Auditorium

The dynamic Birmingham Sunlights are dedicated to carrying on the art of unaccompanied gospel harmony singing that has an especially brilliant heritage in their home place of Jefferson County, Alabama. Formed in 1979 by music

director James Alex Taylor, the quartet originally included James's brothers Steve and Barry, and Ricky Speights and Wayne Williams; Williams has since been replaced by Bill Graves. Upon becoming aware of the rich Jefferson County gospel quartet tradition, they sought training from a senior quartet, the Sterling Jubilees, to learn songs traditional to the area. For over twenty years since then, the Sunlights have carried their joyful message all over the United States and the world.

*Homegrown concerts are produced by the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress in cooperation with the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage and the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian.*

---

### EDITOR'S NOTE

It will be readily apparent to readers of *Folklife Center News* that changes are afoot. The colorful cover is your first clue, of course, but you will also see a change in the masthead: Stephen D. Winick has entered on duty as the Editor for the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.

The majority of our readers do not know me, so a brief introduction is in order. My professional life to this point has had two paral-

lel courses. Since the 1980s I have been a serious student of folklore and folklife. Milestones on that journey include three years as a folk music radio host in New York City, eight years studying folklore and ethnomusicology and earning master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Pennsylvania, and five years as a public sector folklorist in southern New Jersey. I have also been proud to serve on the boards of the New Jersey Folklore Society and the Mid Atlantic Folklife Association, and to serve as convener of the

Music and Song section of the American Folklore Society. As a folklife researcher, I have published articles in such academic journals as *The Journal of American Folklore*, *Folklore*, *Western Folklore*, and *Proverbium*, and have edited one book of contemporary proverb scholarship, to which I also contributed an introduction and an article.

Since the 1980s, I have also been a professional writer and editor for the general public. My most significant association is with the folk music magazine *Dirty Linen*, which

published my first review in the summer of 1989, and which has printed at least one item by me in every issue since then; I have now appeared in ninety-three consecutive issues and bear the title of Contributing Editor on their masthead. I have also written and served as an editor for a variety of other publications, including *Sing Out!*, *Tower Pulse*, *Music Hound*, *All-Music Guide*, and the Philadelphia *City Paper*.

For many years, as both a folklorist and a writer and editor, I have admired the job James Hardin and the staff of the American Folklife Center were doing with *Folklife Center News*. Each issue was informative and interesting, and served as a window onto the world of the American Folklife Center. Stories about the Center's collections and acquisitions gave those

of us in the folklife field a sense of the riches available in the Archive of Folk Culture. Reports on the Field Schools, Heritage Projects, Neptune Plaza and Homegrown Concert Series, and Botkin Lectures made us admire the Library of Congress as a site for the best in public sector folklife work. And articles by guest scholars about issues of general interest to folklorists and folklife enthusiasts kept the Center and the newsletter engaged with the field.

One thing we learn as folklorists is that traditions are not static. We can honor our traditions even while adapting them to current situations; in fact, we must. The changes you will see in *Folklife Center News* are offered in this spirit. *Folklife Center News* is one of the ways in which we at the American Folklife Center interact with the

field of folklife studies, and with the general public. The newsletter must therefore adapt to the environment both inside and outside the field if it is to remain as substantive, interesting, and relevant as it has always been. Although some things will change in the months ahead, I plan to use all my skills as a folklorist, writer, and editor to continue the tradition of excellence *Folklife Center News* has established. I hope our longtime readers will continue to subscribe, and also that we can inspire new people to investigate the richness of American folklife in its home at the Library of Congress.

Stephen D. Winick  
Editor, *Folklife Center News*

## NEXT ISSUE:

A StoryCorps MobileBooth pulls into position outside the Library of Congress on May 19. StoryCorps began its national tour collecting oral histories across America with ten days at the Library of Congress. Their recordings will become part of the Archive of Folk Culture. Photo: Guha Shankar

Stetson Kennedy, veteran folklorist and social activist, visited the American Folklife Center on May



24. Here he signs a copy of his book *The Klan Unmasked* for Folklife Center staff member Valda Morris (r.) while publicist Joanelle Mulrain looks on. The book is based on Kennedy's experiences infiltrating and exposing the Ku Klux Klan in the 1950s. Photo: Stephen D. Winick

Plus: Jack Santino on *Yellow Ribbons*, a new collection of letters from Woody Guthrie, and a day in the life of a Folklife Center processing technician! Read more about these stories next time!



On March 18, 2005, Angela Smith, Member of Parliament, Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, and Parliamentary Undersecretary of State for Northern Ireland, visited the Library to learn about the American Folklife Center's plans for an exhibit on traditional Irish music. During her visit she and her staff met with Library personnel from the AFC and other divisions. The photo shows (l-r) Michael Gould, Deputy Director, Northern Ireland Bureau; Irene Chambers, Chief of the Interpretive Programs Office; Minister Angela Smith, MP; Associate Librarian of Congress Deanna Marcum; American Folklife Center Director Peggy Bulger; Anne Hanafin, Cultural Affairs Officer, Northern Ireland Bureau; and Charles Stanhope, Director of Development at the Library. Photo: Stephen D. Winick

**LIBRARY OF CONGRESS  
AMERICAN FOLKLIFE CENTER  
101 INDEPENDENCE AVENUE, S.E.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20540-4610**

**OFFICIAL BUSINESS  
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300**

PRESORTED STANDARD  
POSTAGE & FEES PAID  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS  
WASHINGTON, D.C.  
PERMIT No. G-103