

FOLKLIFE CENTER NEWS

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American Folklife Center • The Library of Congress



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

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

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Cover (figure 1): Tobacco barn, south Georgia, 1977. (5-17351) Photo by David Stanley. South-Central Georgia Folklife Project, American Folklife Center

Searching for Barns in the Archive of Folk Culture



Figure 2: Twin barn near St. Agatha, Maine, 1991. (HM-B105, no. 21) Photo by Howard Wright Marshall. Maine Acadian Folklife Project, American Folklife Center

By John Michael Vlach

During the summer of 2002, Library of Congress official C. Ford Peatross invited me to initiate a series of architecture books that would celebrate the vast pictorial holdings of the Library. I was asked to locate one thousand images of barns and other related farming structures and then organize them into a volume that would be useful for both professional researchers and general readers. I was sent scrambling through the Library's various divisions and reading rooms. The book—which is called simply *Barns*—was published in April 2003 and heralded with appropriate festivities staged in the Memorial Hall of the Library's Madison Building. There amidst the splendors of a capacious mar-

ble-walled room, the new book series known as the “Norton/Library of Congress Visual Sourcebooks in Architecture, Design & Engineering” was launched with appropriate speeches, banjo and fiddle tunes, and a modest repast of Virginia ham and biscuits.

My search for barn images began logically enough in the Library's Prints and Photographs Division, a repository for approximately fifteen million images, where I concentrated mainly on two collections, the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) and the Farm Security Administration/ Office of War Information photographs (FSA/OWI). The FSA/OWI photographs, many of which capture what are now lauded as emblematic views of America in the thirties, offer a

collective snapshot of everyday life that includes many agricultural settings. Made by a famous band of photographers including such luminaries as Dorothea Lange, Russell Lee, Arthur Rothstein, Jack Delano, and Marion Post Wolcott, the FSA/OWI images provided the foundation for *Barns*.

While it was reasonable to begin my search in the Prints and Photographs Division, I was counseled by Ford Peatross, director of the Library's Center for Architecture, Design, and Engineering, to draw on all of the collections housed within the Library. Because the subject of architecture, he advised, was “threaded throughout the rich fabric of this vast archive,” I was to search across the whole institution. Aware that the American Folklife Center (AFC) had regu-



Figure 3: Barn near Woolwine, Patrick County, Virginia, 1978. (2-20205, no. 9) Photo by Howard Wright Marshall, Blue Ridge Parkway Folklife Project, American Folklife Center

larly dispatched teams of fieldworkers to various rural communities where they often documented traditional farming practices, I spent several weeks searching the collections of the Archive of Folk Culture. There I reviewed photographs made in south Georgia, the Blue Ridge mountains of Virginia and North Carolina, northern Maine, central Nevada, and several other western states. Examining the hundreds of contact sheets produced since 1977, I found numerous documentary images that were equally as compelling as those created by the FSA/OWI pioneers. And especially pertinent for my project, here were images made by my fellow folklorists, who had deliberately focused on barn types as a key indicator of local identity. Further, it was immediately apparent that the high standards for documentary practice set by the FSA/OWI continued to live on in these AFC projects.

Photographs of flue-cured tobacco barns from the Wiregrass Region of southern Georgia made

Figure 4: Barn near Absher, Wilkes County, North Carolina, 1978. (3-20365, no. 3) Photo by Blanton Owen. Blue Ridge Parkway Folklife Project, American Folklife Center

by Howard Marshall and David Stanley in 1977 match up well with similar images made some forty years earlier by FSA/OWI photographer Carl Mydans (see figure 1, cover). The images made during these two documentation efforts encourage useful comparison across a period of extraordinary social change. As part of an American Folklife Center documentary project initiated in 1991 at the request of the National Park Service, a team of folklorists was dispatched to the St. John's River Valley of northern Maine, where it surveyed a sizeable community of French-speaking Acadians. This was again a

region that had been visited earlier by FSA/OWI photographers Jack Delano and John Collier, in 1940 and 1942, respectively. The photographs made by the AFC fieldworkers, when compared to the earlier images made just before the outbreak of World War II, show an extraordinary degree of continuity in local farming practices. Folklorist Howard Marshall's images of potato barns could easily be substituted for those made by Jack Delano. But the AFC teams also noticed a distinctive barn type composed of two common barns joined together, one behind the other, so that, in profile view, their roof lines formed a giant M (figure 2). This barn type, known locally as a twin barn, had emerged at the end of the nineteenth century. However, it remained for Marshall's keen and curious eye to take notice of this intriguing form.

The productive complementarity of the FSA/OWI record and subsequent AFC research surveys is clearly evident in the images made by folklife researchers working in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina and Virginia in 1978. Despite the broad mission of the FSA/OWI to document the daily lives of all Americans, its photographers were never sent into the mountain areas of the South. Consequently, the Blue Ridge Parkway Folklife Project was the first sustained federal effort to



Figure 5: Horse barn on the 96 Ranch, Paradise Valley, Humbolt County, Nevada, 1960 (156704-4) Photo by Carl Fleischhauer. Paradise Valley Folklife Project, American Folklife Center

inventory the cultural resources of this important region. Pat Mullen, Blanton Owen, and Howard Marshall all recorded typical barn types, some that were made of logs and others that were examples of framed construction. In form, these buildings constituted a recognizable type known to scholars of folk architecture as the transverse-crib barn; that is, a barn consisting of two rows of stabling areas separated by a central passage with a sizeable area for feed storage overhead (figure 3). This barn type was invented in the mountains early in the nineteenth century and its design proved highly adaptable for so many different farming needs that it became the most typical and widespread of all American barns—examples can be seen from Virginia to Alaska. That its basic plan could be adjusted to suit just about any purpose or context is demonstrated by an example documented by Blanton Owen near Absher, North Carolina (figure 4). This particular dairy barn was built close enough to the slope of a hill that a second entry



was opened into its loft via a short bridge. The structure combines features of both gable-entering and side-opening barn plans, a signal of the synthetic and experimental thinking that is so indicative of the area but most widely acknowledged in the creation of the region's

musical traditions.

While various FSA/OWI photographers traveled extensively throughout the western states with orders to pay careful attention to the impact of the Depression on farmers and their families, no barns of any kind were documented in Nevada. However, a four-year-long survey of Nevada ranching traditions initiated by the AFC in 1978 produced an in-depth portrait of the area around Paradise Valley in Humbolt County. This study was accompanied by an extensive pictorial record detailing the annual cycle of work tasks, domestic routines, and local celebrations. Effectively completing the documentary tasks that were initiated during the New Deal era, the Paradise



Figure 6: Barn on the Joseph Delmue Ranch, Dry Valley, Lincoln County, Nevada, 1990. (IAW-BO-BO27-8) Photo by Blanton Owen, Italian-Americans in the West Folklife Project.

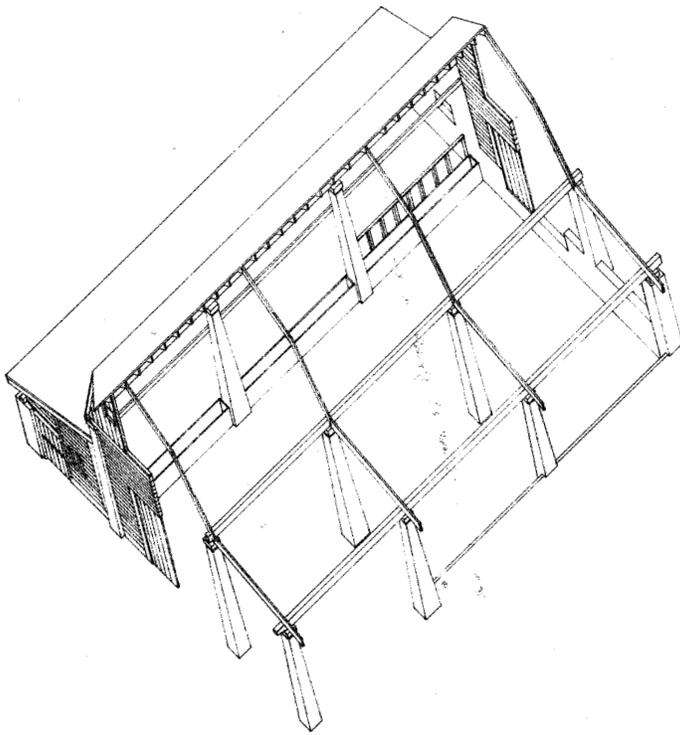


Figure 7: Axometric drawing of the 1916 Joseph Delmue barn, 1990. Drawing by Steve Simmons. Italian-Americans in the West Folklife Project, American Folklife Center

Valley Folklife Project generated a rich cache of documentation that includes quite a few photographs of barns as well as other typical ranching structures (figure 5).

American Folklife Center documentation projects have not only added to the Library's pictorial record, they have also, in some instances, raised the standards of documentary practice. As part of the Italian-Americans in the West Project (1989-91), the question was raised about the history of traditional Italian buildings along the Nevada-Utah border. In Lincoln County, Nevada, Blanton Owen discovered at the ranch belonging to Joseph Delmue a barn constructed with stone pillars (figure 6). He made several photographs of the building (including one taken from his low-flying airplane). While interviewing the owner about the history of the ranch, he was shown a photograph of this unusual barn while it was under construction in 1916; the image was copied for the AFC record. Owen learned that this barn had been constructed by the owner's

grandfather, who seemed to be following customary practices that he had learned in his home town of Biasca, Switzerland, an Italian-speaking town on the Italian-Swiss border. Thomas Carter, professor of architectural history at the University of Utah, was asked to examine the building in greater detail, and he assembled a team of students who accompanied him on a visit to the site. Under Carter's direction, Steve Simmons and Douglas Banks produced a set of meticulous scaled drawings of the whole ranch site and its primary buildings. Simmons's rendering of an intriguing three-dimensional, bird's-eye view of the interior of the Delmue barn (figure 7) exposes the structural complexity of what, to the passing eye, seems to be nothing more than an old barn. It is evident the Italian-Americans in the West Project did more than simply create a record of buildings; the project encouraged deep inquiry into the complex cultural transitions that occurred repeatedly during the making of the American West.

It is also evident that as the American Folklife Center undertakes future community and regional surveys, it will continue to amass photographic images of everyday-life settings that will prove extremely valuable to future studies of American vernacular architecture.

American Folklife Center Publications Featuring Traditional Barn Images

Sketches of South Georgia Folklife, Carl Fleischhauer and Howard W. Marshall, eds. (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1977)

Buckaroos in Paradise: Cowboy Life in Northern Nevada, Howard W. Marshall and Richard E. Ahlborn, eds. (Washington, DC: National Museum of History and Technology, 1980). See AFC Web site for online version.

Blue Ridge Harvest: Region's Folklife in Photographs, Lynthia Scott Eiler, Terry Eiler, and Carl Fleischhauer, eds. (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1981)

Acadian Culture in Maine, C. Ray Brassieur, coordinator (Boston, Mass.: North Atlantic Region, National Park Service, 1992)

Old Ties, New Attachments: Italian-American Folklife in the West, David A. Taylor and John Alexander Williams, eds. (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1992)

John Michael Vlach is professor of American studies and anthropology at The George Washington University, in Washington, D.C. He is the author of ten books and many articles, largely on American vernacular architecture and material culture, including Plain Painters (1988), The Afro-American Tradition in Decorative Arts (1990), and Back of the Big House (1993). Dr. Vlach's new publication, Barns, is the first book in a new series, the Norton/Library of Congress Visual Sourcebooks in Architecture, Design and Engineering. Barns includes a CD-ROM of images.

Jack Tales and Their Tellers in the Archive of Folk Culture



Ray Hicks tells a story at the National Storytelling Festival's "Swapping Ground," circa 1988. International Storytelling Collection, American Folklife Center

By Todd Harvey

And so now I'm gonna tell you uns what I can. Want to hear "The Heifer Hide?" Well now, "The Heifer Hide," now that's a old one. Now that's one of mine that grandfather [Ben] told me who is named in the Jack Tale book. . . . [Ben], if you read it in there, that's my grandfather that told Richard Chase, that copyrighted the Jack Tale book, them stories. "The Heifer Hide" and "The Fire Dragon" and "Jack and the Wild Boar and the Unicorn" and "Fill Bowl Fill" and "Cat and the Mouse." If I can think of 'em it's twelve of 'em,

of his stories, twelve of 'em. And so "The Heifer Hide" now, now, now that was back in the time when they was a-workin' the ox And so their father gave Will and Tom a yoke of ox . . . and give Jack, younger, a little old grubby heifer yearling . . .

In this manner Ray Hicks introduced "The Heifer Hide" (AT 1535) at the 1990 National Storytelling Festival, a staple in his Jack Tales repertoire. Hicks was the patriarch of traditional storytelling in America, and the tales he and his extended family have told provide a point of

entry for studying the Archive of Folk Culture's storytelling collections.

Jack Tales have identifiable European antecedents, although Ray Hicks's American versions center around a mountain boy named Jack who succeeds by cleverness, or simply luck, rather than by hard work and perseverance. The tale cycle includes "Hardy Hard Head" (AT 513B), "Jack and the Giants' New Ground" (AT 1640), and "Jack and the Beanstalk" (AT 328), among others. For decades, Hicks told his Jack Tales at the National Storytelling Festival



Richard Chase, of the Blue Ridge Mountain School in Virginia, performing at the National Folk Festival, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1944. Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress

and at other venues. He was recognized with a National Endowment for the Arts National Heritage Fellowship in 1983. Ray Hicks was eighty years old when he died this year on April 20, 2003.

The recordings of the National Storytelling Festival came to the American Folklife Center in 2001 as part of the International Storytelling Collection (AFC 2001/008). This collection is one manifestation of an ongoing partnership between the American Folklife Center and the International Storytelling Center (see *Folklife Center News* 23, no. 3 [summer 2001]:3-5). It contains materials generated between 1973 and the present by the National Association for the Preservation and Perpetuation of Storytelling (NAPPS), and its successor organizations, the National Storytelling Foundation and the International Story-

telling Center. The collection has significantly expanded Archive of Folk Culture storytelling holdings and should be accessible to the public by October 2004.

The International Storytelling Collection provides

unique documentation from the storytelling revival of the 1970s and 1980s. Folk revivals occur as aspects of traditional cultures interact with popular cultures to create a hybrid art form. The storytelling revival evolved from the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, Tennessee, during which the craft of regional traditional storytellers such as Ray Hicks, Doc McConnell, Jackie Torrence, and Donald Davis was consciously cultivated by revivalist performers such as The Folktellers, Laura Simms, Jay O'Callahan, and Doug Lipman.

NAPPS created and continues to administer the National Storytelling Festival, which was first staged in 1973. By some stroke of prescience the festival staff recorded, both on audio and video, practically each story told during each festival. These recordings, combined with literally tons of administrative papers and ephemera, photographs, and artifacts, have resulted in an unparalleled document of the storytelling revival.

The Archive of Folk Culture storytelling collections, some dating back a half-century, have been amplified and enhanced by



Frank Warner playing his banjo, "made by a North Carolina mountain man" and signed by dozens of folk performers, circa 1953. Ray M. Lawless Collection, American Folklife Center

the International Storytelling Collection's arrival. This new collection contributes to the lattice of intersecting points between Archive collections, and allows us to look anew at stories gathered in earlier decades, gaining a deeper understanding of the material such as the Jack Tales. We can also more clearly understand performers and collectors, such as Ray Hicks and Richard Chase.

In 1938 New York folksong collectors Anne and Frank Warner saw a dulcimer made by Nathan Hicks of Beech Mountain, North Carolina. The Warners wrote to Hicks, asking if he could make a dulcimer for them as well, and it was arranged that they would meet on Beech Mountain that June. Among the extended family at that initial gathering were Nathan's son Ray and his son-in-law Frank Proffitt, Sr., from whom the Warners learned the song "Tom Dooley," one of the sparks that ignited the folk revival in music. The recordings that the Warners made on subsequent trips to Beech Mountain, as well as to communities along the Eastern seaboard, are now a part of Archive of Folk Culture collections (AFC 1950/002).

Around this same time, in April 1939, Herbert Halpert was at work near Maryville, Tennessee, collecting Jack Tales told by another member of the Hicks family, Samuel Harmon. The Warners' work had been restricted by their equipment, an instantaneous disc recorder, and a lack of supplies. As a result, they captured only fragments of songs and tales. Armed with a Library of Congress disc recorder and plenty of blank twelve-inch acetate discs, however, Halpert spent four days recording tales told by Harmon and his family (AFS 2895-2933).



Mrs. Maud Long and her granddaughters, "who like the folksongs and stories as much as I do," circa 1956. Ray M. Lawless Collection, American Folklife Center

The recordings include this interchange between Halpert, an experienced ethnographer, and Harmon, an informant who was performing a little-known genre:

Halpert: "Who'd you learn this next story from, Mr. Harmon?"

Harmon: "Old granddaddy Hicks."

Halpert: "And what was it called?"

Harmon: "'The Mad King' was what he called it."

Halpert: "Go on."

Harmon: "One time there was a king and he'd hire men to work for him and he wouldn't give 'em nothin' to eat..."

For those April 1939 recordings, Harmon sings songs and tells tales such as "Jack, Tom, and Will" (aka "The Heifer Hide"), "The Marriage of the King's Daughter," "Stiff Dick" (aka "Jack and the Varmints," AT 1640), and a brief version of "The Bean Tree" (aka "Jack and the Bean Stalk").

Maud Gentry Long, yet

another member of the extended Hicks family, lived in Hot Springs, North Carolina. Her mother had performed for the English folklorist Cecil Sharp during his 1916 collecting trip. In 1947 Long moved temporarily to Washington, D.C., where she was already known to Duncan Emrich, chief of the Folklore Section (then the name of the Archive of Folk Culture). Emrich recorded her at the Library's Recording Lab several times that year (AFS 9150-9163). Her repertoire included many songs and Jack Tales, five of which were released in 1956 as a two-LP set titled simply Jack Tales (AFS L47-48). The tales told at these sessions included

"Jack and the Varmints," "The Heifer Hide," "Jack and the Sop Dog" ("Sop, Doll"), and "Jack and the Sailing Ship" (aka "Hardy Hard Head").

In a memo dated January 20, 1947, to the Library's Music Division chief, Harold Spivacke, Emrich asked for resources to record Long, and in doing so made a case for expanding the Archive's holdings beyond the established folksong collections to include storytelling:

The collection of tales is an extremely rare one. Richard Chase of Virginia has collected in writing some of the "Jack Tales" told by Mrs. Long and published them in his book of the same title. They have not been recorded nor has Chase acquired the full collection from Mrs. Long. The "Jack Tales" have as their base the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. Jack, as the central character, however, appears in the adventures of a whole series of tales. As part of the developing work of the Folklore Section it would be most valuable to have these tales added to our collections.



Ray Hicks at his home on Beech Mountain, North Carolina, circa 1986. Photo by Gayle Peabody. International Storytelling Collection, American Folklife Center

It is significant that Emrich mentions Richard Chase and his book *The Jack Tales* (1943), and that Ray Hicks would also invoke Chase in his introduction to “The Heifer Hide,” quoted above. In compiling *The Jack Tales*, Chase collected from numerous informants, primarily the extended Hicks family. He edited the tales; in his words he had “taken the best of many tellings and correlated the best of all material collected into one complete version.” Scholars have criticized Chase for imposing his own sensibilities on the Märchen tradition (see Charles Perdue’s article “Is Old Jack Richard Chase?” in *Perspectives on the Jack Tales*). Carl Lindahl suggests in his introduction to *Jack in Two Worlds* that Chase’s version of the Jack character may reflect the author’s own Depression-era search for an American folk hero. “Jack” as he

is popularly known through Chase’s book varies from “Jack” as known to the Hicks family storytellers. Archive of Folk Culture researchers can, then, experience the tale cycle through Chase’s particular lens, or listen to more traditional renditions of the stories.

With this background in mind, Ray Hicks becomes an even more interesting figure who truly lived in two worlds. He exerted a profound influence over the revival storytellers, yet was not fully of the movement. He didn’t tour and rarely performed in public. We could argue that in his Beech Mountain home he was a traditional storyteller, but during his annual performances at the National Storytelling Festival he became a folk revivalist: his voice amplified from a stage, his image on promotional materials. Ray

Hicks was both the star of a folk revival and a deep well of traditional culture. That his recordings have been deposited in the Archive of Folk Culture will ensure the continuation of his craft.

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Storytellers Weave Traditional Lore and Personal Experience at the National Book Festival

Photos by James Hardin

The American Folklife Center's storytelling pavilion is an important component of the National Book Festival, recognizing as it does the cultural importance of oral tradition and reminding readers that story is at the heart of many great books. This year's book festival, held on the National Mall on a brisk October 4, attracted about seventy thousand visitors, many clutching books to have signed by their favorite authors. In its third year, the event was sponsored by the Library of Congress and First Lady Laura Bush. The storytelling pavilion featured traditional storytellers Bobby McMillon from North Carolina, Norman Kennedy from Vermont, and Gayle Ross from Texas; Djimo Kouyate and his African family musical ensemble; Vietnamese guitarist Tinh from Oregon; swing dancer Frankie Manning from New York; cowboy poet Paul Zarzyski from Montana; and actors Emery Battis and Ed Gero from the Shakespeare Theatre Company, Washington, D.C., interviewed about backstage theater traditions by folklorist Nancy Groce.

Above right: Traditional Appalachian storyteller Bobby McMillon, from North Carolina, delights children and adults with fantastic tales from North Carolina and haunting renditions of traditional ballads.

Right: Vietnamese guitarist Tinh blends story and song to invoke childhood experiences in his war-torn native country, and his later years living in Pakistan, the Philippines, and finally the United States.





Cowboy poet Paul Zarzyski brings the experience of the working cowboy, the images of the Montana landscape, and his personal perspective on life, love, hope, and peace to his poems and stories.



Carmen Deedy draws upon her family experiences as a Cuban American living in Georgia to create humorous accounts often based on the clash of cultures (and generations) and a failure of communication.



Eighty-nine-year-old Frankie Manning, raconteur and swing dancer extraordinaire, tells stories from his long life and international career. Behind Manning is writer and dance historian Cynthia Millman, who is working with him on his autobiography.

Revisiting West Virginia Folk Culture: The Hammons Family Album Thirty Years Later



Burl Hammons and Dwight Diller at Burl's home, 1970. Photo by Carl Fleischhauer

By Carl Fleischhauer

Dwight Diller, a banjo and fiddle player from Hillsboro, Greenbrier County, West Virginia, was one of the performers at the 2003 Smithsonian Folklife Festival, presented on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., by the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage. On June 26 I visited the festival, drawn by Dwight's music and eager to renew a friendship from the early 1970s, when I lived in West Virginia. In recent years Dwight has earned his living by teaching traditional Appalachian music, performing, selling recordings, and staging music camps from California to England (described on

his Web site: www.dwight-diller.com).

In 1970 and 1971, Dwight was a central figure for several of us who came from outside the area to meet the Hammons family of Marlinton, Pocahontas County. Dwight lived near Marlinton at the time, having moved there from Charleston, West Virginia, as a four-year-old in 1950. Many visitors were attracted to the Hammons home by the family's easy hospitality and warmth, and by their exceptional mastery of traditional music, narratives, skills, and knowledge. Three siblings—Maggie (1899–1987), Sherman (1903–1988), and Burl (1908–1993)—represented the artistic core of the

family, along with townsman Lee Hammons (1886–1980), not a direct relative of the others.

We outsiders learned of the family's existence directly and indirectly through Dwight, who was part of a network of devotees of Appalachian old-time music. In fact, I first met [former director of the American Folklife Center] Alan Jabbour through the Hammonses, which is to say through Dwight, and the three of us went on to collaborate on the documentary record albums *The Hammons Family* and *Shaking Down the Acorns*, now re-released on CD (Rounder Records ROUN1504, 1998). As an insider, Dwight possessed a long-standing friendship with a

number of residents of Marlinton and Pocahontas County, and helped Alan and me get acquainted with the Hammonses in a community context.

Dwight felt that the family's culture was so unified and rich that we must make every effort to understand their lives, ideas, and art as a whole. Our experience would be diminished if the music or stories were studied as isolated folklore items.

In a December 1980 interview at the American Folklife Center conducted by Alan Jabour and Gerry Parsons, Dwight said that "music was an extension of [the Hammonses'] life, just like old-time music now has become an extension of my life." (This interview as well as examples of Dwight's banjo playing may be heard on sound recordings AFS 26,768-26,769.)

Alan and I agreed with Dwight's insight about seeing the family whole. The audio elements in the record albums feature not only music but also narratives and conversations on a wide range of topics. Meanwhile, the fifty-one-page family history also includes stories from the frontier of the siblings' great-grandfather's day about encounters with panthers (mountain lions) and other adventures in the wilderness, portraits of neighborhood characters, calendrical traditions and other items of classic folklore, descriptions of earning a living during the logging period of the 1920s and after, and a family tree going back to 1777. Dwight's extensive tape recordings (AFS 22,948-22,966), made from 1969 to 1971, provided important texts for this history. Dwight and I photographed the family and copied old family photographs



Dwight Diller at the Bristol Mural Stage of the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, June 2003. Photo by Carl Fleischhauer

to illustrate the written history.

One theme in the project was creativity, amply represented by the music and the narratives. For Dwight, however, creativity was also manifest in technology, especially in the case of Lee Hammons. Lee was an important mentor to the twenty-three-year-old Dwight when he began visiting in 1969, and, at the age of eighty-eight, Lee served as best man at Dwight's wedding in 1973. Lee had a workshop next to his home where he built dulcimers, banjos, and other instruments. Once, lacking a jigsaw, he used an old lawnmower engine to fashion one, using the engine's crankshaft to transform the rotary motion of an electric motor into linear, vertical movement, with a saw blade attached to the piston and emerging from the now-open spark plug socket. The Hammonses, Dwight said, may have been poor in material terms but "have taken advantage of the opportunities that were presented to them."

A second theme was never explicitly captured on tape or paper. We had strong personal feelings—verging on the transcendental—occasioned by our immersion in the Hammonses' lives. I felt it in the combination of the physical context—the

mountains, forests, and rivers, and the particulars of the peoples' homes—reinforced by the stories that conveyed an exceedingly rich sense of individuals and past events. I was imaginatively transported to another place and time, and to a fulfilling and complete world view. Dwight was taken even further; in the 1980 interview, he used the word *spiritual* as he reminisced about the religious reawakening he experienced

during the years that followed the publication of the albums. "My experience with God was an end product of all of these things," he said, after telling about his relationships with the Hammonses, "bringing me back to, to something that I wasn't able to find anyplace else."

The Hammons Family album was released by the Library of Congress in 1973. Thirty years later, it was a wonderful thing to see Dwight at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, sharing his own mastery of West Virginia's music and passing along aspects of the culture he had absorbed from the Hammonses and others in the Mountain State.

Formerly a folklife specialist at the American Folklife Center, Carl Fleischhauer is currently project coordinator for the Library of Congress's Office of Strategic Initiatives. Fleischhauer's photographs have appeared in many publications, and he has written and edited a number of books, including Blue Ridge Harvest: A Region's Folklife in Photographs, with Lyntha and Terry Eiler (1981), Documenting America, 1935-1943, with Beverly W. Brannan (1988), and Bluegrass Odyssey: A Documentary in Pictures and Words, with Neil Rosenberg (2002).

Crabs 'R' Us: Field School Documents Chesapeake Bay Maritime Culture



Field school participants receive an impromptu introduction to Crisfield's fisheries by Crisfield resident and fellow field-school participant Tim Howard (left). Left to right: Howard, James Lane, Wendy Clupper, Lora Bottinelli (partially hidden), Maria Gonzalez, Ronda Walker, Gary Leventhal, Kristi Bell, Dan Parsons, and Sonya Spery. Photo by David A. Taylor

By David A. Taylor

This year's American Folklife Center field school for cultural documentation was held in Salisbury and Crisfield, Maryland, June 13 to July 2, and concentrated on the documentation of continuity and change in Crisfield's maritime culture. On the eastern shore of the Chesapeake Bay, Crisfield is a longstanding center of crab fishing and the home of many commercial fishermen, known locally as "watermen." Crisfield is also known as the home of the late Lem and Steve Ward, who were two of the most prominent carvers of waterfowl

decoys in the country.

Cosponsors of the school were Salisbury University and the Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art, both in Salisbury. Another important partner in the field school was the Crisfield Heritage Foundation. Additional support was provided by the Smithsonian's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, Maryland Traditions (a cooperative of the Maryland Historical Trust and the Maryland State Arts Council, with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts), the University of Maryland Eastern Shore—Rural Development Center, the Mid-

Atlantic Folklife Association, and private donors.

As with the Center's previous field schools, the main goal of the one held last summer was to provide comprehensive training in key techniques for documenting local cultural heritage, organizing and preserving documentary materials, and sharing documentary materials with others. During the three weeks of the field school, participants learned a wide variety of things in the classroom, including research ethics, project planning, approaches to preliminary research, and ethnographic observation and writing. They were also



Field schoolers and faculty members at Crisfield on the last evening of the course: (left to right) Roslyn Croog, Polly Stewart, Tim Howard, Jennifer Perunko, Roberta Perkins, Maria Gonzalez, Wendy Clupper, Jordan Rich, Gary Leventhal, Sonya Sperry, Todd Harvey, Lisa Greenhouse, Kristi Bell, James Lane, Lora Bottinelli, and Ronda Walker. (Absent when the photo was taken: Grace Mary Brady and Dan Parsons.) Photo by David A. Taylor

given instruction in how to conduct interviews and use a camera and sound-recording equipment.

Then, working as members of three-person research teams, they left the classroom at Salisbury University and put their newly acquired training to use through fieldwork in Crisfield. All the participants addressed the broad research topic "Crisfield Traditions in Time," but each of the five teams approached the topic through a different sub-theme.

Student researchers interviewed a diverse section of the Crisfield community, including seafood-business owners and workers (including Spanish-speaking migrant workers from Mexico), schoolteachers, watermen, city officials, religious leaders, truck drivers, parks and marina managers, and boat captains. The week of fieldwork resulted in 46 audiocassettes, 822 color photographs, and reams of fieldnotes.

The field school culminated with a public program at Crisfield High School, on July 2, during which each of the five research teams gave an illustrated presentation on their research findings. Documentary material generated by field school participants will be

made available for research at the Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art. Copies of materials will be placed at the Crisfield Heritage Foundation in Crisfield and at the Nabb Research Center in Salisbury. These materials will be made available for the 2004 Smithsonian Folklife Festival, which will highlight maritime communities of the Mid-Atlantic region.

Participants in the field school included people from the local area as well as others from as far away as Texas and Utah. They were: Kristi Bell, a folklore archivist from Provo, Utah; Grace Mary Brady, a legislative assistant from St. Leonard, Maryland; Wendy Clupper, a graduate student in theater and performance studies from College Park, Maryland; Roslyn Croog, a photographer from Catonsville, Maryland; Maria Gonzalez, a graduate student in preservation and conservation studies from Austin, Texas; Lisa Greenhouse, a historian from Baltimore; Todd Harvey, a folklife reference specialist from Washington, D.C.; Tim Howard, a graduate student in history from Crisfield; Ronda Walker, a folklorist from Springville, Utah; Gary Leventhal, a film and video producer/director from Baltimore; Dan Parsons, a grad-

uate student in history from Salisbury; Roberta Perkins, a research technician from Arden, Delaware; Jennifer Perunko, a maritime historian and preservation specialist from Arlington, Virginia; Jordan Rich, a graduate student in folklore from Bethesda, Maryland; and Sonya Sperry, an undergraduate student in anthropology from Salisbury. Field school faculty hope that all the participants will apply the training they received to their current and future work.

The course's principal instructors, who also coordinated the project, were folklorist Polly Stewart, from Salisbury University; folklorist Lora Bottinelli, from the Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art; and folklife specialist David A. Taylor, from the American Folklife Center. Others provided instruction as well, including Catherine Kerst, from the American Folklife Center; folklorist Tatiana Irvine; and photographer Richard Newman. The course's numerous guest speakers included Betty Belanus, from the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage at the Smithsonian; folklorist Shelly Drummond; folklorist Kelly Feltault; anthropologist Harold Anderson; journalist Brice Stump; folklorist Rory Turner, from the Maryland State Arts Council; and folklorists Carrie and Michael Kline. James Lane, president of the board of directors of the Crisfield Heritage Foundation, played a key role in conducting advance field work (undertaken with Lora Bottinelli), introducing course participants to Crisfield's history and culture, and suggesting potential interviewees.

Plans are already underway for next summer's field school. It will be held at Brigham Young University, in Provo, Utah, and is scheduled to run from July 11 through July 31. More information about the course, including its research focus, course fee, and application procedure, will soon be available on the Center's Web site.

Odetta Honored at Library of Congress Performance



Odetta. Photo courtesy of M.C. Records

Folk icon Odetta performed at the Library of Congress's Coolidge Auditorium on November 13, 2003, in a concert sponsored by the American Folklife Center and the Music Division celebrating the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Archive of Folk Culture. She was accompanied on the piano by Seth Farber, and performed traditional folksongs, as well as songs made popular by Bessie Smith and Leadbelly. Before the concert, Deputy Librarian of Congress Donald Scott presented Odetta with the Library's "Living Legend" award, which recognizes and honors individuals who have made significant contributions to America's cultural, scientific, and social heritage.

Odetta is one of the most influential folk revival artists of the past fifty years. At seventy-three, she is in her sixth decade

Odetta in the Library's Recording Laboratory for an oral history with American Folklife Center director Peggy Bulger. Photo by James Hardin

of performing.

Born in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1930, Odetta moved to Los Angeles when she was six and began classical music training at the age of thirteen. Five years later she joined the road tour company of "Finian's Rainbow," which included bluesman Sonny Terry, and her musical career changed course. She took up the guitar and began appearing at San Francisco-area folk clubs, where her powerful voice and unique guitar style brought her national attention.

Josh White, Big Bill Broonzy, Pete Seeger, and Harry Belafonte recognized her extraordinary talent and were instrumental in furthering her career, as she began to record and tour nationally.

Early in her career Odetta discovered the treasury of material in the Archive of Folk-Song at the Library of Congress. To this day she credits the Archive with providing the basis for the breadth and depth

of her repertoire, which includes work songs, blues, jazz, spirituals, and white Appalachian and English folksongs.

In the 1960s Odetta became a major figure in the folk revival and a powerful voice for the Civil Rights movement. While appearing at major venues such as the Newport Folk Festival and Carnegie Hall, she found the time to participate in the 1965 march on Selma, Alabama, and the 1963 March on Washington with the Reverend Martin Luther King. Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, and Janis Joplin credit her musical influence, and several of her recordings from this era became folk classics and inspired an entire generation.

For the next three decades, Odetta continued to expand her artistic horizons. She appeared in plays and television dramas, performed with symphony orchestras and jazz musicians, and toured all over the world, while continuing to record and to work for social causes. In recent years Odetta has been invited as an "Elder" to the International Women's Conference in Beijing, China, received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the World Folk Music Association, and in 1999 was awarded the National Medal of the Arts and Humanities by President Clinton.



Mandan and Hidatsa Visitors in Folklife Reading Room



On October 17, 2003, representatives of the Mandan and Hidatsa tribes in North Dakota were in Washington, D.C., for the unveiling of the Sacagawea statue in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda. The delegation also visited the Folklife Reading Room to listen to wax-cylinder recordings made on the Fort Berthold Reservation, in North Dakota, by Frances Densmore, from 1912 to 1915. Shown here, left to right, AFC folklife specialist Ann Hoog; Edwin Benson; Amy Mossett, cochair, Central Region Circle of Tribal Advisors for the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial; Mary Elk; and Tillie Walker. Hoog is pointing out recordings made of Edwin Benson's grandfather, Ben Benson. Photo by James Hardin

Author Scott Alarik Speaks at Library of Congress



On October 21, 2003, Scott Alarik spoke at the Library of Congress about his new book *Deep Community: Adventures in the Modern Folk Underground*, in which he explores the folk world as it exists today, from traditional festival to urban coffeehouse, and looks ahead to its future as a vibrant subcultural genre. Alarik addressed the question "Why is folk music thriving today, at a time when the commercial music industry is in decline?" A long-time folk music journalist for the *Boston Globe*, *Sing Out!*, and public radio, Alarik is shown here with American Folklife Center director Peggy Bulger. Photo by James Hardin

Vermont Folklife Center Hosts AFC Board of Trustees



At the Celestial Memorial carving studio, Gary Sassi describes the work of a granite carver to Judy McCulloh, Peggy Kinney, Jack Santino, Penn Fix, Claudia Woods, Bill Kinney, and Ellen Lovell, while two of his coworkers look on. Photo by James Hardin

The Board of Trustees of the American Folklife Center held its fall meeting, September 26, 2003, at the Vermont Folklife Center in Middlebury, Vermont, where Jane Beck and her able staff hosted the meeting and arranged a full schedule of activities, including a visit to the Celestial Memorial granite carving studio and a tour of Hope Cemetery, in the vicinity of Barre, Vermont. The schedule also included presentations by a number of Vermont folk artists and a visit to the Shelburne Museum, outside of Burlington. The composition of the Board of Trustees is intended to provide regional representation in guiding the policies and programs of the American Folklife Center. To fulfill the Center's mandate to "preserve and present American folklife" on a national level, the board meets occasionally outside the Washington area, in order to familiarize itself with local, state, and regional programs and to provide endorsement and support when appropriate and possible.



American Folklife Center Board of Trustees outside the Middlebury Inn, Middlebury, Vermont. Front rows, left to right: AFC board members Judy McCulloh, Kay Kaufman Shelemay, Norma Cantú, Wilsonia Cherry, Jack Santino, Peggy Bulger, Penn Fix, and Jane Beck. Photo by James Hardin



Djimo Kouyate (right) and Amadou Kouyate (left) outside the storytelling pavilion at the National Book Festival, October 4, 2003, each with a West African stringed instrument called the *Kora*. They are father and son members of a family ensemble that performs Senegalese stories and dance under the name "Memory of African Culture." For more performers at the event, see pages 11 and 12.

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