
AMERICAN FOLKLIFE CENTER
THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

folklife center news

Spring 1988

Volume X, Number 2



Margaret Fahnestock Lewis (left) describes a sequence of film footage (on video) from the Fahnestock South Sea Collection to Folk Archive Fellow James McKee (center) and Reference Librarian Gerald Parsons (right). The recorded interview took place in the Library's Madison Building, Office of National Programs. The collection was donated recently to the Archive of Folk Culture. See story on page 4.

Photo by Carl Fleischhauer

**AMERICAN FOLKLIFE CENTER
THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS**

Alan Jabbour, *Director*
Ray Dockstader, *Deputy Director*

Carl Fleischhauer
Mary Hufford
David A. Taylor
Folklife Specialists

Peter T. Bartis, *Folklife Researcher*

Gerald E. Parsons, *Reference Librarian*
James Hardin, *Editor*

Magdalena Gilinsky, *Contract Specialist*
Lisa Oshins, *Program Specialist*
Jennifer A. Cutting, *Program Assistant*

Doris Craig, *Administrative Secretary*

Tel: 202 287-6590

Archive of Folk Culture

Joseph C. Hickerson, *Head*

Marsha Maguire, *Archivist*

Sebastian LoCurto, *Program Specialist*
Aldona Kamantauskas Joseph,
Staff Assistant

Tel: 202 287-5510

Federal Cylinder Project

Judith A. Gray
Edwin J. Schupman, Jr.
Ethnomusicologists

Tel: 202 287-9022

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

William L. Kinney, Jr., *Chairman,*
South Carolina
Jeanne Guillemain, *Vice Chairman,*
Massachusetts
Russell W. Fridley, *Minnesota*
Bruce Jackson, *New York*
Judith McCulloh, *Illinois*
Barre Toelken, *Utah*
Marta Weigle, *New Mexico*

Ex Officio Members

James H. Billington, *Librarian of*
Congress
Robert McCormick Adams, *Secretary*
of the Smithsonian Institution
Francis S. M. Hodsoll, Jr., *Chairman,*
National Endowment for the Arts
Lynne V. Cheney, *Chairman, National*
Endowment for the Humanities
Alan Jabbour, *Director, American*
Folklife Center

DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

What has been the most important development in American folklore studies during the past generation? The centennial of the American Folklore Society this year and next prompts the question. It might just as well be asked of earlier generations. But though folklorists today are probably not as different as they imagine from folklorists in the past, the last thirty years have brought highly visible and hotly debated changes in our profession. So let us begin with the present.

My own candidate for "most important development" is neither theory nor intellectual framework. It is not even the whole array of theoretical approaches, from structuralism to semiotics, which proliferated in folklore studies over the past generation. New intellectual frameworks have proved vastly stimulating to our field in the 1970s and 1980s, and one is tempted to call them our most important recent development. Yet one can make an equally compelling case for the theories and frameworks that stimulated American folklorists at the turn of the century. Any generation of a profession is likely to be stirred and honed by theory; a generation without the buzz of fresh approaches may prove, in the end, to be a generation of atrophy.

One might also argue that our generation has been notable for broadening and making more contemporaneous the bounds of our subject. "Is There a Folk in the City?" Richard Dorson asked rhetorically in the 1970 *Journal of American Folklore*. He joined his students in an affirmative response, and his students pushed further against the disciplinary margins by asking, in effect, whether there was folklore in the suburbs as well. The theoretical reevaluations helped along the broadening trend: If, as the theorists contended, folklore was a definable human cultural phenomenon, not simply an aggregate of genres in some official canon, it followed that the definition could be applied in arenas heretofore unexplored.

And explore we did, finding the folkloric impulse imbedded within virtually every expressive mode of our civilization, from CB monikers to clas-

sical music. A few of our sages cautioned that, theory or no theory, our profession was a tiny band in a vast world and could not take responsibility for all its expressive variety. But expanding one's purview is a heady process, and the lure and logic proved irresistible for a decade or more. Now I judge the trend to be more conservative, providing a respite for assimilating that quotient of the broadening phase which will remain a permanent addition to our concerns and commitments.

But no; neither the theoretical ferment nor the broadening impulse are my candidates for "most important development." Yet another important development seems to have facilitated our theorizing and broadening: *the addition of material culture to our professional repertory.* American folklorists have always had some passing interest in folk art, craft, and related subjects. But this is the first generation that can boast a large cadre with a permanent commitment to studying the realm of material culture.

Articles on material culture appeared but rarely in the *Journal of American Folklore* from 1892 through the 1950s. Tristram P. Coffin's index of the journal through 1957 contains a scant few items under the category of "art and architecture." Regional journals offered a bit more space for material culture, but the total harvest was slim throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Yet W. Edson Richmond's "Annual Folklore Bibliography for 1956" (*Journal of American Folklore Supplement*, 1957) includes both "Material Culture" and "Folk Art" as categories. And the bibliography in *Southern Folklore Quarterly*, which had included since the 1940s the category "Art, Craft, and



Architecture” under the stewardship of Ralph Steele Boggs, renamed the category “Material Culture” in 1962 under its new bibliographer, Americo Paredes. Richmond’s bibliography of material culture was largely populated by entries from northern Europe, while Boggs and Paredes provided strong coverage of the Americas; neither shows many U.S. entries. Yet something was clearly in the wind—something that showed up in bibliographic categories when the theoretical studies and clarion calls were yet to come.

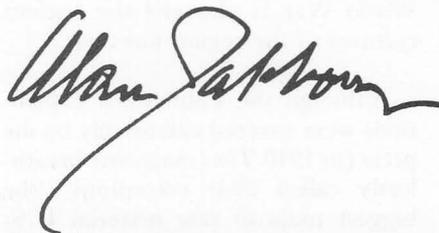
Perhaps the first clarion call was in 1958, when the journal entitled *Dutchman* (formerly *Pennsylvania Dutchman*) changed its title to *Pennsylvania Folklife*. The change signaled both a move to a multicultural focus and the embrace of material culture on the model of Scandinavian and German folklorists and ethnologists. Don Yoder, one of the journal’s editors, chronicled and justified the use of the term *folklife* and the inclusion of material culture in his 1963 essay “The Folklife Studies Movement” in *Pennsylvania Folklife*. The 1965 meeting of the American Folklore Society in Denver tackled the issue with a landmark session on “Material Folk Traditions in the United States.” Participants included several scholars instrumental in bringing material culture to the fore in the work of American folklorists. Norbert Riedl’s plea for material culture appeared the following year in *Journal of American Folklore*. And in 1967 Henry Glassie’s *Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States* gave the nascent movement a book of its own. Thus, whatever its parentage and gestation, the birth of serious attention to material culture by American folklorists came in the period 1957–67.

Or, taking a longer view, we may agree with Simon Bronner’s suggestion that our generation has midwifed not the birth but the rebirth of folkloristic interest in material culture. Indeed, our turn-of-the-century forebears approached folk culture with a broad bore, and material culture was more prominent among their concerns than for later generations of folklorists. Yet the commitment to material culture was not sufficiently tied to the

concept of “folklore” to forestall its being crowded out or migrating into other developing academic realms. This time it is here to stay.

Everyone will agree that adding (or restoring) material culture to our repertory is significant. But what is most significant about it? Simply put, *it makes us whole*. How could we have theorized convincingly about the nature of folklore over the past generation, if we were not actively engaged with all its expressive manifestations? How could we have developed a robust wing of our network dealing with folk arts and folklife in public-sector positions, if our practitioners did not include material folk expression in their purview? If a story, a song, a festival, a belief, an occupational technique, a structure, and a pot have something in common, then folklorists as a group must possess working expertise in all of them. Concepts are fine, but God is in the details; without our generation’s day-to-day immersion in all aspects of expressive culture, including material culture, it is hard to imagine how our theoretical debates would have had such vitality. And it is impossible to imagine the dramatic expansion of public-sector positions in our field without our including material culture within our scope. State folklorists, folklife festivals, the Arts Endowment’s Folk Arts Program, the legislation creating the American Folklife Center, folklife exhibits, museum positions, relations with the preservation movement—all these developed from and depend upon a concept of our field that both includes material culture and arrays it in relationship to other spheres of cultural expression.

Then why did we do it? Because, I think, the public asked us to. But that is the subject of my next column. □



FOLKLIFE CENTER NEWS

James Hardin, *Editor*
Donald Shomette, *Design Consultant*

Editor’s Notes

Folklife Center News is a quarterly report on the programs and activities of the American Folklife Center, available free of charge from the Library of Congress, American Folklife Center, Washington, D.C. 20540.

Folklife Center News was temporarily suspended in 1986 with volume IX, numbers 2 and 3 (there was no volume IX, number 4). Publication resumed with volume X, number 1.

Readers who would like to respond to issues raised in the Director’s Column or in other articles in the newsletter are invited to do so.

Corrections

In the winter 1988 issue: On page 1, the new center at Lowell is the Patrick J. Mogan Cultural Center. In addition to the persons mentioned, Barbara Fertig was also a member of the field team working in Lowell. The cover photograph is of Manuel Figueira, who was born on the island of Madeira. On page 3, photo caption, Congressman Chester G. Atkins is the representative from the Fifth Congressional District.

FOLKLINE

For timely information on the field of folklore and folklife, including training and professional opportunities and news items of national interest, a taped announcement is available around the clock, except during the hours of 9 AM until noon (eastern time) each Monday, when it is updated. Folkline is a joint project of the American Folklife Center and the American Folklore Society.

Dial: 202 287-2000

SOUTH SEA COLLECTION COMES TO FOLK ARCHIVE



The 137-foot (LOA), three-masted schooner *Director II* cruising Long Island Sound in the late 1930s. The second Fahnstock South Sea Expedition ended October 18, 1940, when the vessel was lost off the coast of Queensland, Australia. Photo courtesy of Margaret Fahnstock Lewis

By James McKee

In December 1986, Margaret Fahnstock Lewis of Great Mills, Maryland, presented the Archive of Folk Culture with a collection of 143 16-inch disc recordings of music from the Marquesas Islands, Tahiti, Fiji, Samoa, New Caledonia, Bali, Java, Madura, and the Kangean Islands, made by Mrs. Lewis's late husband, Sheridan Fahnstock, and his brother, Bruce, on two expeditions in 1940 and 1941. Accompanying the discs are five reels of color film and numerous letters, magazine articles, and newspaper clippings documenting the progress of the expeditions. The Fahnstock South Sea Collection, as it will be known officially, is the largest

collection of Pacific Islands sound recordings ever acquired by the Archive. It is particularly important as a complement to the Margaret Meade Collection, which is housed elsewhere in the Library. An excellent example of early ethnographic recording on acetate discs, the Fahnstock discs are probably the first electronic recordings made in Oceania and are among the last field recordings made there before World War II changed the ancient cultures of the region forever.

Although the Fahnstock expeditions were covered extensively by the press (in 1940 *Time* magazine breathlessly called their recordings "the biggest mass of raw material U.S.

musicologists and anthropologists have yet had from the East Indies and South Seas"), the collection has remained unknown for over forty-five years. Highlights of the collection include:

From Fiji, the legends describing the origin of the Ndakunimba Stones (the remains of a giant monolith uncovered on Vanua Levu), and several recordings of *meke*, which combines song and dance, handclapping, and accompaniment by *lali*, a large slit-log idiophone.

From Samoa, a variety of traditional and contemporary musics,

ranging from *sasa*, which are sitting dances using rapid, intricate hand movements, to choral hymns introduced by English missionaries.

A large collection of recordings from Madura, including the music of the *gamelan kerapan sapa* (an ensemble used to accompany bull-races), boatmen's songs, and children's songs.

From Bali, recordings of *gamelan gong gede* (a large orchestra comprised of keyed metallophones, gong-chimes, suspended gongs, and drums, played almost exclusively in ceremonial contexts); the virtuoso *gamelan gong kebyar* (the contemporary descendant of the *gamelan gong gede*); and the *gender wayang* (a quartet of metallophones that accompanies the classical shadow-puppet drama known as *Wayang kulit*).

The first known field recordings from the Kangean Islands, a small archipelago northeast of Java, including a variety of women's divination songs, harvest songs, and rice-pounding songs.

During a recent visit to the American Folklife Center, Margaret Lewis described the circumstances surrounding the making of the Fahnestock recordings. The discs were made on the second and third of three expeditions to Oceania. On the first expedition (1934-37), Sheridan and Bruce, their mother, Mary Sheridan, and a four-member crew sailed the 65-foot schooner *Director* from New York to China, collecting insect specimens and examples of material culture for the American Museum of Natural History in New York. In Marquesas, the Fahnestocks located the grave of the French painter Paul Gauguin; near Santa Cruz, they discovered six previously uncharted islands, which they appropriately named (after the expedition vessel) the Good Director Islands. Their most sensational find, however, was in Fiji, where they uncovered a set of ancient petroglyphs carved into the fragments of what once was a fifty-foot-high monolith buried deep in the forest near



Mary Sheridan Fahnestock, radio operator Colman Glover, and Manchu spaniel "Siege" pose for an NBC publicity shot in the *Director II's* radio shack and recording laboratory. On August 10, 1940, NBC broadcast one program from the expedition by means of a shortwave relay from Suva, Fiji Islands. Photo courtesy of Margaret Fahnestock Lewis

the village of Ndakunimba, Vanua Levu Island. Today these fragments are known as the Ndakunimba Stones. Their origin remains a mystery. While the petroglyphs were at first thought to have been an early writing system, their meaning remains obscure. Bruce and Sheridan described their experiences on this first expedition in a book titled *Stars to Windward* (1938). Mary Sheridan Fahnestock gave her account of the expedition in *I Ran Away to Sea at Fifty* (1939).

Although ethnomusicologists today recognize musical change as both necessary and inevitable, many collectors in the 1940s and 50s feared that the world's lesser-known musical cultures were rapidly disappearing. After the first expedition, Sheridan Fahnestock, a preservationist at heart,

was determined to document the musics of the Pacific Islands before mass culture contacts and the influx of Western popular music (particularly swing and country) changed them forever. After two years of preparation, Sheridan, Bruce and a crew of seventeen (including their wives, their mother, two ornithologists, an anthropologist, a portrait artist, a doctor, a radio operator, a pilot, a cook, and several college students), sailed their three-masted, 137-foot schooner *Director II* from New York Harbor on February 1, 1940.

The twin objectives of the expedition were to collect materials from Pacific bird habitats for exhibits at the Museum of Natural History and to record the music of Oceania for the Fahnestock-Hubbard Foundation

in New York. Helen Fahnestock-Hubbard, an aunt of the Fahnestock brothers and a well-known patron of the arts, had made several recording trips to the South Pacific herself. The *Director II*, originally used as a rum runner, was a Christmas present from her. Extensive radio equipment was brought along, and live broadcasts were planned so that American audiences could follow the progress of the expedition via the NBC Blue Network. Two miles of specially insulated microphone cable enabled the crew to make remote recordings onshore while leaving their cumbersome recording equipment (including a Presto disc-cutter) on board the ship. Several members of the crew planned to take depth soundings, map currents, and update coastal charts for the U.S. Hydrographic Office.

In October 1940, after eight months of recording music and collecting bird specimens in Marquesas, Tahiti, Samoa, Fiji, and New Caledonia, the expedition arrived in Brisbane, Australia. The *Director II* was dry-docked for maintenance work, the recordings and bird specimens were unloaded and shipped back to the Museum of Natural History, and the crew took a brief holiday. While the expedition was vacationing, the Australian Navy, fearing a mainland attack by the Japanese (who at that time had begun incursions into Southeast Asia), confiscated all available nautical charts as a security measure, including those that were being updated by the expedition. Since the crew planned to continue collecting in the Solomon Islands, Java, and the Philippines, they had no choice but to navigate the Great Barrier Reef with maps that were nearly two hundred years old. On the afternoon of October 18, near Gladstone, Queensland, the *Director II* struck a shoal and began to take on water; despite efforts to save her, the ship sank completely in a matter of hours. While the crew escaped unharmed, virtually everything on board was lost at sea. Because war in the Pacific was imminent, the *Director II* could not be insured, and the expedition had to return to the United States eight months sooner than planned, at a loss of over one hundred thousand dollars.

Although the wreck of the *Director II* was unavoidable, it was perhaps not entirely unforeseen. According to Lewis, when the crew was preparing to leave Marquesas, "[the islanders] sang a farewell song, and it was about this beautiful big white bird that came sailing into their harbor. Eventually the big white bird sailed away and went across the ocean, and when she got across the ocean, something happened, and she fell into the sea."

In January 1941, the Fahnestock brothers met with President Franklin D. Roosevelt, a lifelong patron of the Museum of Natural History, to discuss the results of their expedition. The following month, Bruce and Sheridan traveled to Surabaya, chartered a sailboat, and traveled through Southeast Asia for ten months, recording the music of Bali, Java, Madura, and the Kangean Islands. Years later, it was revealed that their trip was an intelligence-gathering mission funded by the American government and initiated at the request of the president. At the White House meeting, Roosevelt had asked them to evaluate Javanese defense facilities, to assess the usefulness of small watercraft in Pacific Islands combat, and to ensure that U.S. defense funds allocated to Southeast Asia were properly spent.

In January 1942, one month after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Fahnestock brothers gave a lecture at the Manhattan School of Music in New York, in which selections from the collection were played for the public for the first time (their radio transmitter was often silenced because of the war and they were prevented from making most of their scheduled broadcasts). André Kostelanetz, then with Columbia Records, expressed interest in issuing the recordings commercially, but negotiations were interrupted by the war. Later that month, Bruce, Sheridan, and several other members of the *Director II* crew were sent to New Guinea. With their nautical experience and knowledge of the Pacific Islands, they served in the Army's fledgling Small Ships Section, a picturesque assemblage of sailboats, fishing trawlers, dories, and freighters run jointly by American and Australian seamen. This colorful opera-

tion (which was the inspiration for the 1960s television comedy "The Wackiest Ship in the Army") was responsible for ferrying troops and supplies into battle. On October 18, 1942, exactly two years after the *Director II* disaster, Bruce Fahnestock was killed in New Guinea when the fishing trawler he commanded was mistakenly attacked by an American fighter plane.

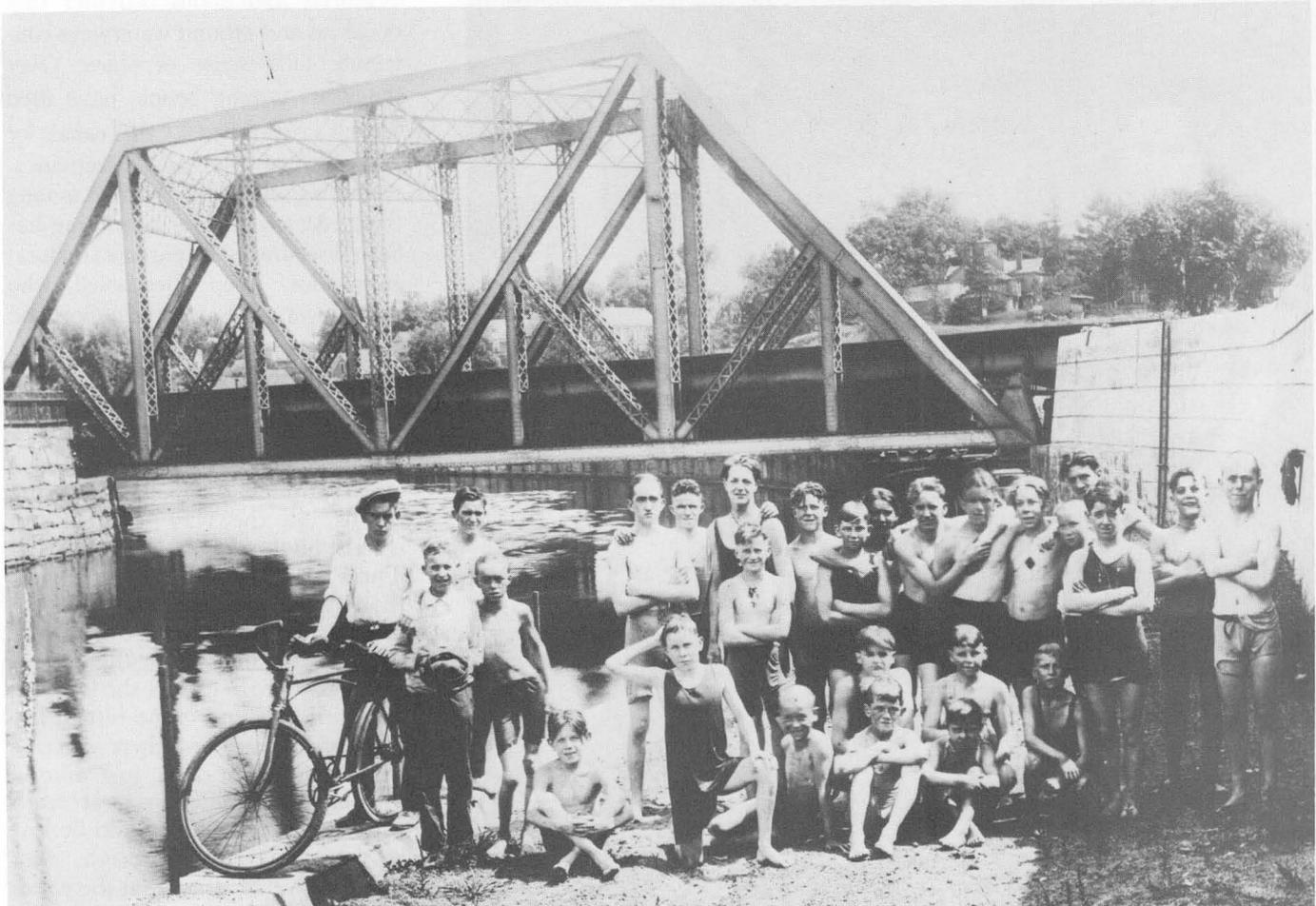
In 1945, Sheridan was named chief of overseas operations, Transport Command, for the invasion of the Philippines and the assault on Japan. After his return to private life, he devoted himself to raising a family, publishing newspapers in southern Maryland, and serving as international director of public relations for Trans World Airlines. He died in 1965, without ever again attempting to release his recordings.

When Margaret Lewis donated the Fahnestock discs to the Library of Congress in 1986, they had been sitting neglected in an attic for over forty years and were in danger of deteriorating completely. Although most of the original field notes and recording documentation were either lost at sea or appropriated by wartime intelligence authorities, almost all of the discs have been identified. With the aid of the ship's log, it was possible to arrange and duplicate the recordings in the order in which they were originally made.

In a recent interview, Margaret Lewis said that the Fahnestock brothers "really weren't interested in being famous and having a lot of notoriety. They wanted to do something that they could give to people. And I think this collection is landing right where it should, to be given to people." By late spring of 1988, the Archive of Folk Culture plans to make the Fahnestock South Sea Collection, fully documented and supplemented with written summaries and bibliographic aids, available to the public. For more information, call the Archive of Folk Culture. □

James McKee is the 1988 Fellow at the Archive of Folk Culture. His special task has been to process the Fahnestock South Sea Collection. Gerald Parsons contributed to this article.

LOWELL TRADITIONS SHAPED BY LOCAL WATERWAYS



A group of boys standing on the bank of the Pawtucket Canal at a popular swimming spot known as "Red Bridge," on July 13, 1923. Diving into the canal from the top of the fifty-three-foot-high span was common. *Photo courtesy of the University of Lowell*

By David A. Taylor

Lowell, Massachusetts, is sometimes called the "Venice of America"—a romantic label evoking images of gondolas plying the calm waters of ancient canals. This appellation, used more by Chamber of Commerce copywriters than by local citizens, correctly characterizes the city's historically significant system of locks and canals, the first segment of which was completed in 1796. And in establishing the Lowell National Historical Park and the Lowell Heritage State Park, the 5.6 mile canal system has been highlighted, both as a means of transportation around the Pawtucket Falls on the Merrimack River and as a source of hydro-power for Lowell's textile mills. In addition, the Lowell Historic

Preservation Commission, under the terms of its recent congressional reauthorization, will establish a canalway (a system of paths connecting all segments of the canal system and portions of the Merrimack and Concord River), promote recreational uses of the waterways, preserve the canal system, and develop land along the waterways.

In contrast to the hoary venues of Venice's celebrated canals, much of Lowell's canal system courses through "industrial canyons" bordered by multi-story, red-brick factory buildings, under railroad bridges, and past the backlots of numerous quotidian business enterprises. But, like the canals of Venice, Lowell's canals and two rivers, the Concord and the Merrimack, reach into the lives of

local residents in many ways. Swimming, fishing, naming places, reading the water, making fishing paraphernalia, boating, consuming fish, and telling stories are all forms of expression that indicate the role played by the city's waterways in fostering individual and group identity and shaping a sense of place.

Lowell's waterways often form the principal boundaries of some of the city's neighborhoods, and local names for waterways, or portions of them, also signal the close contact that certain groups have with them. Many long-time residents of the South End, for example, still know the names and locations of once popular swimming spots on Hale's Brook—"Lucky's" and "The Reds"—while residents of



Jose Rodriguez (above), like many other Lowellians, enjoys using a rod and reel to fish for carp in the city's canals. (LFP-TR-B177/2) Photo by Tom Rankin

other neighborhoods probably do not.

The naming of places signifies an intimacy with one's surroundings. Names of the fishing spots on the Merrimack River—"Duck Island," "The Raceway," "First Brook," and "Second Brook"—reveal both the fishermen's awareness of where local game fish can be found and the personalization of space (LFP-DT-A001). The ability of some fishermen to "read the water," recognizing the signs that reveal the movement of fish and other marine creatures, demonstrates an acute perception of subtle features of the environment.

Locally made artifacts testify to their makers' understanding and

knowledge of local needs and requirements. Fishing flies are made from a wide range of natural and synthetic materials by Lowell fly tier Ray Gagnon, a craftsman who began tying flies in 1938. Some of the flies, including "shad darts," "bumps," "muddlers," and "bigger bellies," were specifically designed to attract the fish of the Merrimack River.

Attitudes about the consumption of fish taken from the waterways may indicate membership in particular groups. Many local fishermen—some outfitted with specially modified bows and arrows—enjoy fishing for the large carp found in the rivers. Carp are frequently eaten by recent immi-

grants from Southeast Asia, who prepare them in a traditional manner, but almost never eaten by other Lowell residents.

Stories told about activities that occur on and around waterways contribute to a sense of place. Over the years, young people have used Lowell's rivers, brooks, and canals for a variety of recreational activities, swimming and diving foremost among them. At most spots, swimming has been discouraged by parents and local authorities. Joseph Beausoleil, who grew up in the Lowell neighborhood known as the Lower Highlands, was a particularly avid canal swimmer as a boy and can vividly recall his exploits:

We swam all the way down the canals, all the way through the canals, all the way down to Lowell. There's one part of the canal there that went under the theaters, went under the road and under the theaters—What was it, the Strand Theater there?—under the [Lowell] Sun Building and came out in the Concord River. And there was one part there that was just like a tunnel. And there were certain times that the water would be low so we could swim through. And there was other times that the water was high and we couldn't swim through. We had to swim under water, all the way under, to the end of the tunnel to come up into the Concord River. (LFP-DT-R007)

In the past, the canals offered a place where young people could learn to swim with an encouraging boost from the swift current that flowed through them when power was being generated for mills. Ed Harley, who learned to swim in the Lawrence Street Canal, recalls:

One of the desirable points, if there was such a thing, was that the current would take you swiftly enough so that if you made any motions you were going to get some distance. And, although it was unsupervised officially, there were older boys around who watched in a manner of speaking. In the canal that I swam in, there

were three designations of bridges: the first, second, and third bridge. . . . You could go in anywhere, but you had to find one of these three spots to come out. The Lawrence Canal, unlike the canals belonging to the Proprietors of Locks and Canals, were just, usually closed power down on the weekend, and so on a Saturday or Sunday you could see how far your progress had proceeded by seeing how far you could swim with no current, hoping that each week you'd gain a little. (LFP-DT-R001)

Given the large number of bridges that cross the rivers and canals, it was probably inevitable that they would be used as diving platforms by young daredevils. Indeed, when one begins to ask long-time residents of the city about water-related activities, narratives about diving invariably pour forth. According to Joseph Beausoleil:

I did it all. I dove off Red Bridge there that's off Broadway Street. . . . It's 53 feet high. We thought nothing of diving off the top of that railroad bridge. We thought nothing of climbing it, and just to climb that thing was a hassle. (LFP-DT-R007)

Similar stories about diving from bridges and from the tops of mills and other canal-side buildings abound in Lowell.

Unsupervised swimming and diving in the waterways have always been dangerous and, consequently, have been discouraged by the police. And for many the illicit nature of the activity added to its appeal. As one informant noted,

It was illegal and the police, when called, would respond and chase you. And if they found your clothes would take them and throw them out near the street so you had to, when you were skinny dipping, make a mad dash to get your clothes and get out before you were spotted by too many people, some of whom might have known your parents. (LFP-DT-R001)

During the winter, the brooks and



Veteran fly tier Ray Gagnon of Lowell in his home workshop. Gagnon makes a multitude of flies for freshwater and saltwater fishing, including several specifically designed to catch fish that inhabit the Merrimack River. (LFP-DT-B246/25) Photo by David A. Tylor

rivers froze and skaters sometimes played hockey and occasionally propelled themselves across the ice with makeshift sails fashioned from bed sheets. Skating on the canals was dangerous because the current prevented ice from adhering to the canal walls. Many stories are told in Lowell about drownings or near-drownings that occurred when people fell through the ice. One resident of Lowell, who worked for many years as a member of the crew that maintained the locks and canals, tells one about a close call he had on the job while breaking ice in front of one of the locks:

You know where the Swamp Lock is? Well, like I said before, we had to go there in the morning and break the ice, you know. In front of the bays they had booms, you know, that you could walk on. . . . the booms were only about that wide [indicates width of two feet].

They were timbers, like, and generally about that much of it [indicates height of two to three inches] above water. . . . Anyway, I had, I don't know who the heck it was working next to me, you know, breaking the ice, you know, making a channel in the ice right beside the boom. And it's cold you know, God, it's five o'clock in the morning, it's still dark. And chopping away, you know, and I had to get on the other side of this guy so I could start chopping on the other side of him, you know, my area was all clean. So, going by him my feet went out and I went in. And, Jesus, it was just beginning to get a little bit daylight, you know, and I'm under the water there. The water has that yellowish color, you know. I can see the ice underneath, the ice is thick. "Geez, I hope I can get out of this." Where I went

Continued on page 14

NORTHERN CHEYENNES PRESERVE TRIBAL CULTURE

By Edwin J. Schupman, Jr.

Edwin Schupman is an ethnomusicologist from the University of California at Los Angeles who joined the Folklife Center's Federal Cylinder Project in January of 1986 on a grant from the Ford Foundation. Beginning in 1979, the project has been preserving and cataloging wax cylinder recordings gathered from various federal agencies and other institutions. Most of the recordings are of Native American music and spoken word collected throughout North America from the 1890s until the 1940s. The grant provided funds to return duplicate tapes of these recordings to the tribes where the originals were made. Schupman's first dissemination trips were to Indian communities in the Southeast and Oklahoma in April and May of 1986. He completed three more trips during the summer of 1987. On June 24 and 25 he presented approximately thirty hours of recordings, catalogs, and supplementary materials to the Osage tribe of Oklahoma. From July 5 through 16, he visited five reservations in Montana as the follow-up to an official presentation ceremony involving tribal representatives and Senator John Melcher of Montana, held at the Library of Congress in the fall of 1986. From July 28 to August 5, Schupman presented duplicate tapes, catalogs, and supplementary materials to seven tribes in southwestern Arizona—the Tohono O'odham (Papago), Pascua Yaqui, Pima, Maricopa, Quechan (Yuma), and Cocopah. In February 1988 he made presentations in New Mexico and Utah to the Mescalero Apache and Ute tribes—bringing the number of communities to which materials have now been disseminated to sixty.

On July 16, 1987, Schupman met with members of the Northern Cheyenne Culture Committee at Lame Deer, Montana, one hundred miles from Billings. The director of the committee is Bill Tallbull, a traditional Cheyenne with a deep concern for and commitment to the survival of his people's culture and the proper recording of their history. He had previously assisted the Federal Cylinder Project by identifying Cheyenne materials in the collection. In the following report on their meeting, Schupman and Tallbull discuss the tribe's own preservation efforts.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the Northern Cheyenne tribe had been decimated and scattered by war, hunger, disease, and poverty. Resistance to the great changes in life as they had known it for centuries effectively ceased at Fort Robinson, Nebraska, the site of the mid-winter incarceration, forced starvation, and subsequent near-annihilation of a group of Northern Cheyennes fleeing deplorable reservation conditions in Indian Territory (now Oklahoma) in 1879. This tragic event served as the basis for a novel by Mari Sandoz and subsequent popular movie appropriately entitled *Cheyenne Autumn*. Many descendants of the survivors of the Fort Robinson massacre currently live on the Northern Cheyenne reservation, established by President Chester A. Arthur in 1884. Despite the turbulence of their relatively recent past, the tribe has retained many aspects of its traditional culture. Facilitated by recent changes in social attitudes of the dominant non-Indian culture, and by government legislation, such as the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, current tribally initiated and operated preservation planning and activities signify a change of season for these enduring people.

The Northern Cheyennes, like many of the tribes I have visited, would like to gather all the published and unpublished printed matter—history, records, and treaties—related to their tribe, as well as sound recordings, historic photographs, selected artifacts, and other forms of cultural documentation. Their goal is to make it possible for comprehensive tribal research to be conducted at a central location on the reservation, particularly for students at the Dull Knife Community College in Lame Deer. The college library, or possibly a new cultural center, would serve as the repository for such collections.

Several additional efforts are under way or planned. The Cheyennes are acquiring a large collection of tapes recorded at the St. Labre Mission

school in Ashland, Montana, some years ago. The project spanned a two-year period and involved recording the elders for tribal history, traditional religion, and songs. At the college they have undertaken a video taping project, working with the elders on traditional Cheyenne life—quill work, meat and hide preparation, plant lore, and other activities. Gail Small, a resident of Busby and director of an organization known as Native Action, has obtained a small grant with which she pays the participants in these video recordings \$10 each for their help.

Tallbull has also taken video equipment to the sites of the Battle of the Rosebud (Montana) and the Fetterman Battle (Fort Phil Kearny, Wyoming) to document the Cheyenne history of those events. He has plans to do the same thing at Fort Robinson. They have planned a project for the Indian Studies students at the college to research the Custer Battlefield in order to commemorate the Cheyenne warriors who perished in that fight and to design and construct a memorial. Officials at the battlefield have agreed to the plan but have retained the right of final approval of the memorial.

Tallbull: I was going to do that in Wyoming also [at] Fort Phil Kearny [and at] Rosebud Battle. There's been a little work done at Sand Creek [Colorado, and at] Summit Springs [Colorado] where Tall Bull [Bill's great-grandfather] had a fight, and Fort Robinson, certainly. We was thirty-five miles north of Fort Robinson, and I walked up to the place where the thing ended, where all those people were killed inside that [cave]. And supposedly it's not been disturbed; the cave has been caving in so it's been covered. And I wasn't properly in a frame of mind to approach that [spiritually], and I've been feeling very guilty ever since then. I should have been more ready to properly walk up to it, look at it, because it was quite an emotional



Northern Cheyenne tribal member and cultural leader William Tallbull accepting tape duplicates of Cheyenne wax cylinder recordings and other materials being presented by Senator John Melchor of Montana on behalf of the Federal Cylinder Project and the American Folklife Center during a ceremony at the Library of Congress on September 29, 1986. *Library of Congress photo by Reid Baker*

visit. We were the first Cheyennes to do any kind of research there. . . . We took an archeology crew that had been working at Vermillion to Fort Robinson to see if the escape route that had been recorded by the military was the true one. We had determined, after some research down there, that was not the route they took. We began to find evidence that it was the next ridge over that was the one. We found shell casings, breastworks; we found some arrowheads and pistol balls, 45/70 bullets, 50 caliber bullets. Since this [the college] is named after Dull Knife [one of the Cheyenne leaders in the Ft. Robinson episode], I spent quite a

bit of time down there doing historical research.

One of the culture committee's responsibilities is to serve as consultants for development projects on traditional Cheyenne lands, on or off the reservation, such as road building, logging, and mining. They are concerned with environmental impact studies that relate to Cheyenne culture and history. The tribe has limited financial means for this activity, and members of the committee must often pay their own expenses during work on these projects. They are also active in trying to get the state of Montana to adopt a reburial policy for uncovered gravesites; a meeting with state

officials is planned for the spring of 1988. Wyoming and Colorado already have such policies in place and, according to Tallbull, have been very good about contacting the culture committee for assistance in these matters. The tribe has adopted an "Archeological Protection Ordinance" which gives the committee these responsibilities.

Tallbull: When I was in Washington in February [1987], I went and testified on a bill that is called the "Melcher Bill" [S. 187, sponsored and introduced by Senator John Melcher of Montana in 1987]. There are some sacred items that belong to the live rituals that we're

missing. I'm trying to get them returned to the tribe. I was having a very difficult time doing that, not only in Washington, but in Cody, Wyoming [Plains Indian Museum]. Cody has since agreed to return one item that belongs to the covenant in Oklahoma. . . . There's a pipe in Washington [at the Smithsonian Institution]. During the testimony the director of the Smithsonian testified that in discussion with the Smithsonian the return of the pipe, the Tall Bull pipe, that was taken by soldiers at Summit Spring in 1869. We need that pipe because the Dog Soldiers are still in existence and we need that pipe to reorganize the membership. I testified that this was needed badly in order to carry out the traditions of this tribe. When he testified he said, "I told the Cheyenne they could come and get this pipe." So they were starting to make concessions. I'm waiting for him to send me a letter saying "you can come get it." If not, I'm going to get a signature from all the Dog Soldiers and have them write him and say, "Hey, what's going on here?"

I asked Tallbull if there are any sacred bundles or items of that nature they would like to reclaim.

Tallbull: No, we don't want those types of things over there because we have lost the structures that structure those bundles. They're no longer beneficial for the tribe. But the ones that belong to the live ceremonies that are still in existence are the ones that we have requested. And communal things, not private. We hope sometime to have a museum here. If the Cheyennes want to look at their things they have to go to Cody, Wyoming, to Helena, and everywhere else. That's not a very good situation.

The tribal government has made a commitment to support a museum and to keep it open. They are considering several plans for its construction and maintenance and are seeking funds. The culture committee

will be involved in the proper handling and display of artifacts as well as in providing accurate interpretation of the significance, uses, and origins of the items.

Bill Tallbull and the other committee members are also concerned with protecting land sites that have traditional significance to the tribe and with the difficulty in attempting to explain that significance to non-Indians—commercial developers and officers of industrial corporations.

"As long as we're in the process of collecting, the policy has to address the sacred nature of these things."

Tallbull: One of the things that I desperately want to record is that there's been a lot of questions about this Medicine Wheel [a large and ancient man-made structure shaped like a wheel with spokes, formed by loose rocks] up in the Bighorns [mountain range of northern Wyoming]. I've researched that, concerned about that for my own. Why here? Who? Why? I went there with a doctor from the clinic over here. And I took my pipe and I smoked it, a little ways from it. As I got up I saw a circle on the ground. I called the doc over, I says, "Come here I'm going to show you something." And I said, "Do you see the circle? Maybe we just never noticed it, maybe there's quite a few of them around." So we walked around and didn't see any more. I came back and saw that same one there, on the ground, and I told Doc, "You see this?" And he said, "No, I don't see anything." And I said, "Well I'm going to get down on my hands and knees and I'm going to trace it, you just watch my finger." I got on my hands and knees and he said, "I still don't see it." I said, "Go get some stones." He got little stones, we marked it. On the way down I thought, "that's part of the answer." It's

one of those things that I've always wondered. This thing appeared to me. This big circle [the Medicine Wheel] appeared to somebody, and he put stones around it. I still don't know why, but I know how. Now, I want that recorded by someone that is. . . . I don't think they'll believe me. If Powell [author Peter J., noted Cheyenne historian] were to write it then they would believe him. But I need to do that.

I went to that same place and went north of there. I laid down on a hillside while these guys went fishing and I was waiting for them. So I was laying down. Somebody was talking to me. And he was saying that "Your people are troubled. Every man and woman, child, troubled." And we were having trouble then. We were having fights. The [sacred] arrows came north [from Oklahoma] and the Oklahomas [southern Cheyennes] came after them. And the Cheyennes were trying to quiet this whole thing down and everybody was concerned. I just left, I was so disturbed, I just left and went up to the mountains. As I was laying there I closed my eyes I could see perfectly hundreds of people, and I'd see just half of them [of their bodies] and they had their hands out like this, facing each other and they were hitting each other. And this guy was talking, he was standing right beside me. He said, "You're troubled, every man, woman, and child." He said, "You came here to get away from that." And as I was listening he said, "Here are some of the things that you can do." And I don't know whether I moved, I don't know what happened, but he quit in mid-sentence. And I laid there and laid there and it never continued. But, there is an answer there for those types of problems, apparently. They were just getting ready to tell, and I don't know what I did. I think I was anticipating, rather than listening, I was anticipating. And I think that's probably what happened. These are some of the things that are involved when you look at land, the

feeling for land we have. Swamp areas, they're kind of spooky because they're powerful places. Our most powerful places are swamps; that's where life began. That's where the strongest spirits live. We look at it in that manner. We try to explain these things when we have a meeting with the coal companies. We have a spiritual relationship with all plant life and animal life. You try to explain these and they don't understand that type of thing.

David Graber has been conducting a recording and documentation project with the Cheyennes. Graber taught music at a school in Busby, Montana, from 1973 through 1979. While there he started recording people to collect songs for use in his teaching. He then left the area, returning in 1984 to assist on a Crow Indian tribal project of documenting their Christian hymn-singing tradition and developing a hymn book. He met Kathy Dykstra, a librarian at Dull Knife, and together they designed a project proposal which they had a professional grant writer prepare. Their project, which was funded by the Montana Arts Council, provides contemporary elders with an opportunity to record, in an organized fashion and with appropriate descriptive notes, the kind of materials to which they would like their descendants to have access. One aspect of the project will be to add announcements to previously recorded collections identifying the songs, lyrics, and history associated with them. He will be working with written documentation and interviewing tribal members for the information.

Tallbull: What I'm trying to do here is that as long as we're in the process of collecting, the policy [of the culture committee] has to address the sacred nature of these things. That's why some of these songs that you're going to be collecting [addressing David Graber] at one time were very sacred in nature. Over the years the significance of that has been lost and it is hard to go back and say, "Let's take this song back over

here where it belongs." These things can get out of hand real quickly if someone is not knowledgeable.

Our meeting ended at three in the afternoon. I was pleased, as I have been in many of the Indian communities visited in my dissemination travels, to discover a wealth of ideas and projects being undertaken or planned by tribal members themselves to preserve and perpetuate culture. In a society based on oral traditions, it has been encouraging to find Indians such as Bill Tallbull employing modern technology and techniques in their preservation work, without compromising their long-held beliefs and practices. Community support is growing and solidifying as more and more Indians, from tribal government leaders to grass-roots traditionalists, discover the value and necessity of retaining their culture. The main problem impeding the implementation of such actions on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation, and in most Indian communities, is a lack of adequate funding. Federal and state agencies and other public and private institutions, as well as informed tribal members, are increasing the Indian awareness of sources and methods for acquiring outside financial support. But, the problem remains serious.

Community support is growing and solidifying as more and more Indians discover the value and necessity of retaining their culture.

After the meeting, Bill offered to take me to look for a cluster of tepee rings marking an early village site that he had spotted several years before. We drove to a spot near Busby, parked along the highway, and hiked out on to the high-prairie plateaus. For two hours we explored three of many possible ridges but were unable to locate the tepee rings. The trip was not without its rewards, however. Bill found a shallow oblong depression in

the ground, approximately seven by ten feet, which he identified as a buffalo wallow. Small in that vastness, and easily overlooked by unskilled eyes, it was a poignant reminder of the sixty million or so buffalo that once inhabited the Plains and sustained the Cheyennes.

Every few minutes, as we walked up and down the gullies and across the ridges, Bill would stop to point out a plant, telling me its name and traditional use among the Cheyennes: "That's man sage; we use that in our sweat lodge. And that one over there is woman sage; only women use that, and only certain women are supposed to pick it. These are rose hips; a Cheyenne war party once survived for eleven days just eating those and drinking water. This is what we call a skeleton plant; it can be used to increase mother's milk." In what appeared from the road to be an arid and rather barren land, I was surprised to find a thriving and undisturbed variety of life at its early-summer fullest. □

FOLKLIFE ANNUAL

Folklife Annual is a yearly collection of articles on traditional expressive life and culture, written by specialists in folklore, folklife, and related fields, and intended for a wide audience. Published by the Library of Congress, the annual includes many illustrations, thus providing an opportunity for folklorists to present the results of their work in both text and pictures.

The editors will consider articles on all areas of American folklife. Manuscripts should be double-spaced and follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*; sample illustrations should be included with submissions. Send articles and requests for further information on the annual and for ordering back volumes to the Editors, *Folklife Annual*, the Library of Congress, American Folklife Center, Washington, D.C. 20540.

WATERWAYS

Continued from page 9

through [there] was only a space about this wide [*indicates width of two feet*]. . . . I can see the ice, the bottom part of the ice, you know, daylight showing through the ice a little bit and I could see the bottom part of the ice. And I'm looking around to see if there's a hole that's open. Better get out of there. By chance, I don't know how it happened, it's a miracle, I guess, I came out the same damn hole I fell in. (LFP-DT-R012)

Swimming in and skating on local waterways have declined in recent years as a result of the increased availability of indoor recreational facilities and other diversions, but, for many Lowell youths, the lure of these generally unsanctioned activities is strong and participation continues. Unfortunately, drownings—also a part of Lowell's social history—are often the result.

Kim Dovey defines place as a "complex system of people, physical setting and meaning" (*Place and Placemaking*, 1985). Lowell's waterways are but a part of this system for residents of the city. The relationships people have with waterways, along with their attachments to many other natural and man-made features of the environment, permit them to personalize their surroundings and to make sense of the world. Waterways are used as boundaries and help people identify a neighborhood. The activities that take place on waterways—swimming, fishing, skating, boating—create or strengthen ties between those who participate in them. For many, the memories of experiences on and around waterways, often expressed in the form of stories, provide strong links to their surroundings and to the past—to the time when Native Americans caught salmon and shad on the Merrimack, to the era of the burgeoning of the nation's first planned industrial city. Rich in accumulated meaning, Lowell's waterways are an integral element in a congeries of associations that provide residents with a point of orientation in the world. □



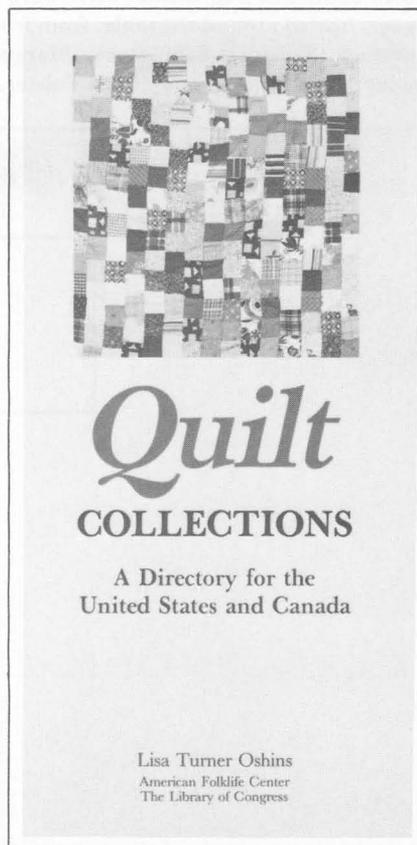


Fall and Winter Programs

Above: Following a lecture by Charles Camp entitled "Traditional Holiday Foodways," December 10, 1987, members of the audience were invited to sample from a smorgasbord of Christian and non-Christian holiday foods prepared by Library of Congress employees and friends of the Folklife Center. *Photo by James Higgins*

Opposite page, above: Paul Smith, of the University of Sheffield, presented an illustrated lecture entitled "'Raise a Fire and Strike a Light': British Folk Drama in the Carpenter Collection at the Archive of Folk Culture," November 19, 1987. *Library of Congress photo by Reid Baker*

Opposite page, below: Jack Santino, of Bowling Green State University, presented an illustrated lecture "Festivals of Death and Life," on November 5, 1987. *Library of Congress photo by Reid Baker*



Publications

American Folk Music and Folklore Recordings 1986: A Selected List, the fourth edition in this series, lists twenty-six of the best recordings of 1986, selected by a panel of folklorists and ethnomusicologists. It has been distributed to organizations and publications concerned or connected with libraries, educational media, music educators, broadcasting, folklore, and ethnomusicology. America's traditional music is often recorded by small, grassroots record companies. The purpose of this series is to bring these recordings to the attention of institutions such as libraries and schools that would not otherwise learn of them and thus promote sale and distribution.

The Archive of Folk Culture has released two new items in its series of reference and finding aids. They are *Publishers in North America of Books and Monographs with Folklore, Ethnomusicology, and Folk Music Series or Catalogs* (LCFAFA No. 6) by Joseph C. Hickerson and Jeffrey Place and *South Asian Recordings in the Archive of Folk Culture* (LCFAFA No. 5) by Frank J. Korom. These publications are available from the Archive of Folk Culture.

Quilt Collections

A directory of quilt collections and resources in public institutions in the United States and Canada is available from the American Folklife Center. Organized by county, state, and institution, the directory lists 747 collections and is illustrated with both black-and-white and color photographs. It includes lists of statewide and regional quilt documentation projects and major national and regional quilt organizations.

Copies of *Quilt Collections* can be ordered from the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20540. The price is \$18.95 for the softcover and \$24.95 for the hardcover edition. Add \$2 per order for postage and handling. Check or money order payable to the American Folklife Center must accompany order.



In the main cabin of *Director II*, on the Fahnstock South Sea Expedition, there were two seatings for each meal. At this convivial gathering are many of the principals on the voyage. Seated around the table, from front left to right: George Peterson, Jack Scott, George Thomas Folster, Mary Sheridan Fahnstock, Sheridan Fahnstock, Margaret Steele Fahnstock (now Mrs. Margaret Fahnstock Lewis), Rollin Grant, Ladislav Reday, Jack Morris, and Helen Folster. *Photo courtesy of Margaret Fahnstock Lewis*

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
AMERICAN FOLKLIFE CENTER
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20540

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

FIRST-CLASS MAIL
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
WASHINGTON, D.C.
PERMIT No. G-103