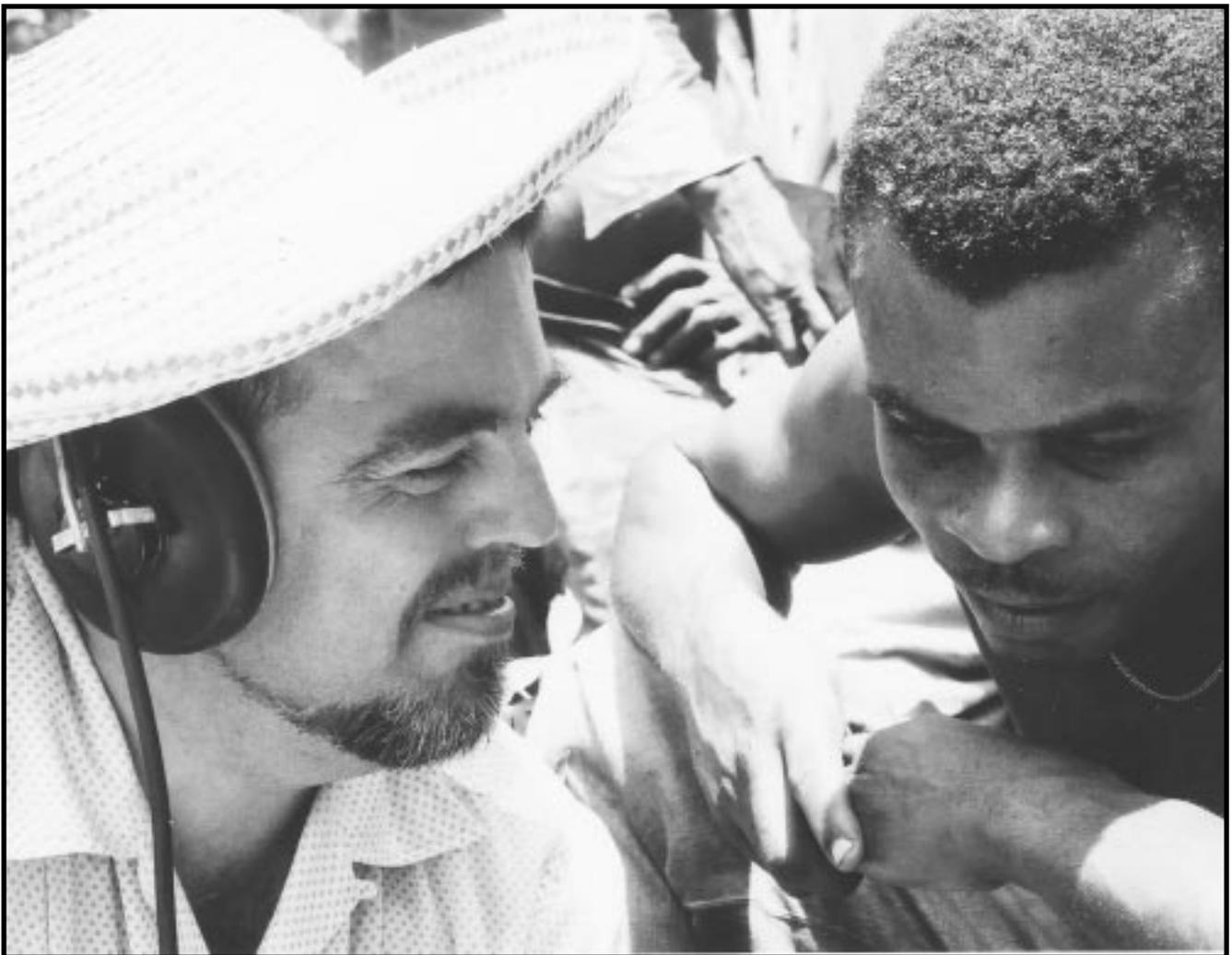


FOLKLIFE CENTER NEWS

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

The Folklife Information Service is a cooperative announcement program of the American Folklife Society and the American Folklife Center. It is available only on the American Folklife 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: Alan Lomax in the Caribbean, 1962. Alan Lomax Collection

Alan Lomax Collection Finds Permanent Home at the Library of Congress



Men playing drums, Mayoro, Trinidad, 1962. Photo by Alan Lomax

By Don Fleming and David Taylor

The American Folklife Center in the Library of Congress has acquired the Alan Lomax Collection, which comprises the unparalleled ethnographic documentation collected by the legendary folklorist over a period of sixty years. The acquisition was made possible through a cooperative agreement between the American Folklife Center (AFC) and the Association for Cultural Equity (ACE), and the generosity of an anonymous donor. The Alan Lomax Collection joins the material Alan Lomax collected during the 1930s and early 1940s for the Library's Archive of American Folk Song, and its acquisition brings the entire seventy years of Alan Lomax's work together

under one roof at the Library of Congress, where it has found a permanent home.

"The Alan Lomax Collection contains pioneering documentation of traditional music, dance, tales, and other forms of grassroots creativity in the United States and abroad," said James H. Billington, the Librarian of Congress. "We are extremely pleased that this collection has come to our American national library, where its creator did such important work in the 1930s."

From the time he left his position as head of the Archive of American Folk Song at the Library of Congress in 1942 through the end of his long and productive career as an internationally known folklorist, author, radio broadcaster, filmmaker, concert and record pro-

ducer, and television host, Alan Lomax amassed one of the most important collections of ethnographic material in the world.

The collection has been housed in several large rooms at Hunter College in New York City. It includes more than 5,000 hours of sound recordings, 400,000 feet of motion picture film, 2,450 videotapes, 2,000 scholarly books and journals, hundreds of photographic prints and negatives, several databases concerning portions of the archive, and over 120 linear feet of manuscript such as correspondence, fieldnotes, research files, program scripts, indexes, and book and article manuscripts.

Included in the collection are sound recordings of traditional singers, instrumentalists, and storytellers made by Lomax



Bessie Jones, Georgia Sea Islands, 1959. Photo by Alan Lomax

during numerous field trips to the American South, the Caribbean, Britain, Scotland, Ireland, Spain, and Italy; original video footage, shot in the South and Southwest, Washington, D.C., and New York City, that was used as the basis of Lomax's *American Patchwork* television series, as well as videotapes of all the programs in the series; 16mm footage of performances by Howling Wolf, Son House, and others during the Newport Folk Festival in 1966; videotape of folk dance performances; and work elements and originals of numerous films made by Lomax.

Alan Lomax believed that folklore and expressive culture are essential to human continuity and adaptation, and his lifelong goal was to create a public platform for their continued use and enjoyment as well as a scientific framework for their further understanding. His desire to document, preserve, recognize, and foster the dis-

tinctive voices of oral tradition led him to establish the Association for Cultural Equity (ACE), based in New York City and now directed by his daughter, Anna Lomax Wood.

ACE will continue to produce the Alan Lomax Collection compact-disc series on Rounder Records and to administer rights to repertoire contained in the collection, working from digital copies of original materials that the Library of Congress will be housing. ACE plans to donate CD and DVD copies of hundreds of hours of audio and video recordings to regional libraries in the United States

Alan Lomax working on documentary film from his collection. Alan Lomax Collection



and abroad. Over the next few years, ACE will work closely with the American Folklife Center to create databases for the audio, video, and film collections, to raise funds for preservation and for fellowships, and to make Lomax's ethnology of performance style available to researchers.

The Lomax family has a long history of collaboration with the Library of Congress. Alan's father, John Avery Lomax, began a ten-year relationship with the Library in June 1933, when he set out with Alan, then eighteen, on their first folksong gathering expedition under the Library's auspices. Together they visited Texas farms, prisons, and rural communities, recording work songs, reels, ballads, and blues. John Lomax was named "Honorary Consultant and Curator of the Archive of American Folk Song," which had been created in the Library's Music Division in 1928. Alan became the Archive's "Assistant in Charge" in 1937, and he continued to make field trips and supply recordings to the Archive of American Folk Song until 1942. He was the first to record such legendary musicians as Huddie "Leadbelly" Ledbetter, McKinley "Muddy Waters" Morgan-



Alan Lomax playing guitar, 1940. Alan Lomax Collection

field, Ferdinand “Jelly Roll” Morton, and David “Honeyboy” Edwards. In 1938, at the Library of Congress, he recorded Jelly Roll Morton for over eight hours of singing, playing, and spoken recollections, and in 1940, at the Department of the Interior, he recorded Woody Guthrie for over four hours of songs and stories.

After he left the Library of Congress, Alan Lomax continued his work to document, analyze, and present traditional music, dance, and narrative through projects of various kinds throughout the world. With his father and on his own he published many books, including *American Ballads and Folk Songs* (1934) and *Our Singing Country* (1941). He received many honors and awards, including the National Medal of the Arts, the National Book Critics Circle award for his book *The Land Where the Blues Began* (1993), and a “Living Legend” award from the Library of Congress. According to folklorist Roger Abrahams, he is “the person most responsible for the great explosion of interest in America folksong throughout the mid-twentieth century.”

The Association for Cultural Equity administers the rights to the use of materials in the Alan Lomax Collection, and carries on Lomax’s mission through the cataloging and dissemination of materials. In partnership with the American Folklife Center, ACE seeks to ensure that Alan Lomax’s legendary collection remains accessible to general and specialized audiences.

“We are delighted that our agreement with ACE makes it possible to combine Alan Lomax’s earliest documentary material,

Dancer in Valencia, Spain, 1952. Photo by Alan Lomax

which he collected during his time at the Library of Congress, with the material he collected during the rest of his life,” said American Folklife Center director Peggy Bulger. “His entire collection will now be available in one place. The collection is simultaneously a monument to one of the greatest cultural documenters of the twentieth century and a priceless storehouse of traditional artistry.” The collection has served as the basis for many publications, films and videos, commercial recordings, broadcasts, multimedia products (notably Lomax’s “Global Jukebox”), and major research endeavors (such as his Choreometrics, Cantometrics, and Parlametrics projects).

According to Michael Taft, head of the Center’s Archive of Folk Culture, “the Alan Lomax Collection may be the largest single collection we have ever received, and we are committed to fulfilling Alan Lomax’s dream of making his unparalleled collection widely available to the world.”

A musician and music producer, Don Fleming is the public affairs coordinator for the Association for Cultural Equity and director of licensing for the Alan Lomax Collection.

David Taylor is a folklife specialist and coordinator of acquisitions for the American Folklife Center.



George Korson: Pioneer Collector of Industrial Folklore



George Korson (right, with cap in hand) in the Newkirk Tunnel Mine, 1946, as James Muldowney plays his fiddle. Black Star photo, George Korson Collection

By Michael Taft

The life's work of folklore collector George Korson is now part of the Archive of Folk Culture and will soon be available to researchers interested in folksongs, mining traditions, the folklore of Pennsylvania, the history of the American labor movement, ethnic folklore, and occupational folklife. For almost sixty years the collection has been housed at King's College, in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, but the institution has decided that Korson's work would receive better preservation and more use by researchers at the American Folklife Center.

Consisting of 144 containers of manuscripts, 3 containers of photographs, 23 instantaneous discs, and 76 open-reel audiotapes, as well as Korson's personal library of books, this acquisition is a significant addition to the Folk Archive's material on industrial folklore, and more specifically on the folklore of Pennsylvania coal miners.

George Korson was a pioneer collector of industrial folklore, especially folksongs, and may well be considered the father of occupational folklore studies in the United States. Yet, like many of the greatest folklore collectors of the twentieth century, he was neither trained in folklore

nor did he hold an academic position in the discipline. Like Vance Randolph, Harry Middleton Hyatt, Helen Hartness Flanders, among other "amateur" folklore collectors, Korson had a sense of mission and enthusiasm for the work of collecting folklore that stemmed from an emotional attachment to a particular region and people. Korson's commitment to the culture of the coal miners of Pennsylvania, combined with his innate ability to establish rapport with these workers and his talents as an observer and writer, elevated him to the status of respected member of the scholarly community of folklorists.

The value of Korson's work lies beyond his recordings and careful documentation. He collected more than folk texts—he was interested in the lives of those who sang for him and told him stories. He concerned himself with social, historical, and political contexts. For this reason, his work is of importance for what it tells us about occupational life in industrial America and the impact of the labor movement on workers and their traditions.

Korson did not come from the community that he studied. Like many of the great twentieth-century collectors, he was an outsider, and he had to earn the trust and respect of the Pennsylvania miners. He was born in Bobrinets, Ukraine, in 1899, and came to America with his family in 1906. Eventually, in 1912, this Orthodox Jewish family settled in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania—in the heart of coal-mining country. As a high school student, Korson became interested in the history of Wilkes-Barre, writing an article on the subject for his high school newspaper. This effort marked the beginning of his career as a writer and journalist whose “beat” was northeast Pennsylvania.

In 1917 Korson became a reporter for the *Wilkes-Barre Record*. After a stint with the British army in 1918 and 1919, fighting in Palestine as a Jewish volunteer, he resumed his career in journalism, joining the *Pottsville Republican* in 1921. While a reporter for this newspaper, Korson began his lifetime work of collecting the traditions of miners. As he told the story, he wondered if there were collections of miners' songs similar to the collections done among loggers. When he went to the public library to find the answer,



George Korson makes a recording of Mrs. Clinton Otto, of Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania, during the 1950s. George Korson Collection

librarian Edith Patterson suggested that Korson collect these songs himself.

With Patterson's encouragement, Korson soon amassed enough folksongs for a book, first serialized in the *United Mine Workers Journal* and then published as *Songs and Ballads of the Anthracite Miner* in 1927. By this time, he was a journalist in New Jersey, but his work among Pennsylvania miners, as well as his more general involvement in Pennsylvania folklore, continued. He became director of the Pennsylvania Folk Festival in 1936.

Korson finally returned to coal mining country in 1931, when he became a reporter for the *Allentown Chronicle and News*. He wrote two small books on Pennsylvania folksongs and expanded his first book, publishing it in 1938 under the title *Minstrels of the Mine Patch*. In the 1940s Korson became a writer and editor for the American Red Cross in Washington, D.C., but as in previous years, he continued to collect and write about folklore.

Following on his fieldwork with anthracite miners, he turned his attention to another group of workers, publishing *Coal Dust on the Fiddle: Songs and Stories of the Bituminous Industry* (1943). It was this publication that brought Korson to the attention of academic folklorists, and they were not immediately receptive to this outsider. Collecting folklore from industrial workers was not within the ken of traditional-minded folklorists, who had spent their careers among rural, agrarian folk. But Benjamin Botkin, then director of the Archive of American Folk Song at the

Library of Congress, was immediately receptive to Korson's work, and challenged other folklorists to follow Korson's lead by examining occupational traditions.

While in Washington, Korson established ties with the Library of Congress. His wife, Rae Korson, worked at the Library and eventually became the director of the Archive of American Folk Song (1956–69). In 1946 Korson began recording Pennsylvania miners for the Library of Congress. Using the Library's instantaneous disc-cutting machine, and the assistance of sound engineer Arthur Semmig, he was able to make state-of-the-art field recordings. These discs were the source for the Library's record album, *Songs and Ballads of the Anthracite Miners*, edited by George Korson (currently available on compact disc, Rounder Record 1502).

During the 1940s Korson continued to write on folklore, while holding a full-time job with the Red Cross (and writing non-folklore books and articles). With Marion Vallat Emrich, he appears as the editor

of *The Child's Book of Folklore* (1947)—although much of the work on this volume was actually done by Duncan Emrich, director of the Archive of American Folk Song (1945–55), and Rae Korson. Because, at that time, the Library of Congress frowned on its staff publishing books, their spouses finished the editing of the book and George wrote the introduction. Korson also edited *Pennsylvania Songs and Legends* (1949).

In the 1950s Korson's health began to fail. His bad heart meant that fieldwork became difficult for him, but he remained active in folklore. He served three terms as president of the Pennsylvania Folklore Society, and became increasingly recognized by academic folklorists as an important scholar. Only in the last ten years of his life was he able to retire from the Red Cross and devote

the majority of his time to folklore—thanks in part to a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1957. With the counsel of his doctor and the help of nitroglycerin tablets, Korson embarked once again on a series of collecting trips in Pennsylvania. This time he replaced the bulky disc-cutter with a somewhat less bulky tape recorder, and the culmination of his fieldwork was *Black Rock: Mining Folklore of the Pennsylvania Dutch*, published in 1960.

In the 1960s Korson was able to enjoy the fruits of his labor, as *Minstrels* and *Coal Dust* were reprinted, and he was able to produce and edit *Songs and Ballads of the Bituminous Miners*, a companion to his earlier album for the Library of Congress (Rounder Record 1522). In 1960 he was honored by the American Folklore Society by being made a Fellow, and he won the Chicago Folklore Prize for *Black Rock*.

In failing health, Korson realized that his private collection of books, manuscripts, recordings, and photographs needed a permanent home. In 1965 he donated his collection to the D. Leonard Corgan Library at King's College in Wilkes-Barre. Korson died in 1967 without putting all of his papers in order; that job was carried out by his wife, Rae, and special collec-



George Korson, with his wife, Rae, reviews a manuscript, around 1960. George Korson Collection

tions librarian Judith Tierney of King's College. Since that time, King's College has taken good care of Korson's work, and has published a handsome and informative guide to the collection. Thanks to King's College, their Korson collection now joins the existing material that Korson donated to the Library of Congress in the 1940s and 1950s.

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Glimpses of a Different Side: The Pete and Toshi Seeger Film Collection



Peggy Bulger, director of the American Folklife Center; Kitama Jackson, the Seegers' grandson; Toshi and Pete Seeger; and David Taylor, AFC coordinator of acquisitions, June 9, 2003, outside the barn where the Seeger Film Collection has been stored. Photo by Mike Mashon

By Todd Harvey

In his autobiography, *How Can I Keep from Singing*, Pete Seeger describes how, in 1939, Alan Lomax, assistant-in-charge of the Archive of Folk Song, hired him for "fifteen dollars a week." "His duties were untaxing . . . cataloging the dusty archives and transcribing songs. In the process he absorbed an entire repertoire" (p. 61). Thus began a long association between Seeger and the Library of Congress that has led to the donation of numerous sound recordings, including his song to President Roosevelt, "Dear Mr. President" (1942), field recordings made at a Texas prison (1951), a performance at Oberlin College (1955),

and performances by the Hudson River Sloop Singers (1971).

While most people properly associate Pete Seeger with folk music performances, it is not well known that Pete and his wife, Toshi Seeger, share an interest in film as an expressive medium. Beginning in the mid-1950s, the Seegers began to document on film the music, dance, games, and occupational lore of the many places they visited around the world. In June 2003 they donated this collection to the American Folklife Center.

"These films are only the latest in a long series of contributions to the Library made by the Seegers, beginning when Pete worked with Alan Lomax in the late 1930s," said Michael Taft,

head of the Archive of Folk Culture. "Since that time, the Library has acquired many sound recordings of Pete and his contemporaries, but the Seeger film collection adds an important new dimension to Seeger's role in the documentation and promotion of traditional music."

The Pete and Toshi Seeger Film Collection includes material from 1957 to 1964. There are a few earlier items: copies of the 1935 *March of Time* newsreel footage featuring Huddie "Leadbelly" Ledbetter, for example. The collection contains classic folk-revival material such as recordings of Big Bill Broonzy (1957), Odetta and Bob Gibson (1957), and Elizabeth

Cotten (1960). There is footage from the National Folk Festival (1957) and a Texas prison (1965). The collection also contains works such as Seeger's instructional film, *The Five-String Banjo*, which followed the landmark book and Folkways LP of the same title. The majority of films, however, derive from the Seeger family's ten-month performing tour during 1963 and 1964 that included stops in Japan, Indonesia, India, East and West Africa, Israel, the USSR, and Ireland.

During the world tour, Pete Seeger kept readers informed with his regular "Johnny Appleseed, Jr." column in *Sing Out!* magazine. In the April/May 1964 edition, he wrote:

On this trip, we have so much equipment with us that, to keep from paying too much overweight charge on the planes, our clothing is down to the bare minimum. One pair of shoes apiece, two socks, two shirts, etc. The rest is banjos and guitars, a tape recording machine, and cameras, cameras, cameras.

Seeger's column and his book *The Incomplete Folksinger* give detailed accounts of the world trip, offering a window into the content of the film collection. In a December 1963 entry from New Delhi, Seeger writes about being taken to a village inhabited solely by snake charmers and their families. It is a fertile description, touching first on the social and political structure of India, and the economics of snake charming. The family is treated to a live exhibition of the craft and the musician in Seeger takes over, talking about the instruments and rhythms. Suddenly, he realizes that he is face-to-face with two, then three, enormous cobras. In his words: "I lift my legs and start to move." All the while, Toshi is coolly filming the event. The label on the film canister reads: "Delhi India; snake charmers; city scenes—wild"

A few months prior to the tour, Pete Seeger gave a concert at Carnegie Hall, later issued as *We Shall Overcome* (Columbia CS



Folklife specialist Todd Harvey examines a film canister from the Pete and Toshi Film Collection. Photo by James Hardin

8901). His program notes express hope for the upcoming trip:

Aim: to learn more about some of the other three billion human beings who share this earth, learn about their past and present, and their hopes for the future. Hope to bring back some songs and stories. Aim also: to give them a glimpse of a different side of Americans than perhaps they knew of.

The world tour films present the viewer with children's games at a Tokyo school, Baul dancers in Calcutta, singing Ghanaian fishermen, a music festival in Clones, Ireland, a Yemenite village in Israel, Seeger giving concerts in Nairobi and Kiev, and more.

As a whole, the collection's 530 reels document dozens of events on both black-and-white and color film in the form of picture positives and negatives, composite prints, magnetic tracks, and audio dubs. The Seegers used Bolex and Auricon cameras and a Nagra audio-tape recorder, standard equipment for amateur filmmakers of the day.

The collection's film stock is between forty and seventy years old. "From a preservation perspective, however, the film is in fairly good shape," says Linda

Shah, of the Library's Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division (MBRS). Some of the reels suffer from "vinegar syndrome" (an acidification process) and other problems, such as color fading and brittleness. These symptoms of degradation are fairly common and should not significantly hinder preservation efforts.

Mike Mashon, a curator in MBRS, is working with the Seegers to prioritize collection materials for preservation. This will include duplicating the material onto film and onto high-quality video. Mashon hopes that selected portions of the collection will be made available to the public during 2004.

The Pete and Toshi Seeger Film Collection captures an iconic family in American folk music as they explore the world and document their experiences. Says Pete, "I'm very proud that [the films] will be well cared for now. But my life-long bad habit is to start more projects than I can handle." In accepting the generous gift of this collection, the American Folklife Center is pleased to support one the Seegers' "bad habits."

StoryCorps Donates “Born Digital” Oral History Collection



David Isay and Studs Terkel in front of the recording booth in Grand Central Terminal, New York City, October 23, 2003, at the opening ceremony launching StoryCorps, a new national oral history project. Photo by James Hardin

By James Hardin

Studs Terkel says he’s “deaf as a post,” but he wants to help all the rest of us talk to one another. On October 23, 2003, the ninety-one-year-old oral historian cut the ribbon to inaugurate the first recording booth for “StoryCorps,” a national oral history project in which ordinary Americans will be interviewed by their friends or relatives. The site was New York City’s Grand Central Terminal, in its heyday a crossroads symbolic of bustling American life. (Even today, the beautifully restored Beaux-Arts

building is used by over 150,000 commuters every day.) Recordings from the project will be sent to the American Folklife Center to form its first “born-digital” collection.

StoryCorps founder David Isay compares his new oral history venture to the Federal Writers Project of the 1930s and envisions it as “the largest oral history project ever undertaken,” in which 200,000 people may eventually record episodes from their life stories. More recording booths are scheduled to open in Chicago and on the West Coast by fall 2004, and several mobile

units moving from town to town are planned as well. The interviews will be guided by facilitators who will help the participants formulate their questions. For a modest fee, each interview pair will receive a compact disc copy of the interview, and a digital copy will be sent to the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.

David Isay is an award-winning radio producer and MacArthur Fellow who has conducted extensive research at the American Folklife Center. In the course

of his work, he was deeply moved by recordings made during the 1930s and 1940s, documenting the lives of ordinary people—housewives, farm and factory workers, former slaves, and many others. These recordings from the Works Progress Administration and private collectors inspired him to create the StoryCorps project. But StoryCorps focuses on the meaning of the interview to the participants themselves. “In my work on radio programs, I discovered that a bond was created when one person interviews another,” said Isay. The primary purpose of StoryCorps is to strengthen connections between friends and family members. Selected excerpts of some StoryCorps interviews will eventually be featured on public radio stations, as well as Nation-

al Public Radio’s *Morning Edition* and *All Things Considered*.

“Look around at this great building,” said an irrepressibly witty and still-energetic Studs Terkel, at the opening ceremony. “We know who commissioned and designed it, but what about the many unknown folks who labored to construct it, and the many workers who keep it clean. It is these uncelebrated people that StoryCorps honors.”

“I think the StoryCorps collection is going to provide a great snapshot of American life in the early 2000s,” said Peggy Bulger, director of the American Folklife Center, who was on hand in New York, representing the Center and the Library of Congress. “The Center’s Archive of Folk Culture holds thousands of hours of recorded

histories from the 1890s to the present day, preserving the memories of ordinary people from every region of the country, along with the sound of their voices.” The Center also holds the newly acquired International Storytelling Collection (recordings from the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, Tennessee) and the ever-growing collections of the Veterans History Project. “At the American Folklife Center we are convinced that audio and video documentation is a vital part of the historical record, and that oral history recordings add a powerful human dimension to the study of history,” Bulger said. “But, perhaps, of more importance—these StoryCorps interviews of today are destined to become the family treasures of tomorrow.”

Homegrown 2004: The Music of America

A free concert series presented at the Library of Congress by the American Folklife Center, in cooperation with the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage and the Folklore Society of Greater Washington

April 15: Norman and Nancy Blake, old-time country music from Georgia. One of the most respected musicians in the field of country music, Norman Blake’s career spans fifty years.

May 19: Don Roy Trio and Florence Martin, Franco-American music from Maine. One of the finest Franco-American fiddlers in the Northeast, Don Roy organized and played with the Maine French Fiddlers for eleven years, during which time he played at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Wolf Trap, and on “A Prairie Home Companion.”

June 15: Paschall Brothers, African American gospel quartet from Virginia. Formed in 1981, the Paschall Brothers are in the

great tradition of unaccompanied religious singing in Tidewater Virginia, a black-gospel-quartet tradition that can be traced back to plantation life in the South.

July 14: Oinkari Basque Dancers, from Boise, Idaho. The Oinkari Basque Dancers perform the traditional dances brought from the Basque region of the Pyrenees Mountains of France and Spain to the West by immigrants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

August 18: Phong Nguyen Ensemble, Vietnamese music from Ohio. Phong Nguyen is one of the world’s foremost performers and scholars of Vietnamese music, and has received a National Heritage Fellowship Award from the National Endowment for the Arts for his efforts to preserve and present this music in the United States.

September 28: 2004 NEA National Heritage Fellow—TBA

October 20: Nadim Dlaikan, Arabic music from Michigan. Born in the village of Alai in Lebanon, Nadim Dlaikan makes and plays the nay, a single-reed wind instrument. He is now part of the dynamic Arab American music community in Detroit.

November 17: American Indian Music and Dance Troupe, from Oklahoma. The American Indian Music and Dance Troupe, directed by noted Kiowa flute player Tom Mauchahty-Ware, will perform the Eagle, Hoop, Fancy, and Grass dances.

December 8: Jerry Grcevich with Tamburitza Orchestra, Tambura music from Pennsylvania. Jerry Grcevich is a master player, composer, and arranger of tambura music, the intricate string-ensemble music of Eastern Europe, notably Croatia and Serbia.

Folklorist's Field Recordings Reflect Pennsylvania Dutch Heritage

By David Taylor

Folklorist Don Yoder, professor emeritus at the University of Pennsylvania, has donated a collection of his field recordings that document aspects of Pennsylvania Dutch culture, particularly folk belief, sermons and religious music, folksong, and harvest festivals. Recordings of performances at the Pennsylvania Dutch Folk Festival, at Kutztown, Pennsylvania, are also included. The collection, which comprises seventy-nine reel-to-reel tape recordings, was created by Yoder over the course of more than thirty years.

Don Yoder is a leading authority on Pennsylvania Dutch history and culture. He has also played an important role in broadening the field of folklore to include "folklife"—the full range of traditional expressions that includes the musical and narrative genres long studied by folklorists as well as belief, ritual, dance, material culture, foodways, and other genres. His many publications include *American Folklife*;



Don Yoder holds a "bird tree," an item of Pennsylvania Dutch folk art from his personal collection. Photo, October 11, 2003, by David A. Taylor

Discovering American Folklife: Studies in Ethnic, Religious and Regional Culture; Hex Signs: Pennsylvania Dutch Barn Symbols and Their Meaning; and Groundhog Day. In 1996 he retired from the University of Pennsylvania, where he taught for forty years.

Yoder's connection with the American Folklife Center is a long-standing one. During the

1950s he donated an important collection of Pennsylvania Dutch songs and narratives that he recorded in the field on wire spools. From 1976 to 1978, he served as a member of the Center's board of trustees. In addition, he wrote the introduction to the Center's publication *Pennsylvania German Fraktur and Printed Broadside: A Guide to the Collections in the Library of Congress* (1988).

Don Yoder is himself of Pennsylvania Dutch background. His father's ancestor, Hans Joder, an emigrant from the Bernese Oberland in Switzerland to the Palatinate in Germany, came to Pennsylvania in 1709. Yoder represents the ninth generation of his family in the new world. When he was a little boy, summer visits to his grandmother's farm exposed him to Pennsylvania Dutch language, foodways, and other traditions in context. This experience sparked a strong interest in the culture that has stayed with him ever since, an interest that has led to ground-breaking research and writing.

A Teacher's Guide to Folklife Resources New Online

An online version of *A Teacher's Guide to Folklife Resources*, edited by Carol Moran and Catherine Kerst, is available on the American Folklife Center's Web site at www.loc.gov/folklife/teachers.

The online guide includes a list of published materials that will be useful to educators who wish to incorporate folklife projects and programs into their

teaching, whether in classrooms, home schools, youth groups, museums, or libraries. This guide is based on the print publication of the same name, compiled by Peter Bartis and Paddy Bowman in 1994. The new version provides links to materials or distributors and offers a variety of searching possibilities. The American Folklife Center invites readers

to submit new items to be included on the list, as well as updates of items already listed.

Teacher resources listed include, for example: (1) *Florida Music Train*, by Laurie Kay Sommers, published by the Florida Heritage Education Program, Museum of Florida History, in Tallahassee. Five lesson plans, grade 6 to 8, for the study of language arts and social studies

through Florida folk music; (2) *Wisconsin Folks*, by the Wisconsin Arts Board, a Web site where you can “meet” over seventy traditional and ethnic dancers, musicians, cooks, craftspeople, and regional specialists; and (3) *Discovering Our Delta: A Learning Guide for Community Research*, by Betty

Belanus and Jan Rosenberg, published by Smithsonian Folkways Recordings. This educational kit teaches students how to conduct interviews, use a tape recorder, transcribe, and put information into a final form, all within the context of the Mississippi Delta.

Paddy Bowman, coordinator, Network for Folk Arts in Education, says, “we can find not only authentic, interdisciplinary resources on traditional culture and music but also how to order them, link to them, and browse several categories. . . . This is a much-needed resource.”

AFC Publishes Spanish-language Edition of Folklife and Fieldwork

Folklife and Fieldwork: A Layman's Introduction to Field Techniques, the American Folklife Center's popular thirty-eight-page pamphlet with practical advice on conducting ethnographic documentation, is now available in a Spanish-language edition titled *La Tradición Popular y la Investigación de Campo: Una introducción a las técnicas de investigación*. Initially prepared by Peter Bartis in 1979, *Folklife and Fieldwork* was revised and updated in 1990 and 2002. The latest version of the pamphlet was translated into Spanish by Pampa Rótolo.

Like its original, the new pamphlet includes a definition of folklife, a list of traditional activities and expressions that are frequently the subject of folklife research, and step-by-step recommendations for planning and executing a fieldwork project. There are sections on making audio and video recordings and on taking still photographs. The pamphlet also includes sample forms to use in making fieldnotes and securing permission from people who have been documented to use their performances in publications and for public programs.

Up to fifty copies of *La Tradición Popular y la Investigación de Campo* are available free of charge to individuals, or for use in workshops and classrooms. Special requests for more than



At the American Folklife Center, folklorist Peter Bartis instructs Celina Campas, a teacher from California, in the use of a cassette-tape recording machine. Photo by James Hardin from *La Tradición Popular y la Investigación de Campo*

fifty copies will be considered. Please contact Doris Craig at the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, 101 Independ-

dence Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20540-4610. Dcra@loc.gov; Phone: (202) 707-1736; Fax (202) 707-2076.

Meyerson Family Foundation Grant Funds Preservation Project

The Marlene Nathan Meyerson Family Foundation has announced a grant of \$10,000 to the American Folklife Center (AFC), for two projects in support of the AFC's mission to "preserve and present American folklife."

The first project will digitize and preserve seventy-six lantern slides and nineteen glass negatives in the Frances Densmore Collection of Native American materials, in the possession of the American Folklife Center. Frances Densmore (1867-1957) worked for the Smithsonian Institution's Bureau of Ethnology and other

museums, recording the songs and traditions of Native Americans from 1907 to 1954. She was a prolific field collector, and made recordings of many tribes on more than twenty-five hundred wax cylinders. During the late 1940s and early 1950s, Densmore worked closely with Library of Congress staff members on the production of published recordings drawn from her cylinder collection. Although she is known primarily for these recordings, she also took many photographs of her subjects, using some of these as illustrations in her books and lectures. Through the Meyerson

Family Foundation grant, the slides and negatives in the possession of the American Folklife Center will be conserved, digitized, and made available to researchers and the general public.

The second project supported by the grant is the production of a radio series that will feature the unique recorded-sound collections in the Archive of Folk Culture. Funds will be used to do the research and script writing for a pilot radio program on storytelling, which will be used in proposals to possible funding organizations.

Ethnographic Thesaurus Project Receives Mellon Foundation Grant

Working in partnership with the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress, the American Folklore Society has received a three-and-a-half-year (2004-2007) grant of \$484,000 from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to complete the development of an Ethnographic Thesaurus.

The American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress has carried out work on this project so far, and has joined with the Society, which received and will manage the Mellon Foundation grant, as the partner in its completion. The completed thesaurus will be available for permanent use and revision on the American Folklore Society's Web site (www.afsnet.org).

There is no standard for describing traditional culture in an agreed-upon vocabulary. This

project will create an online, searchable ethnographic thesaurus that will act as an authoritative list of terms for those working in folklore and ethnomusicology, as well as for those in the related fields of anthropology, literature, and music; for archivists and librarians who deal with ethnographic materials; and for the general community of researchers.

More than a century of collecting and archiving ethnographic recordings and accompanying material has created a demand for the proper, coordinated, archival description of this body of material. In the coming century, the ethnographic thesaurus will be essential in streamlining efforts to describe ethnographic collections for digitization and retrieval purposes.

The American Folklore Society, founded in 1888, is the premier U.S.-based professional association for folklorists: people who create and communicate knowledge about folklore throughout the world. Its more than two thousand members and subscribers are scholars, teachers, and libraries at colleges and universities; professionals in arts and cultural organizations; and community members involved in folklore work.

For more information, contact American Folklore Society executive director Timothy Lloyd (614 292-3375; lloyd.100@osu.edu) or Michael Taft, head of the Archive of Folk Culture at the American Folklife Center (202 707-1739; mtaf@loc.gov).



Sid Hemphill and Lucius Smith, Mississippi, 1959. The American Folklife Center has acquired the Alan Lomax Collection, which comprises the documentary material accumulated by Alan Lomax from the time he left the Library of Congress in 1942 until the end of his life. Story on page 3. Photo by Alan Lomax

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