

FOLKLIFE CENTER NEWS

FALL 1999 • VOLUME XXI, NUMBER 4



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.

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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.

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American Folklife Center publications (including *Folklife Center News*), a calendar of events, collection guides, general information, and connections to a selection of other Internet services related to folklife are available on the Internet.

LC Web is available through the World Wide Web service (<http://lcweb.loc.gov/>). The Center's home page can be accessed from the Library's main menu. The direct URL for the Center's home page is: <http://lcweb.loc.gov/folklife/>

Folklife, an information service providing timely information on the field of folklore and folklife, including training and professional opportunities and news items of national interest, is available through the above Internet server. For telephone service, call the Folklife Reading Room: 202 707-5510.

EDITOR'S NOTES

Alan Jabbour

Alan Jabbour has contributed many articles to this journal, from his director's columns of the seventies and eighties to his two-part article reviewing the twenty-year history of the American Folklife Center (winter-spring and summer-fall 1996). Readers of Alan's columns, which ran through 1986, were treated to an ongoing seminar on a range of folklore topics: cultural preservation and national heritage; the role of federal agencies in cultural affairs; striking the balance
(Continued on page 23)

Cover: Alan Jabbour (left) and Carl Fleischhauer (behind the camera and operating the Nagra III tape recorder) record the fiddle playing of Burl Hammons in Marlinton, West Virginia, 1973. In order to dampen vibrations produced by Hammons's tapping foot, Fleischhauer set the microphone stand on a foam bedroll, using his wallet as a shim to prevent the stand from falling forward. Photo by Carl Fleischhauer

Music More Naturally Rendered: The John and Ruby Lomax 1939 Southern States Recording Trip



African American convicts working with shovels, possibly the singers of "Rock Island Line" at Cummins State Farm, Gould, Arkansas, recorded by John A. Lomax in 1934. Photographer unknown.

By Rachel I. Howard

When John and Ruby Lomax left their vacation home on San José Island at Port Aransas, Texas, on March 31, 1939, they already had some idea of what they would encounter on their three-month, 6,502-mile journey through the southern United States collecting folksongs. Many of the people and places they planned to visit were already familiar to them, and while they were always on the alert for previously unrecorded musical genres, songs, and tunes, one of the

purposes of this trip was to record some of their favorite folksongs and folksingers from past expeditions on state-of-the-art equipment.

The Library of Congress provided the Lomaxes with the latest in recording technology: a portable Presto disc-cutting machine, with extra batteries, and a supply of blank twelve-inch acetate discs and sapphire needles that could be replenished upon request. Hauling this heavy equipment to and from the trunk of their Plymouth automobile as they stopped to

make recordings in schools, churches, homes, hotels, prisons, and even along the roadside in locales throughout the rural South, they could hardly have suspected that, in sixty years' time, the cultural heritage they were collecting for the Archive of American Folk Song at the Library of Congress would be played back, with the click of a mouse button, through computer speakers in homes, schools, and offices around the world.

John Avery Lomax, born September 23, 1867, in Goodman, Mississippi, had been collecting

songs since his childhood in Bosque County, Texas, jotting down lyrics to cowboy songs as he listened. At the University of Texas at Austin, however, where he studied English literature, one disdainful professor temporarily squelched his enthusiasm for the vernacular lyricism of the Texas frontier. By 1906, he was a graduate student at Harvard University, and professors Barrett Wendell and George Lyman Kittredge actively encouraged Lomax to document his native folklife. The subsequent documentation effort resulted in *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads* (New York: Sturgis & Walton Co., 1910), published to critical and popular acclaim. Indeed, as the Lomaxes wrote in their fieldnotes for the 1939 expedition, on at least one occasion John's book preceded him into the home of a performer. Elmo Newcomer, a fiddler and dance caller recorded in Bandera County, Texas, on May 3, 1939, remarked upon meeting John,

"Shake, boy. I've heard about you all my life . . . We scraped our

savings together an' sent 'em to you an' sure 'nough here come the book. . . We read it and sung from it so much and loaned it out so much that it's might nigh tore up." There was the book of cowboy songs, no two pages hanging together, but apparently all there between the covers, one of the 1910 edition ("1939 Southern Recording Trip Fieldnotes," Section 9: Pipe Creek, Bandera and Medina, Texas; May 3-7, p. 120).

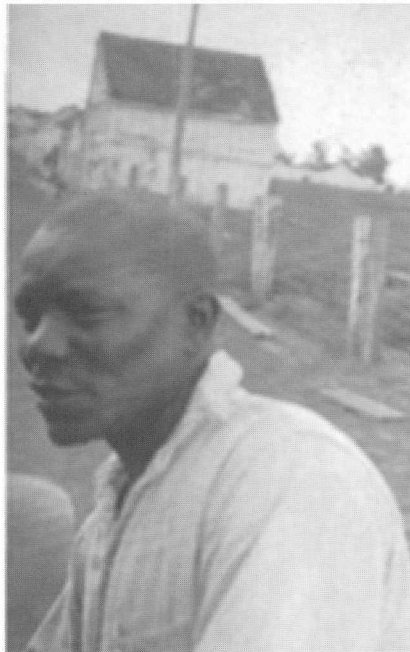
John Lomax married Bess Brown in 1904, and they had four children: Shirley (1905), John Jr. (1907), Alan (1915), and Bess (1921). Lomax taught English at Texas A&M University, researched and collected cowboy songs, and, with Prof. Leonidas Payne of the University of Texas at Austin, co-founded the Texas Folklore Society, a branch of the American Folklore Society. The Texas Folklore Society's founding members shared with Lomax a sense that their state's rich folklore needed to be documented and preserved for analysis by later scholars. Nascent technology such as the radio and the

gramophone, it was feared, would end the age-old tradition of transmitting music and lore directly from one person to the next. With professional musicians' works being piped into homes across the country, the purity of traditional music, its particularities of region, religion, and ethnicity, could be lost forever. Ultimately, Lomax, often accompanied by his son Alan or by his second wife, Ruby, collected more than ten thousand performances for the Archive of American Folk Song at the Library of Congress. Ironically, he relied on the latest technological advances to document the very oral tradition he feared technology would destroy.

Circumstances took John Lomax away from his beloved Texas in 1917, when he accepted a job as a banker in Chicago. When Bess Brown Lomax died in 1931, a full-scale return to folklore studies, as a lecturer and folksong researcher, gradually revived the despondent John Lomax. The Macmillan publishing company accepted his proposal for an all-inclusive an-



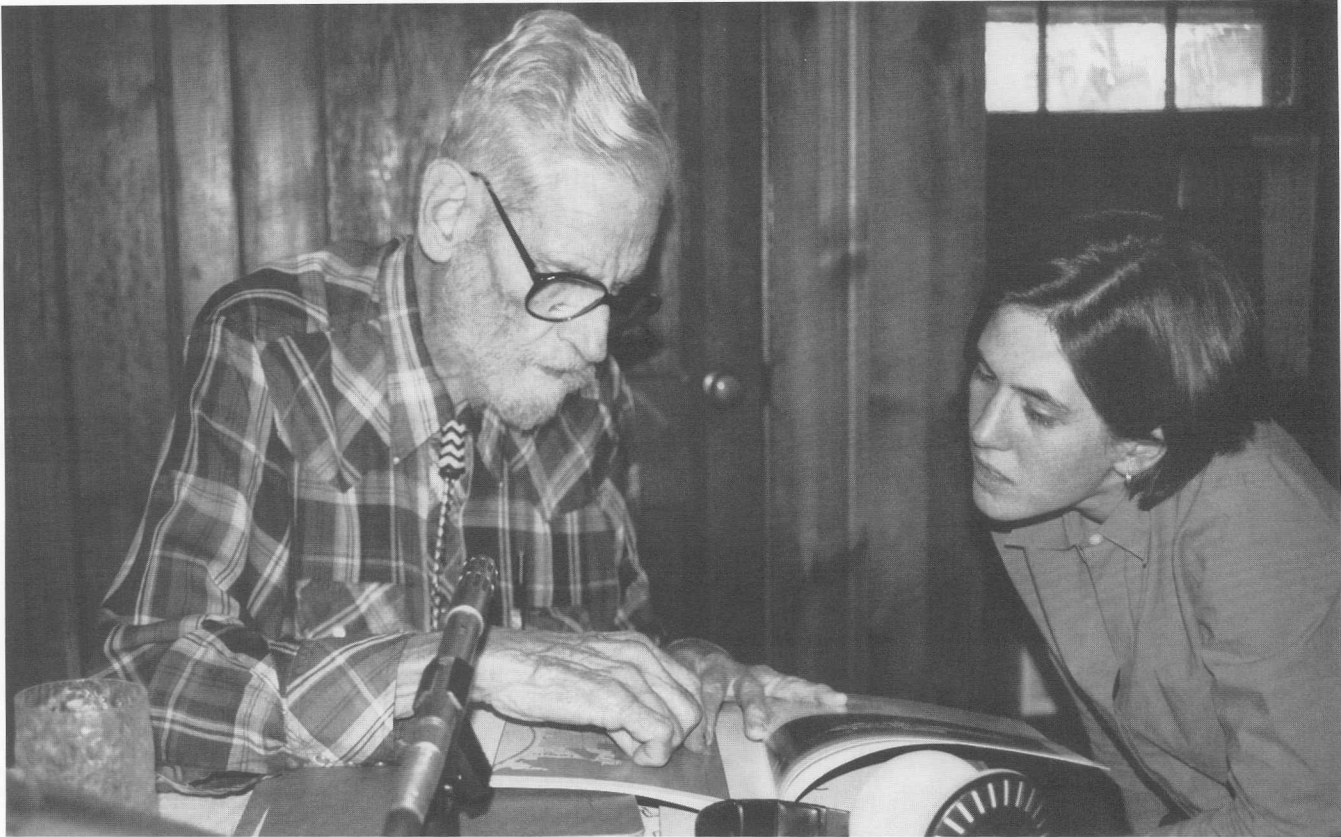
Aunt Harriet McClintock dancing for John A. Lomax as she sang "Shing, Shing," at the crossroads near Sumterville, Alabama, 1940. Photo by Ruby T. Lomax



James Baker (Iron Head), Sugar Land, Texas, 1934. Photo by Alan Lomax



Moses Platt (Clear Rock), Sugar Land, Texas, 1934. Photo by Alan Lomax



Rachel Howard interviews Frank Goodwyn at his home in Silver Spring, Maryland, April 29, 1999, sixty years to the day since he was recorded in Texas by John and Ruby Lomax. Goodwyn sang cowboy songs for the Lomaxes and introduced them to other singers they recorded. Photo by David A. Taylor

thology of American ballads and folksongs, and in the summer of 1932 he traveled to Washington, D.C., to do research in the Archive of American Folk Song.

By the time of Lomax's visit, the Archive already contained a collection of commercial phonograph recordings and wax cylinder and aluminum-disc field recordings of folksongs, built up under the leadership of Robert Winslow Gordon, head of the Archive, and Carl Engel, chief of the Music Division. Gordon had also developed and experimented in the field with a portable disc recorder. Lomax made an arrangement with the Library whereby it would provide recording equipment (including recording blanks), in exchange for which he would record songs to be added to the Archive. Thus began a ten-year relationship with the Library that would involve not only John but the entire Lomax family.

Thanks to a grant from the American Council of Learned Societies, Lomax was able to set

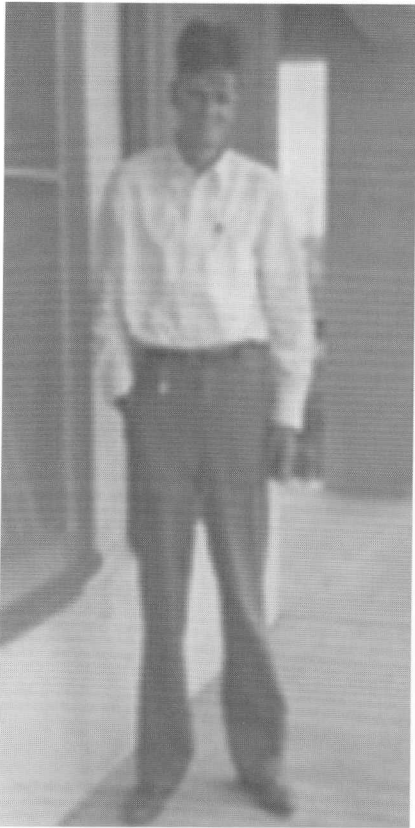
out in June 1933 on his first recording expedition under the Library's auspices, with Alan (then eighteen years old) in tow. John and Alan toured Southern prison farms recording work songs, reels, ballads, and blues from prisoners, whom they believed represented an isolated musical culture "untouched" by the modern world. One of their great discoveries occurred that July, when they recorded a twelve-string-guitar player by the name of Huddie Ledbetter, better known as "Lead Belly," at the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola.

Throughout that summer, as John Lomax traveled across the South pursuing his lifelong interests, he courted Ruby Terrill by mail. They were married on July 21, 1934, in Commerce, Texas.

Ruby Terrill, called "Miss Terrill" by John Lomax even after their wedding, first met her future husband in 1921. A native Texan, she was dean of women and instructor of classical lan-

guages at East Texas State Teachers College in Commerce, Texas, when John Lomax lectured there on his cowboy-song research. After she gave him and his young son, Alan, a tour of Commerce, he enlisted her as a babysitter. Over a decade later, the widowed John Lomax reintroduced himself to Miss Terrill, now a classical languages M.A. from Columbia University; co-founder of the pioneering woman educator's professional society, the Delta Kappa Gamma Society International; dean of women at the University of Texas at Austin; and Alan Lomax's Latin instructor.

His newlywed status did not prevent John Lomax from continuing to make disc recordings of musicians throughout the South. In 1934, Lomax was named honorary consultant and curator of the Archive of American Folk Song, and he secured grants from the Carnegie Corporation and the Rockefeller Foundation, among others, for continued field recordings. As



Frank Goodwyn, Kingsville, Texas, 1940. Photo by Ruby T. Lomax

Lomax continued his work, his field expeditions reflected his broadening scope of interest, to the benefit of documentary history. For example, in 1934, he and Alan recorded Spanish ballads and *vaquero* songs on the Rio Grande border and spent weeks among French-speaking Acadians in southern Louisiana. In 1936, he was assigned to serve as an advisor on folklore collecting for both the Historical Records Survey and the Federal Writers' Project, two Works Progress Administration agencies. As the Federal Writers' Project's first folklore editor, Lomax directed the gathering of ex-slave narratives and devised a questionnaire for project fieldworkers to use.

Meanwhile, Ruby Terrill Lomax continued working at the university, overseeing the home and family, and taking care of a number of duties for her husband's research. In 1937, she decided to exchange the academic pursuits and frenetic schedule of her life in Austin for the intellectual pursuits and equally frenetic pace of life on

the road with a ballad hunter. The Lomaxes made a house outside Dallas (called the "House in the Woods") their permanent residence, then drove away in her Plymouth on a scouting tour of the Southern states. The classics scholar evidently enjoyed the expedition, and threw herself wholeheartedly into it.

Ruby Terrill Lomax's role in the success of the 1939 Southern states recording trip cannot be overemphasized. She composed nearly all written documentation relating to the collection. She cataloged the contents of each disc on the record's dust jacket as the recording was taking place. According to Frank Goodwyn (a schoolteacher and former ranch hand who sang cowboy songs and served as a guide and Spanish translator for the Lomaxes in April 1939), Miss Terrill operated the Presto machine while John instructed and encouraged the performers (interview with Frank and Elizabeth Goodwyn, April 29, 1999, AFC 1999/006). After the trip, at the Library of Congress, she transcribed song lyrics and composed and typed much of the 307 pages of fieldnotes. In addition, Ruby's voice can be heard on a number of the recordings, carefully announcing the performer's name and the date and location of the recording. While her husband possessed the contacts, the title of honorary consultant and curator of the Archive of American Folk Song, and the expert knowledge of the material he was seeking and collecting, Ruby Lomax possessed the organizational and archival skills of a longtime administrator and instructor, the wide-eyed wonder of a lifelong learner uncovering a whole new world of studies, and the social skills of a parliamentarian. In 1940, when the couple traversed the same path through the South, she took on the additional role of photographer. Many photographs from the 1940 recording expedition illustrate the National Digital Library online presentation featuring the 1939 recordings (see page 8).

John and Ruby Lomax began their 1939 Southern states recording expedition in Texas, stopping in twelve counties in seven-and-a-half weeks (more than half of the trip) to capture some 350 blues songs, *corridos*, fiddle tunes, lullabies, play-party songs, and railroad, riverboat, and prison work songs in settings ranging from a storage garage in Houston to schoolyards in Brownsville and Wiergate to the Ramsey State Farm in Otey, where prisoners were "under guard, behind three sets of locks" ("1939 Southern Recording Trip Fieldnotes," Section 5: Ramsey State Farm, Otey, Texas; April 23, p. 48). Mechanical difficulties delayed and damaged some recordings, as the Lomaxes' correspondence with the Music Division documents. For example, their attempts to record the religious drama *Morir en la cruz con Cristo, o Dimas, el buen ladrón* on Easter Sunday in Houston were foiled by failing batteries; they visited the López family at their home in Sugar Land two weeks later to capture the entire drama.



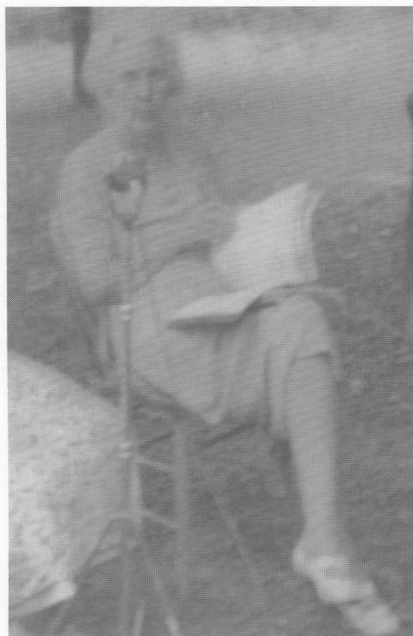
Isabella Salazar at the Casa Ricardo Hotel, Kingsville, Texas, 1940. Photo by Ruby T. Lomax

Merryville, Louisiana, their first stop outside of Texas, had been suggested by John's son Alan (employed as assistant in charge of the Archive of American Folk Song since 1937) and his wife, Elizabeth. "Elizabeth's uncle lives in a little town in the no-man's-land on the Texas edge of Louisiana. Elizabeth says that he has a natural amateur's interest in folksongs and knows all the fiddlers and singers of that section, and he could probably lead you to very good material" (Letter from Alan Lomax to John A. Lomax; Port Aransas, Texas, January 21, 1939). Herman R. "H.R." Weaver did prove a valuable contact, offering his home as a recording studio, guiding the Lomaxes to the blind gospel pianist J.R. Gipson and the New Zion Baptist Church congregation, and singing a few traditional songs he had learned from his father.

The Arkansas and Mississippi state prisons, Cummins and Parchman, provided a wealth of material, although evidently less than they had for Lomax in the past. Ruby Terrill Lomax



H.R. Weaver, who sang "Ox-driving Song" for the Lomaxes, at his home in Merryville, Louisiana, 1940. Photographer unknown



Ruby Pickens Tartt, at her home, Livingston, Alabama, 1940. Photo by Ruby T. Lomax

described these prison farm recording sessions in a letter written to her family:

We consider that we had rather a lucky escape [sic] from the Cummins State Farm in Arkansas; the night after we left a storm blew one of the stockades down, such as the ones in which we set up our machine to work. . . . Twelve convicts escaped in the confusion and two, at latest account that we saw in the papers, were killed in trying to escape. We made some pretty good records, but even in the past two years the death rate of old songs has risen. . . . At Parchman we found the superintendent harassed by personal and political problems, so that we did not tarry very long after working with two camps. Fortunately for us, rain kept the boys out of the fields so that we were able to do our work by day instead of at night ("1939 Southern Recording Trip Fieldnotes," Section 14: Cummins State Farm, near Varner, Arkansas; May 20-21, p. 205).

Alabama provided a more hospitable environment for the traveling couple, now two months into their expedition. John and Ruby Lomax spent five days in Sumter County, Alabama, where they were assisted,

guided, and introduced to performers by their friend Ruby Pickens Tartt, local folklorist and chairman of the WPA Federal Writers' Project of Sumter County. Tartt facilitated the recording of 115 children's songs, hollers, play-party songs, religious oratory, and spirituals, many of which were recorded on the porch and in the yard of her home at Baldwin Hill in Livingston. The Lomaxes were glad that the Presto machine was in good working order, as they were able to better document the repertoire of the cousins Vera Hall and Dock Reed, whose mellifluous singing voices graced numerous Library of Congress acetate discs recorded prior to and after 1939.

In Florida, the Lomaxes revisited Mrs. G.A. Griffin, who sang old ballads and demonstrated her unique manner of calling chickens. They also recorded at the State Farm at Raiford. Ruby Lomax was barred by the superintendent from making recordings with John in the men's dormitory but captured some fine examples of blues songs and singing game songs from the women prisoners.



Hettie Godfrey at the home of Ruby Pickens Tartt, Livingston, Alabama, 1940. Photo by Ruby T. Lomax

A polio epidemic in South Carolina prevented the Lomaxes from recording large groups of schoolchildren in that state, as planned, but they nevertheless collected forty-nine songs in three counties. At the home of another WPA Writers' Project contact, Genevieve W. Chandler, along the Atlantic coast at Murrells Inlet, they collected Anglo-American ballads from Mrs. Minnie Floyd and African-American singing game songs and spirituals from schoolteacher Annie Holmes and several of her students. In Clemson, South Carolina, host Ben Robertson Jr. gathered two groups at his home to sing children's songs and religious songs and escorted the Lomaxes to the Little Hope School House to record the church congregation gathered there. While driving through Anderson County, John and Ruby were appalled to see a gang of approximately eighty prisoners connected by an ankle chain; they recorded the group singing spirituals and work songs, and composed a letter to the governor to protest this practice, which they considered inhumane.

At the urging of their Clemson host, Ben Robertson, John and Ruby Lomax spent an afternoon at the Georgia-Carolina Singing Festival in Toccoa Falls, Georgia. The festival set-up was a far cry from the intimate settings in which they were accustomed to making their recordings, and the distinction between the festival performances and the types of songs they were seeking plagued the classification of "folk" music to this day:

After lunch we drove to Toccoa Falls, Georgia where a huge crowd had gather [sic] from three states, about twenty thousand. . . . Loud speakers made the singing audible over several acres. It was a great social gathering, a veritable reunion. It was impossible to choose wisely. After listening for a long time on the outside, Mr. Lomax chose two quartets, one of women, one of men, for recordings. They were conducted to a building where the machine was set up. The records were made in the midst of much noise and confusion. The songs are not folk songs, but the records illustrate a kind of religious song and a man-

ner of singing them that are currently popular in some small town and rural districts ("1939 Southern Recording Trip Fieldnotes," Section 21: Clemson, South Carolina and vicinity; June 9-12, p. 297).

John and Ruby Lomax drove through North Carolina on June 13, arriving in Galax, Virginia, in the late afternoon. Dr. W.P. "Doc" Davis, director of the Bog Trotters Band, was ill, so the Lomaxes' plans to record the band were stymied, but they nonetheless enjoyed the beautiful trip through the mountains and the company of the band members. They arrived at the Library of Congress on June 14, and there deposited the set of discs proclaimed by Alan Lomax to be "Musically and acoustically . . . one of the best groups of records accessioned in the Archive" ("1939 Annual Report: Excerpt from the Archive of American Folk-Song Annual Report, 1928-1939," p. 70).

John Lomax summarized the trip as follows:

John and Ruby Lomax 1939 Recording Trip Available in New Online Presentation

The John and Ruby Lomax 1939 Southern States Recording Trip is a multiformat ethnographic field collection that includes nearly 700 sound recordings, as well as fieldnotes, dust jackets, and other manuscripts documenting a three-month, 6,502-mile trip through the Southern United States. Beginning in Port Aransas, Texas, on March 31, 1939, and ending at the Library of Congress, in Washington, D.C., on June 14, John Avery Lomax, Honorary Consultant and Curator of the Archive of American Folk Song (now the Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center), and his wife, Ruby Terrill Lomax, recorded approximately 25 hours of folk music from more than 300 performers. These recordings represent a broad spectrum of traditional musical styles, including ballads, blues, children's songs, cowboy songs, fiddle tunes, field hollers, lullabies, play-party songs, religious dramas, spirituals, and work songs. Photographic prints from the Lomaxes' other Southern states expeditions, as well as their other recording trips made under the auspices of the Library of Congress, illustrate the collection, since no photographs from the 1939 Southern states recording trip have been identified.

Southern Mosaic: The John and Ruby Lomax 1939 Southern States Recording Trip can be accessed online at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/lohtml/lohome.html>. From the American Folklife Center's Home Page, <http://lcweb.loc.gov/folklife/>, click on "collections available online." This presentation is made possible by the generous support of the Texaco Foundation.

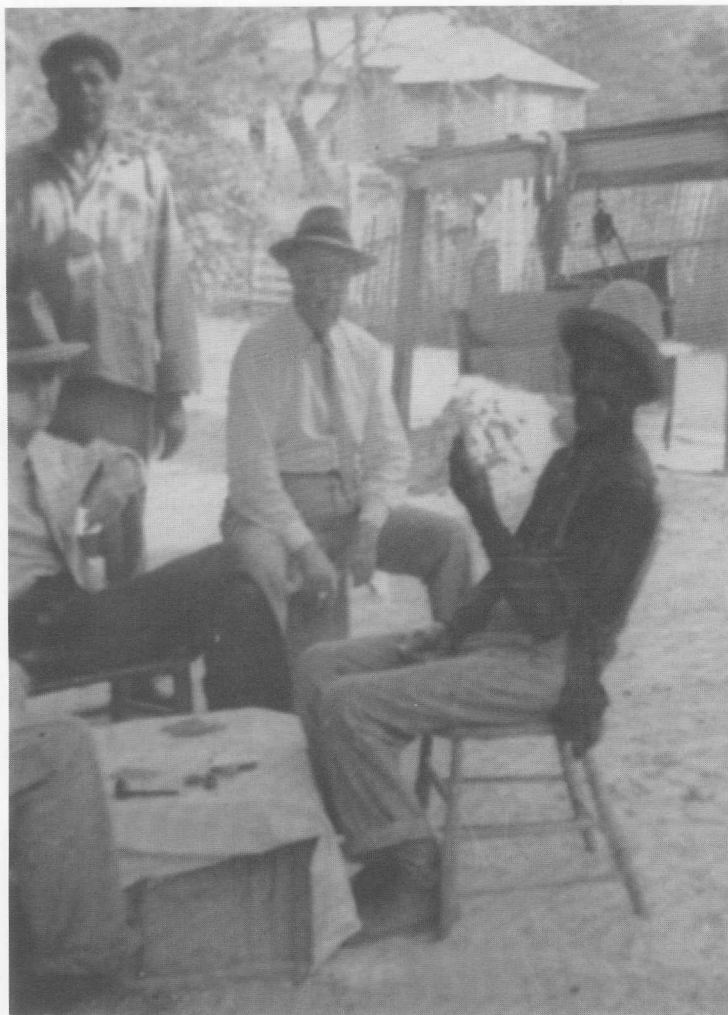
... in many instances we re-recorded folk songs sung in a different manner, or slightly different musically from already known material. In visiting the homes, schools and churches of the Southern folk and recording their singing in their own locale, we carried out the theory of the Folk Song Archive of the Library of Congress, namely, that folk singers render their music more naturally in the easy sociability of their own people ("1939 Southern Recording Trip Report," p. 1).

The online presentation of *Southern Mosaic: The John and Ruby Lomax 1939 Southern State Recording Trip* fulfills the mission of the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress, "to preserve and present American folklife" (Public Law 94-201, 1976). By making these recordings available to a wider audience of students, researchers, musicians, folklorists, and many others, the musical heritage John Lomax and his family devoted themselves to documenting is being passed on to new generations.

For further information on John and Ruby Lomax and the Archive of American Folk Song, see:

Bartis, Peter T. "A History of the Archive of Folk Song at the Library of Congress: The First Fifty Years." Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1982.

Lomax, John A. *Adventures of a Ballad Hunter*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1947.



Uncle Billy McCrea (right) with John A. Lomax (center) and friends, at McCrea's home in Jasper, Texas, 1940. Photo by Ruby T. Lomax

Porterfield, Nolan. *Last Cavalier: The Life and Times of John A. Lomax, 1867-1948*. Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1996.

The following recordings published by Rounder Records contain portions of the John and Ruby Lomax 1939 Southern States Recording Trip:

A Treasury of Library of Congress Field Recordings (Rounder 1500). An anthology of thirty field recordings made between 1933 and 1946, previously published in the Library's series *Folk Music of the United States*. Selected and annotated by Stephen Wade.

Afro-American Spirituals, Work Songs, and Ballads (Rounder

CD 1510). Recorded in the Southern United States by John and Alan Lomax, 1933-39. Edited by Alan Lomax.

Afro-American Blues and Game Songs (Rounder CD 1513). Recorded in the Southern United States by John and Alan Lomax and others, 1933-41. Edited by Alan Lomax.

Deep River of Song: Black Texans: Balladeers and Songsters of the Texas Frontier (Rounder CD 1821). Twenty-nine songs documenting African-American life on the Texas frontier, recorded in Texas by John, Alan, and Ruby Lomax, 1933-40.

Deep River of Song: Mississippi Saints & Sinners (Rounder CD 1824). Twenty-five songs documenting the realities of everyday life in early twentieth-century rural Mississippi.

Recorded in Mississippi by Alan, John A., and Ruby T. Lomax, Lewis Jones, and Herbert Halpert, 1933-42.

Deep River of Song: Mississippi: The Blues Lineage (Rounder CD 1825). Sixteen songs documenting the roots of the blues in African American folk expression and its future development and influence on popular music. Recorded in Mississippi by Alan, John A., and Ruby T. Lomax, Lewis Jones, and John W. Work, 1933-46.

Rachel Howard is a digital conversion specialist for the American Folklife Center's National Digital Library Team. Christa Maher, also of the Center's NDL Team, contributed to this essay.

Tributes Honoring Alan Jabbour for His Service to the Field of Folklife



The Hollow Rock String Band, on the Thompsons' front porch near Hollow Rock, outside of Durham, North Carolina, about 1967–68. Clockwise from lower left: Bobbie Thompson (guitar), Tommy Thompson (five-string banjo), Bertram Levy (mandolin), and Alan Jabbour (fiddle). Photo by John Menapace

Edited by James Hardin

Alan Jabbour began his career at the Library of Congress in 1969, when he became the seventh head of the Archive of Folk Culture. In 1974, he moved to the National Endowment for the Arts, where he established the Folk Arts Program. When the

American Folklife Center was created in 1976, Alan was tapped to be its first director. For twenty-three years, he has guided and directed the Center, making many friends along the way and contributing to folklore programs and activities throughout the nation and in other countries around the world. Alan became

senior advisor at the Center on July 6, when Peggy Bulger became the second director, and he plans to retire from federal service at the end of this year. In the remarks that follow, a few of his friends and colleagues honor Alan with their memories of the many works of his days and his many kindnesses.

Throughout the years, Alan Jabbour's efforts have kept alive an essential part of our family history. Beginning by making a few simple recordings of a Glen Lyn fiddler named Henry Reed in 1966, Alan has exposed Henry Reed's music to an audience and to an extent that most of the family would never have dreamed of. Alan's enthusiasm and dedication to the music and history on both a personal and professional level is quite remarkable, and is much admired.

However, his efforts have had a much more personal impact upon our family. His recordings and the excitement generated by them have kept alive the memory of Henry Reed within the Reed family. Grandchildren and great-grandchildren who were born many years after Henry Reed's death are now able to not only listen to the music, but to share in the life of Henry Reed in a manner that would not have been possible without Alan. For this the Reed family will be forever grateful to Alan. In recent years it has become somewhat of a tradition on Labor Day weekend for Alan to visit in Rich Creek, Virginia, just a few miles from where he visited Henry Reed. The sharing of music and memories with Alan is always a highlight every year, and these weekends are filled with much joy.

We consider Alan a dear friend and want to thank him for all he has done both personally and professionally. We wish him the best in his retirement and hope to continue sharing our lives with him for many years to come.

Dean, Billie Sue, and Terry Reed
Rich Creek, Virginia

Alan Jabbour can never retire: his ideas and insights will continue to reverberate throughout the years. A wonderful body of fiddle pieces called "Henry Reed" tunes might have been invented by Alan because you only heard those tunes from Alan. There were no published recordings of Henry Reed avail-



At the American Folklife Center's tenth anniversary party on the Library's Neptune Plaza, May 22, 1986, Leo Sarkisian and his band play Armenian music and members of the audience perform a line dance. Alan Jabbour is in the line, upper left. Photo by Reid Baker

able. Alan, hearing something beautiful in these melodies which he had collected, disseminated them. The tunes live on among string bands today.

Observations which Alan has made in passing have remained in my understanding of folklore and folklife—while miles of theories and policies have paraded by and been forgotten. Illustrating some original theory, he pointed out that old time fiddlers held their instruments low against their chests with the bow almost vertical, in the same way classical violinists held their instruments prior to Paganini.

He described how the 1950s were far from being a quiet time in American folk music, and

how the emergence of Bluegrass, Rhythm & Blues, and Native American Pow Wows all shared the same sense of consolidation. They were embarked on creating new cultural forms from older traditions in response to a postwar, mass-marketed America which was destroying the earlier regional aspects of these groups.

Alan is more than a good folklorist and administrator. He is a good fiddler, and practices what he preaches. His ability to inspire other musicians may have as great a significance as his academic skills. His Library of Congress recordings of American fiddle tunes from the collection produced respect for the cre-

ative and inventive qualities of diverse American fiddlers, establishing the validity of this tradition, in anticipation of the great fiddle revival which has followed.

Years ago he visited my home to acquire my Peruvian recordings for the Library. He had to stoop to fit into some of the low bedrooms of my 19th-century farmhouse. He must have made these kinds of visits at hundreds of other homes in pursuit of rich material. I once wrote him a letter about some difficulties I ran into in the Andes. He turned this letter into a long article for the *Folklife Annual*. Sometimes when he speaks, it is as if he is addressing a group of elderly ladies at a social tea. This capacity to communicate clearly has never diminished the complexity of his thoughts. His seemingly dignified demeanor has made him the diplomat of folklife, able to steer the complex path between politicians, librarians, academics, and the general public, as a cultural broker for the wonderful musicians and traditions he represents so effectively.

John Cohen
Putnam Valley, New York

In the mid-1960s, a gentleman named Alan Jabbour started coming with his friend Bertram Levy to play music with my parents and their friends at our regular Friday night music parties. Before they came to the parties, the music being made emulated Bill Monroe, Ralph Stanley, and Flatt and Scruggs. Alan brought with him a serious dedication to collecting tunes from an older generation in the mountains, and teaching a younger generation to reproduce these tunes the way they had been played by the old ones. Alan and Bertram formed the Hollow Rock String Band with my parents, Bobbie and Tommy. Their tunes came directly from fiddle-tune collecting in the mountains. They were learning authentic folk music, music which migrated from the British Isles, across the

Atlantic Ocean, was transformed as it adjusted to the rustic conditions of its new home in America, and was influenced by African music. Music which had been passed from parent to child without being written down anywhere. Music whose origins were ancient.

Alan was teaching the Hollow Rock String Band to play the old-time tunes, which they would practice in the living room on Fridays. Around this same era, my father was reading *The Hobbit* to me as a bedtime story. Since then I have always thought of us as Hobbits and Alan as Gandalf.

Out of respect for Alan, I have to admit that my perspective on fiddle tune collecting as a four and five year old was a little different from his. I was learning not to embarrass our hosts by asking them where their bathroom was. Many of the people we visited had outhouses rather than bathrooms, so I learned to ask if they had a bathroom instead of where it was. I learned that I did not like the Brunswick Stew at fiddlers' houses, and that fiddle players sometimes required moonshine, which was clear like water, but was not water. Still, Alan's efforts were not totally lost on me. I noted the similar structure of all the tunes, an "a" part, a "b" part, and sometimes a "c" part. I noticed the similarities in the rhythms, the chord structures. While I didn't understand the obsession with old-time tunes, and I declared that they all sounded alike, I was enjoying a rare and unique childhood experience which has shaped my entire approach to life today.

There was one big difference between the people we learned old time tunes from, and us. To them, the outhouses, the necessities of heating with wood, or coal, or kerosene, the lack of running water or electricity, the handmade clothes, were symbols of an obsolete way of life, something to strive to overcome. Plumbing, electricity, central heating, and things like aluminum siding were a sign of progress. To us, progress meant

loss of culture. The hardships of the old ones were to us the trappings of a simpler way of life, something that we recognized as valuable, something we aimed for. From Alan and my parents, I developed a sense of reverence for the gifts passed on to me from a world in which survival was much harder and more basic; for people that helped build the foundations of today's world, and kept track of their history through music and an oral tradition.

I am certain that Alan has had a similar influence on all those he has come into contact with. For my part, it was this appreciation of cultures different from my own, which showed me the way to develop a necessary supportive, appreciative relationship with the care givers in the nursing home where my father now resides.

Alan exemplified what I mean the first time he visited my father there. One of my father's care givers was a lady named Cordelia, from Nigeria. Cordelia had taught a little Nigerian song to my father and me. While Alan was visiting, we sang it for him. Right then and there, he pulled out his fiddle, and played the tune by ear. Cordelia was enchanted, and ever after, until she returned to Africa, she asked me about the man from the Library of Congress, who had learned to play her song so quickly.

Jessica Thompson Eustice
Durham, North Carolina

You better stay all night, boys." Maggie Hammons Parker's phrase was a regular marker of the visits Alan and I paid to Marlinton, West Virginia, in the 1970s. Something about the emphasis she gave the word all reinforced the ritual aspect of her instruction. But we heard additional connotations. The phrase expressed the family's strong tradition of hospitality, echoing the voices of generations past. Surely, we thought, Maggie's father, Paris Hammons (1856-1926), and grand-



Documenting the next generation of the Hammons family, Pocahontas County, West Virginia, about 1972–73. From left to right: Kay Hammons, Allene Hammons, Lee Hammons, Alan Jabbour, and Sherman Hammons. Photo by Carl Fleischhauer

father Jesse Hammons (ca. 1833–ca. 1880) would have said the same thing to travelers who stopped at their homes in West Virginia's forested eastern mountains.

The echoes of Maggie's parents and grandparents, of course, had drawn us to the family in the first place. We were regular guests from 1970 through 1973, when our phonograph record *The Hammons Family* was published by the Library of Congress, continuing to visit (albeit less frequently) until Burl Hammons died in 1993. Without talking about it too much, Alan and I concocted an approach to our shared fieldwork. Alan contributed his carefully honed musicianship and his interest in understanding tune and narrative in context, while I brought a journalistic sensibility, refined by my contacts with documentary and anthropological filmmakers. I had recently read Linwood Montell's *Saga of Coe Ridge* and worked to construct a family history in a similar manner, tremendously helped by the extensive tape collection pro-

duced by Dwight Diller, a Marlinton native who introduced the family to us and to other visitors.

Alan guided our collecting and publishing to a judicious balance between specific tunes and tales—which included infrequently collected Child ballads and motif-filled stories about witches—and a sense of who the Hammonses were, and of the world they inhabited. During our conversations and editing sessions, Alan's mentoring improved my understanding of culture and respect for the importance of humane relationships with the people whose lives we document. Alan remarked later that our project established for him the merits of *team* fieldwork, which became a hallmark of the new American Folklife Center.

Cultural documentation is never solitary. Whether one person or a team stands behind the recorder, camera, or keyboard, other people face the microphone, lens, or an observer's eyes and ears. Thus, the product is always a collaboration. In our case, Alan's humane spirit

established a collegial and reciprocal relationship with the Hammonses, evidenced by a song Maggie composed for us shortly before the record album was published. "Come all you people and listen to me," it begins, proceeding to highlight events in her life, concluding with, "You can put it on a tape and a record, you see / Then you can tell of my life's history."

Carl Fleischhauer
Port Republic, Maryland

Alan Jabbour has contributed so much to encouraging the preservation of our country's rich folklife traditions. I had the pleasure of working with Alan at the National Endowment for the Arts. Its program supporting the folk arts continues to reflect his wisdom and sensitivity. Through Alan's leadership, the American Folklife Center has become another preeminent source of support for the cultural traditions that form the fabric of our nation's heritage. I wish him and [his wife] Karen all the best.

Lawrence L. Reger
President
Heritage Preservation

When Alan first became director of the American Folklife Center, many of his musician friends thought every American home would have a banjo in every garage and two fiddles in every pot. But Alan taught us that folklife is much more—a whole world of human expression. For thirty years he has indulged us with his eloquent prose and professional style yet still smokes Camels, drinks whiskey, and plays fiddle tunes all night like the rest of us.

Bertram Levy
Port Townsend, Washington



At an exhibit of photographs by John Lueders-Booth in the Cannon House Office Building, "Lowell Folklife: Portraits of Culture in a New England Town," on display from September to October 1991, from left: Rep. Chester Atkins, Massachusetts Fifth District; Alan Jabbour; Rep. John Olver, Massachusetts First District; and Center folklife specialist Peter Bartis. Photo by Reid Baker



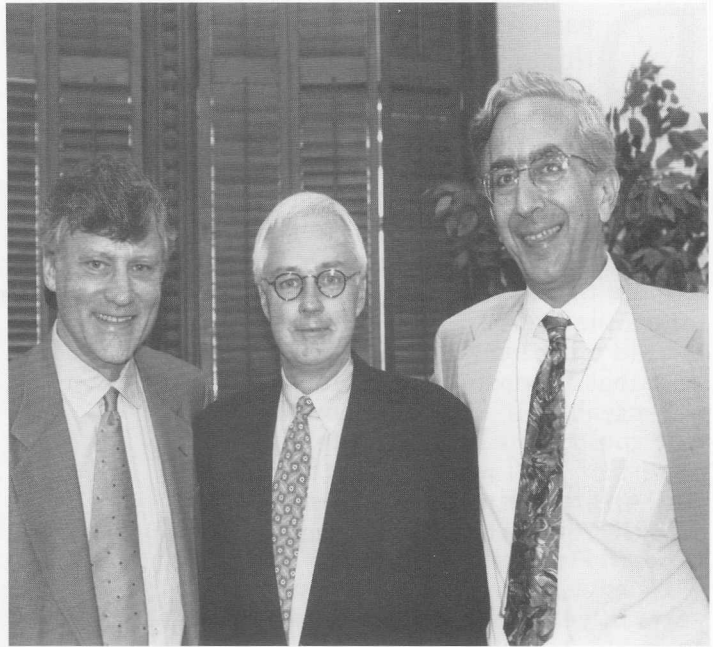
Judy McDermott, chief of the Exchange and Gift Division, and Alan Jabbour look on as Ursula Schwadron (right) and her son Steven C. Schwadron discuss the work of their late husband and father, Dr. Abraham A. Schwadron, professor of music at the University of California at Los Angeles. Mrs. Schwadron and her son visited the Center on November 14, 1988, to present Professor Schwadron's collection of recordings, publications, and manuscripts, including hundreds of versions of the Passover song "Chad Gadya" ("One Kid") from Jewish communities around the world. Photo by Reid Baker



Savannah folk artist Ulysses Davis presents his wooden bust of President Jimmy Carter to then first lady Rosalynn Carter and daughter Amy, while Alan Jabbour and Librarian of Congress Daniel J. Boorstin look on. The occasion was a January 1978 exhibit of Georgia folk art and folklife in the Library's Jefferson Building. Library of Congress photo



Julia Bishop, Alan Jabbour, and Peggy Parsons look at materials from the James Madison Carpenter Collection, which Jabbour acquired from Carpenter in 1972. Bishop was the first recipient of an award from the Parsons Fund for Ethnography, which she used for a trip to the Library to create an annotated index for the ballad tunes in the Carpenter collection. The fund was established by Peggy Parsons's late husband, Reference Librarian Gerald E. Parsons, to support the work of researchers in using the collections in the Archive of Folk Culture. Photo by James Hardin



Three Washington-area folklorists at the ceremony swearing-in Bill Ivey (center) as chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, May 28, 1998. Left is Bill Ferris, chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and right is Alan Jabbour. Ferris and Ivey are ex officio members of the Center's Board of Trustees. Photo by David Taylor

Alan Jabbour applauds Grateful Dead percussionist Mickey Hart following his remarks at a reception in the Great Hall of the Library of Congress, March 15, 1993, celebrating the release of *The Spirit Cries: Music of the Rainforests of South America & the Caribbean*. The CD was the first in a series called the Endangered Music Project, produced by Hart and Jabbour and published by Rykodisc. The purpose of the project is to make world music collections from the Archive of Folk Culture more widely available. Anthropologist Ken Bilby (behind Jabbour, left) worked on the CD; Don Rose (back, right) is the president of Rykodisc; Rep. Vic Fazio of California (right), a long-time supporter of the Center, may be gazing up at Grateful Dead leader Jerry Garcia, who had positioned himself on the balcony above the Great Hall. Photo by Yusef El-Amin



Dear Alan Jabbour, I think the first time I met you was in Atlanta at Governor's Day. After that you called me one day and had me to paint two or three works of art for you, and you had me one day out in the lawn to paint that day and autograph for people my art.

I did a big bust of you. I still have that dimension of you. It is still useable. If I had someone who could come by and get this pattern of you I would give it to you. An artist can still mark you off by it. You can have it from me, Howard Finster.

We have enjoyed many happy years in your shows. I am 82¹/₂ years old, had about five operations, but still working every-day. You took me to the new Library of Congress and we saw mysteries there, and I finally spoke at the Smithsonian and played banjo. . . . Thank God for Alan Jabbour and family. We love you all forever.

Howard Finster
Summerville, Georgia

Although I have been retired eleven years from my beloved Library of Congress, memories of my forty-one years at that incomparable institution remain fresh, and one of those vivid memories is about the remarkable contributions of Alan Jabbour. It is true, of course, that many persons have left their mark on the American folklife scene, but in my judgment Alan's presence made the most impact largely because he was at the helm when the very existence of the American Folklife Center not only was threatened but seemed doomed. That it survived and flourished is due in large measure to Alan's dedication.

He earned the respect and praise of the American folklife community, his staff, his peers, his superiors, and Appropriation Committee members such as Congresswoman Lindy Boggs.

In my long association with Alan, I found him to be a col-



In February 1984, during a meeting of the Center's Board of Trustees, Mrs. Irvin McCreary of Temple, Texas, made a gift to the American Folklife Center to establish a trust fund to be named for her daughter, Center board member Raye Virginia Allen. Photographed at a reception for the board, from left: Mrs. McCreary, Alan Jabbour, Raye Virginia Allen, and Associate Librarian of Congress Donald C. Curran. Library of Congress photo

league of distinction, gifted with integrity and a warm personality. It was my good fortune to work with him and to consider him a friend. Alan always gave his best, and his legacy records a glowing record of achievements.

William J. Welsh
Deputy Librarian
of Congress, Retired

Alan Jabbour's career has been admirable in so many ways. I'm honored to have been involved with its blossoming into full strength when I served as chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts (1977-81) and when Alan served as director of our Folk Arts Program. His insights and administrative skills were exceptional. We all depended on his wisdom in a field that grew in importance under his leadership, and we benefitted by his rare combination of wisdom and wit!

I know how these qualities enhanced the American Folklife Center at the Library of Con-

gress. I have followed Alan's contributions with an interest that stemmed from his own convictions and beliefs in a major art form, first given that designation in the legislation I prepared for the NEA in 1965. Alan represents the best in his espousal of a wonderful cause. His work abides.

Livingston Biddle
Washington, D.C.

Alan Jabbour is a very special friend and colleague. My husband, H.K., joins me in paying tribute to his thirty years of federal service as a distinguished leader on behalf of our nation's cultural heritage.

A flood of priceless memories come to mind. These memories not only honor the early years of the Center—when I served on the founding Board of Trustees—but evoke the beginning of a warm, personal friendship with Alan and his wife, Karen.

It seems like only yesterday when I first met Alan during the period of the passage of the

American Folklife Preservation Act by the U.S. Congress. We were introduced by the late Nancy Hanks, then chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts and a close lifelong family friend. Knowing of my interest in American cultural history due to my graduate work in American studies and my volunteer service on behalf of the American Revolution Bicentennial Commemoration, Nancy Hanks insisted that Alan and I meet at the Folk Arts Office at the National Endowment for the Arts. She observed: "You two will have much to say to each other," and added, "Knowing you two good talkers, you'll talk for hours." Nancy was right, for it seems that Alan and I have had one extended conversation about cultural matters for twenty-five years. We share a commitment to the parallel goals of scholarly research and public outreach programming in preserving and presenting the nation's folk cultural traditions and expressions.

Nancy Hanks also had insisted that I meet Archie Green, that indefatigable and indispensable champion of folk culture, without whom there would not have been an American Folklife Preservation bill creating the Center (I refer readers to Green's "A View from the Lobby"). Archie, in turn, urged me to meet Alan, realizing our common interests in the arts and humanities and a belief that the 200th anniversary celebration of the American Revolution was a strategic time to launch federal, state, and local programs of cultural heritage.

At the exact same time, though from another national arena, Congressman W.R. "Bob" Poage (my district representative and advocate for my appointment to the founding board) notified me of his enthusiastic sponsorship of the American Folklife Preservation Act. In fact, Archie Green had furnished informal briefings for Poage's top aide, as well as for staff of other sponsoring members of the Texas congressional delegation. I remember quite

well the help Alan provided when I organized a meeting between Congressman Poage, Nancy Hanks, and other cultural leaders. You see, while Poage was an enthusiast for federal folk cultural programming, he opposed federal programs for the arts. Support for the American Folklife Center was consistent with his mission as a champion of the U.S. farmer and as chairman of the House Agriculture Committee. In tandem, Alan and Nancy articulated one of the best arguments I have ever heard tying the cultural expression and traditions of farming to the world of the arts. As Bob Poage himself would say—we were walking in "high cotton."

Over the last twenty-five years—including my terms on and chairmanship of the board and subsequent years as a passionate advocate for the Center—I have felt that Alan was a unique spokesman and creative leader for the American Folklife Center, as well as for the Library of Congress. He stands for the value of cultural expression in our lives. I look forward to his future contributions. My life has been enriched by our association; Alan's ideas and insights have been an inspiration to me.

Raye Virginia Allen
Temple, Texas

Alan was a member of the D.C. Humanities Council's Board of Directors in 1987, when I became executive director. He was also a co-chair, and believe me, he sat tall in the saddle. The board spent a lot of time in those days reviewing grant proposals and



Joseph Aiken and Alan Jabbour strike up a tune and a pose at the Aiken home in northern Durham County, North Carolina, for a feature article on Jabbour's early fiddle tune collecting. Photo by staff photographer, *Durham Morning Herald*, about 1966-67

making funding decisions. I found the process a bit frustrating, but Alan was a master of it. With his folksy Southern drawl and giant intellect, and his incomparable ability to spin words into elegant testimony, he saved many a folklife project, and other projects too, from a premature demise. I think that's why the D.C. Humanities Council developed such a strong record of support for community-based projects that told the hidden stories of the people and communities of the nation's capital beyond the monuments. I'll always remember, and love, Alan for that.

Fran Cary
Director
Florida Humanities Council
Tampa, Florida

The Fund for Folk Culture traces its roots to a small group of people including Founding Director



Stephen Wade and Alan Jabbour at the Washington Folk Festival, Glen Echo, Maryland, June 1986.

Jillian Steiner Sandrock, Raye Virginia Allen, Archie Green, Joe Wilson, and Founding Chairman Alan Jabbour. Alan co-crafted the FFC's mission, helped design the organization's governance structure, provided cultural expertise in decision-making, and was instrumental in securing early financial support from private sources such as the L.J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, and the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund. Alan chaired grants panels in addition to chairing the board, which he left only after the maximum possible term of service had elapsed. In his role on the FFC's Trustee Advisory Council, he continues to lend his support to the further creation of a national resource for the field in its broadest sense, embracing local

cultures throughout the United States. In short, Alan Jabbour has been a steady friend and influence from our beginnings. We are forever grateful for his wise leadership, and we wish him every great happiness and success.

Peter Mattair
*Executive Director
 The Fund for Folk Culture
 Sante Fe, New Mexico*

In the concerts that Alan and I have played together over the years, we always seem to open with a fiddle tune called "Stoney Point." With its surging drive and angular rhythm, the tune incorporates three distinct sections. Then, at a point about two-thirds of the way through, Alan nods or maybe smiles, and we launch into a fourth part. I run up the

neck of the banjo, and he hits the bow against the strings with rasping force. The tune crests and falls like a fanfare of horns. "Stoney Point" succeeds as an introductory piece, I suppose, by its combination of speed, dynamics, and this added element of melodic surprise. Afterwards, Alan tells listeners about the tune. It goes by a wonderful variety of names: "Wild Horse," "Pigtown Fling," "Old Dad," "Buck Creek Girl." And, as Alan notes, there's always some accommodating soul who calls it "The Wild Horse at Stoney Point."

It's this last remark, spoken with gentle humor, that characterizes Alan's own breadth. By picturing an individual who either can't quite make up his mind or else wants it all, he hints at life's ineffable complexity. This same sympathy instills his writing. Whether he describes the elderly and their untapped wells of knowledge, or traces the creative ferment that has accompanied a century of American folklore, Alan sifts through the multiple, and sometimes contradictory, strains that comprise the human community. To that end, a number of his writings have employed the fiddle as a metaphor. A musician since his youth, he found in the intricacies of Southern bowing, a symbol of the give-and-take at large in American life. The senior fiddlers from West Virginia and North Carolina that he first recorded in the mid-nineteen-sixties touched moments in our national history in the patterns of their bow strokes. Alan speaks with wonder of the connection that lies between the tunes he learned from his teacher, fiddler Henry Reed, and the work of fiddler and fifer Quincy Dillion. Dillion, born in the early years of the nineteenth century and a veteran of the Mexican War, was an old man when he taught Henry Reed, just as Reed himself was in his eighties when he taught Alan. Although nearly two centuries of time separate the lives of these musicians, Alan stands but one person away from this fifer

who grew up on the Jacksonian frontier. These lines of musical kinship are dazzling, and like the genial fellow who wanted "Stoney Point" in all its splendor, I look forward to Alan's next set of tunes.

Stephen Wade
Hyattsville, Maryland

In the year 1990, Dr. Alan Jabour taught young South Indian folklorists the values of doing folklore in the public sphere. The occasion was a month-long workshop organized around the loose theme "applied folklore" and conducted in a small town in Kerala, called Thrissur. In a stunningly mesmerizing lecture Alan began by outlining the self-reflexive sensitivity a folklorist should bring into fieldwork to identify and elicit multiple identities that go into the making of a culture. He elaborated the ways by which the same sensitivity can help in organizing the cultural space called folklore archive. Illustrating from the Federal Cylinder Project, undertaken by the American Folklife Center, Alan demonstrated how a folklife archive can become an actual ingredient of a culture it deals with.

During one of the field trips around Thrissur, Alan surprised us by playing a folk fiddle (made up of coconut shell and copper strings) and establishing an instantaneous rapport with the fiddler. Later we learned that Alan was an accomplished violinist. One evening he enthralled us with a memorable one-man concert. When the young attendees of the Thrissur workshop went on to become teachers and archivists in different folklore centers, we always remembered Alan because we realized that his teachings were practically useful and his personality adorable. We never thought we would meet Alan again, although we kept hearing about him through our fortunate colleagues who went on to pursue higher studies in the United States. . . .

That creative translation of

his experience into principles, ethics, and ideas of multiculturalism was visible in Alan's work when he came back to India in 1996 to review the Ford Foundation's folklore program in India. I had the unique opportunity to work with him as a member of the review panel and observe his methods of "translation" closely. Alan enjoyed meeting his young Indian colleagues of Thrissur days at various folklore centers in India and engaged them in a creative dialogue to take the field of Indian folklore one step ahead. He talked about the interconnectedness of folklore, the newer contacts generating newer currents in folklore theory, the Indian folklore acting as resource pool for different strands of Indian culture to play and interact with, and the need for a national center for Indian folklore. He gathered all his arguments into an effective but gentle speech which he delivered as a guest speaker in the annual conference of the Folklore Association of South Indian Languages. His speech was widely reported, and the need for a national center for Indian folklore became the topic wherever folklore was discussed. The idea gathered momentum and, well facilitated by the Ford Foundation's New Delhi office, fourteen folklore organizations in India came together to establish National Folklore Support Center in Madras in 1997.

Recently, through the Internet folklore discussion list administered by Mark Glazer, we learned that the American Folklife Center was permanently authorized and we were genuinely happy for Alan and his colleagues. Congratulations to Alan, Karen, and their family on the occasion of his retirement.

M.D. Muthukumaraswamy
*Executive Trustee
National Folklore Support
Center
Chennai (Madras) India*

I've come to know horses and horse people over the last years of my life. So it is with no apology that I compare

Alan to a fine Arabian horse. It isn't because Alan's family came to America leading Arabian horses. It's more an equine alertness, an intensity of spirit coupled with a calm demeanor that marks a good Arabian and a good trainer. It's also something I have grown to love about Alan, this intensity and calmness of spirit that he embodies. I remember once after a raucous time in San Diego at the American Folklore Society meetings we returned to the hotel where Alan promptly backed into a parked car making a good dent in his rental vehicle. You could see that he was embarrassed and upset but still he kept that signature voice—slow, melodic, deep, and measured—as he did what was necessary to handle the situation. I would have been screaming a long string of invective.

I've had so many wonderful experiences with Alan over the years beginning with playing fiddle tunes, getting my first grant from him while he was at the National Endowment for the Arts, then working with him brainstorming projects at the American Folklife Center.

But it's other experiences I will remember best—smoking cigars, bounding down dirt roads through rural Utah, binoculars around necks, counting species of birds along the way, then playing a few tunes and sipping good Scotch after a big day of fieldwork. This is what has framed wonderful trips with Alan and, in a way, that is what has meant the most to me.

He has made a great contribution as Founding Director of the American Folklife Center. He is not being put out to pasture. I know that he plans to continue writing, producing recordings, playing the fiddle, and doing all the things that mark his talents. I want to wish him the best, to congratulate him on his legacy at the Center, and to compliment him with this equine tribute.

Hal Cannon
*Founding Director
Western Folklife Center
Elko, Nevada*

Blanton Owen Fund for Fieldwork Established in the Library of Congress

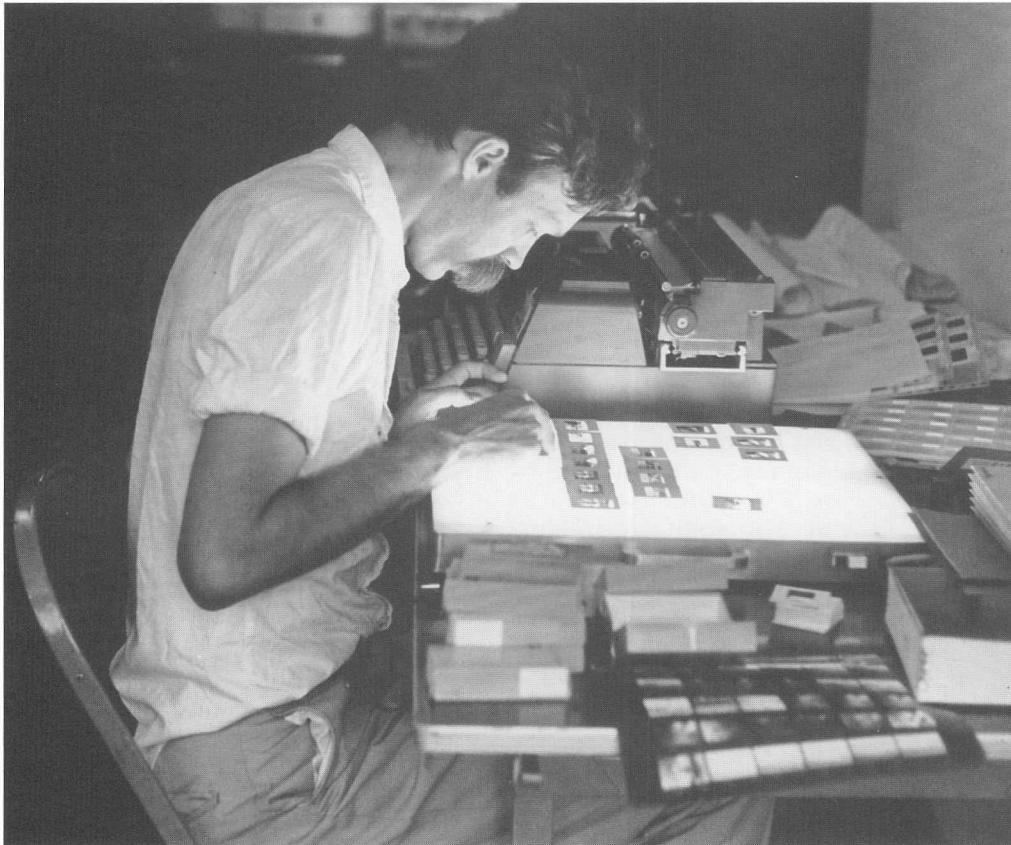
By James Hardin and
Alan Jabbour

The Library of Congress Trust Fund Board and the U.S. Congress have accepted a donation from Ted Owen to establish the Blanton Owen Fund for Fieldwork in the Library of Congress, the sixth gift or trust fund maintained by the American Folklife Center in order to receive private donations from individuals and organizations for carrying out its work. Folklorist, musician, and photographer Blanton Owen (1945–1998) died tragically on June 6, 1998, when the private plane he was piloting crashed in a lake in eastern Washington. He was doing fieldwork at the time, documenting the traditional culture of the area.

Blanton Owen studied folklore at Indiana University and

for nearly three decades engaged in the documentation of folklore and music in Appalachia, other sections of the South, and in the West, especially Nevada. His later fieldwork shows his broad interest in the whole spectrum of culture he encountered. The Archive of Folk Culture preserves his work from two American Folklife Center projects, the Blue Ridge Parkway Folklife Project in 1978 and the Italian-Americans in the West Project in the early 1990s, including interviews with tobacco farmers along the Blue Ridge and documentation of ranching traditions in Nevada. In addition, the Archive holds recordings that Owen made in Virginia, West Virginia, and North Carolina in the early seventies of fiddle tunes and other folk music.

In memory of Blanton Owen, his family and friends have established a fund within the American Folklife Center to support documentary fieldwork in folklife and related cultural fields, and especially fieldwork by young people, who so often have the motivation and commitment but lack the resources to carry out their work effectively. Recipients of awards from the fund may be either individuals or organizations (other than agencies of, or persons employed by, the federal government). It is the intention of those who established the fund that the documentary materials (or copies thereof) resulting from fieldwork supported by the fund be placed in the Archive of Folk Culture at the American Folklife Center.



Folklorist Blanton Owen edits and assign numbers to color slides he made for the Center's Blue Ridge Parkway Folklife Project, in preparation for adding them to the project collection materials in the Archive of Folk Culture. American Folklife Center photo by Margaret Counts

The Blanton Owen Fund for Fieldwork: How to Contribute

The central purpose of the Blanton Owen Fund is to provide financial support for ethnographic documentary projects, especially to young people who might otherwise be unable to pursue their field research. Those who would like to help with this important work by making a contribution to the fund may send their checks to the Library of Congress, American Folklife Center, 101 Independence Avenue, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20540-4610. Make checks payable to the American Folklife Center and write "Blanton Owen Fund for Fieldwork" on the comment line. For further information call or write Peggy Bulger 202 707-1745, mbul@loc.gov, or Jim Hardin 202 707-1744, jhar@loc.gov.

Concert to Support the Creation of a New Fund for Folk Artists



Henry Reed (right, with banjo) and his brother Josh, about 1903. Photo courtesy of the Reed family



Henry Reed at his home in Glen Lyn, Virginia, about 1967. Photo by Karen Jabbour

The American Folklife Center, in cooperation with the Folklore Society of Greater Washington and the North American Folk Music and Dance Alliance, is pleased to announce a concert on Wednesday, December 1, 1999, to help create the Henry Reed Fund for Folk Artists at the American Folklife Center. The fund will be used for any purpose benefitting folk artists, such as concerts or workshops at the Library of Congress, artists' fees for publications of performances in the Archive of Folk Culture, or documentation programs sponsored by the Center.

It will be named for West Virginia fiddler Henry Reed (1884-1968), who was documented by Alan Jabbour in the 1960s (see page 11).

The concert will feature Pete Seeger and his grandson Tao Rodriguez-Seeger; Christine Balfa and Dirk Powell; Geno Delofose; Stephen Wade; Hazel Dickens and Dudley Connell; Alan Jabbour; the gospel group "Prophecy" (composed of former D.C. policeman); members of the Henry Reed family; and others.

The concert will be held at the State Theater, 220 Washington

Street, Falls Church, Virginia. Tickets are \$25 and available through the Folk Alliance Web site: www.folk.org and by phone (202) 835-3655. Or call the Folklife Center for information: (202) 707-5510. Persons who would like to support the creation of a Henry Reed Fund for Folk Artists may send contributions to the Library of Congress, American Folklife Center, 101 Independence Avenue, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20540-4610. Make checks payable to the American Folklife Center and write "Henry Reed Fund" on the comment line.

The Parsons Fund for Ethnography in the Library of Congress

The Parsons Fund for Ethnography in the Library of Congress offers an annual award or awards to support the work of individuals and organizations who wish to use, for their research projects, the collections of primary ethnographic materials housed anywhere in the Library of Congress.

Projects may lead to publication in media of all types, both commercial and noncommercial; underwrite new works of art, music, or fiction; involve academic research; contribute to the theoretical development of archival science; explore practical possibilities for processing

ethnographic collections in the Archive of Folk Culture or elsewhere in the Library of Congress; develop new means of providing reference service; support student work; experiment with conservation techniques; and support ethnographic field research leading to new Library acquisitions. Past recipients and their research topics have included: for 1996, Julia Bishop (The James Madison Carpenter Collection); for 1997, William T. Dargan (African-American Lining Out Hymn Performance) and Lucy Long (Appalachian Plucked Dulcimer); for 1998, Carl Lin-

dahl (British- and Irish-American Folk Tales) and Thomas Gilcrease Museum Association (Yuchi Dance Music).

The Parsons Fund Committee, which is made up of the professional staff of the American Folklife Center, meets each year in March to review applications. Persons wishing to apply should send applications to the Parsons Fund Committee, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, 101 Independence Avenue, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20540-4610, by March 1, 2000. The application should consist of a two-to-three-page narrative describing the proposed project and its potential products and audiences, and should provide a budget and time frame. Include a resume or statement of previous experience and the names, addresses, and phone numbers of three references.

For further information, call the Folklife Reading Room (202) 707-5510; James Hardin, Public Information Coordinator (202) 707-1744; or consult the Center's Web site: <http://lcweb.loc.gov/folklife/>.

Persons who would like to make a tax deductible contribution to the Parsons Fund should send their checks to the American Folklife Center. Please write "Parsons Fund for Ethnography" on the comment line.



Susan Lutz photographs a family farm in Conickville, Virginia. Lutz received a Parsons Fund award in support of a visit to the Library of Congress to conduct research connected with a one-hour documentary film entitled "Sunday Dinner: Food, Land and Free Time." Photo by Winston Lutz



Yucel Demirer (left) in the Folklife Reading Room with Center director Peggy Bulger. Demirer received a Parsons Fund award in support of a visit to the Library of Congress to survey the Paris Peace Conference Correspondence and Documents in the Woodrow Wilson Papers, located in the Library's Manuscript Division, for ethnographic representations of the Kurds. Photo by David Taylor

EDITOR'S NOTES *from page 2*

between folklife presentation, on the one hand, and research and analysis, on the other; the vitality of state cultural agencies; the legal protection of folklore; folklore exhibits and festivals; American pluralism and ethnicity; cultural documentation; folk art; and others. Alan's arguments are cogent; his analysis, insightful; his prose, lucid. That talent for analysis and expression has characterized Alan's career at the Library of Congress. And what many of us who have known him over the years remember best is the company of his beautiful mind. Alan will be retiring at the end of this year, after twenty-three years as director of the Center and thirty years of federal service. In this issue of *Folklife Center News* are recorded the comments of a number of Alan's friends and colleagues, from different places and times of his life, each of whom has shared his company and profited from his experience and wisdom.

Fall 1999

EMTEC Award

The American Folklife Center has been awarded a grant-in-kind consisting of \$10,000 worth of media-recording products from the EMTEC Corporation, which makes BASF tapes. The grant is for a two-year period, beginning September 1999. Center director Peggy A. Bulger attended a press conference in New York City on September 23 to receive the award. The two other recipients are the Country Music Foundation, in Nashville,

Tennessee, and the Louis Armstrong Archives, in New York City.

Corrections

The quilt pictured on page 8 of the summer 1999 issue, lower left, is by Sara Ann McLennand. Apologies to Ms. McLennand for misspelling her name the first time around.

The farmhouse pictured on page 3 is in Alleghany County, North Carolina.

2000 LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
BICENTENNIAL
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For information on the Library's Bicentennial celebration, including the Local Legacies Project, consult the Library's Web site at <http://lcweb.loc.gov>; or call (202) 707-2000.



Henry Truvillion and his wife, in the garden near Newton, Texas, date unknown. Truvillion was recorded by John A. and Ruby T. Lomax on their 1939 Southern states recording trip. The documentary materials from the trip, housed in the Archive of Folk Culture, are now available online through the National Digital Library Program. See page 3. Photo by Ruby T. Lomax

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