

FOLKLIFE CENTER NEWS

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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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EDITOR'S NOTES

The Next Generation

On the cover of this issue is Michael Crummett's wonderful portrait of four generations, taken during the Center's 1979 Montana Folklife Survey. Could there be by now a fifth generation? Thanks to the generosity of Art Ortenberg and Liz Claiborne (see page 4), a heritage project is underway in Montana schools to engage young people in studying the history and culture of their state, region, and local communities and to encourage

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Cover: Trail portrait of Web Dolson (far right), with his great grandson, daughter, and grandson. From the American Folklife Center's Montana Folklife Survey, September 3, 1979. Photo by Michael Crummett

Montana Heritage Education Project Brings Schools Back Into Community



Shawn Orr interviews long-time Mission Valley resident Waldo Phillips as part of English teacher Marta Brooks's heritage project in St. Ignatius, Montana. Photo by Michael Umphrey

By Michael Umphrey

Students in Libby, Montana, have been collecting, cataloging, and preserving the vast number of unsorted and poorly stored historical photographs in the community library and the community museum. Students in Corvallis have been gathering the history of the gold rush

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town of Rochester, taping interviews, and working under the direction of the Bureau of Land Management to conduct archeological site surveys. In Chester, high school students researched and wrote the histories of the oldest buildings in town for the Liberty County Historical Museum and are currently trying to get two of the buildings listed on the

National Register of Historic Places. Students in St. Ignatius have started a museum, which at present consists of a file cabinet in the community library that is slowly filling with articles, photographs, and other documents. Young people in Broadus identified veterans of World War II still living in the Powder River area, then conducted interviews with

them and wrote biographies for the Powder River Historical Museum.

Across the state, schools participating in the Montana Heritage Project are gathering, preserving, and displaying their community's cultural heritage. In doing this work, young people have a chance to learn and practice a range of academic skills, but they also become valuable community workers, accomplishing much that might otherwise not be done.

The project began in 1994 when businessman Arthur Ortenberg with his wife, Liz Claiborne, approached the Librarian of Congress, James Billington, with an idea. The couple owned a ranch in Montana, and they were looking for a way to help people maintain what is best about Montana's cultural heritage. The history of every community includes what Mr. Ortenberg called "the arts of social living" as well as "sites and events that have been transforming." By paying attention to these arts, sites, and events—that is, their own collective experience—Ortenberg hoped that communities could pass on to the next generation the defining narratives necessary for cultural continuity.

Dr. Billington liked the idea, so Alan Jabbour, director of the American Folklife Center, worked out a more detailed proposal with Center folklife specialist Peter Bartis and John Y. Cole, director of the Library's Center for the Book. They suggested that the heritage approach would guide students through four learning stages. First, they would be asked to pursue answers to basic questions about their communities, such as: What has changed and what has stayed the same? Is the occupational culture changing? Are the various cultural traditions in good health? How does the community fit into the state? What does it mean to be a Montanan? How does Montana fit into the national picture?

Second, they would be taught to use the tools of library research to find books, letters, journals, photographs, newspapers, and other



Librarian of Congress James H. Billington, in his office at the Library with Tabatha Nitchke (left) and Jessica Remp, May 14, 1997, discuss the students' class project, which included the gathering and preservation of historical photographs of their home town. Photo by Peter Bartis

records that shed light on the people and the world of the past, including such topics as the local economy, local government, foodways, architecture, arts and crafts, medical practices, clothing, transportation, schooling, environmental resources, sports and recreation, celebrations, and ceremonies.

Third, they would practice the documentary techniques of interviewing, photography, videotaping, drawing, painting, and note-taking in order to gather and preserve information about the people and the world around them.

And finally, they would be guided toward critical thinking through the work of creating such products as exhibits, prose and photographic essays, dramatic scripts and performances, radio programs, public seminars, and video tapes. Such products would deepen the students' understanding of their own research, help community members understand each other and their own experiences better, and preserve research findings for future generations.

With Mr. Ortenberg's full support, Alan Jabbour flew to Montana in early 1995 for a series of meetings

with the leaders of the state's major cultural agencies. Subsequently, the Office of Public Instruction, the Montana Historical Society, the Montana Arts Council, the Montana Committee for the Humanities, the Montana State Library, and the state's two major universities agreed to sponsor the project. "It's something we should have done a long time ago," said University of Montana president George Dennison. Governor Marc Racicot said the program would provide the most aggressive look into Montana's past since the ground-breaking "Montana Study" research project of the 1940s.* "It will allow our young people to seize control of their own

* Editor's note: The Montana Study was a Rockefeller Foundation-funded project (1944-47) conducted by the University of Montana System to enrich the quality of life in Montana by using the humanities to contribute to improving the lives of people in small communities. Chancellor Ernest O. Melby believed that by creating a common awareness of Montana's heritage, the people of Montana would develop a deeper devotion to the welfare of their community, state, and country, and consequently act to address social and community problems.

futures by studying what has happened in the past," he said.

Assured of support from the highest levels in state government, the Liz Claiborne and Arthur Ortenberg Foundation pledged over \$100,000 per year (for three years), and communities were recruited to begin immediately. During the 1995-96 school year, six schools completed heritage projects. Last year, projects were underway in Broadus, Chester, Corvallis, Libby, Red Lodge, St. Ignatius, and Townsend. This year, Bigfork, Fort Benton, Roundup, and Simms will join the project.

English teacher Stuart Garrick in Broadus wanted a project that would engage the students in research and writing at the same time it allowed them to serve the community. He teamed up with Don and Bobbie Heidel, directors of the Powder River Historical Museum. The museum had several stations that featured collections of artifacts but few interpretive materials. So teams of students each chose a station, con-

ducted interviews with folks who knew the area's history, researched collections of the library and the county courthouse, then wrote scripts for an audio walking tour of the museum. Students recorded the tapes, and donated them to the museum.

Meanwhile, Paula Nisley began her heritage project in the sophomore English classes fairly conventionally by using the literature of World War II. The students viewed films, read novels, and discussed the war as it was presented by artists. Then, instead of moving on to another topic, she sent the young people into the community to interview veterans about their experiences and reflections. The students wrote biographies of those veterans, which were donated to the Powder River Historical Society Museum.

Art teacher Connie Barnhart decided to turn the art club's annual fund-raiser into a heritage project. She invited students to research historical topics in the community and use what they learned as inspiration for artwork that focused on

Montana's heritage. The club then published and sold a heritage calendar featuring the students' art. The money raised was used to take the students on a tour of galleries and museums in Denver.

Freshman David Scoles chose for his subject his own grandfather, who had been the most decorated veteran from Powder River County during World War II. He found photographs of his grandfather's war years, not in a family album but in the Powder River Historical Museum. As David planned his drawing, he interviewed his grandfather several times. His Grandfather Patten had wanted to serve his country when the war began but didn't want to shoot anyone, so he became a medic. While serving on Los Negros Island, he was forced to evacuate forty wounded men through enemy territory. He accomplished the task with no casualties and was awarded the Bronze Star. He was also awarded a purple heart after being wounded in the jaw and in both legs. "I got the medals for being there," the older man modestly explained to his grandson.

David completed a drawing showing three views of his grandfather. The next day, Mr. Patten died. "This drawing helped me understand him," David said. "And it will help me remember him."

Such stories of students finding personal meaning through their school work in heritage projects are common among the participating teachers. A host of school reformers have urged schools to find ways to make school work personally meaningful to young people, which is an easier suggestion to make than it is to implement. But by making their home communities the focus of study, teachers find that many students become motivated. Furthermore, local studies projects generate enthusiasm and collaboration from adults that is rare for academic work. As every successful coach knows, the motivation of many students is directly related to the attention their efforts receive from the



Buddy Brooks gathers life stories from Waster and Mildred Hamel in their home in St. Ignatius for a community pageant "Stories from the Mission Valley," which the high school seniors wrote and produced. Photo by Michael Umphrey

community. Community recognition lets students know that what they are doing matters, and they begin to feel a stronger sense of belonging and responsibility.

This self-reinforcing process was seen clearly in teacher Marta Brooks's experience in St. Ignatius. Her first goal was to help her students establish a personal connection with the work she was asking them to do, so she took her class of senior English students on a walk through town, looking at various places, encouraging reverie. As they walked, she asked them to remember things they knew had happened in those places. This led to each student's taking a research topic related to the town's history. Each student was to include citations both from texts and from interviews in his or her final paper. By the end of the nine-week project, each student had a resource file containing photographs, maps, and other documents as well as a ten-page research paper. And the community had the beginnings of a historical archive.

Along the way, the young people practiced many valuable academic skills—library research, note-taking, interviewing, and writing. But other things were happening as well. On the night the students were to present their research findings back to the community, winter storm warnings forced some agency representatives from the state capital to cancel their plans to attend. Marta Brooks worried that the sub-zero weather would keep people at home. As it turned out, the high school library was warm, bright, and crowded. People who had not been in the school for decades showed up. The community's stories were told in formal presentations and informally in the halls between presentations. Student Angela Posivio noted that several elders told her "these projects evoked the memories that had been set aside and forgotten." In dozens of ways, students heard from the adults in their world that the work they were doing was real and that it mattered. Many



Violin maker and potato farmer Arvil Anderson shows young interviewers an instrument that he made. Anderson was one of eight community elders who were interviewed and photographed for a display in the community library in St. Ignatius. Photo by Michael Umphrey

people mentioned that the evening was both educational and entertaining. The mood was one of celebration. At its simplest level, heritage education is a community paying attention to itself by paying attention to its children.

It is a love of place and the local people that provides the motivation for most of the teachers. Heritage teacher Bob Malyevac, a thirty-four-year classroom veteran, said he settled in Libby because he found the same beliefs there that he had learned while growing up in a working-class neighborhood in Butte. "Perseverance and the work ethic" still matter to people, he said. Those values "are still here and can still be saved." People are still committed to the

project of building families over generations. By "having faith that the younger generation can do better than the previous generation," some families teach young people to accept bonds of obligation beyond the self, to their parents and grandparents as well as their children and grandchildren. The rudiments of historical consciousness are taught early and deeply in such homes, along with other fundamentals such as brushing teeth or sharing cookies.

Can schools build on such family and community foundations by supporting high levels of academic achievement while teaching the disciplines necessary to join and enhance living communities? Heritage teachers think the answer is yes. Logging has always been central to community life in Libby, and English

teacher Rose Goyen asked her creative writing students to discuss the work with an adult, write a story or essay based on that conversation, and then take it back to the adult for a signature before handing it in. The assignment stimulated considerable discussion between some young people and their "mentors." One student's father began laughing as he read her essay about him. This prompted her mother to read the story as well, and she also signed it. "It was amazing," the girl said. "I had no idea of what my father had accomplished."

In an unusually ambitious project, social studies teacher Jeff Gruber organized more than thirty citizens, including the mayor, a Forest Service archeologist, church and business leaders, and a city council member to join forces with his high school seniors in the evenings to conduct an intensive ten-week community self-study following the model Baker Brownell and Joe Howard created for the Montana Study in the 1940s. Gruber organized the study because he felt that



Charlotte Jenson at the Sweet Grass Lodge retirement home in Chester tells fifth-graders Rachel Case and Shyann Norick about the Montana in which she grew up. Photo by Michael Umphrey

young people were disenfranchised. "They see that things are changing, and they feel powerless to affect the

changes," he said. He wanted them to understand the way citizens in a free democracy, including themselves, can meet their challenges by educating themselves and by linking their efforts. Libby had been one of the communities in the original Montana Study, and Gruber had spent much time visiting with the chair of that committee, Inez Herrig. She visited Gruber's classes to tell the seniors about the study she had participated in fifty years before and to encourage them to get involved. "We can't pursue future goals until we discuss them as a community," she said.

Libby's economy has been devastated in recent years by the loss of timber industry jobs, and each meeting combined historical reports co-researched by adults and students on such topics as the history of the logging mills in the area, and the town's relationship to the timber industry, with discussions about the town's past, present, and future. They also studied and discussed religion, recreation, and education, focusing on what could be done to



Matthew Clark records an interview with Anne Freeman to add to the collection of stories from homestead times being collected by teacher Carley Evans's fifth-grade class in Chester. Photo by Michael Umphrey

make life better. This was not simply another school assignment. In fact, the students who participated received neither grades nor credit. They were motivated by their hunger for community and meaning. Senior Sarah Fisher said that she joined the project because she had read the minutes of the 1947 study. "I was amazed at what they did," she said, "and I wondered if we could do it again."

At the end of the study, Jeff Gruber commented, "I'll be doing heritage teaching in one form or another for the rest of my career."

In Red Lodge, English teachers Lori Bremer and Helen McKay decided to collaborate on their heritage project. Lori would have students in her Montana writers class conduct library research and interviews on a variety of topics concerning the town's history: agriculture, arts, mining, and ethnic heritage. "The kids are responsible for setting up interviews, assembling information, and transcribing their notes," Bremer said. Then, during the second semester, the students in

McKay's creative writing class used these materials as catalysts for the creation of poems, short stories, and other literary works. In addition to doing research at the Carnegie Library, the Western Heritage Center in Billings, and the offices of the *Carbon County News*, the students conducted numerous interviews in town. Senior Eric Lynn decided to follow his interest in the arts, and his work on a history of the local arts guild led him to tape thirteen interviews (so far), scheduling them on his own time after school and on weekends. Other students have other motivations. One boy was delighted when his interviews with third-generation ranchers Ron and Marianne Yates resulted in an invitation to come back to the ranch to hunt.

Some of the experts on Red Lodge history now live in the local nursing home, so Lori Bremer arranged with patient services coordinator Kim Waples to conduct interviews there. Before the visit, Waples visited the school to give the young people an orientation to issues that arise when working with the elderly.

Waples sees that the project is as valuable for the older folks as it is for the students. The older people receive help "in resolving some of their life issues" by telling their stories to a young audience. She feels it is important for young people to understand that in asking for information they are at the same time giving a gift.

English teacher Renee Rasmussen in Chester teamed up with Pat Ludwig, president of the Liberty County Genealogical Society, to bring young and old together. Renee asked her class to research the history of the oldest buildings in town, keeping a focus on learning what this said about what the people in town cared about. Meanwhile, Ludwig began teaching classes on writing autobiographies at the senior citizen center, so as the young people went looking for the history of their place, their elders were invited to bring that history to the fore. She also organized a corps of adults from the community to pick students at school and drive them to their interview appointments.



On a May 14 visit to the Library of Congress, Montana Heritage Project director Michael Umphrey and students from Libby, Montana, examined the Montana-related materials from the collections of the Prints and Photographs Division. They were able to recognize many hometown sites among the historic photographs. Photo by Peter Bartis



Libby High School students present a framed historic photograph of Kootenai River falls to Liz Claiborne (right) and Art Ortenberg (left). The photograph was selected from an archive that was created by students participating in the Montana Heritage Project. Making the presentation during their May 14 visit to the Library of Congress are Jessica Stubbs, Jessica Remp, Tabatha Nitchke, and Delila Croucher. Photo by Larry Glatt

The heritage approach to education includes dozens of ways to teach all the academic skills that young people these days need to learn, but it also includes dozens of ways to educate their hearts. The investigation and documentation of the lives of communities provides a rich context for heritage reporters to find personal meaning in the work they do.

In an age when a concern for how to teach values to the next generation dominates many educational discussions, heritage teachers recognize that there is no such thing as value-free teaching. The act of teaching itself is an attempt to change another person, and all teaching is a value-laden activity. Heritage teachers are explicit about the values they are trying to teach, and strive to be sure that these values are enacted at every level of their teaching. Values

identified by the teachers in the Montana Heritage Project include:

- Community itself is an important value.
- Attentiveness to the worth of each person, especially the elderly.
- Valuing differences as a way of getting along with one another.
- Awareness that the experiences of "ordinary" individuals and the understanding they have brought to those experiences are important sources of learning.
- Knowledge of the past as a means to understanding human experience.
- Individual responsibility in helping to preserve and perpetuate those things that contribute to the well-being of the community.

As the Montana Heritage Project illustrates, the heritage approach is one teachers can use effectively to address problems of great social importance: how to teach high-level academic skills in a context that allows students to find personal meaning; how to provide a sense of belonging to searching youngsters; how to involve parents and other community members in the real work of education; and how to use emerging technologies to provide young people with a historical consciousness. As the work goes on, the teachers continue to find that a living community is an inexhaustible educational resource—that, in the words of Arthur Ortenberg, can be "a continuing voyage of discovery."

Michael Umphrey is the director of the Montana Heritage Project

Center Folklorists Document "Rivers of America" Publishing Series



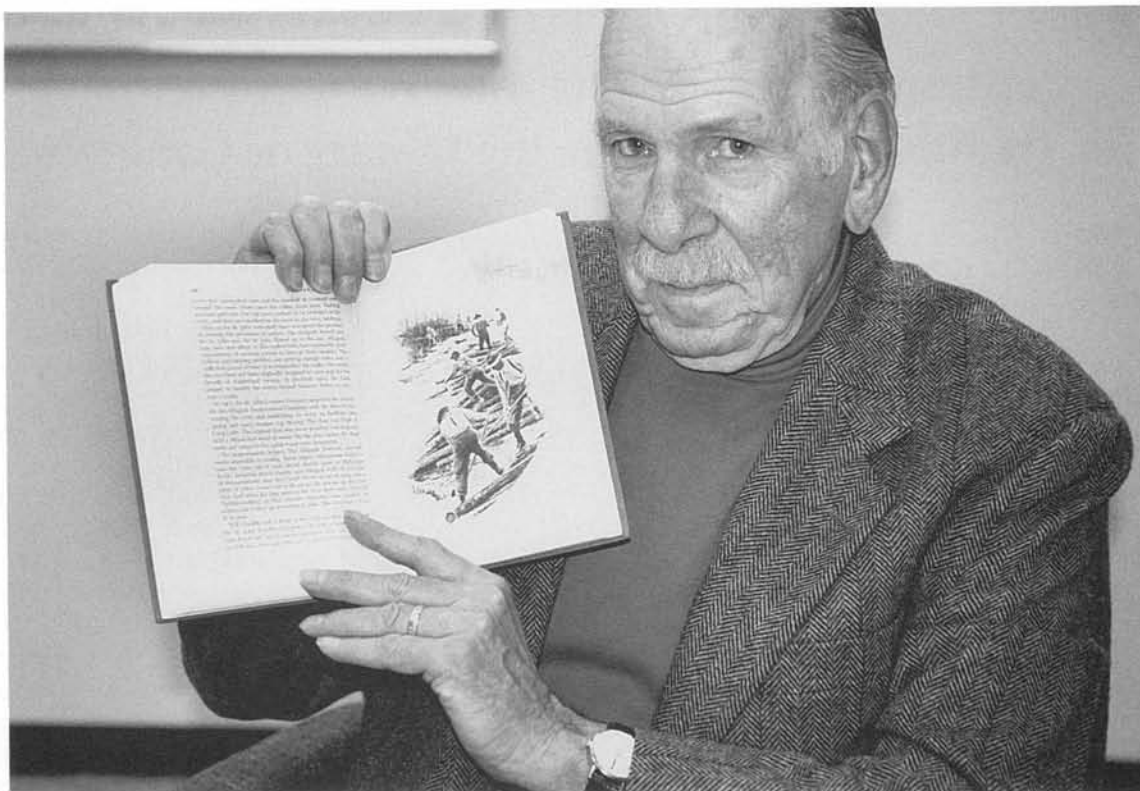
David Taylor interviews Dr. Thomas D. Clark, author of *The Kentucky* (1942), at his home in Lexington, Kentucky. Photo by John Y. Cole

The Folklife Center and the Library's Center for the Book are collaborating on a project to document the reminiscences of authors, illustrators, and editors involved in the "Rivers of America" book series conceived by author/editor Constance Lindsay Skinner and launched sixty years ago by the publisher Ferrar and Rinehart. The series, which yielded sixty-five books published between 1937 and 1974, focused na-

tional attention not only on the historical and cultural significance of rivers but also on the need to conserve them for future generations. A symposium was held at the Library on April 9 and 10 to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the series.

Center folklife specialists Peter Bartis and David Taylor have conducted taped interviews with a number of "Rivers of America" authors and illustrators; additional in-

terviews are planned for the coming months. The taped interviews and other documentary materials they collect will be added to the collections of the Center's Archive of Folk Culture. Of particular interest to folklorists will be the authors' observations on their fieldwork, especially the various cultural traditions they encountered and subsequently described in their books.



Illustrator George Loh holds up one of his drawings that appears in *The Allagash* (1968). Photo by David Taylor



Wilma Dykeman, author of *The French Broad* (1955), talks with Prints and Photographs Division curator Beverly Brannan during an interview at the Library of Congress conducted by Taylor and Brannan. Photo by David Taylor

California Gold: New Online WPA Collection of Traditional Music from the Library of Congress

By Catherine Kerst

"California Gold: Northern California Folk Music from the '30s," a multi-format ethnographic field collection from the American Folklife Center's Archive of Folk Culture, has just been made available online through the National Digital Library Program of the Library of Congress (<http://www.loc.gov>). This elaborate online collection includes sound recordings, still photographs, drawings, and manuscripts documenting the musical traditions of a variety of European ethnic and English- and Spanish-speaking communities in California. It comprises 35 hours of folk music recorded in twelve languages representing 185 musicians.

In addition, nearly two hundred photographs, drawings, and sketches of the musicians and their instruments, and hundreds of pages of field documen-



Armenian Mary Goshtigian playing the oud, Fresno, California, April 17, 1939. From the WPA California Folk Music Project Collection

tation and correspondence provide background information on

the folk music research undertaken during the course of the project.

From 1938 to 1940, while in her thirties, Sidney Robertson Cowell, ethnographer and collector of traditional American music, single-handedly organized and directed a Northern California Work Projects Administration project designed to survey musical traditions in the northern part of the state. One third of the recordings represented English-language material, and the other two thirds, the music of numerous ethnic groups, primarily European, including Armenian, Basque, Croatian, Finnish, Gaelic, Hungarian, Icelandic, Italian (including Sicilian), Norwegian, Russian Molokan, Scottish, and Spanish. She also recorded music from Azorean Portuguese, Mexicans, Costa Ricans, and Spanish-speaking settlers whose forefathers had come to California beginning in the 1600s.

Legendary Library of Congress Folk Music Records Reissued on Compact Disc

By Alan Jabbour

The Library of Congress and Rounder Records have released the first three compact discs of American folk music reissued from the legendary Library of Congress folk music albums. The three CDs launch a series of reissues, produced by Bob Carlin, that will number at least twenty over the next few years. *Negro Blues and Hollers* (Rounder CD 1501), originally edited by Marshall Stearns and issued in 1962, features

African American roots traditions from the Mississippi Delta country, recorded by Alan Lomax from the Library of Congress and John W. Work and Lewis Jones from Fisk University in 1941-42. *Songs and Ballads of the Anthracite Miners* (Rounder CD 1502) features the "minstrels of the mine patch" in the Pennsylvania anthracite region, originally recorded and edited by George Korson in 1946-47. *Railroad Songs and Ballads* (Rounder CD 1508), edited by Archie Green and originally released

in 1968, offers a range of recordings associated with the train in American life.

Negro Blues and Hollers has been for decades a defining album for blues lovers and students of African American culture. For the blues devotee, the album's rural Mississippi blues performances (including four by blues legend Son House), joined by authentic field and camp hollers and gospel church performances, provide a window into the rural Mississippi Delta heartland

where blues began. For the student of African American cultural history, the album offers a powerful sampling from a pioneering documentary project by the Library of Congress and Fisk University that sought to record the entire range of the musical life of a rural Mississippi community, and that also sought to trace and preserve musical performances revealing the African roots of the grand tradition of African American music. The notes of Marshall Stearns, who edited the original album, are augmented in this reissue by notes on the original field expedition itself, provided by producer Bob Carlin.

Songs and Ballads of the Anthracite Miners represents the labors of George Korson, author and folklorist of the mining camps, whose recording expedition in 1946 for the Library of Congress led to this unique compilation of the authentic voices of the Pennsylvania anthracite region. The songs, ballads, and instrumental tunes he recorded reveal both the cultural roots of the miners in European immigrant traditions, and also the passions, pride, pain, and strife of their contemporary livelihood in the coal mines. The CD edition reproduces Korson's notes without change. It is the definitive album on the Pennsylvania mining tradition and a monument to the creative spirit of generations of coal miners.

Railroad Songs and Ballads was edited by folklorist and labor historian Archie Green from a wide range of recorded collections added to the Archive between 1936 and 1959. The twenty-two selections feature not only the reality of train history and railroading craft but also the symbolic significance of trains in American culture. Train calls, track-lining chants, songs about famous train wrecks, and instrumental imitations of trains are joined by folk renditions of popular compositions about the railroad and spirituals drawing

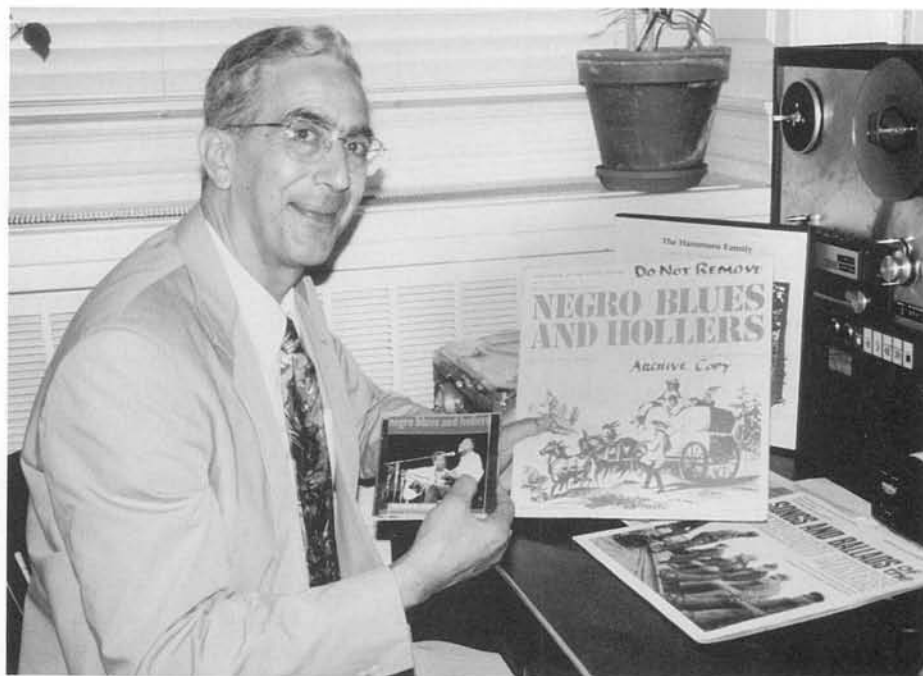
upon train imagery. The thirty-seven-page accompanying booklet by Archie Green remains an indispensable guide to the subject and is reproduced here without change.

The Library's series of published folk music recordings began in 1942. During the 1940s a number of albums were produced and released from the Archive by the Library's Recording Laboratory, providing the public with authentic examples of folk music recorded in the field throughout America and the world. In the 1950s the series was converted to the new format of long-playing records (LPs), and new releases continued to appear. Thousands of copies of the maroon-and-gray Library LP jackets, many containing distinctive red vinyl discs, found their way into libraries and private collections throughout the United States. They helped fuel the revival of popular interest in American folk music during the 1950s and 1960s, and they are still fondly remembered today by thousands of musicians and other music-lovers. All told, the "Folk Music of the United States" series provided seventy-one releases, and a special Bicentennial series of fif-

teen LPs raised the total to eighty-six releases before the LP format began to be supplanted by cassettes and CDs.

Rounder Records, a company in Cambridge, Massachusetts, has specialized in American folk music recordings since the early 1970s. Over the years Rounder has released a number of LPs and CDs drawn from the collections of the Archive of Folk Culture, including recordings of Leadbelly, Woody Guthrie, Jelly Roll Morton, Aunt Molly Jackson, and many others. The present series represents a collaboration between Rounder and two Library of Congress divisions: the American Folklife Center, which includes the Archive of Folk Culture, and the Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division, which includes the Library's Recording Laboratory. The original recordings were released through the Recording Laboratory Revolving Fund.

Other reissues scheduled for release soon in the series include *Sacred Harp Singing* (Rounder CD 1503), *The Hammons Family* (Rounder 1504/5), and *Children of the Heav'nly King* (Rounder 1506/7).



Alan Jabbar, in the Folklife Reading Room, shows the LP and new CD versions of "Negro Blues and Hollers," field recordings from the Archive of Folk Culture.

Parsons Fund Award Recipients Pursue Folklife Research

William T. Dargan and Lucy Long were the 1997 recipients of awards from the Gerald E. and Corinne L. Parsons Fund for Ethnography in the Library of Congress. Both used the money to travel to Washington to conduct research at the American Folklife Center. Long worked with recordings of dulcimer music in the Folk Archive in order to identify the early-to-mid-twentieth-century repertoires and playing styles associated with the instrument. Dargan is doing a survey and analysis of black lining out hymn performances from historical and contemporary recordings in the Archive. He is at work on a book, "Lining Out: Vernacular Singing in African American Culture," which looks at how and when slaves in the American colonies embraced the practice. The Parsons Fund for Ethnography,



William T. Dargan



Lucy Long

administered by the staff of the Center, provides support for persons who wish to use the ethnographic collections of the Library of Congress for their own research or other projects. For information,

write Parsons Fund, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20450-4600; or call 202 707-5510.

Alan Jabbour Consults on Folklore Initiative in India

In the fall of 1996, Alan and Karen Jabbour vacationed in India, where he served as a consultant to the Ford Foundation regarding the foundation's folklore initiative in India. The initiative has supported a number of folklore centers and programs in South India for several years, leading to extensive documentation and programming featuring the folk arts and cultural traditions of the region. Beginning this year, it will expand in scope to include other regions of India as well, making it one of the most significant granting programs in the field of folklore and folklife anywhere in the world. The Jabbours are shown here opening an exhibit during the annual conference of the Folklore Society of South Indian Languages, in Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh.



Summer Fellows Process Collections for Digital Library

Library of Congress 1997 Junior Fellows Katherine Snodgrass, University of Maryland; Christa Maher, M.A., University College Cork, Ireland; and Catherine Bowers, Drew University, in the Folklife Center collection processing area, look at slides from the Paradise Valley Folklife Project, one of the collections being organized and prepared for the Library's National Digital Library Program. Unavailable at the time of the photo, Cynthia Zujko-Miller, University of Maryland, is also working at the Center this summer as a Junior Fellow. Photo by James Hardin



Judith Gray Receives Krasnoff Grant – Mary Hufford Receives Guggenheim Fellowship



Judith Gray

Ethnomusicologist Judith Gray at her desk, just off the Folklife Reading Room, where she is coordinator of reference. In April Gray was awarded a grant of \$13,000, provided by Abe and Julienne Krasnoff (through the James H. Billington Fund). Krasnoff grants are awarded to curators at the Library of Con-

gress for work on Library projects of their own special interest. The Center will use the money to hire a reference specialist, part-time for six months, so as to allow Gray to resume work on the Federal Cylinder Project.

The Federal Cylinder Project was launched by the Center in 1979 to preserve, document, and make available to researchers the cultural heritage of diverse groups (particularly American Indians), as it was documented on cylinder recordings of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Gray will continue the process of cataloging several major collections, principally Navajo and Pueblo.

Folklife Specialist Mary Hufford has been named a Fellow of the John Simon Guggenheim Memo-



Mary Hufford

rial Foundation for twelve months beginning September 1997, for her proposal "Time, Space, and Historical Discourse in Central Appalachia." Hufford will write a book on the interplay of local and national discourse practices surrounding the current coal and timber boom in southern West Virginia.

Center Hosts Meeting of Folklore Department Heads and AFS Board Members

Minutes recorded by David A. Taylor; edited by David Taylor and James Hardin

On April 3 and 4, the heads of graduate academic programs in folklore and the members of the Executive Board of the American Folklore Society (AFS), along with Folklife Center staff, met at the Library of Congress. Participants included: Peter Bartis (American Folklife Center), Regina Bendix (AFS Board), Erica Brady (AFS Board), Olivia Cadeval (AFS Board), Deborah Kapchan (University of Texas), Marcia Gaudet (University of Southwestern Louisiana), Joseph Goodwin (AFS Board), Alan Jabbour (American Folklife Center), Elaine Lawless (University of Missouri), Tim Lloyd (AFS Board), Margaret Mills (University of Pennsylvania), Rita Moonsammy (AFS Board), Jo Radner (AFS Board), John Roberts (AFS Board), Sharon Sherman (University of Oregon), Amy Shuman (Ohio State University), Steve Siporin (Utah State University), Paul Smith (Memorial University of Newfoundland), Nick Spitzer (AFS Board), Shalom Staub (AFS Board), Ruth Stone (Indiana University), David Taylor (American Folklife Center), Peter Tokofsky (U.C.L.A.), John Vlach (George Washington University), Michael Ann Williams (Western Kentucky University), and Charles Zug (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill).

John Roberts, who acted as chair, noted that the meeting provided "an opportunity to face important issues, such as the place and position of folklore in the academy." He said the AFS executive board has talked about convening a meeting between department heads and members of the board for some time. He stressed the need for department heads to meet regularly.

Programs and Curricula

Amy Shuman said she and her colleagues at Ohio State are currently in the process of putting together their program of study: "We're asking, What should a folklore program be today?" She noted that there seems to be a strong demand for training in fieldwork. Shuman explained that since OSU's folklore program is part of the English Department it is possible to offer potential graduate students full tuition plus a generous stipend.

A discussion ensued about the merits of the terms *folklore* and *folklorist* versus other terms. Michael Ann Williams said that "hearing about a desire to change the name of the discipline makes our students nervous." Paul Smith said, "The value of the term *folklore* varies widely from place to place. At Memorial University of Newfoundland it's a positive thing." Margaret Mills said, "One of the chief impediments to using the term at our institution is that the field is seen to represent low theory."

Elaine Lawless said, "Folklore students in our department say 'I'm a folklorist' loud and clear. The students we're training now are the best hope for the future of our field." Amy Shuman said, "Our students who do folklore are very positive and enthusiastic about it, whereas other students in the English Department are very discouraged and disengaged." She observed that, at the undergraduate level, students are permitted to appreciate what they study, while at the graduate level students' papers that are too appreciative of the material are seen to be weak and lacking in critical capacity. She said her students understand the differences between folklore and cultural studies, and they're disgruntled by cultural studies theory but enjoy folklore high theory.

Courses and Requirements

Discussion then shifted to departments' core courses. Michael Ann Williams said all graduate students at Western Kentucky are required to take six core courses within the department—a total of eighteen hours. Ruth Stone said Indiana University has expanded the number of its core courses, and this has strengthened the department. One of the first courses graduate students take is one that includes presentations by the department's faculty members about their research.

The desirability of interdisciplinary training was discussed. Deborah Kapchan said that a problem the Texas program has had is what to include in its single core folklore course. At first, this course dealt mainly with the history of the discipline, but this proved to be dull. Later, the course dealt mainly with contemporary folklore studies, which students found much more appealing but it didn't give them much information about the history of the field.

Discussion then addressed comprehensive examinations. Charles Zug explained that North Carolina has a reading list that is regularly updated; it contains about fifty items. Graduate students in UNC's folklore program take courses broadly within the university and are expected to cover areas represented by the literature on the reading list. "Maybe our program is too loose," he observed.

Amy Shuman said that while there isn't a folklore program, as such, at Ohio State, folklore is one of the nine areas covered by the English Department's comprehensive oral exam. She said the department's Ph.D. candidates all seem to want required courses. She also said she would like help in determining what a core course should constitute, and

what a course on the history of the discipline should encompass.

John Vlach discussed the objectives of the M.A. thesis and the Ph.D. dissertation. The thesis is primarily meant to demonstrate one's scholarly skills, while the dissertation is meant to be a fresh contribution to knowledge, he said. At George Washington University, the thesis is typically 80 to 150 pages in length. He said he thinks of the thesis as a "banner students can wave" when they are looking for a job or attempting to enter a Ph.D. program.

Paul Smith said Memorial University's program combines the best of the British and American systems, resulting in a defined course structure and high standards for theses and dissertations. The typical M.A. thesis is 400 pages in length.

Steve Siporin noted that students at Utah State have alternatives to writing a thesis. For example, instead of a thesis, students can take extra courses or submit two publishable papers.

Elaine Lawless discussed courses and exams in her program at Missouri. "We don't have core courses," she said. "What we teach is based on who's there to teach courses." With respect to exams, students make up their own reading lists in consultation with the faculty, and then work with professors to develop exam questions. Though somewhat loose, this system works very well, she said, and the process of question development is extremely useful to students.

Teacher Training

Amy Shuman said that at Ohio State graduate students who are about to teach undergraduate courses are required to take an upper level course that involves teaching a course with a faculty member. Together the graduate student and the professor work out the syllabus, plan readings on certain topics, review teaching skills, and review students' term papers and exams. This teaching course is required for graduation from the graduate program.

Paul Smith described two ways graduate students at Memorial University gain teaching experience within the program: through work as a teaching assistant and through mentored teaching of an entire course. In the case of the former, graduate students are paid to assist a professor with elements of one of the five core courses; they're not expected to work on the entire course. In the case of the latter, they are paid (at the full course rate) to teach an entire undergraduate course.

Ruth Stone said that Indiana University has instituted a curriculum of teaching folklore, and this is her department's first foray into a comprehensive look at teaching folklore. Some mentoring is also provided to graduate students teaching alone at other campuses.

Peter Tokofsky explained that the program at UCLA is rethinking what the core curriculum should be at the graduate level. With regard to teaching by graduate students, he said graduate students in the folklore program are involved in teaching the undergraduate "Introduction to Folklore" course. They teach the first semester under his guidance and handle the course by themselves during the second semester. Funds are not available to hire graduate students to teach other courses. He noted that "Introduction to Folklore" typically has an enrollment of 125 students per class.

Michael Ann Williams said that Western Kentucky's folklore program has added a nine-hour certificate for teaching at the community college level, which is in addition to the thirty-six-hour requirement for the M.A. This course of study is offered by the university's Department of Education. She said the course is of particular benefit to students who want to go into teaching.

Folklore Departments in the University Community

Ruth Stone said one problem her department faces within the university is convincing administrators

that the Folklore Department is not anomalous within academe. Thus, she said, it would be extremely useful to have access to information that can be used to compare the various North American folklore departments. Data to be shared among the departments might include: number of students, student-faculty ratio, and faculty pay ranges.

Margaret Mills noted some of the challenges facing the folklore department at the University of Pennsylvania. "The department is seen as an anomaly within the university," she said. "Another serious issue relates to mission and outreach. It's crucial for us to get out of the ivory tower and thus be linked with the entrepreneurial direction of the administration."

Mills also said that while the University of Pennsylvania is very concerned with placing graduates in academic positions, it doesn't seem to be aware that other kinds of placements are also valid. "I'd like to see us teaching more effectively in the public-sector area," she said.

Charles Zug said that the creation of profiles of the folklore programs would permit department heads to use them to strengthen their hands when dealing with administrators. For example, on occasion it might be useful to point out that other departments do things the way your departments does things—or would like to do things.

Ruth Stone noted that a recent development at Indiana University's folklore department is a tremendous increase in the number of applicants from foreign students, who usually have full funding as well as jobs waiting for them back home when they complete their degrees. She also noted that her department cut admissions by 40 percent this year since nearly everyone accepted last year—twenty-seven in all—decided to attend.

Margaret Mills said that Penn admitted eight new graduate students this year, six of whom are likely to enroll. Half of the applicants are from other countries.

Minority Participation in the Field

The group then addressed the subject of minority participation in the field. John Roberts said that a recent AFS-sponsored study revealed that obstacles to minority participation include: the field's lack of visibility, the lack of courses that appeal to minorities, the lack of jobs in the field (or at least the perception that there aren't any jobs), and stiff competition with other fields for top minority students.

Elaine Lawless remarked that African American students at the University of Missouri flock to courses on African American literature, but they are not particularly interested in folklore courses. Michael Ann Williams said, "We haven't been able to sell African American students on the idea that a degree in folklore is a good idea."

Charles Zug suggested that the field might reach out more aggressively to the historically black colleges and universities. Marcia Gaudet asked if it would make sense to take a "folklore road show" to historically black colleges and universities and other schools with significant numbers of minority students.

John Vlach commented that the problem of minority recruitment is not unique to the field of folklore. The best students are in great demand. George Washington University struggles hard to keep minority students, partly by creating financial packages for them. GWU's American Studies Department (where Vlach teaches) is also working with the National Park Service to hire African American students to work at historic sites of significance to African Americans.

Peter Tokofsky said UCLA is the most culturally diverse university in the country. However, his program engages in intense competition—especially with Indiana and Penn—for minority students. He asked, "How do people feel about advising students to go into folklore versus studying folklore within the context of another department, such as eth-

nic studies, that will better prepare them for the job market? Roberts replied, "I don't know of any African American folklorist without a job. In addition, every year there are jobs in African American literature that go begging." In other words, he said, African American students in folklore are on the same footing as African American students who go through other departments when it comes to securing a job.

Tokofsky mentioned that undergraduate folklore courses can be a major tool for recruiting minority students (and others) into folklore graduate programs. Williams said courses on cultural diversity can lead students to folklore courses. At Western Kentucky, courses on cultural diversity are better "feeder courses" than "Introduction to Folklore" because every student has to take such a course or another that fills this slot.

Preparing Students for Employment

At this point, the discussion turned to the departments' role in preparing students for work in the field of folklore and elsewhere. Nick Spitzer observed, "I see the academic programs as a pragmatic delivery system. We need to figure out how to make it work for the field and for the people in the community."

Alan Jabbour noted that the American Folklife Center has a program for graduate students who do work at the Center as interns. Thus, the Center participates in the "academic funneling progress" to a certain extent. He also said, "We need to think about how people are led into our field."

Marcia Gaudet observed that students earning degrees from her program do well on the job market because of the diversity of their training, which includes courses in English as well as folklore. She said she is now working with Maida Owens—Louisiana's state folklorist—to convince the state legislature to create four new public-sector po-

sitions and base each one at a different Louisiana university. Under their plan, one position would come to the University of Southwestern Louisiana. If this comes to pass, Gaudet hopes that the folklorist assigned to her university will be able to teach a course in her department.

Amy Shuman said her department seems to be able to find jobs for all its students in the area of rhetoric and communication. Elaine Lawless said that students with interdisciplinary training and creativity can get jobs. To give our students the best chances of meaningful employment, we need to do a better job of getting them to think about where they're going to go with their degrees from day one, she said.

Ruth Stone said her department thought most graduates were getting jobs in the public sector but did a study and found that three-quarters of the graduates found academic jobs—but not necessarily in folklore. Having this information is very helpful in getting students to prepare for employment.

Job-Search Workshops

Margaret Mills suggested that having a job-search workshop at the annual American Folklore Society meeting might be useful. Jo Radner asked if the society could bring a traveling program about job searching from graduate program to graduate program so students can start thinking about this early in their graduate school careers. Amy Shuman said Radner's idea is particularly important because, since the job market shifts, a regular program can take change into consideration. She said applied linguistics is an area that is opening up right now, and there has been an explosion in foreign-language teaching that has led to jobs for people who can teach culture along with a language. Thus, she said, we have to train students so they are qualified as applied linguists or foreign-language specialists as well as folklorists. Marcia Gaudet added that folk-

lore programs have to be aware of the requirements for getting academic jobs in certain fields so they can make sure students can meet them.

Paul Smith said he and his colleagues at Memorial University have tried to establish a hierarchy of training that prepares students for employment. That training includes: work in an archive, work as a teaching assistant, and work as a lecturer. Payment is provided to the student in each instance.

Shalom Staub said that since the job market is always shifting we have to be able to assess shifts swiftly if we are to guide and counsel students adequately about the kinds of jobs that are available and how to prepare for them. It's mind boggling that graduate students still think they're going to get teaching jobs, he said. However, that's the work for which they are most qualified. Staub added that there should be an institutionalized awareness of what's happening in the job market.

Compiling and Sharing Information About Graduate Programs

John Roberts returned to the issue of compiling and distributing information about the folklore graduate programs. There seems to be a need for a central office to serve as a clearing house for information about academic programs in folklore, he said.

Ruth Stone said that if a comprehensive guide to folklore programs could be created—one that describes

departments' strengths and other details—it could be put on the Web for students to examine.

Elaine Lawless proposed that the AFS Newsletter be used to showcase folklore graduate programs; perhaps a special issue could be devoted to the subject.

Charles Zug noted that the UNC program recently completed a ten-year review. He said it would have helped strengthen the program's case within the university if information about other folklore programs had been available.

Jo Radner asked what statistics are needed to compile and share. John Roberts then read a list of data it would be useful to compile. These data included: number of faculty, number of undergraduate students, number of graduate students, degrees offered, financial aid available, institutional structure, special programs, archives and special collections, range of faculty salaries, course enrollment statistics, application/acceptance ratio for graduate students, number of minority applicants, number of international applicants, colleges and universities graduate students come from, average GRE scores of applicants, number of graduates, and placement of graduates of the program.

Formally Constituting the Department Heads as a Group

John Roberts led a discussion on how to more formally constitute the department chairs as a group. One

idea was to create a section of AFS. Roberts suggested that such a section might also include the chairs of undergraduate folklore programs since it is important for the chairs of undergraduate and graduate programs to establish a dialogue.

Elaine Lawless asked how department heads could establish an AFS section. Roberts replied that any group can petition to become a section. Lawless said a section meeting held in conjunction with the annual meeting of AFS would make sense. Michael Ann Williams said that while it would be nice to include members of the AFS executive board in section meetings, it is more important to schedule meetings at the convenience of department heads.

Deborah Kapchan said it would probably be difficult to convene a meeting like the present one every year. She said she would prefer to meet at the annual AFS meeting and deal with issues specified in an agenda prepared in advance. Roberts said the AFS executive board will work with the AFS program committee to schedule a department heads' section meeting at the next AFS meeting, in Austin.

Editors' note: In a phone conversation, John Roberts said that the meeting at the Library of Congress had been a good start toward bringing some organizational structure to academic folklore programs, and that he would convene another meeting of department heads at the American Folklore Society meeting in October, in Austin, Texas.

EDITOR'S NOTES from page 2
them to become better acquainted with their parents and grandparents, as well as other community members.

The Montana Heritage Project, dubbed "The Next Generation," is being sponsored jointly by the Folklife Center and the Library's Center for the Book. A consortium

of institutions in Montana are involved. Project director Michael Umphrey has written an inspiring account of how much has been done in the first two years (page 3), and how communities in Montana are finding their way across the "generation gap." For online information on the project, consult its web site: www.edheritage.org.

Folklife Specialist Peter Bartis has been tracking a number of community-based education projects, such as the one in Montana. *A Teacher's Guide to Folklife Resources for K-12 Classrooms* (1994), prepared by Bartis and folklorist Paddy Bowman, is available from the Center in print form or online, along with other Center publications.



Geography and Map Division curator James Flatness displayed historical and contemporary maps of Montana and the town of Libby for Montana Heritage Project students and teachers during a May 14 visit to the Library of Congress. See page 3. Photo by Peter Bartis

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