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SONGS OF VIETNAM-ERA SOLDIERS FEATURED AT CENTER PROGRAM

By James Hardin

Among the collections that make up the Archive of Folk Culture are songs of the American Revolution, the Civil War, and the First and Second World wars. The researcher may be surprised, however, to come upon a collection of songs from a war of more recent vintage, one that evokes powerful and complex emotions.

Two collections of songs that grew out of personal reactions to the Vietnam War were recorded or assembled by Gen. Edward Lansdale and donated by him to the Archive of Folk Culture in 1975 and 1977. The songs were composed and sung by soldiers and civilians and express a range of thoughts and feelings about being in Vietnam, "in country," as it was called—they are songs of bitterness, satire, loneliness, and humor, some with original words and lyrics, some with words that play ironically against the folk or popular tunes to which they have been set. To call attention to the collection and to honor the contributors to it, the Folklife Center presented a concert, reception, and symposium on July 13 entitled "In Country: Songs of the Vietnam-era Soldier." The program was supported by contributions from the John W. and Clara C. Higgins Foundation and the Friends of the Vietnam Memorial.



Gen. Edward G. Lansdale entertaining himself with his harmonica, an instrument he used effectively to make new friends. *Photo courtesy of Cecil Currey*

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Folklorist Lydia Fish of Buffalo State College, who has been interviewing Vietnam veterans and studying their music for a number of years, proposed the program and assisted Center folklife researcher Peter Bartis in organizing it. The concert featured four men who have gained reputations for singing the songs, either their own or those of their colleagues: Col. James T. "Bull" Durham (United States Air Force, retired), a collector and performer with a number of recordings of military songs to his credit; Bill Ellis, who served with the First Cavalry and was a well-known front-line performer whose songs were sent to Lansdale for the collection; Chuck Rosenberg, a veteran of the Sixth Special Forces, who is now a performer and researcher with a one-man show, "Jodie's Got Your Cadillac," although his own work is not included in the Lansdale Collection; and Dolf Droge, who served on active duty in the Korean War, was in Vietnam with the Agency for International Development, and is the only one of the four who actually played for General Lansdale.

The concert in the Library's Coolidge Auditorium opened with a dramatic flourish as Bill Dower, a retired Marine Corp chief drill instructor, called to attention six marines who trooped from the back of the auditorium to the stage singing the cadences (jodies) that are customarily associated with military life and particularly with marching. The controlled, uniformed presentation provided an ironic frame for the irreverent, informal, personal songs that followed, and emphasized by contrast one purpose of the concert and of General Lansdale's original intention: to portray the deepest feelings about the American Vietnam experience as they are reflected and revealed in songs composed by the men and women who were part of it.

Librarian of Congress James Billington welcomed the audience to the concert, commenting that you never know what collection will gain importance and value for future generations, and thanked Mrs. Pat Lansdale, in the audience, for her late husband's work and foresight. Congressman Lane Evans of Illinois, chairman of the

House Committee on Vietnam-Era Veterans and himself a former marine, remarked that the songs "tell a lot about the time, the war, and the people who fought that war," and thanked the Library for calling attention to them and to the men whose feelings they express. Two themes marked the day, and were expressed again and again at the reception that followed the concert: the recognition that a concert at the Library of Congress confers, and the thrill of the performers at meeting one another for the first time. They had sometimes heard and sung one another's songs, but had always performed separately.

At the symposium the audience learned more about the creation and uses of music during wartime and about General Lansdale and the performers. Harold Langley, curator of naval history at the Smithsonian Institution, noted that in writing history it is difficult to get at individual feelings because it is "hard to separate the feelings of men from the actions of the team." These feelings, he pointed out, are often recorded in song. Lydia Fish described the making of the Lansdale collections and the musical climate in which they were created. A version of her remarks appears in this issue of *Folklife Center News*, "Vietnam War—American Songs." Cecil Currey, professor of military history at the University of South Florida, gave an informal account of Edward Lansdale, evoking the spirit of the man with an impromptu performance on one of Lansdale's own harmonicas, an instrument the general found both personally entertaining and useful in making new friends. Part of Lansdale's success, both as a military intelligence officer and as a collector of songs, can be ascribed to the simple fact that he liked other people and was a good listener. He collected songs from the Vietnamese as well as from Americans as a way of getting to know them and established a household in Saigon where you could always "find out what was happening." Those who would like to read more about the remarkable general may consult Dr. Currey's book, *Edward Lansdale: The Unquiet American* (Houghton Mifflin, 1989).

Called an intuitive folklorist by

Lydia Fish for his perceptions and his collecting instincts, Lansdale had a broad view of military intelligence and understood that the war under way was one that battled for the hearts and minds of the Vietnamese people. He put together a collection that enlarges our view of Vietnam, its people, and our experience there. It was clear by the end of the "In Country" program how important the Lansdale Collection has already become to those associated with it.

□

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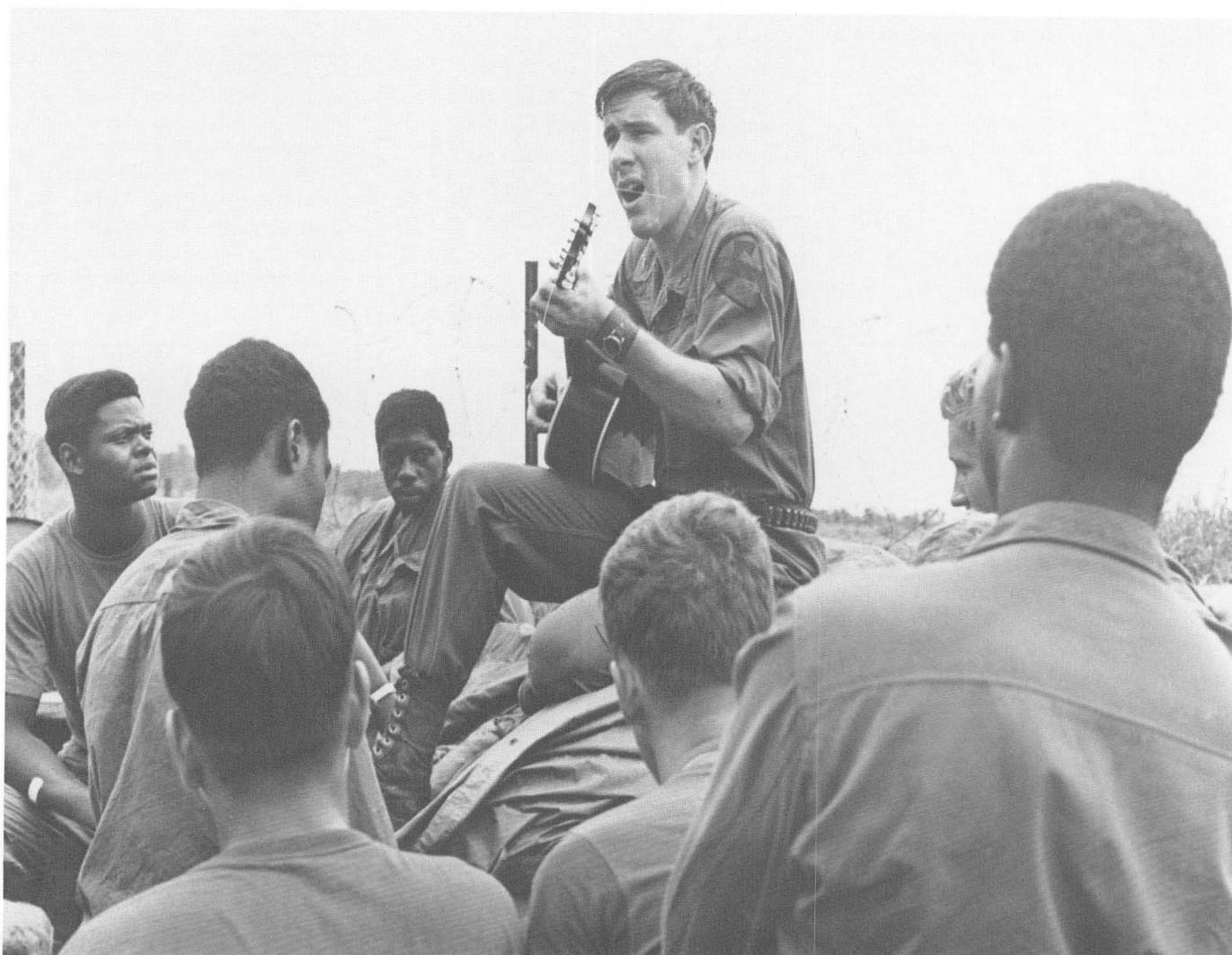
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Performers at the Folklife Center's "In Country" concert sing together at the end of the show. From left to right, Bull Durham, Dolf Droge, Chuck Rosenberg, Bill Ellis, and Bill Dower. *Photo by Reid Baker*

**VIETNAM WAR—AMERICAN SONGS:
THE GENERAL EDWARD G. LANSDALE COLLECTION**



Bill Ellis, infantryman, First Cavalry, U.S. Army, performing at a forward firebase in Vietnam, about 1968. Ellis was one of five performers at the Center's "In Country" concert. See page 3. Photo by Thomas Tynes, courtesy of Bill Ellis

By Lydia Fish

The following article is adapted from a paper presented at the Folklife Center's "In Country" symposium, July 13.

Most of the songs of the American sixties were part of life in the combat zone during the Vietnam War, from hard rock to folk. Sony radios, Akai stereos, and Teak tape decks were easily available, American music was performed live by the ubiquitous Filipino rock bands, and AFVN Radio and GI-operated "underground" stations broadcast round the clock. The troops had their own "Top Forty," mostly of songs that expressed their

own concerns, like "Leaving on a Jet Plane" and "Run Through the Jungle."

But there were other songs "in country" in Vietnam. Some of these were part of the traditional occupational folklore of the military. The pilots who flew off the carriers and out of Thailand sang songs that were known by the men who flew in the two world wars and in the Korean War; and "grunts" learned songs their grandfathers had sung in the trenches in France. There were also the songs that soldiers and civilians, men and women, made for their own entertainment. These grew directly out of the Vietnam experience, and many were

strongly influenced by the folksong revival of the late fifties and early sixties.

Many soldiers were already experienced country, rock, or folk musicians when they arrived in Vietnam, and some formed Kingston-Trio-style trios and quartets like the Merry-men, the Blue Stars, the Intruders, and the Four Blades. The groups performed informally in barracks and mess halls or in military clubs, and a few performers, like Bill Ellis, toured the outlying fire bases as part of their official duties, traveling where the USO performers could not go. A few amateur composers wrote both words and music, but most wrote new lyrics for

well-known folk, country, or popular tunes. Barry Sadler's "Ballad of the Green Berets," for example, spawned dozens of parodies.

Like all folklore, these songs served as entertainment, as a means of unit definition and bonding, and as a strategy for survival. They also provided a means for the expression of protest, fear, and frustration, of grief and of longing for home. All the traditional themes of military folksong can be found in them; praise of the great leader, celebration of heroic deeds, laments for the dead comrades, disparagement of other units, and complaints about incompetent officers and vainglorious rear-echelon troops. And like all soldiers in all wars, the troops in Vietnam sang too of epic drinking bouts and encounters with exotic young women.

The same technology that made it possible for the troops to listen to commercial rock music—"from the Delta to the DMZ"—provided ideal conditions for the transmission of this newly created folklore. The widespread availability of inexpensive portable tape recorders meant that concerts, music nights in the mess, or informal bar performances could be recorded, copied, and passed along to friends.

That technology was used by one of the most remarkable personalities to emerge from the Vietnam War, U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Edward Lansdale (1908-1987), and the result is a collection of songs many folklorists would be proud of. The collection is in two parts, the first made while Lansdale was serving as head of the Senior Liaison Office of U.S. Mission in Saigon. The songs were recorded at Lansdale's house in Saigon by singer, composer, and musician friends, both American and Vietnamese: Saigon government officials, soldiers serving as advisors to the Vietnamese army, and civilians employed by AID, the Foreign Service, USIS, CORDS, and the CIA. The songs range from the patriotic ("I'm Proud To Be an American") to the cynical ("We Have Pacified This Land One Hundred Times"), from classic soldier songs about heroic deeds ("Battle for the Ia Drang Valley") and epic drinking bouts ("Ba Muoi Ba") to highly top-

ical satirical songs about the political situation in Vietnam ("I Feel Like A Coup Is Coming On").

In 1967 Lansdale put together a collection of fifty-one of these songs, "In the Midst of War," with a narration explaining the circumstances of their composition and performance. He sent copies of the tapes to Lyndon Johnson, members of his cabinet, and several officials in Saigon, including Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge and Gen. William Westmoreland. Since his intention was, as he wrote, "to catch some of the emotions of the Vietnam War in these folk songs and, with them, try to impart a greater understanding of the political and psychological nature of the struggle to those making decisions," he was in effect using folklore as a form of military intelligence. He was worried that decisions were being made outside the context of the needs and feelings of either the Vietnamese people or the American troops. And he was convinced that the government's best weapon against Communist insurgency was the genuine support and trust of the people, a belief that ran counter to the conventional American military wisdom, which was to rely on force.

Lansdale returned to the United States in 1968, but friends and com-

rades continued to send him recordings from Vietnam and Thailand, and to drop by his house in Virginia to sing new songs they had written or collected. Thus he was able to put together a second collection of 160 songs entitled "Songs by Americans in the Vietnam War." Lansdale edited both these collections and provided them with excellent notes. Copies of the two collections were donated to the Library's Archive of Folk Culture in 1975 and 1977, respectively, where they are identified by catalog nos. AFS 17,483; 18,882; and 18,977-18,982. They provide rich material for those folklorists, historians, and other scholars who are interested in the culture of American soldiers in Vietnam. □

Lydia Fish is a professor of folklore at Buffalo State College and director of the Vietnam Veterans Oral History and Folklore Project. The project is engaged in an ongoing effort to collect, preserve, and make more widely known the folksongs of the Vietnam War. Anyone who wishes to contribute manuscripts, books, records, or tapes to the project, or to find out more about it, should contact Dr. Fish at the Department of Anthropology, Buffalo State College, 1300 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, New York 14222. Telephone (716) 878-6110



General Lansdale's house in Saigon, about 1966, a gathering place for soldiers and civilians, Americans and Vietnamese, where many songs were recorded. Photo courtesy of Cecil Currey

THE MOCK WEDDING: FOLK DRAMA IN SASKATCHEWAN AND THE PLAIN STATES



A mock wedding couple before the minister, whose script is hidden within a large book. Carmichael, Saskatchewan.
Photo Courtesy Marj Ann Metz

By Michael Taft

The following article is based on an illustrated lecture entitled "Mock Your Neighbor: Bawdy Masquerades on the Great Canadian Prairie," presented at the Library of Congress on May 10.

Among the lesser-studied forms of North American folklore is folk drama. While traditions such as the Newfoundland mumming sword-play—moribund for a generation or more—have received considerable attention, present-day folk drama traditions remain to be explored. One such dramatic form, for example, found in the Plains States and Canadian Prairie Provinces, is the mock wedding.

The mock wedding is a dramatic parody in which members of a community dress as a wedding entourage

and stage a marriage ceremony. Players have specific roles and there is a script in which several of the players have speaking parts. This form of folk drama is characterized by cross-dressing, bawdy behavior, ad-libbing, and general carousing. The mock wedding is a ritual within a ritual, for it most often occurs as part of the larger community celebration of a couple's marriage or their wedding anniversary. In Nebraska, the drama seems to occur more often at wedding receptions,¹ while in Saskatchewan and North Dakota milestone anniversaries—most notably the twenty-fifth—are the more common context. This drama, however, might also be part of wedding and baby showers, birthdays, community benefit concerts, or adult Halloween house-visiting. As I am most familiar with the Saskatchewan wedding anniver-

sary performance, I will describe that particular context.

Saskatchewan is made up of small, agricultural communities, many with populations of less than one hundred families. Despite the small size of their communities (or perhaps because of it), these rural people busy themselves with an array of local functions—from wild fowl suppers and rodeos to daily get-togethers at the local café or pub. The wedding anniversary is one such occasion for the community to gather. For a couple's twenty-fifth anniversary, the community will hold a celebration in their honor, usually in the local hall or church basement. The honored couple, surrounded by friends, neighbors, and relatives, is regaled with speeches (sometimes of the "roast" variety), gifts, poems composed in their honor by the local poet, and favorite songs sung by mem-

bers of the community. Food and drink are essential elements of this celebration, and usually there is dancing, either to the music of a local band or to prerecorded music.

Unannounced and supposedly unexpected, a mock wedding procession enters the hall and takes over "center stage." Amidst laughter, jeers, and expressions of dismay, the procession arranges itself in a tableau: a minister standing before a bride and groom, surrounded by bridesmaids, parents of the mock couple, a best man or ring-bearer, sometimes a flower girl, sometimes a musician, sometimes other *dramatis personae*. The most striking feature of the entourage is that all female parts are played by men and all male parts are played by women.

The minister begins with a "dearly beloved" speech, a parody of the actual wedding liturgy. Holding a telephone book, old catalog, or perhaps a *Playboy* magazine, the minister reads the vows to the couple before pronouncing them "man and wife." The finale usually involves a post-nuptial kiss (sometimes devolving into a wrestling match) and the presentation of a bridal bouquet composed of local, noxious weeds to the honored couple.

The drama is usually limited to this parody of a wedding, but it can also include further scenes. For example, one performance included a comic elopement scene because the honored couple had eloped. While such a parody relates to an actual event in the lives of the honored couple, at least one stock scene is also part of this folk dramatic tradition: at the point when the minister asks if anyone can show why the couple should not be wed, a character playing a girl friend—either pregnant or carrying a baby—will rush forward, causing a scene within the scene.

Like the girl friend, most of the roles in the drama are stereotypes of typical members of a wedding: the weeping mother (sometimes carrying a roll of toilet paper to wipe her eyes); a father of the bride (usually carrying a shotgun with which to prod the groom); a ring-bearer (who may wear a suit covered with jar-sealer rings or respond to the minister's call for the ring by ringing a bell or producing a teething ring, cigar band, washer, or

other gag ring). The minister (the only role that can be played by either a man or a woman) wears a funny cloak and hat, carries the aforementioned liturgical "text," and often has a jug of hooch hanging from his/her sash.

The bride and groom, however, are not so much stereotypes as caricatures of the honored couple. In their dress, mannerisms, and stage actions, they parody known characteristics. At the same time, the minister reveals further characteristic and humorous or embarrassing events in the lives of the anniversary couple through a series of vows. For example, in one drama the groom was asked if he promised to buy his chickens from the market rather than steal them from the Hutterites, while in another drama the bride was asked if she promised to shoot the deer when she was the only one with a loaded gun. Both vows related to funny stories known within the community about the people being honored.

The mock wedding would not be possible without a producer-director. Like the local poet, musician, raconteur,

woodcarver, cake decorator, or other person with an acknowledged talent, the producer-director of mock weddings serves the community when the need arises. In almost all cases, the producer-director is a woman, and she is in charge of all aspects of the event, writing the script (she is often the local poet as well and the script is sometimes written in verse), gathering props and costumes, and selecting members of the cast.

Some weeks before the couple's anniversary, friends or relatives of the couple will contact the producer-director and ask her to prepare a mock wedding. Because she must either write or, in most cases, refashion her existing script to fit the couple to be honored, she will ask for interesting or funny stories about the couple, or specific quirks or traits of character that make them distinctive within the community; in many cases, of course, she will already have the information, since she is the couple's neighbor and most likely their friend. It is difficult to keep secrets in such small communities, and "open secrets" are grist for the producer-director's mill.



The honored couple, surrounded by friends and neighbors. Lintlaw, Saskatchewan, 1980s. Photo courtesy of Alvena and Bill Oryszczyn

There is little difficulty in getting men to play the parts of women. While Saskatchewan society is typical of mainstream North American culture in its machismo ethic, there is a kind of reverse-machismo at work during the mock wedding. Only a "real man" can give up his dignity with good humor; only a man entirely in control of himself and entirely confident in his manliness would agree to dress in women's clothes. There are, in fact, some men who insist on being part of the production and who take pride in their roles.

Any sense of lost manly dignity is counterbalanced by the men's behavior during the performance: much more than the women-dressed-as-men, the female impersonators engage in considerable mugging and clowning. They parody feminine stereotypes through mincing, blushing, and speaking in falsetto voices; or, they

assert the masculinity beneath their costumes through making their muscles bulge and strutting and swaggering in a supposedly manly fashion. They often exhibit bawdy behavior by lifting their skirts, scratching themselves, or revealing and "redistributing" their movable breasts; and their costumes often exaggerate the female anatomy, with padding used to create grossly oversized breasts and backsides.

Through this exaggerated and bawdy behavior, the men show that they are ultimately in control. The men are not so much playing a role as playing *with* a role; and if a man were perceived to be taking his role seriously, his manliness might well be called into question.

The women act in a much more straightforward style. Being used to wearing men's clothes on the farm (or wearing clothes fashioned after men's

styles), their costumes are not so far from their everyday dress, and they feel no need to reassure either themselves or their audience about their real-life status. But the women face other risks. Because the mock wedding is a woman's production, the women are responsible for how the drama is received by the community. Because so much of the script is derived from local gossip, the women producer-directors must know what they can and cannot include; they must know how far they can go in revealing the honored couple to their community. They walk the fine line between good clean fun and malicious gossip.

Standards of propriety vary from community to community, from couple to couple. In one drama, a vow that the bride would scratch her husband's psoriasis was considered within the bounds of good taste; in another, however, the father's shotgun was dispensed with because it was known that the woman being honored was pregnant at the time of her marriage.

The localization and tailoring of mock wedding scripts seems to be a phenomenon of the northern Plains and Prairie Provinces. While the roots of the mock wedding go back to nineteenth-century Tom Thumb and womenless weddings in eastern North America,² they owe little now to that tradition. By comparison, the lesser, more conservative mock wedding tradition of southern Ontario relies much more on a standard, non-localized script.³ While further research might reveal a more complex pattern of influence and dissemination of the greater North American wedding parody tradition, there seems to be a regional dimension to the mock wedding forms found in the Plains and Prairies.

The distinctiveness of the Saskatchewan mock wedding, at any rate, lies in what it says about the role of women on large, modern, family-run farms. Among the most common topics of conversation among Saskatchewan farm wives is the conflict they feel between the traditional feminine roles they are expected to fulfill and the actual roles of farm workers they must fulfill: on a family-run farm, the women must perform many tasks ordinarily regarded as men's work. From



Mock wedding producer-director Alvena Oryszczyn with bridal veil. Lintlaw, Saskatchewan, 1986. Photo courtesy of Michael Taft

driving grain trucks and combines, maintaining outbuildings, and slaughtering animals, to keeping the accounts, women are engaged in work outside the traditional female roles.

Women's concern over this necessary performance of a double role reveals itself both in conversation and in other forms of expression.⁴ Perhaps because prairie people seem especially prone to use costumes as a form of expression—parades, benefit concerts, sporting events, and especially Halloween (which is an important community holiday in the province) all involve costumes or masks⁵—it is not so surprising that this topic should be at the center of many mock wedding scripts. In fact, the mock wedding as a whole might be seen as a commentary on the role of women in Saskatchewan society. The very fact that women are dressed as men in the mock wedding sends the message, “as farm wives, we are both women and men at the same time.”

The mock wedding vows also address this topic; while some vows concern gossip, others concern the expectations of the farm wife. The minister asks the bride, “Do you promise to clean the slaughterhouse mess and not love and honor your husband any less?” and asks the groom, “Do you promise to keep her dressed in the finest of jeans, even if they are beyond your means?” And again, he asks the bride, “Wilt thou promise to tend the chickens, milk the cows, and churn the butter?” “Wilt thou promise to paint the granaries?”

The mock bride's vows, however, also include all the domestic duties and traditional role expectations: “Do you promise from harvest to harvest to serve him with coffee and cake?” “Will you take him to the health spa for sexual rejuvenation?” “Will you promise to produce four children?” “Wilt thou promise to change the diapers?”

The mock wedding thus allows the women to turn the tables on the men—making *them* feel the ambivalence of having to live two roles. Through the drama, through putting on women's clothes, the men experience what the women experience every day of their lives.

□

Notes

1. Personal communication from Roger Welsch, May 5 and 6, 1989.

2. See Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1984), pp. 117–25.

3. See Pauline Greenhill, “Mock Weddings in Ontario: Traditional and Non-Traditional Secular Ritual,” paper read at the annual meeting of the Folklore Studies Association of Canada, Winnipeg, 1986.

4. For a discussion of this topic revealed in narratives, see Michael Taft, *Discovering Saskatchewan Folklore: Three Case Studies* (Edmonton: NeWest Press, 1983), pp. 73–78.

5. The only scholarly discussion of adult Saskatchewan Halloween masking and house-visiting is Darryl Hunter, “No ‘Malice in Wonderland’: Conservation and Change in the Three Hallowe'ens of Ann Mesko,” *Culture & Tradition* 7 (1983), 36–53.

Michael Taft is a freelance folklorist who lives in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. His books include Discovering Saskatchewan Folklore (NeWest Press, 1983). Dr. Taft will continue his investigation of the mock wedding over the next several years. He would welcome comments on this article, leads for further research, and comparative material from other researchers. He may be contacted at 803 6th Avenue, North, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada S7K 2T1. Telephone (306) 242-1423



The manly bride. Brainard, Nebraska, 1959. Photo courtesy of Edith Stuchlik Morrissey

ITALIAN REGIONALISM AND PAN-ITALIAN TRADITIONS

By John Alexander Williams

This is the second in a series of articles written initially to provide fieldworkers with historical background and theoretical considerations as they embark on the Center's "Italian-Americans in the West" Columbian Quincentenary field project. See Folklife Center News, volume XI, number 2, spring 1989.

In assessing the balance of cultural continuity and change among Italian-Americans, due regard should be paid to regional and even local variations in the Italian backgrounds of their immigrant ancestors. From late Roman times until the last third of the nineteenth century, Italy remained a territory of city-states and small duchies and kingdoms. In Metternich's contemptuous phrase, Italy was merely "a geographic expression," and Italian national unity was elusive, even after political unity was achieved under the Piedmontese royal house of Savoy and reinforced by the twenty-year fascist dictatorship of Benito Mussolini.

While standard Italian based on the Tuscan dialect emerged as a written language at the time of Dante, it was not a widely spoken language until after World War II; even educated people preferred to converse in their regional dialects. Regional differences were reinforced by the mountainous terrain of the peninsula and its adjacent islands and by the lack of a dominant metropolis such as London or Paris. Rome, Milan, Naples, Turin, Venice, Florence, Genoa, and Palermo have each played important roles in the formation of modern Italy, and even today the country's urban network more closely resembles the decentralized network of the United States than the centralized cultural regimes of other West European states.

Only since World War II, with the growth of popular democratic institutions and of national transportation

and communications networks, has Italian cultural unity been achieved. And yet, it is also worth noting that regionalism in Italy has not spawned separatism, as it has in Britain, France, and especially Spain. Apart from small linguistic enclaves along the French and Austrian borders, Italy presents a complex picture of ethnic unity amid regional diversity.

The transformation of Italian-Americans from immigrants to ethnics parallels—in time and to some extent in character—the transformation of Italy from a geographical expression to a modern state. Only a relatively small number of experts and political refugees among the immigrants brought with them a significant sense of Italian nationalism. The *campanilismo* (suspicion of anyone born outside the village) that affected the outlooks of Italian villages was reproduced to some extent in the village-based clusters found in big American cities, notably in the form of *feste* in honor of the patron saint of an ancestral village. But, except in New York City, immigrants from a particular village were not numerous enough for *campanilismo* to serve as a principle of social organization, and so the earliest forms of community organization followed regional lines.

Emigration from northern Italy to France, North Africa, and South America preceded mass migration to the United States, and northern emigration generally preceded emigration from southern Italy (where in turn a generation of internal migration preceded emigration abroad). Most Anglo-Americans were aware of the distinction between northern and southern Italians, and this distinction gained force from the official classification of immigrants into one group or the other upon entry to the United States. However, immigration officials usually lumped Liguria with Sicily and other southern regions, despite the fact that the Ligurian capital, Genoa, lies considerably to the north of Tuscany

and other "northern" classifications. Apparently the distinction was drawn on racist lines between lighter- and darker-skinned immigrants, and the Ligurians—doubtless as a result of the seafaring traditions that took them to all corners of the Mediterranean—apparently looked swarthier than the Anglo-American notion of what a northern Italian should look like allowed.

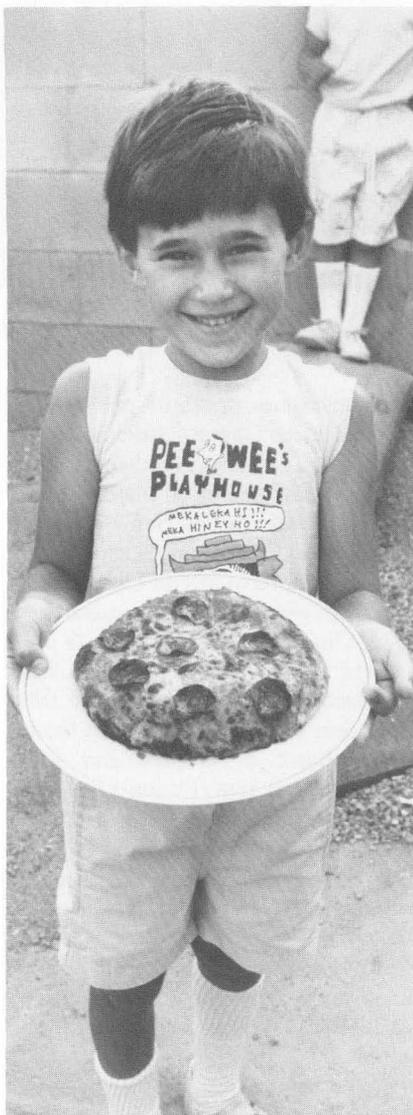
Regional organizations, mostly mutual benefit insurance organizations or devotional societies organized within larger Catholic parishes, were the first building blocks of Italian-American ethnic identity in U.S. communities. But by the 1890s, there were Italian-American leaders who could no longer find in regional mobilization sufficient scope for their ambitions. Businessmen and politicians had the most to gain from mobilizing a sense of pan-Italian ethnicity. Dino Cinel has described the formation of inter-regional business institutions in San Francisco such as the Colombo Market and the Bank of Italy (later Bank of America), as well as the advantages that manufacturing and agribusiness leaders such as Marco Fontana (Del Monte) and Pietro Rossi (Italian Swiss Colony) gained by promoting pan-Italian ethnic solidarity among Italian and Italian-American wage workers (*From Italy to San Francisco*, 1982). He also describes the early political mobilization of Italian-American voters in the city and the galvanizing effect produced by the political debate generated among San Francisco Italians by the rise of fascism in Italy. The Italian language press was yet another secular promoter of ethnic identity as it evolved during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries from compilations of reports of regional matters to a focus on pan-Italian issues and organizations. Meanwhile, fraternal organizations, such as mutual benefit societies, organized originally along regional lines, evolved into federated membership

organizations, such as the Italian Catholic Federation or the Order of the Sons of Italy in America, whose local lodges developed around the nuclei of the original regional clubs.

Judged by the success of Italian-founded California corporations and San Francisco area politicians, the efforts to promote pan-Italian sentiment among later immigrants and their children were successful, but after World War II both the corporations and Italian-American wage-earners and voters merged into the regional mainstream. By the 1980s, a well-delineated system of ethnic brokerage had evolved in the Bay Area, but only a relatively small number of people actually made their living as brokers. Chiefly the leadership of pan-Italian organizations fell in the postwar era to men, such as the owners of food-related businesses or independent professionals, who could increase their customers and clients through the continued promotion of Italian-American ethnicity.

Three notable aspects of expressive culture derive from the organized promotion of pan-Italian ethnicity during the first half of this century. One was the reinvention of Christopher Columbus as an ethnic hero and of Columbus Day as an amalgam of a traditional Italian saint's day festival and an Anglo-American patriotic ceremony. The second was the development of a repertoire of popular music drawn both from Italian art music and from Neapolitan vaudeville as well as from folk music. The third was the development of the pasta-and-pizza restaurant cuisine known to (and adopted by) Anglo-Americans as "Italian food." Today these inter-related pan-Italian festival, music, and food complexes are significant components of Italian-American ethnic identity, both within and outside of the ethnic community. Further research in each of these areas may illuminate the processes of cultural construction, both as they involve negotiation between the Italian-American minority and the host culture and the fusion of folk cultural elements with elements drawn from the popular and elite segments of organized cultural life.

The adoption of Columbus as an American national hero was an invention of American nationalists during the decades following the American Revolution. For patriots of the early republic, Columbus symbolized the claim they staked on the entire North American continent, while later writers and artists turned Columbus into a symbol of romantic individualism, a hero whose personal attributes overshadowed the social and political context of his achievements (such as his Italian birth or Spanish sponsorship).



Frankie Briguglio of San Pedro, California, proudly displays the first pizza baked in his family's new *forno*, a traditional outdoor oven. (IAW-DT-B008-27) Photo 1989 by David A. Taylor

For much of the nineteenth century, the celebration of Columbus in literature, the arts, and ritual remained in Yankee hands. But while the "Italianization" of Columbus began in eastern cities such as New York and Philadelphia, Italian-Americans in the West made significant contributions to this process. Columbus Day parades began in San Francisco in 1869, but it was only after 1885 that an elaborate Columbus Day pageant and parade emerged as an important occasion for proclaiming pan-Italian identity. This became an annual institution in San Francisco after World War I and came to include a variety of rituals: a mock landing of Columbus staged from fishing boats in the harbor, the selection of a pageant queen ("Queen Isabella"), and the impersonation of Columbus by a succession of men who each in their turn acquired legendary reputations among California Italian-Americans for the talent and enthusiasm they invested in this role.

One of the interesting questions about the Columbus Day complex is the extent to which it combined Italian and Anglo-American elements. The landing pageant and the costuming of Columbus impersonators, for example, may owe much to the John Vanderlyn painting, *The Landing of Columbus*, commissioned for the U.S. Capitol rotunda in 1839 and reproduced widely on U.S. postage stamps in 1869 and 1892. The Columbus Day parades (generally not a feature of the Anglo-American Columbus Day before 1892) may owe much to Italian religious processions, especially if we consider the importance of Columbus statues in the Columbus Day complex. The Italian-American community of Walla Walla, Washington, erected its Columbus statue in 1910 and, according to local historians, the annual Columbus Day festival dates from that year. Meanwhile, in 1907 Colorado became the first state to make Columbus Day a legal holiday, thanks to a drive led by local *prominenti* aided by the Italian consul in Denver. The holiday and its associated practices and artifacts remain an important cultural landmark for Italians. For example, when during the recent restoration of California's Gold Rush era capitol in Sacramento architects proposed elimi-

nating an anachronistic Columbus statue that had been installed in the capitol rotunda under Anglo-American auspices in 1882, Italian-American politicians and organizations raised a storm of protest, forcing the reinstatement of the statue.

The emergence of a pan-Italian musical repertoire is more difficult to trace, but the historical record provides tantalizing clues to a process of borrowing from folk, art, military, and popular music sources. Walt Whitman's "Italian Music in Dakota," referring to strains of Verdi played by a military band the poet heard at a fort on the Missouri River in the 1880s, derives from an era when most of the bandmasters and many of the musicians posted at forts throughout the western states were drawn from the ranks of Italian experts. Carla Bianco noted in *The Two Rosetos* (1974) that many of the Italian-American males in Roseto, Pennsylvania, belonged to that town's brass band, which entertained at community functions and competed on a regional basis in contests with other bands from similar communities. Local histories contain photographs of brass bands in Italian-American coal mining communities in Utah and Washington State, and they were probably widespread in other western states. Sidney Robertson Cowell recorded mandolinists and other Italian folk music performers in fishing communities on San Francisco Bay during the 1930s, while commercial recordings were made of individual mandolinists and of Italian string orchestras. Mandolin bands apparently remain a popular form of Italian-American music making in the Bay Area and probably elsewhere in the West. Russ Colombo, the Italian-American singer who perfected the "crooning" popular music style later made famous by Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra, Vic Damone, and Tony Bennett, was from Washington State (as was Crosby, the only non-Italian on the list).

Bianco found the belief widespread among Italian-Americans that Italians had actually "invented" music, while the typical *prominenti* accounts of Italian-American community history often emphasize associations with



John Vanderlyn, *The Landing of Columbus, 1492*. U.S. Capitol Collection

famous Italian operatic performers such as Enrico Caruso, Adelina Patti, and Luisa Tetrazini. Yet Louis Martini refers in his oral history to a "secondary opera" in San Francisco where poor Italian-Americans who could not afford to attend Caruso performances went to hear the music they loved. Cinel notes that vaudeville performers flowed from Naples to San Francisco along the same route that linked San Francisco immigrant banks to the Bank of Naples and food importers and travel agents to their Italian trading partners. While folk music and operatic traditions contributed to the pan-Italian repertoire, probably the Neapolitan music hall of the early twentieth century was the greatest single source of the music that Italian-Americans—and Anglo-Americans—today think of as uniquely Italian.

Neapolitan commerce probably also had a formative influence on what (until recently, at least) most Americans think of today as "Italian food"—pizza, pasta, red sauces, and cheap red wine. According to one source, American pizza—generically

a derivative of the flat bread and *con-panatico* that has existed in some form or another in Italy since Roman times—derives from a dish specially produced in 1890 incorporating the colors of the Italian national flag (red sauce, white mozzarella cheese, and green garnishes) to celebrate the annual residence of the Piedmontese royal house in Naples as required by the kingdom's constitution. As for pasta, the few folklorists who have investigated its Italian-American foodways disagree as to the reasons for its Americanization. Bianco found that the use of pasta in Pennsylvania differed from Italian precedents only in the more frequent use of richer sauces and the adaptation of forms, such as lasagna, which had not been part of her informants' Apulian regional repertoire. But Toni Frati, another Pennsylvania researcher, found that her informants used pasta more frequently and more as a staple in America than had been the case in the southern Italian regions from which they or their immigrant parents had come. Frati attributes this to the more limited availability in America of the vegetable staples that peasants had

grown in Italy, an explanation which may hold true for Philadelphia and other urban or industrial communities but probably would not hold true for California and other western locations where Italian-American private and commercial gardening was established. Food researchers in Utah found that some more exotic food choices persisted among Italian-Americans as a kind of "ethnic performance," especially in the use of organ meats and other animal parts that Anglo-Americans found distasteful. Regional specialties, such as the Ligurian pesto sauce and the Sicilian use of anchovies, may also have served as badges of regional identity within Italian-American communities and households.

But household foodways do not tell us as much about the creation of pan-Italian restaurant cuisines. The evolution of "Italian" restaurants beyond the boarding house and neighborhood clienteles paralleled the creation of other pan-Italian institutions and cultural expressions. This evolution took the form of a simplification of food types (such as the elimination of organ meats from menus and the more central importance of pasta and tomato sauces) and the expansion of menus from a regional to a pan-Italian repertoire. Another marker was the adoption of a red-white-and-green presentation aesthetic comparable to the one embodied in the Neapolitan pizza. Finally, both commercial and household Italian-American tastes became "Americanized" through the use of more meat, less garlic and other spices, and lighter oils. And like Columbus Day and "Italian" music, pan-Italian restaurant cuisine became both an internally proclaimed badge of ethnic identity and one recognized and widely admired by non-Italians as well. □

John Alexander Williams is director of the Center for Appalachian Studies at Appalachian State University. From 1986 until 1988 he was director of the presidential commission on the Columbus Quincentenary, and in 1989 he was a consultant to the American Folklife Center, engaged to research, plan, and organize the Center's "Italian-Americans in the West" project.

PANEL SELECTS OUTSTANDING FOLK RECORDINGS

By Jennifer Cutting

Educational organizations and members of the public often have difficulty locating good recordings of American traditional music because most of these recordings are produced by small, independent producers who do not have access to mainstream distribution networks. At the same time, these producers have difficulty penetrating educational and library markets. With the goal of helping both groups, the American Folklife Center has been compiling lists of folk music and folklore recordings for the past six years. For the purposes of librarians and teachers, these brief, annotated lists should be more useful than comprehensive discographies.

Thirty-six sound recordings have been selected for inclusion this year, and the list appears at the end of this article. *American Folk Music and Folklore Recordings 1988: A Selected List*, a free pamphlet published by the Folklife Center that includes annotations for each of the recordings, will appear at the end of the year.

The *Selected List* is limited to about thirty titles, and represents a process of critical appraisal. To qualify for consideration, a recording must:

- (1) have been released in the previous calendar year;
- (2) feature cultural traditions found within the United States;
- (3) emphasize "root traditions" over popular adaptations of traditional materials;
- (4) be conveniently available to purchasers in the United States;
- (5) include liner notes or accompanying booklets relating the recordings to the performers, their communities, genres, styles, or other pertinent information.

A panel of five specialists met at the Library of Congress on March 29 and 30 to select the best recordings from over 150 that were submitted. This

year's selection panel included Dorothy Sara Lee, from the Archives of Traditional Music, Indiana University; Richard March, from the Wisconsin Arts Board; Jay Orr, from the Country Music Foundation; Barry Lee Pearson of the University of Maryland; and Neil Rosenberg of Memorial University of Newfoundland.

This year, as in the past, the release dates of recordings caused eligibility difficulties, and the panel recommended revising next year's first criterion to read "must have been released in calendar year 1989 or calendar year 1988 if not previously submitted." Several criterion-challenging but promising submissions tempted panelists to explore the nuances of the second requirement, which has excluded recordings because the artists neither lived nor recorded in the United States. For example, Barry Lee Pearson argued that one recording excluded this year represented a genre that was important to the origin of a U.S. tradition. Richard March defended the criterion as a pragmatic measure that helps limit the list to a reasonable number. He reasoned that the list would end up encompassing world music if it were to take all such influences into account.

Unfortunately, lack of jacket or liner notes disqualified many good recordings. There was concern especially about making the public aware of recordings from underrepresented categories like tamburitza, polka, and Native American music. Within such categories, there are excellent recordings, but because they are produced by artists for their own communities producers provide little in the way of explanatory notes.

In a few cases, the panel considered recordings that featured "roots" musicians performing with students or friends from other cultural backgrounds. Thus it was important to

determine who had control of the recording's production, and to try to distinguish between innovations within the tradition and influences that had not been absorbed into the tradition. Equally perplexing was the assessment of submissions from collector-performers. The panel agreed that while some were excellent educational products and important catalysts, priority should be given to more traditional performers within the particular categories.

The 1988 list reflects the industry-wide growth of cassette and compact disc formats. In a significant increase over past years, thirty of the thirty-six recordings selected are available on cassette, and nine on compact disc. Most recordings are available in at least two formats, with only three recordings available exclusively on long-playing records.

The 1988 *Selected List* will be available free of charge from the American Folklife Center by the end of the year. Copies of the 1985, 1986, and 1987 lists are still available while supplies last.

Recordings selected for the 1988 list are the following:

REGIONAL

- Various artists: *Possum Up a Gum Stump* (Alabama Traditions 103)
 Various artists: *Virginia Traditions: Southwest Virginia Blues* (Blue Ridge Institute BRI 008)
 Various artists: *Virginia Traditions: Early Roanoke Country Radio* (Blue Ridge Institute BRI 010)
 Various artists: *Traditional Music from the Cumberland Plateau, Volumes 1 and 2* (County Records CO786/0787)
 Joe Panczewski: *Brand New Old Time Fiddle Tunes* (Voyager VRCS 335)

AFRICAN-AMERICAN

- James P. Johnson: *Carolina Shout* (Biograph BCD 105 DDD)
 Skip James, Blind Willie McTell, and Bukka White: *Three Shades of Blues* (Biograph BCD 107 ADD)
 Various artists: *New York Grassroots*

- Gospel: The Sacred Black Quartet Tradition* (Global Village GVM206)
 Various artists: *Bless My Bones: Memphis Gospel Radio — The Fifties* (Rounder 2063)
 The Golden Eagles: *Lightning and Thunder* (Rounder 2073)
 Various artists: *Gospel Warriors* (Spirit Feel SF1003)
 Various artists: *Chicago Gospel Pioneers* (Spirit Feel SF1004)
 Reverend Claude Jeter: *Yesterday and Today* (Spirit Feel SF1005)
 Marion Williams: *Born to Sing the Gospel* (Spirit Feel SF1007)

ANGLO-AMERICAN

- The Stanleys: *Stanley Series-Volume 3, Number 1* (Copper Creek CCSS-V3N1)
 Buck Owens & The Buckaroos: *Live at Carnegie Hall* (Country Music Foundation Records CMF-012-L)
 Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs and the Foggy Mountain Quartet: *You Can Feel It In Your Soul* (County Records CCS111)
 Melvin Whipple: *Echoes of the Past: Cowboy Poetry of Melvin Whipple* (Institute of Texan Cultures at San Antonio, no catalog number)
 Lee Sexton: *Whoa Mule* (June Appal Recordings JA0051)
 Gid Tanner & His Skillet Lickers:



- Early Classic String Bands — Volume 2* (Old Homestead OHCS-192)
 Various artists: *Ragged But Right: Great Country String Bands of the 1930s* (RCA/BMG Music 8416-2-R)
 Various artists: *Are You from Dixie? Great Country Brother Teams of the 1930s* (RCA/BMG Music 8417-2-R)
 Mac Wiseman: *Early Dot Recordings-Volume Two* (Rebel Records of Canada CCS109)
 Woody Guthrie: *Library of Congress Recordings* (Rounder 1041/2/3)

OTHER ETHNIC

- Chuck Guillory & The Rhythm Boys: *Grand Texas* (Arhoolie 5039)
 The Hackberry Ramblers: *Early Recordings 1935-1948: Louisiana Cajun Music, Volume 8* (Arhoolie/Old Timey 127)
 White Eagle Singers: *Intertribal Pow-Wow Songs* (Canyon Records CR-6197)
 Gu-Achi Fiddlers: *Old Time O'odham Fiddle Music* (Canyon Records CR-8082)
 Various artists: *A Colorado Dutch Hop Sampler* (Music Association of Swallow Hill, no catalog number)
 Various artists: *Raices Musicales: Music of Mexico and the Hispanic Southwest* (National Council for the Traditional Arts, no catalog number)
 Sol Hoopii: *Master of the Hawaiian Guitar — Volume 2* (Rounder 1025)
 D.L. Menard: *No Matter Where You At, There You Are* (Rounder 6021)
 Various artists: *¡Conjunto! Texas-Mexican Border Music, Volumes 1 and 2* (Rounder 6023/6024)
 Various artists: *Swissconsin: My Homeland* (Wisconsin Folklife Center Ethnic Music Series, no catalog number)

ANTHOLOGY

- Various artists: *The Library of Congress Banjo Collection* (Rounder Records 0237)
 Leadbelly and Woody Guthrie: *Folkways: The Original Vision* (Smithsonian Folkways SF 40001)

CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

CULTURAL CONSERVATION: RECONFIGURING THE CULTURAL MISSION

The American Folklife Center is seeking presentations for the first national conference on cultural conservation, to be held at the Library of Congress, May 16-19, 1990. The conference will address a number of questions and issues that surround the definition and protection of cultural heritage in the United States.

Throughout the 1980s, the concept of cultural conservation has been steadily gaining currency among specialists in a variety of fields seeking a more holistic approach to heritage protection. Under the rubric of "cultural conservation," folklorists, anthropologists, historic preservationists, archeologists, planners, designers, environmentalists, and others have begun joining forces. The appearance of the term "cultural conservation" in a number of recent publications, projects, and conferences, and its use by government agencies, suggests that a shift in the paradigm for heritage protection is under way—a shift away from particular disciplines and professions in charge of selected resources toward a more integrated view of the cultural mission.

With the concept of cultural conservation gathering force, the time is ripe for a national conference. Participants will be encouraged to articulate concepts and practices that link their fields, identify overlapping data and issues, develop a critique of the cultural conservation enterprise, and propose a course of action for the future. We therefore invite proposals for the following:

Case-Study Presentations

These can be based upon particular cultural conservation projects, completed or in progress, or they can present particular cases that warrant a multidisciplinary, cultural conservation approach. These should be presented as problems: that is, they should offer possibilities for stimulating discussion in interdisciplinary



The real estate sign symbolizes the dilemma for lowcountry basketmakers on Kiawah Island, South Carolina, who welcome tourists but fear that overdevelopment will destroy traditional ways of life. Photo by Dale Rosengarten, courtesy of the McKissick Museum

workshop settings. The cases should shed light on issues and data that cut across professions and illuminate connections between them. Cases may be of local, national, or international significance, and ideally should consider some combination of the material environment (built or natural, historic or contemporary) and community life, in the context of planning and policy-making.

Issue-Oriented Presentations

These should examine issues that cut across disciplines, professions, and agency missions: How do we define cultural resources? How do we determine what counts as a cultural resource and what does not? How do concepts of authenticity, tradition, diversity, purity, surveys, inventories, advocacy, mitigation, endangerment, nature, and culture align among disciplines and professions? What are the practical or theoretical advantages or disadvantages of interdisciplinary collaboration? Do current policies

intended to advance cultural conservation on one front inhibit it on others?

The goals of the conference include (1) the identification of a framework-in-common, linking cultural and natural conservation; (2) theoretical and methodological growth in the field of cultural conservation; (3) the building of a strong interdisciplinary coalition for cultural conservation; (4) the strengthening of networks linking persons engaged in cultural conservation initiatives.

Proposals for presentations should be five hundred words in length, jargon-free, typewritten and double-spaced; they must be accompanied by brief biographical sketches of the presenters. The deadline for submissions is September 30, 1989. Notifications of acceptance will be sent by November 15. Please direct inquiries and proposals to Mary Hufford, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20540, or telephone (202) 707-6590.



The "In Country" concert, held in the Library's Coolidge Auditorium on July 13, was opened by Bill Dower, who led six marines in the "singing" of cadences called "jodies." Dower is a former chief drill instructor for the Marine Corps, the first black to hold the post. Story on page 1. *Photo by Reid Baker*

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