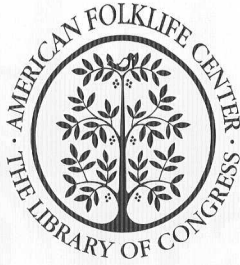


FOLKLIFE CENTER NEWS

SUMMER 2002 • VOLUME XXIV, NUMBER 3



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.

STAFF

Administration

Peggy A. Bulger, *Director*
Doris Craig, *Administrative Assistant*
John Lewis, *Assistant to the Director*

Acquisitions

David A. Taylor, *Coordinator*

Processing and Cataloging

Rosemary Graham, *Processing Technician*
Todd Harvey, *Processing Technician*
Catherine Hiebert Kerst, *Archivist*
Judy Ng, *Processing Technician*
Marcia Segal, *Processing Technician*
Nora Yeh, *Archivist, Coordinator*

Programs

Mary Hufford, *Folklife Specialist*
Michael Taft, *Folklife Specialist*
David A. Taylor, *Folklife Specialist*

Publications

James Hardin, *Editor*

Public Events

Theadocia Austen, *Coordinator*
Andrew Wallace, *Coordinator*

Reference

Jennifer A. Cutting, *Folklife Specialist*
Judith A. Gray, *Folklife Specialist, Coordinator*

Stephanie A. Hall, *Automation Specialist*

Ann Hoog, *Folklife Specialist*

Veterans History Project

Ellen McCulloch-Lovell, *Director*
Peter T. Bartis, *Project Manager*
Sarah Rouse, *Program Officer*
Virginia Sorkin, *Program Officer*
Timothy Roberts

Administrative Officer

Administrative Office

Fax: 202 707-2076

Reference Service

Tel: 202 707-5510

E-mail: folklife@loc.gov

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Congressional Appointees

Kay Kaufman Shelemay, *Chair, Massachusetts*
Mickey Hart, *California*
Dennis Holub, *South Dakota*
Susan B. Howorth, *Mississippi*
William L. Kinney Jr., *South Carolina*
Judith McCulloh, *Illinois*
Marlene Myerson, *New Mexico*

Presidential Appointees

Maureen P. Cragin
Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs
Department of Veterans Affairs
Fran Mainella

Director, National Park Service

Sonya E. Medina
Deputy Director of Projects
Office of the First Lady
The White House

Neal A. McCaleb

Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior

Librarian Appointees

Jane Beck, *Vice-chair, Vermont*
Norma Cantú, *Texas*
Tom Rankin, *North Carolina*
William H. Wiggins Jr., *Indiana*

Ex Officio Members

James H. Billington, *Librarian of Congress*
Lawrence M. Small, *Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution*

Eileen B. Mason, *Acting Chairman, National Endowment for the Arts*
Bruce Cole, *Chairman, National Endowment for the Humanities*

Jack Santino, *President, American Folklore Society*
Ellen Koskoff, *President, Society for Ethnomusicology*
Peggy A. Bulger, *Director, American Folklife Center*

FOLKLIFE CENTER NEWS

James Hardin, *Editor*
David A. Taylor, *Editorial Advisor*
Sheryle Shears, *Designer*
Peggy Pixley, *Production*

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

ONLINE INFORMATION RESOURCES

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

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

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

EDITOR'S NOTES

In the publicity for a number of the American Folklife Center's projects, during the past several years, the phrase "the next generation" has figured as a central slogan. The Montana Heritage Project, for example, seeks to provide high school students with a heightened sense of community life, and facilitate the conservation of historical and cultural memory. The Save Our Sounds project is designed to ensure that our nation's recorded-sound heritage will be safe for many years to come, and
(Continued on page 19)

Cover: Mary Tomlin at work on "tube winding" at the Joseph Teshon textile plant, on 21st Avenue, Paterson, New Jersey, August 1994. This is an image from the American Folklife Center's new online presentation *Working in Paterson*. Photo by Martha Cooper

Silk City's Occupational Culture Now Online



Bunny Kuiken in front of the American Labor Museum, Botto House National Landmark, on Norwood Avenue in Haledon, New Jersey, where she works. The house was once owned by her grandfather, Pietro Botto. During the labor unrest of 1913, Botto offered his home as a meeting place for striking silk-mill workers, and leaders of the labor movement addressed thousands of strikers from the balcony. Photo by Martha Cooper.

By David A. Taylor

The everyday working lives of shopkeepers, restaurant owners and workers, factory workers, dressmakers, and many others from Paterson, New Jersey, are featured in a new online presentation from the American Folklife Center: *Working in Paterson: Occupational Heritage in an Urban Setting*. The presentation is part of the Library of Congress's American Memory Project, and the sixteenth collection or special presentation from the Center to be made available over the

Internet. It may be reached through the American Folklife Center Web site www.loc.gov/folklife. Select Collections Available Online.

"As a lifelong Patersonian, I am thrilled that the Library of Congress has created this outstanding online resource detailing the historical significance of the Silk City," said U.S. Representative Bill Pascrell, of New Jersey's eighth district. "Ours is a city that helped shape this nation's steadfast commitment to hard work and innovation, and this rich heritage is cap-

tured brilliantly through the photos, interviews, and essays on this website."

The documentary collection was created as part of the American Folklife Center's Working in Paterson Project, a four-month study of occupational culture in Paterson, New Jersey, conducted in 1994. The study was sponsored by the Mid-Atlantic Regional Office of the National Park Service (Philadelphia), under a 1992 federal program, the New Jersey Urban History Initiative. The program is concerned primarily with



Flanked by “Working in Paterson” project director David Taylor (left) and digital conversion specialist Christa Maher (right), Congressman Bill Pascrell and Librarian of Congress James H. Billington announce the release of the Library’s new online collection *Working in Paterson: Occupational Heritage in an Urban Setting*. They are holding an enlargement of one of the images in the collection, a postcard depicting important buildings in Paterson. Photo by Paul Hogroian

Retired ladies’ garment worker Florence DiStephano in her basement sewing shop, where she makes and alters garments for herself, her family, and friends. She wears a smock she made that has the International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union (ILGU) logo imprinted on the fabric. Photo by Martha Cooper

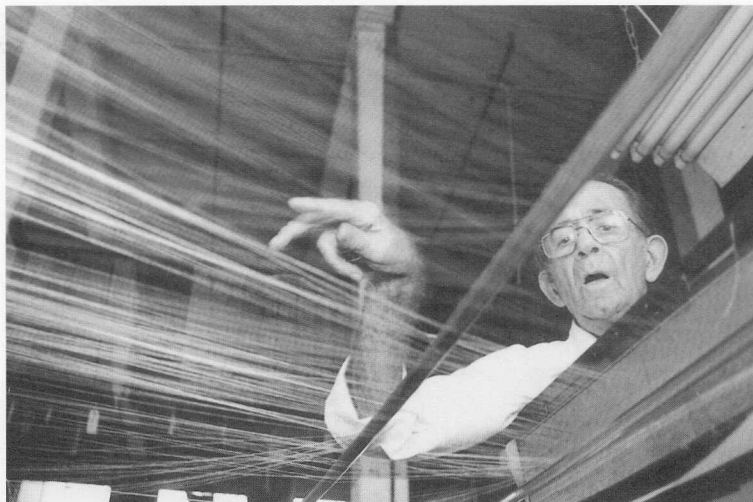


Proprietor Doug Owens poses by the counter of the L&B Food Center, near Rosa Parks Boulevard in Paterson. Photo by Martha Cooper

Elsa Mantilla (right), owner of Elsa’s Fashions, a dress shop on 21st Avenue in Paterson, joins Cueto, Goicoechea, and Brenda Freytes in discussing a dress they are working on. Photo by Martha Cooper



Master warper Al Zarky at the Joseph Teshon textile plant on 21st Avenue in Paterson. There are 10,440 "ends" (or threads) on the warp Zarky is making. His warp-winding machine was made in Paterson by the Sipp Machine Company. Photo by Martha Cooper



assessing, stabilizing, and restoring historic buildings and other structures in order to revitalize deteriorating business districts and provide an enriched sense of local historic and cultural resources for residents and visitors.

Paterson was founded in 1791 by the Society for Establishing Useful Manufactures (SUM), a group that had U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton as an advocate. The city is considered to be the cradle of the Industrial Revolution in America. The basis for the region's manufacturing potential was the Great Falls on the Passaic River. Paterson went on to become the largest silk manufacturing center in the nation as well as a leader in the manufacture of many other products, from railroad locomotives to firearms.

Working in Paterson: Occupational Heritage in an Urban Set-

ting includes 470 audio-taped interview excerpts and 3,882 photographs. These documentary materials explore how industrial heritage expresses itself in Paterson today, in work sites, work processes, and the memories of workers. The presentation also includes interpretive essays on such topics as work in the African American community, a distinctive food tradition (the Hot Texas Wiener), the ethnography of a single work place (Watson Machine International), business life along a single street in

Paterson (21st Avenue), and narratives told by retired workers.

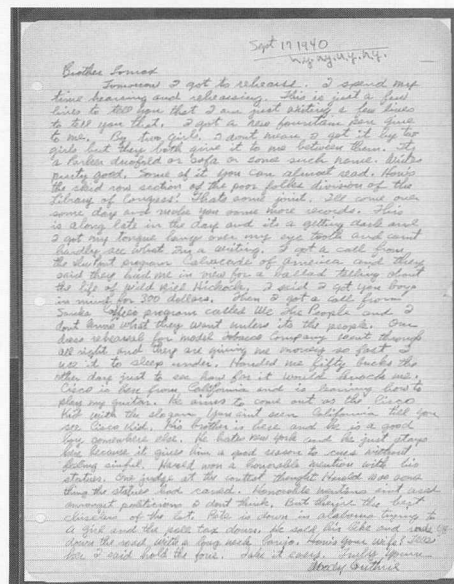
Working in Paterson is part of the Library of Congress's American Memory digital library. Now online are more than a hundred collections, including the papers of the U.S. presidents, Civil War photographs, early films of Thomas Edison, papers documenting the women's suffrage and Civil Rights movements, Jazz Age photographs, and baseball cards. There are more than 7 million items from the collections of the Library and those of other major repositories.

Woody Guthrie Letters Available Online

"Woody Guthrie and the Archive of American Folk Song: Correspondence, 1940-1950" is available from the Library's American Memory Web site. The new online presentation includes letters between Woody Guthrie and staff of the Archive of American Folk Song (now the American Folklife Center's Archive of Folk Culture). The letters were written primarily in the early 1940s, shortly after Guthrie had moved to New York City and met the Archive's assistant in charge, Alan Lomax. In New York, Guthrie pursued broadcasting and recording careers, meeting a cadre of artists and social activists and gaining a reputation as a talented and influential songwriter

and performer. His written and, occasionally, illustrated reflections on his past, his art, his life in New York City, and the looming Second World War provide unique insights into the artist best known for his role as "Dust Bowl balladeer." The letters may be found by visiting the Center's Web site at www.loc.gov/folklife and selecting Collections Available Online.

"Tomorrow I got to rehearse." Letter from Woody Guthrie to Alan Lomax, September 17, 1940. Archive of Folk Culture



Save Our Sounds Audio-Preservation Project Receives Major Support



The Midgley Pace Eggers of Yorkshire, England, perform their annual Pace-Egg Play, an Easter version of the Mummung Play in which players collect eggs and other gifts. Photo by staff photographer, *Yorkshire Post*, about 1930. (AFC 172/001.ph015) James Madison Carpenter Collection

By Michael Taft

The Rockefeller Foundation has awarded a grant of \$250,000 in support of the Save Our Sounds audio-preservation project, a joint initiative undertaken by the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress and the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage at the Smithsonian Institution. Save Our Sounds is supported by Save America's Treasures, a public-private partnership of the National Park Service and the

National Trust for Historic Preservation.

The purpose of the project is to restore, preserve, describe, and digitize endangered sound recordings in the collections of the Library and the Smithsonian and to set standards for other institutions to preserve and make accessible their collections of sound recordings. The Rockefeller grant will help finance this project over the remainder of the year 2002.

"This award is only the latest in the Rockefeller Foundation's

sixty-year history of support for the Library's efforts to preserve its collections of sound recordings," said Peggy Bulger, director of the American Folklife Center. "We have been raising funds from many organizations and private citizens, including our own Folklife Center staff, to accomplish the work of the Save Our Sounds project. The generous contribution from the Rockefeller Foundation ensures that we will reach our goal of matching the amount of the original grant from the National Park

Service, and that our precious heritage of sound recordings will be available for future generations."

All of the eight collections earmarked for the project are in various stages of the preservation process. Acetate discs and tapes from the Eloise Linscott Collection (New England folk music) are currently at Cutting Corporation, a preservation laboratory in Bethesda, Maryland, where they are undergoing digitization. To date, 6,000 manuscript pages and 271 photographs from the collection have been scanned and now reside on the Library of Congress computer-storage server. Likewise, 13,400 pages of manuscript and over 500 photographs from the James Madison Carpenter Collection (folk traditions of the British Isles) have been digitized, and the collection cylinders are undergoing transfer to analog tape as the first step towards their digitization. The Zuni Storytelling Collection and the Pearl Harbor Collection (man-on-the-street inter-

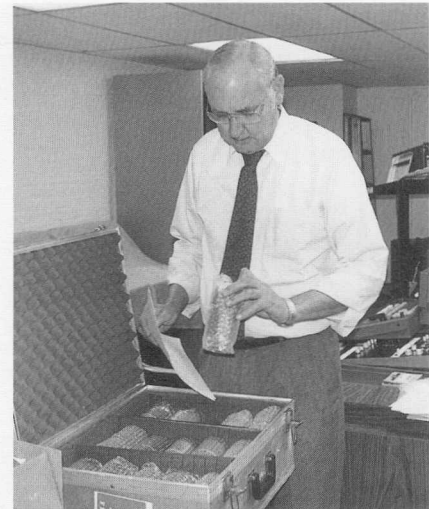
views from December 8, 1941) are now scheduled for digitization by the Library's Special Formats Facility, while the American Dialect Society Collection (New England spoken-word recordings from the 1930s) is next on the docket for Cutting Corporation.

One immediate result of this activity is that scanned material from the Carpenter Collection has now been made available to a UK team based at the University of Sheffield, who are creating a detailed catalog of James Madison Carpenter's corpus. Similarly, scanned images from the Linscott collection were recently used by Maureen Loughran for her M.A. thesis at Brown University. As these collections become increasingly available as digitized resources, they will undoubtedly attract greater use by researchers.

A large and important part of the project involves creating an online description of the digitized material, so that a researcher will know the context for the sounds, text, and images of the collections. To this end,



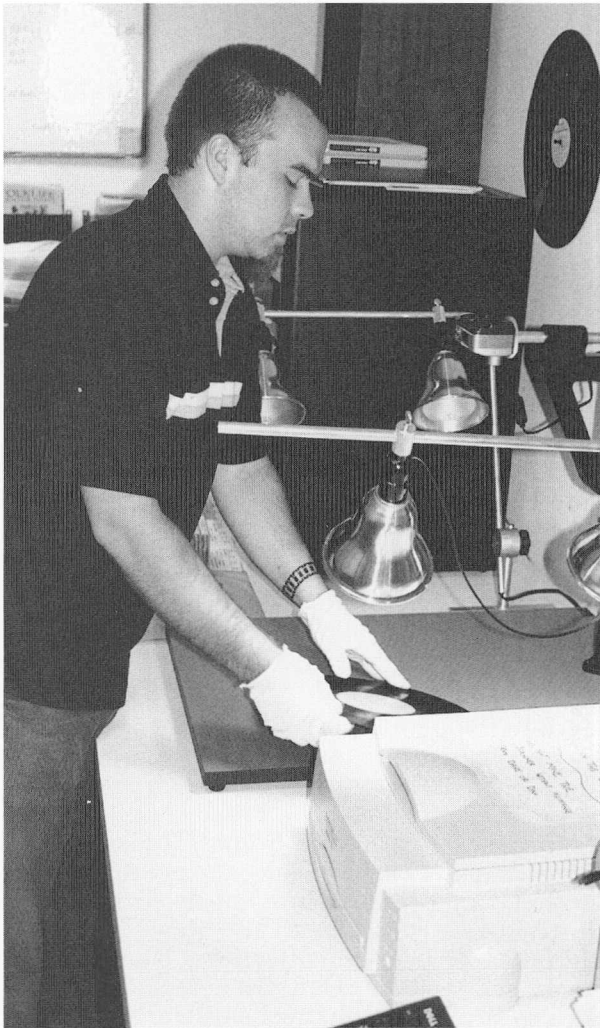
The production crew from the A&E Network's History Channel visit the Library's Special Formats Facility to film techniques for preserving cylinder and wire recordings. The Network is making an hour-long television documentary on the Save Our Sounds Project that the History Channel will air on December 12, 2002, as part of their Save Our History series. The documentary will feature both the American Folklife Center and the Smithsonian Institution in its exploration of modern methods for saving old media. Left to right are Frank Rosario, production assistant; Craig Gibson, sound technician; Mark Stoddard, cameraman; and Andrew Ames, producer and director. Photo by James Hardin



Audio engineer John Howell, in the Library's Special Formats Facility, examines wax-cylinder recordings that have been packed for shipping. Photo by James Hardin

the project has been entering data in a complex database devised by the Library's Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division. The Linscott and Carpenter collections have been extensively described in this database. Other collections, such as the American Dialect Society Collection, the Pearl Harbor Collection, and the Don Yoder Collection (wire recordings of Pennsylvania Dutch traditions) are close to being entirely "captured" on the database. The other earmarked collections—the Eleanor Dickinson Collection, the Zuni Storytelling Collection, and the International Storytelling Foundation Collection—are in various stages of the data-entry process.

A large part of this preservation story is the support the project is receiving from individuals and organizations outside of the Library. The grant from the Rockefeller Foundation—along with its federal matching grant from Save America's Treasures—takes the project a long way towards its financial goal of raising \$285,000. The National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences has made a second substantial award in their continuing support of the project.



Cutting Corporation archive engineer Matthew Feinstein uses an overhead scanner to capture an image of a disc recording in order to create a record of its condition. Photo by James Hardin

while the Country Dance and Song Society has given funds for the Carpenter Collection. Recently, the Franklin & Eleanor Roosevelt Institute has financed work on the Pearl Harbor Collection, for the specific purpose of adding this American Folklife Center material to their educational site on the New Deal Network. This kind of collaboration goes to the heart of the

Some donors have directed their money to specific collections. For example, the Higgins Foundation has twice supported work on the Linscott Collection,

project: making rare recordings accessible to a wide range of users in a form that will not further endanger the fragile originals.



We are deeply grateful to foundations and private individuals who have recognized and contributed to this important effort to preserve our audio cultural heritage. To date, the American Folklife Center Save Our Sounds donors are:

- Ted Anthony
- A&E Network (The History Channel)
- Dorothy E. Beck
- Sheila M. & William C. Benson
- Elaine Bradtke
- Country Dance and Song Society
- Dance Perspectives Foundation
- Emtec Pro Media
- Franklin & Eleanor Roosevelt Institute
- Ross S. Gersten
- Judith A. Gray
- Ann Green
- James Hardin
- The Higgins Foundation
- IBM
- Indian Gaming Commission
- Catherine H. Kerst
- Daniel Mick
- Elizabeth R. Milner
- Philadelphia Folklife Project
- National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences
- North Carolina Preservation Consortium
- Anne S. O'Donnell
- Peggy Parsons
- Mark F. Pretzat
- The Rockefeller Foundation
- Nancy G. Schaub Trust
- Gerald & Mary Swope Fund
- Michael Taft
- Robert Young Walser
- Michael R. & Sharon Wildemuth

At the Cutting Corporation, in Bethesda, Maryland, sound preservation engineer Ryan Davis makes a digital transfer of an analog glass-based disc recording from the Eloise Hubbard Linscott Collection to create a digital file. Photo by James Hardin

"Real People Talking": Conversations with Fletcher Collins

By Ann Hoog and
Todd Harvey

Fletcher Collins Jr. was born November 19, 1906, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He is a graduate of Yale University (Ph.B. 1928; Ph.D. 1934) and former professor of English at Elon College in North Carolina (1936–42). While at Elon he recorded numerous folksongs and donated them to the Archive of American Folk Song at the Library of Congress. He is founder of the drama department at Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, Virginia, where he is professor emeritus (1946–77). He is the author of several books on medieval church music-drama and has edited a book of medieval troubadour and trouvère songs. Ann Hoog and Todd Harvey interviewed Fletcher Collins at his home in Staunton, Virginia, on July 2, 2002 (quotations are from this tape-recorded interview unless otherwise specified).

Through the haze of a sweltering July afternoon, the Blue Ridge Mountains were barely visible on the horizon as we arrived at the home of Fletcher Collins. We knew little about him, except that in the 1930s and 1940s he collected folksongs in North Carolina and Virginia using a Presto disc-cutting machine on loan from Alan Lomax, then the assistant in charge of the Archive of American Folk Song at the Library of Congress. We also knew that he was among those collectors Lomax telegraphed on December 8, 1941, requesting that they record reactions to the bombing of Pearl Harbor and declaration of war. There are thousands of record-



Fletcher Collins at home in Staunton, Virginia.
Photo by Ann Hoog

ings in the Folk Archive from this time period, but very few oral histories with the collectors themselves.

Fletcher Collins's relationship with the Library of Congress began in August 1936, when he met Charles Seeger while working in the Arthurdale Community of Reedsville, West Virginia, a New Deal Homestead Community established by Eleanor Roosevelt to resettle coal miners and their families who lived in impoverished coal camps. Seeger was then the technical advisor for the Special Skills Division of the Resettlement Administration (1935–38), and had visited Arthurdale to record a music festival organized by Collins. It was here that Collins began collecting folk-

songs, by following the collecting practices of the generation before:

The first songs I [collected] at Arthurdale I transcribed by hand. I'm glad I had [my wife] Margaret with me. She did the words while I did the music. We thought we were Cecil Sharp and Maud Karpeles.

By the fall of 1936 Collins left Arthurdale and took a job as professor of English at Elon College in North Carolina. He continued his relationship with Seeger and soon came into contact with Alan Lomax, then working with his father, John A. Lomax, head of the Archive of American Folk Song. Under the Library's Equipment Loan Program, Collins obtained a Presto disc-cutting machine for his fieldwork. He vividly recalls using the machine:

[The Presto disc-cutting machine] made aluminum records, or later acetate records with a needle, just like the old Victrolas. It weighed about sixty pounds. That was with the A & B batteries. The Presto itself, I think, was something like twenty-five [pounds], but it felt like about a hundred pounds by the time you lugged it up the side of the mountain to get at the people you wanted to get a song from. (Interview with Fletcher Collins by Katharine Randolph, tape-recording, Staunton, Virginia, October 5, 2001)

Collins's first recordings with the Presto machine were made in North Carolina, in March of 1939. Over the next three years he recorded approximately one-hundred-fifty songs in North

Carolina and Virginia, primarily from family members of his Elon College students. He saw fieldwork as a teaching tool, both in terms of folksong collecting and for the song texts' aesthetic and literary values. One challenge he faced was establishing a relationship with singers, and he solved this by using his connections at the college.

I've always thought that there is some kind of relationship that is necessary before you really get much good singing from people who know the songs. I mean, what's in it for them? Why should they bother? They were mistrustful of city folk. It's best if it's someone who is part of their family. I was very fortunate in collecting in North Carolina because I had several English classes that I undertook to equate English poetry by way of the American folksongs. They [the students] came from families that were still really quite full of good songs. So they would pave the way and get Uncle George to say, "Yeah, I wouldn't mind singing a few for him."

Collins recalls being surprised by the people he was recording. Generally, he was more interested in the songs themselves than the singers, yet he realized the importance of understanding how people come to know their repertoire. In his collecting, Collins was looking for songs that were passed down orally through families or through communities, not learned from songbooks or the radio. Some of his recordings are accompanied by the copious notes he took while interviewing the singers in an effort to understand how the songs were learned. Although his collecting activities took place over sixty years ago, and Collins is well into his nineties, he recalls them in great detail:

I didn't find that there was much relationship between the character [of the singer] and the song. I was constantly being surprised, initially by Patty Newman, the wife of the professor of Greek and Latin [at Elon College]. She couldn't know any songs. I thought, that's ridicu-

lous. Dan Tate, when I first saw him, I thought, I'd be lucky if I got one song from him. And he sang with as much passion as anybody I've ever heard. It was just marvelous, with his "Wind and the Rain" and "The House Carpenter." He had a "House Carpenter" that would just blow you away.

Collins thought it was important to preserve his field recordings. On July 26, 1941, he wrote to Alan Lomax about a folksinger he wished to record and stated his intention of placing the recordings in the Archive:

He is getting along in years and under my tutelage has decided that he would very much like to record his repertory so that it won't be lost when he goes. I mentioned the Archive to him, and he agreed that such a depository would be the right place for his songs, and that he'd be glad to take off a few days in the fall to sing into an Archive mike, for me.

Although the majority of recordings Collins made were of songs, there is one significant set of recordings he made that do not contain any music. On December 8, 1941, Collins received a telegram from Alan Lomax asking him to record "man on the street" reactions to the bombing of Pearl Harbor and declaration of war. Collins immediately invited his neighbors over to his house, where they sat around the kitchen table with the Presto disc-cutting machine rolling, and recorded their own opinions of the world's events. Collins recalls his reasons for responding so promptly:

I was a little concerned that the media were not really representing all the broad sweep of the American people. They hadn't had much experience with this. World War I, of course, didn't have radio and all that stuff, so it was kind of a new thing. They weren't really onto it very well, and I was worried about that, that it would be possible for us to lose that war just by not having public opinion going for it. I saw a chance for me to do a little something there to get to the grass roots. These are grass roots people.

They're not illiterate, they read and write and talk, they're very intelligent people. They are not big intellectuals, they don't work for the government. [They are] mostly farmers. And it would be good to get them down, to see if they could contribute something here. And I said as much to them when I invited them to talk; it was friends and neighbors of mine out in the country. [These interviews] are an important historical record, as important as newspapers, sometimes more important because it was real people talking, not just journalists making copy. (Interview with Fletcher Collins by Katharine Randolph, tape-recording, Staunton, Virginia, October 5, 2001)

In a December 11, 1941, letter to Lomax, Collins further conveyed his enthusiasm for the recorded interviews:

I have been mentally exploring the extraordinary possibilities which this recording technique has in our wartime situation as well as afterward. I am certain that the two disks I cut are alone sufficient proof that we must go on with a widespread and down-to-earth project of this sort for the duration of the war. I have solid friendships with several Washington people whose support of such a project would probably assure it. You have too, I know.

One solid friendship was with Eleanor Roosevelt, with whom he became acquainted while working at Arthurdale. He recalls meeting with her at the White House, in an effort to further the project. Collins today expresses pride in his participation:

Alan [Lomax] and Margaret [Collins] and I and Charlie Seeger all met with Eleanor in the upstairs sitting room and played the records [we made in the field]. She was enormously pleased with them, and she said, "Oh, we've got to have more of that, this is the real thing."

"But nothing more really happened," Collins told Katharine Randolph. "It's always easy in wartime for things to get lost, the energy is elsewhere."

The Library's "man on the street" interviews did not continue at that time, but sixty years later they served as inspiration for the establishment of the American Folklife Center's September 11, 2001, Documentary Project, which began last fall when Peggy Bulger and Ann Hoog called upon folklorists and others to document reactions to the terrorist attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center. The announcement for the September 11 project included the names of those who had been telegraphed by Alan Lomax the day after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, and one of those names was Fletcher Collins. Katharine Randolph, an oral historian in Richmond, Virginia, who knew of Collins, saw the announcement and arranged

for an interview with him, both to learn more about his work from sixty years ago and to capture his reactions to September 11. Collins was happy to comply:

I think I was about to turn the tube on to see what the Dow was doing, or the weather. And here was this thing just happening. I was amazed. I thought it was a sci-fi thing coming up. And then I saw the second plane come in and make the huge ball of fire and I knew it was real. It was frightful, it was just horrible. (Interview with Fletcher Collins by Katharine Randolph, tape-recording, Staunton, Virginia, October 5, 2001)

For over sixty years Fletcher Collins's recordings have held an important place in the

Archive of Folk Culture. They were made immediately before and after United States involvement in World War II, at a time when both the portable disc machine and the idea of preserving sound recordings in an archive were relatively new.

I visited the [Library of Congress's Folk] Archive at one time with Alan [Lomax]. He had [the field recordings] in kind of a vault, with shelving going up to the ceiling. That was very exciting with all that was in there. It was better now that we had recordings that were done in the field. Direct. With a singer. With all the nuances. It was so much better than anything you could do with publication. I thought [the Archive] was a very good concept; I still think so.

Work on the Ethnographic Thesaurus Continues

By Catherine Kerst

Since the mid-1980s, the Archives and Libraries Section of the American Folklore Society (AFS) has investigated the question of creating a controlled vocabulary of ethnographic terms. While disciplines such as architecture, art, education, and sociology have developed thesauri, folklore and ethnomusicology have yet to do so. These thesauri serve as models for an ethnographic thesaurus, but they do not approach "the universe" in a way that is useable for ethnographers, nor do they address the specific needs of archivists in making multi-format ethnographic materials accessible to researchers and the public.

In 1998 the American Folklife Center convened the first of several meetings bringing together a group of folklorists, ethnomusicologists, anthropologists, archivists, and thesaurus-construction specialists to discuss the feasibility of creating an ethnographic thesaurus. In partnership with the American Folk-

life Center, the American Folklore Society applied for and received a National Endowment for the Humanities Preservation and Access planning grant in 2001. These funds have allowed the group to develop and disseminate a survey to assess the needs of the ethnographic archiving community concerning the development of a controlled vocabulary for their materials. It has also hired a part-time researcher to work on the survey, select and test possible thesaurus software programs, develop a website database version of the proto-thesaurus, and establish a listserv for the discussion of issues related to the ethnographic thesaurus. George Mason University, in Fairfax, Virginia, generously provided a space and support for the thesaurus researcher during this time and server space for the listserv and will continue to be involved in the project.

At this point, a working version of the "proto-thesaurus" of approximately four thousand terms can be accessed at: <http://www.afsnet.org/thesaurus/>

We are working to convert the "proto" into MultiTes, a thesaurus software program, where we expect to have the capacity for users to leave comments and suggestions on the AFS website. The proto currently serves as groundwork for the ethnographic thesaurus. Once funding has been received and work begun in earnest on the proto, it will be revised, using facet analysis, to give it a more balanced consistency, and then become useable as a standard tool for categorizing cultural materials.

Persons who would like to join the listserv and keep in touch with progress and discussions relating to the work of the ethnographic thesaurus should send an email to: listproc@gmu.edu. Then type the following line as the message text: `Subscribe Ethnographic_Thesaurus Your Full Name`

A message confirming the subscription will be sent in reply.

Alan Lomax, 1915–2002

Alan Lomax, the legendary folklorist whose name is inextricably connected with the Library of Congress and the Archive of American Folk Song, died on July 19, 2002, in Sarasota, Florida, at the age of eighty-seven.

Alan Lomax was still a teenager when he began making field expeditions with his folksong-collecting father, John A. Lomax. Together they published *American Ballads and Folk Songs* (1934) and *Our Singing Country* (1941), and Alan, on his own, published *The Folk Songs of North America* (1960) and many other books. They lectured and produced concerts, notably by the great Huddie "Leadbelly" Ledbetter, for example. Alan hosted and produced a series of CBS radio broadcasts in New York for "Columbia's School of the Air," on which he sang himself and presented performers such as Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie, and the Golden Gate Quartet.

In 1933, the Lomaxes began a mutually beneficial ten-year association with the Library of Congress. In 1928, in its Music Division, the Library had established an Archive of American Folk Song, under the direc-



Alan Lomax at the Library of Congress, April 24, 2000, for a concert on the grounds of the U.S. Capitol in celebration of the Library's Bicentennial. His daughter, Anna Chairetakis, is to his right. As part of the program, Lomax was named a "Living Legend" by the Librarian of Congress, one of eighty persons selected by the Library's curators and subject specialists who have "advanced and embodied the quintessentially American ideal of individual creativity, conviction, dedication, and exuberance." Photo by James Hardin

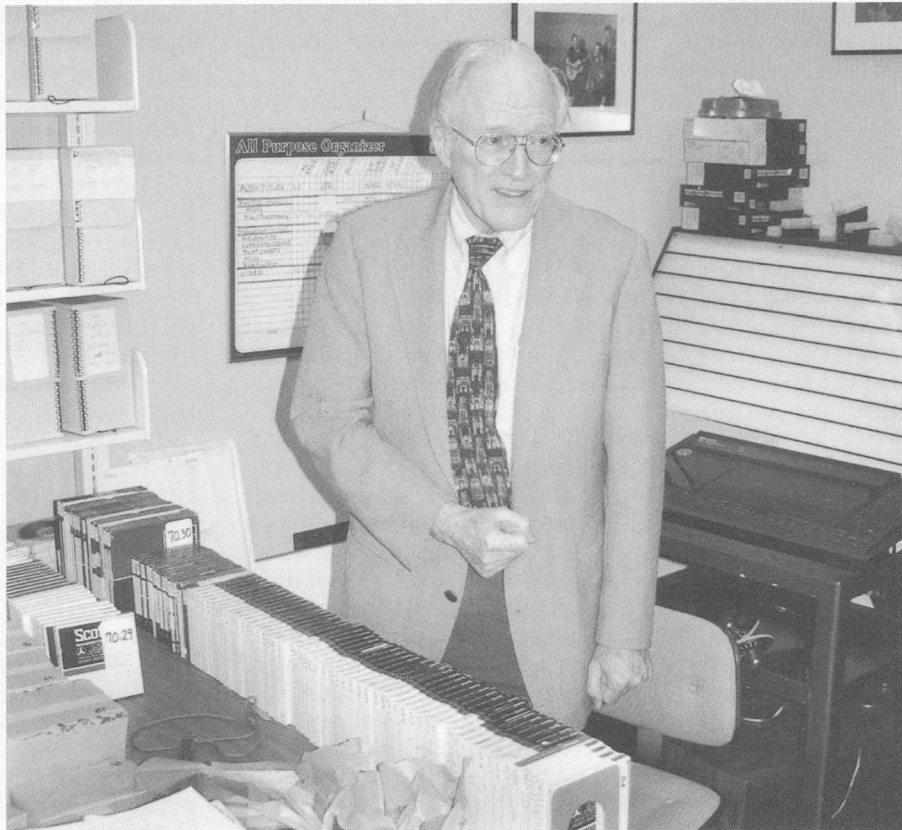
tion of Robert W. Gordon, and in its Annual Report for that year acknowledged the "pressing need for the formation of a great centralized collection of American folk-songs." John Lomax became "honorary curator" in 1933, and Alan became the Archive's first federally funded staff member (1936), serving as "assistant in charge" (1937–42). He made collecting expeditions

for the Library; produced a seminal series of documentary folk music albums entitled *Folk Music of the United States*; conducted interviews with performers, such as Jelly Roll Morton; and, over the years, introduced Washington audiences to an array of folk musicians

After leaving the Library of Congress, Alan Lomax continued his career as a musicologist, author, radio broadcaster, filmmaker, concert and record producer, and television host. He traveled in this country and abroad, making documentary recordings, began a database of thousands of songs and dances he dubbed the "Global Jukebox," and founded the Association for Cultural Equity at Hunter College in New York City. In 1986 he received the National Medal of Arts from the

National Endowment for the Arts, and in 1993 he received the National Book Critics Circle award for nonfiction for his book *The Land Where the Blues Began*. Like Walt Whitman, Alan Lomax heard America singing. Through his lifelong efforts he ensured that people everywhere could share that priceless heritage of music and song.

Noted Anthropologist Donates Philippine Recordings



Harold Conklin at the American Folklife Center with recordings from his field research. Photo by James Hardin

By Judy Ng

From 1961 to 1995, Harold C. Conklin made approximately ten field trips to northern Luzon, the Philippines, an agrarian cultural region whose traditions are deeply rooted in the growing of rice as a medium of exchange, social status, and subsistence. The recordings he made, plus twenty-four others made by friends and acquaintances, comprise his third and last set of field recordings made in the Philippines. In September 1999, Conklin loaned this third set of Philippine recordings to the American Folklife Center so

that duplicate copies could be made for the Archive of Folk Culture. The Harold C. Conklin Philippine Collection (AFC 2001/007) currently comprises 184 reference CDs and is available through the Folklife Reading Room.

There are approximately 140,000 Ifugao living in scattered districts over some 170 square miles in northern Luzon. They are agrarian farmers who have perfected a system of sustainable rice terracing uniquely suited to the heavy rainstorms and rugged terrain of the region. Rituals, ceremonies, and events are tightly interwoven into the

Ifugao people's daily lives. The richness and diversity of Ifugao agriculture, religion, and music are strongly evident in the Conklin Philippine Collection, which includes what is arguably one of the largest, most comprehensive set of audio recordings on the Ifugao in existence.

The recordings document continuity and change in some of the most important features of Ifugao culture over the course of forty years. They document a wide range of social customs, as they are revealed through conversations, vocabulary exercises, children's games and songs, chants, recitations, rituals, and

the collector's voice-letters to his family. They chronicle Ifugao ceremonies, events, rituals, and rice harvesting, with much of the collection divided between strictly oral, strictly instrumental, and combined oral/instrumental field recordings.

While a handful of the recordings are in the languages of Buhid, Hanunóo, Ilonget, Kallahan, or English, the majority are recorded in the Ifugao Bayninan dialect, one of the twenty-three dialects spoken by the Ifugao. The documentation comes from twenty-seven of approximately one hundred and fifty agricultural districts, thereby providing a respectable sampling of the Ifugao. Therefore, due to its topical, geographical, and temporal scope, the recordings not only capture the exact details of ritualized Ifugao ceremonies, they situate them within the larger cultural context.

Harold C. Conklin (professor emeritus, Yale University) is a renowned anthropologist, linguist, ethnobiologist, and preeminent authority on the Ifugao and Hanunóo people of the Philippines. Born in Easton, Pennsylvania, in 1926, Conklin developed an early interest in anthropology and the history and culture of Native Americans that was supported and encouraged by his family. By the end of his high school career, Conklin had formed a number of influential friendships with American Indians, worked as the only non-Indian National Youth Association Indian Counselor, and served as a part-time volunteer at the American Museum of Natural History, where he worked under the supervision of curator and department chairperson Clark Wissler.

By 1943 Conklin's interests in high school, particularly in American Indian studies and linguistics, had prepared him for undergraduate study at the University of California, Berkeley. In his first year there, he was introduced to Austronesian languages through a "hasher"

(cook's assistant) job at the Gamma Phi Beta sorority house, where he first began speaking, reading, and writing in Malay. In his second semester, Conklin built upon this introduction to Malay by enrolling in an advanced linguistics course where students were assigned the task of transcribing Australian and American broadcasts for Indonesians living throughout the archipelago, then occupied by the Japanese during World War II.

In July of 1944, Conklin was inducted into the U.S. Army and served two years with the 158th Regimental Combat Team in the Philippine Islands, northern Luzon. After arranging to be discharged in the Philippines in 1946, Conklin spent a year and a half conducting anthropological research and fieldwork in Manila, Mindoro, and Palawan. During this period, he made his first set of Philippine recordings, and was given locally crafted artifacts, plant leaves, and cuttings in exchange for his freely given store of seed beads, postwar relief clothing, and medicines. The resulting collection of artifacts was later donated to the Philippine National Museum. During his stay in Manila, Conklin was also given a serendipitous crash course, by botanist H.H. Bartlett, on the proper way to prepare, press, and store the botanical specimens he had accumulated during his stay in the Philippines. Upon his return to the United States in 1948, Conklin finished his undergraduate work at Berkeley, but not before cataloging his collection of bamboo manuscripts written by natives from Mindoro and Palawan, publishing two articles on the Mindoro, and typing up a 600-page Hanunóo-English dictionary.

During his first two years as a Yale graduate student (1950-51), Conklin continued to engage in scholarly dialogue with numerous faculty members, visiting scholars, and fellow students who shared his interest in anthropology and linguistics. From 1952 to 1954, he returned to the Philippines to

complete fieldwork on the Hanunóo people for his dissertation. At this time, he began making his second set of Philippine recordings with equipment lent to him by Moses Asch of Folkways Records. Although he officially completed his graduate research in 1955, Conklin's analysis of the Hanunóo, based on his four field trips to Mindoro between 1947 and 1958, was not completed until 1961. Almost immediately thereafter, he began studying the Ifugao of northern Luzon in order to provide cultural contrasts to his work with the Hanunóo. From 1961 to 1973, Conklin continued his fieldwork in northern Luzon, making six field trips during this twelve-year span. The audio material he recorded during these visits comprises his third and most comprehensive set of Philippine recordings.

In 1954 Conklin accepted a position at Columbia University, where, for the next eight years, he taught and explored his research interests in cognition, kinship, language use, and folk classification. From 1962 to the present, Conklin has taught at Yale University, where he has continued to pursue research on shifting cultivations, ethnology, and ecologies of tropical forested areas of the Pacific Basin. A prolific writer, Conklin has authored over thirty scholarly essays and seven books.

References:

Anthropology at Yale: Emeritus Anthropology Faculty. Yale University. 18 December 2001. <http://www.yale.edu/anthro/people/faculty/hconklin.html>.

Conklin, Harold C. "Language, Culture, and Environment: My Early Years." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 27 (1998): xiii-xxx.

The Bump of Musical Cultures: An interview with Kay Kaufman Shelemay



Kay Shelemay at the Library of Congress. Photo by David Taylor

By James Hardin

Kay Kaufman Shelemay is G. Gordon Watts Professor of Music at Harvard University. She received her Ph.D. in music from the University of Michigan, and is the author of many articles and books, including *A Song of Longing: An Ethiopian Journey* (1991), *Let Jasmine Rain Down: Song and Remembrance Among Syrian Jews* (1998), and *Soundscapes: Exploring Music in a*

Changing World (2001). She has arranged for a percentage of the net proceeds from *Soundscapes* to be donated to the American Folklife Center to assist in "its important work." The donation will be matched by the publisher, W.W. Norton & Co. At the March 1, 2002, meeting of the Center's Board of Trustees, Professor Shelemay was elected chair. On June 26, James Hardin and David Taylor spoke to her about her life and work.

Music has been a part of Kay Shelemay's life as long as she can remember. She played folksongs and children's songs on her record player as a child, had a favorite aunt with a beautiful singing voice, and studied vocal performance in college. In graduate school, at the University of Michigan, she found herself surrounded by people who were remarkably good singers, however, and decided to give up her own performance aspirations for music scholarship. "My head worked better than my vocal chords," she said.

Shelemay had a desire to make a contribution to knowledge, found herself interested in new and experimental music, loved to travel, and was attracted to cross-cultural studies. In a graduate school ethnomusicology seminar, all of these interests came together, and Kay Shelemay found her calling. During a medieval music course, the professor played recordings of liturgical music from Ethiopia, and she found her first major topic of study.

Shelemay decided to do fieldwork in highland Ethiopia for her doctoral thesis on the music and liturgy of the Bela Israel community of Ethiopian Jews, and the experience changed her life. First, however, it was necessary to overcome the opposition of her professors, who said of her interest in the African country, "Don't go," and "You'll get over it, and do the real stuff later." There was opposition to cross-cultural studies in the 1970s, and Ethiopia had not been

much studied by ethnomusicologists. But Shelemay was persistent, prepared well for her journey, read extensively, made contacts with the Ethiopian Jewish community, learned a couple of Ethiopian languages, and lived in Jerusalem the year before. She spent three years there, beginning in August 1973, and found in Ethiopia an extraordinary country with incredible art, music, and literature, a crossroads of Africa and the Middle East, "a puzzle, a problem to solve, and an adventure." She also met her husband, and lived through the Ethiopian revolution, which began in February 1974.

During her five years as chair of the Department of Music at Harvard and her term of office as president of the Society for Ethnomusicology, Kay Shelemay has been able to balance teaching, writing, and administrative duties by managing her time carefully. She is especially proud of having built the ethnomusicology program at Harvard, with two new colleagues added to the music faculty and increased interest in cross-cultural activity in the arts. Of her own teaching, she cites the saying, "You only teach one course your entire life, and it takes a while to find out what that is." For Shelemay, that course comprises "things urban, things at home, and relevance."

The profession of ethnomusicology is changing quickly, she says, with many new academic jobs available to young scholars. There is a shift in interest from music abroad to music at home. An expansion in music departments has added courses in ethnomusicology. And one of the growth areas of interest in ethnomusicology is popular music. There is also a new interest in the profession in public sector programs, a growing understanding of the musical diversity all around us (a consequence of our changing population), and the "thought that what we do can make a difference outside the academy."

Music is an integral part of

American life, from the traditional music of ethnic communities to the music adopted by many "communities of affinity." People can discover and adopt as their own traditional music from within their own communities or as a matter of choice from communities they encounter. "Think of the popularity of ballroom dancing," she said. "And in my visits to nursing homes, I have discovered the residents know and can sing the popular tunes of the thirties and forties. Folks who grew up in the sixties know the music of the Beatles." Each wave of popular music in America has had its devoted followers, for whom a particular music has become inseparable from life, experience, and memory.

In fact, Shelemay has participated in a multi-discipline study at Harvard known as "Mind, Brain, and Behavior" and has become interested in the relationship between music and memory. In her book *Let Jasmine Rain Down*, she uses the Syrian materials she collected to demonstrate the uses of memory within a community.

Shelemay's long-standing interest in world music is now directed toward its appearance in local communities in the United States, where there is available "a richness of musical experience" that opens windows to other places, cultures, and politics. There are continual juxtapositions of cultures, "the way one tradition bumps up against another," and a combination of cultural forms and traditions within a single performance. It is sometimes impossible to sort out the influences of one musical tradition upon another as music migrates from place to place. By way of example, Shelemay mentioned "a karaoke tango played within the Vietnam community,



At the March 1, 2002, meeting of the Board of Trustees of the American Folklife Center, outgoing chair Jim Hoy hands the gavel of office to the new chair, Kay Kaufman Shelemay. Photo by James Hardin.

set to a melody composed by Franz Liszt."

Shelemay says that she finds "utterly compelling" the mission of the American Folklife Center, to preserve, present, and interpret American folklife. "It takes care of essentially ephemeral cultural expression that has been important to individuals and communities over time, and makes it available to those communities and to others." It is the "ultimate non-partisan cause," and one that everyone agrees is important. And this is an exciting time to be part of the Center, with its congressional support and major new undertakings, such as the Veterans History Project. "It's great to be on the cusp of two flourishing and growing enterprises," she said, the profession of ethnomusicology (and its expansion at Harvard) and the American Folklife Center.

Homegrown Series Presents *Alabama Gospel and Wisconsin Polka*



Karl and the Country Dutchmen (and a lady) on stage at the Coolidge Auditorium.

The Grammy-award winning Gospel group the Blind Boys of Alabama and the renowned polka band Karl and the Country Dutchman presented noon-time concerts at the Library of Congress on June 5 and June 19, respectively. The concerts were presented as part of the Center's series "Homegrown 2002: The Music of America" and the Music Division's major musical initiative *I Hear America Singing*. The "Home-

grown" series is cosponsored by the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage and the Folklore Society of Greater Washington.

The Blind Boys of Alabama formed as a group in 1937 at the Talladega Institute for the Deaf and Blind, thirty miles from Birmingham, where the members were taught piano in Braille. They sang together whenever they could and sneaked out of the school grounds to entertain nearby soldier encamp-

ments based there during World War II.

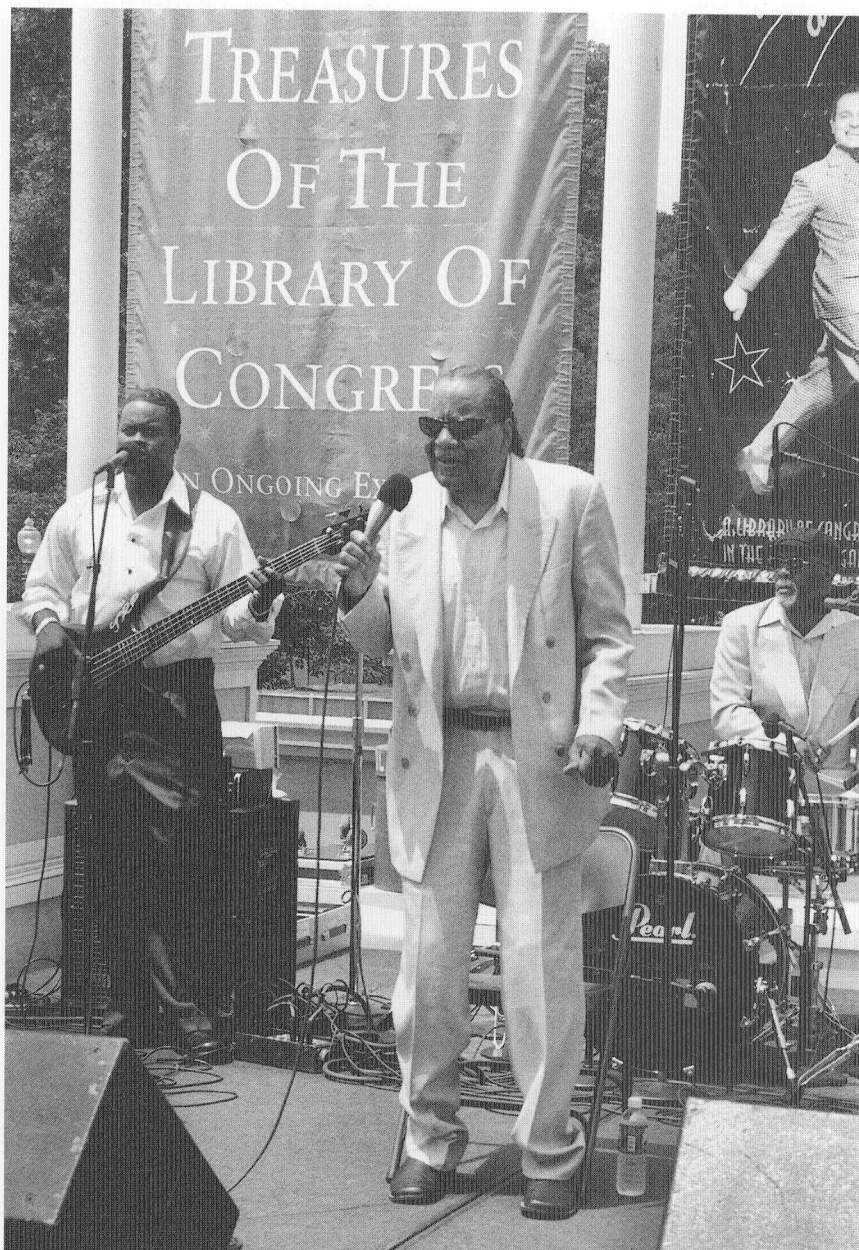
The ensemble's initial encounter with commercial gospel singing came via a radio show on Birmingham's WSGN station (their teachers refused to accept gospel as a "legitimate" art form); their early influences were the Golden Gate Quartet, the Heavenly Gospel Singers, and the Soul Stirrers. They first called themselves the Happy Land Jubilee Singers, but noting

Blind Boys of Alabama leader Clarence Fountain at the microphone, flanked by Caleb Butler (bass) and Eric McKinnie (drummer).

the success of the Five Blind Boys of Mississippi, decided in 1948 to change their name to the Blind Boys of Alabama.

Today, the Blind Boys of Alabama perform on stages and worldwide venues from the White House and the Olympic games to the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, World of Music, Arts and Dance (WOMAD), and the Seattle world hunger benefit, Groundwork 2001, with Dave Matthews and Emmylou Harris. They have appeared on Broadway with Morgan Freeman in "The Gospel at Colonus" and have appeared on national television. The group's new compact disc, "Spirit of the Century," which has been called one of the most important roots releases of 2001, won the 2002 Best Traditional Soul Gospel Album Grammy Award.

The music of Karl and the Country Dutchmen comes with a rollicking beat and an infectious spirit. With his Chemnitzer concertina, Karl Hartwich leads his band of brass and reed players. It is polka and a whole lot more: Dixieland, ragtime,



and old-time pop and country standards. The group plays for dances from coast to coast, and on cruises and European tours. The band has been featured on Garrison Keillor's "Prairie Home Companion" and at the National Folk Festival in Lowell, Massachusetts.

The "Dutchman" style of polka, originating with German immigrants, is widely known in the rural Midwest, for the most part played by bands from Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa. A key instrument is the Chem-

nitzer concertina, which is played in interaction with brass and reed instruments. The most famous Dutchmen musicians in the past, "Whoopee John" Wilfahrt and Harold Loefflemacher with his "Six Fat Dutchmen," based in New Ulm, Minnesota, succeeded in establishing a foothold in the Midwestern mass media and entertainment business from the 1920s through the 1950s. Today, Karl Hartwich is recognized as the outstanding Dutchman concertinist of his generation.

Wisconsin congressman Ron Kind visited the Library to offer his greetings and congratulations to Karl Hartwich (right) and Richard March (left), the traditional and ethnic arts coordinator for the Wisconsin Arts Board. March introduced the group to the Coolidge Auditorium audience when a sudden shower forced the concert inside.

Summer and Fall Events at the American Folklife Center

Homegrown 2002: the Music of America

Cosponsored by the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage and the Folklore Society of Greater Washington. All concerts at noon on the Neptune Plaza unless otherwise noted. For further information, call the American Folklife Center at 202 707-5510.

August 28 The Campbell Brothers—Sacred steel gospel

September 10 Tom Paxton—“Summon the Heroes”—a commemoration of September 11, 2001

September 19 Mingo Saldivar—2002 NEA Heritage Fellow, with his conjunto from Texas

September 27* Shirley Caesar—gospel legend (Coolidge Auditorium, 8:00 P.M., tickets available September 4)

September 28* Gospel symposium and performance by the **Dixie Hummingbirds** (Coolidge Auditorium, 1:30 to 4:30 P.M.)

October 4* Santiago Jimenez, Jr.—Tex-Mex accordion legend

October 8 Old New England—contra dancing with 2002 NEA Heritage Fellow Bob McQuillen and his group

November 7* “Pinetop” Perkins with the **Bob Margolin Blues Band** and **Willie “Big Eyes” Smith**—blues and boogie piano master

November 13 Cellicion Traditional Zuni Dancers** from Zuni pueblo in New Mexico

* In collaboration with the Music Division, Library of Congress

** In collaboration with the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian

Other Programs and Events

September 13 Suzanne Vega and Friends, featuring songs from the Vigil Project, a part of “Summon the Heroes (Coolidge Auditorium, 8:00 P.M., tickets available August 21)

October 7 “Leading the Field: James Madison Carpenter and Maude Pauline Karpeles, Pioneering Collectors of Folklore in England and North America,” a lecture by British folklorist **Georgina Boyes**. Noon in the Mary Pickford Theatre, James Madison Building, 101 Independence Ave. SE, Washington, D.C.

November 6 “Beyond the Commons: Intellectual Property and the Masks of Enclosure,” a lecture by Smithsonian fellow **Anthony McCann**. Dining Room A, Madison Building, 1:00 P.M.

EDITOR’S NOTES *from page 2*

available to our children and our children’s children. The very process of folklore, of course, involves the passing on to the next generation of some valuable, often intangible, possession.

On occasion, however, we are reminded that some members of the “older generation” are still very much with us, thank you! Charles Todd made recordings in the migrant labor camps in California in the 1940s, now in the Folk Archive as the Charles Todd/Robert Sonkin California Migrant Labor Camp Collection. When the Folklife Center created the online presentation “Voices from the Dust Bowl,” we discovered that Todd was living in Florida and contacted him there. He was extremely pleased with the new uses and audience for his documentation.

The Center’s Homegrown 2002 outdoor music series recently presented the Blind Boys of Alabama featuring Clarence Fountain (described in this issue of *Folklife Center News*). Several of the original members are still singing with the group, which was founded in the 1930s.

And now, folklife specialist Ann Hoog has been able to interview Fletcher Collins at his home in Staunton, Virginia. Collins made “man on the street” interviews for Alan Lomax and the Library of Congress following the attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, and he still has vivid memories and good stories about this, as well as about collecting folk-songs and stories in Virginia and North Carolina.

As Hoog suggests in her article “Real People Talking,” in the Archive of Folk Culture there are thousands of field record-

ings of artistic expression, made throughout the United States, but only a few that record the people who did this documentary work. At the Center, we’re grateful to have the stories of the men and women on both sides of the microphone.

As we were completing work on this issue, we learned of the loss of one of our great folklore collectors, Alan Lomax, whose association with the Library of Congress dates to the 1930s, when he and his father, John A. Lomax, did such extraordinary work in building the Archive of American Folk Song and bringing national attention to the importance of our American musical heritage. By coincidence, Lomax figures in Ann Hoog and Todd Harvey’s article on Fletcher Collins, as he does in so many stories of the Folk Archive.



The Blind Boys of Alabama performed on the Library's Neptune Plaza, June 19, 2002. The "Homegrown 2002" concert was cosponsored by the American Folklife Center and the Library's Music Division. See page 17. Photo by James Hardin

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

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

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