

# FOLKLIFE CENTER NEWS

July 1978

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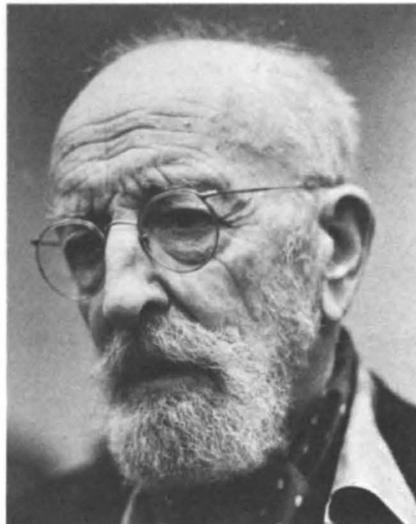
## FOLKLIFE CENTER JOINS NATIONAL PARK SERVICE IN BLUE RIDGE STUDY

The American Folklife Center has joined with the U.S. Department of Interior's National Park Service in a study to document folklife along a section of the Blue Ridge Parkway near the North Carolina-Virginia state line. The Blue Ridge Parkway Folklife Project will examine and document traditional life and work in and around the Mabry Mill-Rocky Knob area of the Parkway in Virginia and the Doughton Park-Little Glade Millpond area in North Carolina.

Begun in 1933 as a project for the Public Works Administration, the Blue Ridge Parkway was designed to protect and preserve a scenic stretch connecting the Shenandoah and Great Smoky Mountain National Parks. The Parkway covers 90,761 acres and laces through Virginia and North Carolina for 469 miles. In 1936 the Parkway became a unit of the National Park Service.

The Blue Ridge region is vitally linked to the history of folklife scholarship in the United States, beginning with the early efforts of Cecil Sharp in 1916 to locate traditional British songs

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Charles Seeger, who at 91 is the undisputed pioneer of American musicology, presented a lecture at the Library of Congress on June 11. Seeger's remarks on "Song and the Compositional Process" reflected his long career as a composer, conductor, theorist, ethnomusicologist, song collector, and writer. Co-founder of the American Musicological Society, father of folk artists Pete, Peggy, and Mike Seeger, and mentor of several distinguished American composers, Charles Seeger continues to be a creative inspiration to all who concern themselves with folklife.

## NEVADA COMMUNITY FOLKLIFE PROJECT

In 1859 Horace Greeley said it would be better if the Sierra Nevada and Rocky Mountains could be brought together and the intervening country eliminated from the surface of the earth. But traveler Greeley's characteristic notion was not shared by everyone who went West and ventured into the "intervening country" called Nevada. Enthusiasm for the place is reflected in postmaster Ernest Miller's legend of how one Nevada valley got its name.

"They said that they, in the real old times, there was a couple prospectors came up from the, uh, valley on the east side of us and they come up on top of the beautiful Santa Rosa range, and when they looked over the top they said, 'Now isn't this a beautiful paradise.'"

Miller's story about Paradise Valley is one of many items collected by a team of researchers from the American Folklife Center, who visited that north central Nevada community in May and found it rich in cultural traditions as well as in natural beauty. The team will return this month to continue

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## FOLKLIFE CENTER NEWS

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at the

*Library of Congress*

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### DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

One of the first endeavors of the American Folklife Center was to sponsor the preparation by Linda Coe of *Folklife and the Federal Government: Activities, Resources, Funds and Services*. That directory, with a fine historical introduction by Archie Green, is now published, and a perusal of its contents will provide its users with much-needed guidance in locating and availing themselves of folk cultural resources in the many branches of the Federal government. Though the directory may require updating in the future, as government programs and structures change, we may for now regard the first goal of the endeavor—service to the public—as accomplished.

Perhaps we have also accomplished our second goal: stimulation of the federal agencies themselves. It is certainly true that the very process of contacting various administrators for entries in a directory forces them to reflect on "folklife" as a category. The canvassing elicited such responses as "What does folklife include?" or "We

should be doing more in that area." The publication of the directory will, we trust, continue that agency-by-agency stimulation.

Finally, the directory quietly contributes to a third goal: defining and reflecting upon the cultural activities of the federal government from a folk cultural perspective. Enrichment of the nation's cultural life, and the structuring of the agencies that do it, is much discussed in Washington these days. One encounters such disparate straws in the wind as the proposed White House conferences on the arts and the humanities; the proposed creation of a new department of education, including various cultural agencies and offices; and the recent creation of the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service in the Department of Interior. "Culture" means many things to many people, and it is important that a folk cultural perspective be added to the general cultural deliberations.

By way of example, let me return to the Department of Interior, which I mentioned in this space last issue. Conservation and preservation are a fundamental mandate of the department, executed by such agencies as the National Park Service and the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service. It is impossible to overstate the impact on the nation of Interior's working concept of "culture." That concept has in the past dwelt most heavily upon the historical and artifactual side of culture; "culture" was, as it were, past or concrete. Thus it is a great pleasure for me to report strong indications that agencies in Interior are now willing to begin broadening that concept to include the intangible, living aspects of our nation's cultural life.

I remember on a certain occasion, when I played for acquaintances a recording I had made of a splendid West Virginia fiddler, being a bit crestfallen when they characterized the

music as "just like pioneer days." Perhaps it was, but what had struck me was the living presence of the man, his life, and his art. Past and present, artifact and art and life, all were threaded together in that vibrant emanence of the spirit when he played for me. Thus I am persuaded that in the current reevaluation of cultural policy at the Federal level, the concept of folklife can provide a fresh touchstone.

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### FOLKLORIST-IN-RESIDENCE IN SOUTH GEORGIA

Dennis Coelho, a Ph. D. candidate from Indiana University's Folklore Institute, is the new folklorist-in-residence at the Arts Experiment Station in Tifton, Georgia. The position was created following the South Georgia Folklife Project conducted in summer 1977 by the American Folklife Center and local agencies.

In preparation for his work in Tifton, Coelho spent six weeks working under contract at the American Folklife Center processing some of the documentary materials collected during last summer's field survey. He evaluated many of the 177 reel-to-reel tapes from the collection and edited a set of tapes containing highlights for presentation to the Arts Experiment Station. The recordings include religious music ranging from "note-singing" in black congregations to Primitive Baptist hymnody by whites, secular music from oldtime fiddle tunes to modern band styles, and spoken-word recordings which range from traditional jokes in a local setting to a chanted prayer.

### PRESIDENT CARTER SIGNS THREE-YEAR EXTENSION

The President approved authorization of the American Folklife Center until September 30, 1981, when he signed Public Law 95-259 on April 17, 1978.

The new law, which amends the American Folklife Preservation Act, provides for significant increases in the annual budget and sets guidelines for annual funding of the Center's activities. The Congress then appropriates funds according to the demonstrated need not to exceed the authorized amount.

Alan Jabbour commented, "We continue to appreciate the fine support and encouragement American folklife has received from members of the House of Representatives and the Senate."

As folklorist-in-residence, Coelho will work with cultural organizations, students, teachers, and interested citizens on developing folklife programs and projects for area schools and communities. He will also develop a course of study to be offered through the continuing education division at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College for introducing residents to the concept of folklife and to train students in documenting and presenting folk cultural traditions of the region. Coelho also plans to continue field research and documentation begun during the Center's six-week field survey in order to gain a year-round portrait of folklife in South Georgia.

Funding for the position was made possible through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Arts with matching funds provided by local sources. The grant is scheduled for a 12-month period which began in June.

The American Folklife Center will support Coelho's residency by lending him recording equipment and providing consultant services.

### PUBLICATIONS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

Brochure—general information on the American Folklife Center. Available upon request.

Coe, Linda, ed. *Folklife and the Federal Government: Activities, Resources, Funds and Services*. Publications of the American Folklife Center, no. 1. 147 pp; \$2.75. For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Order by stock no. S/N030-000-00091-9. Remittance must accompany order.

Fleischhauer, Carl, and Marshall, Howard W., eds. *Sketches of South Georgia Folklife*. Publications of the American Folklife Center, no. 2. Washington, D.C.: Information Office, Library of Congress, 1977. 32-page photo essay; \$2. Georgia residents should purchase copies from the Arts Experiment Station, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, Tifton, Georgia 31794.

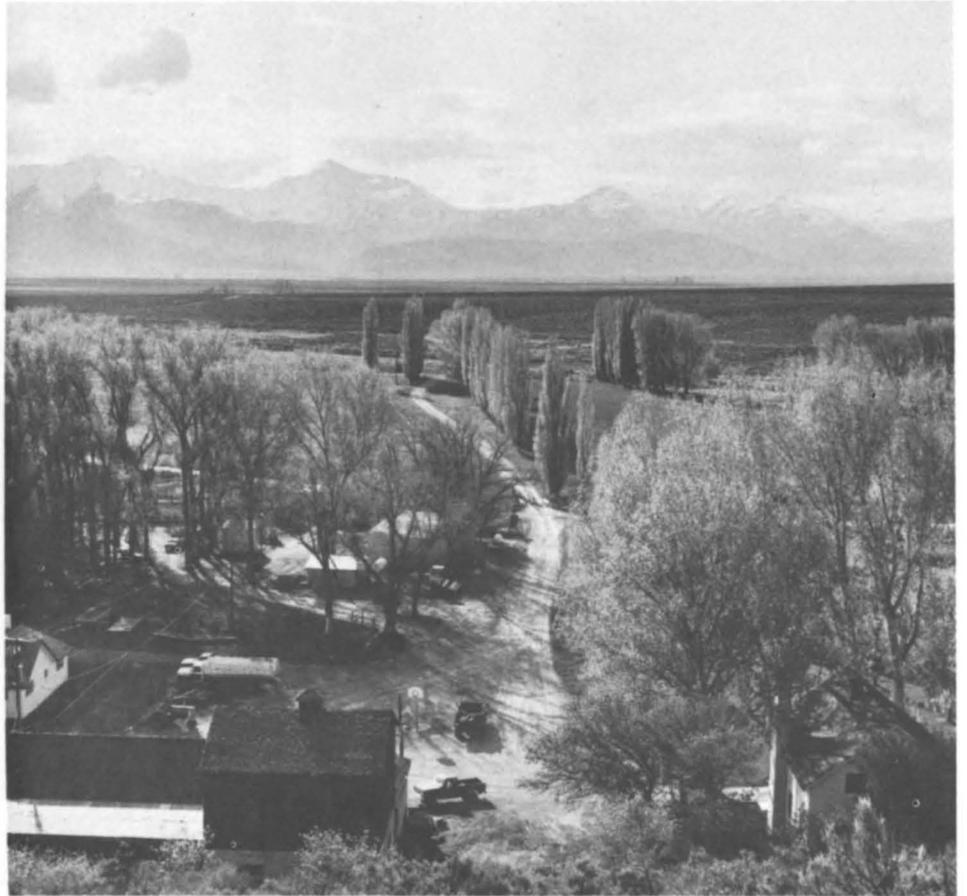
#### AMERICAN FOLKLIFE

"American Folklife" means the traditional expressive culture shared within the various groups in the United States: familial, ethnic, occupational, religious, regional. Expressive culture includes a wide range of creative and symbolic forms such as custom, belief, technical skill, language, literature, art, architecture, music, play, dance, drama, ritual, pageantry, and handicraft. Generally, these expressions are learned orally, by imitation, or in performance, and are maintained or perpetuated without formal instruction or institutional direction.

Public Law 94-201



These photographs of Paradise Valley were collected during phase one of the Nevada project. Rusty Marshall photographed buckaroo Chuck Wheellock helping move Les Stewart's cattle to their summer grazing range. Bert Wilson studied ranch work and technology and photographed Bob Cassinelli as he and his son placed a temporary canvas dam in their irrigation system. The Cassinelli's ranch commands a view across the valley toward the Santa Rosa Mountains. A photo from the collection of Joe Boggio depicts Paradise Valley's main street around the turn of the century. Mr. Boggio said that the newly planted Lombardy poplars protected by frame boxes had been given to the townspeople by "old man Alphonso" Pasquale, an early settler.



## Jottings From The Circle A Line Camp



Buckaroos Herb Pembroke, Dave Hiller, and Dick Gusky

### JOTTINGS FROM THE CIRCLE A LINE CAMP

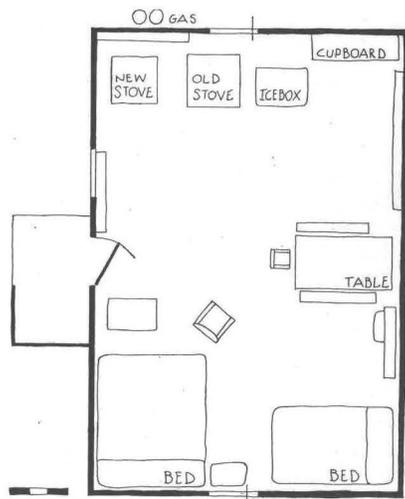
I first met Dick Gusky and Herb Pembroke at the Circle A, far out in the Owyhee Desert in an oasis-like canyon, on a tour courtesy of Paradise Valley ranchers Les and Marie Stewart. Linda Gastañaga, Bert Wilson, and I returned and spent May 20th with Dick, Herb, and Dave Hiller, another buckaroo and a maker of steel spurs and horsehair tack. We videotaped Herb and Dick shoeing a packhorse

and drove with Dick in the four-wheel-drive truck to see "Butch Cassidy's cave" and a box canyon called "gouge eye" where mustangs were rounded up. Herb cooked us a fine dinner of fried liver, beans, biscuits, and coffee, and we spent the rest of the afternoon talking about the buckaroo life.

The frame bunkhouse is situated in the middle of the canyon, near the corrals and the creek which runs through the aspens, and is typical of others around the Valley. Earlier bunkhouses were often built of adobe

or stone, but frame seems to have been used after about 1910. A woodstove sits idle next to the newer gas-fired cookstove. There is no electricity or running water. Baths are taken in the creek. While Herb sleeps in a tent outside, Dick and Dave each have a bed laid out in the bunkhouse, with a kit of personal effects (sometimes called a "war sack"), and horse gear, spurs, boots, hat, and outer clothing hung up around the walls on nails. The buckaroos will live at the camp while they ride fence and herd cattle on the summer range.

—Rusty Marshall



The bunkhouse is reminiscent of the familiar Anglo-American cabin—a one-room rectangular volume, 16 by 24 with a seven-foot ceiling, with a gabled roof and entry along one side. In the West, interior walls are often (as here) covered with horizontal boards. The roof is a system of 2 by 4 rafter couples, butted at the peak without a ridgepole and stabilized with collars. The whole structure sits on a low rock foundation.

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEET

The Board of Trustees of the American Folklife Center held its spring meeting May 22-23 at the Library of Congress. The first day was devoted to deliberations of the various subcommittees on publications, development, and projects. The meeting of the full Board included reports on current projects, new proposals, reports by the subcommittees, and general discussions.

Introductions were made of newly-appointed member Janet Anderson of Austin, Texas and Carol Nemeyer, Associate Librarian for National Programs, who represented the Librarian of Congress. In addition to Board members from the private sector, the meeting was attended by William Whalen, Director of the National Park Service, Alex Mercure, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, Ronne Kaplan representing Mary Berry, Assistant Secretary for Education of HEW, Tom Litzenburg and Harold Cannon representing the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, Bess Hawes, representing the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, and Ralph Rinzler representing the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution.

Reports were presented on the Nevada Community Folklife Project and the Blue Ridge Parkway Folklife Project, and the Board discussed future programming possibilities. Wayland Hand was instructed to develop further his proposal for a conference on American folk custom and usage. The Board recommended that the Center and other interested parties proceed to develop a comprehensive program of transcribing and preserving the many cylinder recordings of Native American and other folklore now in the collections of the Library of Congress and other Federal agencies.

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for autumn 1978.

## CENTER GIFT FUND ESTABLISHED

The American Folklife Center Fund has been established through the generous contributions of friends of the Center. The Fund is composed entirely of non-appropriated funds and will be used for producing publications, recordings, and other products. Any revenues will be returned to the Fund.

The initial contributors to the Fund are H. J. Kaplan, Rochester, N.Y.; Virginia D. Edwards, Durham, N.C.; Mr. & Mrs. Richard DeLancie, San Francisco; Frank Torperzer, Bethesda, Md.; Dr. Myron A. Coler, New York City; Lee Abramowitz, Washington,

D.C.; Mr. & Mrs. Bernard Lipman, Augusta, Maine; Norman W. Kamerow, Washington, D.C.; Mr. & Mrs. Ashworth N. Stull, Boston, Mass.; Mr. & Mrs. William Epstein, Boston, Mass.; Elliot A. Siegel, Chevy Chase, Md.; Herbert Saturn, Washington, D.C.; Dr. Sidney M. Fogelman, Washington, D.C.; and the Institute of Lithuanian Folk Dance, Chicago.

Gifts to the American Folklife Center Fund are gifts to the United States of America, and they are tax deductible under the Internal Revenue Code. Information about the Fund may be obtained by writing directly to the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20540.



Board of Trustees at the Library of Congress. Top, left to right—Carol Nemeyer, Associate Librarian of Congress; St. John Terrell, New Jersey; William Whalen, Director, National Park Service. Bottom, left to right—Janet Anderson, Texas; Alex Mercure, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture; Wayland Hand, California.

*Blue Ridge Study continued*

and continuing through more recent interdisciplinary approaches to the study of mountain culture. Unlike previous studies which have focused most often on musical traditions, the Folklife Center study is designed to provide a comprehensive view of the cultural life of the region through extensive field research and by using the abundant stock of existing documentation.

Following preliminary research and preparation of information guides, the field team will meet in Washington in July for pre-fieldwork planning and discussions. The fieldwork phase of the project will run throughout August and September. Members of the field team include Geraldine Johnson, University of Maryland; Patrick B. Mullen, Ohio State University; Margaret McClellan Owen and Blanton Owen of the Blue Ridge Institute at Ferrum College; Terry Eiler and Lyntha Eiler, who will serve as documentary media specialists; and Carl Fleischhauer and Howard W. (Rusty) Marshall of the American Folklife Center.

Materials gathered during the project

will be housed at the Library of Congress for use by researchers and the general public and may be used in a publication, phonograph recording, or other products. In addition, the work will expand the Blue Ridge Parkway's research base and provide information for further development of interpretive materials and presentations for visitors. The Folklife Center and Park Service consider this cooperative effort a model project to demonstrate ways in which folklore and folklife can be incorporated in National Park interpretive programs throughout the nation.

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*Nevada continued*

documenting ranching and community life, and further team visits are planned to coincide with seasonal changes in ranch work.

In May, Bert Wilson, Linda Gastañaga, Rusty Marshall, and Carl Fleischhauer studied cattle ranching, sheep tending, vernacular architecture, religion, foodways, ethnicity among Basque, Italian, and German Ameri-

cans, and working cowboy life. The summer phase of fieldwork will look at those features and others such as haying, bunkhouse furnishings, willow corral construction, and other ranch crafts.

The work in Paradise Valley is one component of the Nevada Community Folklife Project, a cooperative project developed by the American Folklife Center and the Smithsonian Institution at the invitation of the Foresta Institute in Carson City. For the other component the Smithsonian's Folklife Programs will research and assist in a series of local presentations with accompanying scholarly and instructional materials featuring community folk cultural resources in the state.

The Folklife Center research team includes William A. Wilson of Utah State University, Oregon State Folk Arts Coordinator Suzi Jones, Basque culture specialist Linda Gastañaga of Reno, Nevada, Richard E. Ahlborn of the Smithsonian Institution's Division of Community Life, Thomas Vennum of the Smithsonian's Folklife Programs, and Carl Fleischhauer and Howard W. Marshall of the Center.

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