

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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EDITOR'S NOTES

Volume Number Correction

Apologies to librarians (in particular) for an error in numbering the winter 1994 issue of *Folklife Center News*. The issue is volume XVI, number 1.

From Campfire to Computer Screen

Since we have come to think of the TV set as the electronic hearth in today's household, the yoking together of two very different modes of communication in this issue of *Folklife Center News*, cowboy poetry and the Internet, should not be too jarring. Peculiar juxtapositions have always been a part of American life. But for me, the striking oxymoron in the issue appears on page 6, a cowboy reading in the shade of a wagon. From the point of view of an editor seeking images to illustrate Carol Edison's point about post-Civil War literacy, the photo was a happy find. But it also reminds us all that our action heroes—cowboys, firemen, race car drivers, football players—are capable of pausing for reading and reflection. How appropriate for a publication from the Library of Congress to mention this.

Cover: Rounding up cattle, Elko County, Nevada, 1940. (LC-USF34-29930-D) Prints and Photographs Division, FSA photo by Arthur Rothstein

FOLKLINE

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

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Cowboy Poetry: Talkin' Heart to Heart



Cowboy Poetry Day participants pose with an artifact from the Folklife Center's 1983 exhibition *The American Cowboy*. From left to right: Kim Stafford, Linda Hussa, Teresa Jordan, Sonny Hancock, Hal Cannon, and Paul Zarzyski. Photo by Yusef El-Amin

By James Hardin

"Don't ever write a poem about roping a bear," warned Sonny Hancock at the opening session of the Folklife Center's celebration of cowboy poetry. Hancock had failed to heed his own warning, however, and proceeded to recite a bear-roping poem of his own. The injunction (and Hancock's violation of it) suggested several traits associated with the cowboy: his ability to rise to the occasion, his pleasure in demonstrating an acquired skill, and his sense of humor. These traits partially account for the continuing popularity of the cowboy as an American type, and for the renewed and increasing popularity of cowboy poetry.

Over the past ten years, thousands of cowboys, ranchers, other westerners, and visitors have been flocking to Elko, Nevada, in mid-

winter, to listen to cowboy song and verse. Hal Cannon, artistic director of the Western Folklife Center, is one of the organizers of this annual Cowboy Poetry Gathering. He arranged to bring three poets to the Library of Congress on April 7, 1994, for an afternoon seminar and evening poetry reading sponsored jointly by the American Folklife Center and the Poetry and Literature Center: cowboy and rancher Sonny Hancock, Lakeview, Oregon; ranch wife Linda Hussa, Cedarville, California; and rodeo performer Paul Zarzyski, Augusta, Montana. They were accompanied and introduced by writer and editor Teresa Jordan and writer and teacher Kim Stafford.¹

At the afternoon seminar, Stafford drew upon his studies in medieval literature to provide a literary context for cowboy poetry, quoting

from *Beowulf* to demonstrate the power of the spoken word in recitations of narrative verse. Zarzyski defines cowboy poetry as the "ring and ricochet of cowboy lingo off the stirrup of the middle ear," and his rendition of the traditional ballad "The Legend of Boastful Bill" further emphasized the communal pleasure that can be derived from the sound of language (see page 7). Teresa Jordan spoke of the growing participation of women at the Cowboy Poetry Gathering, and the way, increasingly, ranch women are finding their own voices and describing their own experiences.

At the evening reading, Hancock and Zarzyski recited both traditional poems and new ones of their own; Hussa read her sensitive portrayals of western ranch life. The audience included Library poetry and literature program regulars

and Washington-area residents from the West, identified by their hats and boots, who came to hear about home and partake of the western-style reception fare provided by the National Cattlemen's Association. All present seemed to delight in the pervading spirit of swagger and fun that has come to be associated with cowboy life.

The historical period during which the cowboy flourished in the American West was actually quite short. Open-range cowboy culture lasted for about thirty years, from after the Civil War until the 1890s. During that time, open-range grazing on unfenced western lands and the need to move large herds to market resulted in the two principal tasks of the cowboy: the roundup and the trail drive. This work and the circumstances of life that surrounded it, including the rugged western terrain, are the basis for the national myth about (or national love affair with) the cowboy. From novels like *The Virginian* to radio, movies, and television, the cowboy has been celebrated in story and song.² Today, cowboy images, clothing, music, dance, and paraphernalia are nearly inescapable.

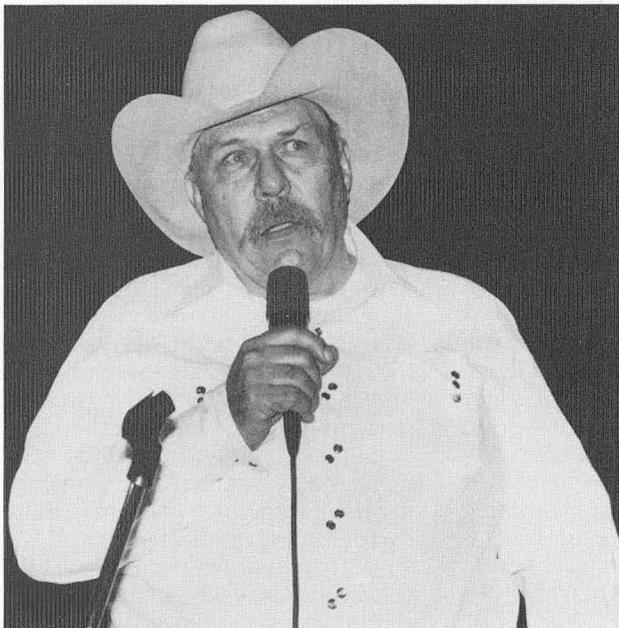
While Hollywood created a sanitized version of the singing cowboy,

in fact, cowboy songs and verse recitation were genuinely a part of cowboy life. In his introduction to the Library's Cowboy Poetry Day, Hal Cannon traced cowboy poetry back to the 1860s and 1870s, the early days of the trail drive, when cowboys entertained themselves by reciting verse around the campfire and the chuck-wagon.

Folklorist Austin Fife credits N. Howard ("Jack") Thorp (1867-1940) for recognizing "in cowboy and western songs a creativity capable of serving as a nucleus around which a new culture might identify itself."³ In 1889 and 1890, Thorp made a 1,500-mile journey on horseback through New Mexico and Texas to collect cowboy ballads. He published a slim volume, *Songs of the Cowboys*, in 1908. Writing in the *Atlantic Monthly* (August 1940), Thorp described the themes of cowboy songs as "things that cowboys liked, things they hated, incidents of the here and reflections on the hereafter."⁴ He speculated that cowboy singing might be an expression of loneliness or "just another way of expressing good fellowship."⁵ Loneliness was sometimes a condition of cowboy life, and it figures as a theme in cowboy poetry, but the singing of songs or reciting of verse was and continues to be very much a social activity.

Cowboy writer and singer Glenn Ohrlin has noted that the tone of cowboy poetry is more humorous than melancholy: "While many writers remark on the 'sadness' of cowboy songs, it seems to me there are more that are comical."⁶ There are many, many narratives in the tradition of the western tall tale and in the manner of Canadian poet Robert W. Service (1874-1958), who is best known for his frontier ballads such as "The Shooting of Dan McGrew," published in *Songs of a Sourdough*, 1907. They entertain in large part by making light of hardship.

But neither romantic image—the lone figure on horseback or the sociable group around a campfire—accounts fully for the way cowboy poetry was learned and shared. Carol Edison, in her book *Cowboy Poetry from Utah*, points out that during the period of open-range cattle management, free public education was both available and mandatory in many areas of the United States. "In short, because of the lateness of western settlement, a large number of westerners, including cowboys, were among those nineteenth-century Americans who used the printed word as an important means of transferring and sharing information."⁷ Austin Fife also notes that, in the eighties and nine-



Rancher Sonny Hancock recites both traditional cowboy ballads and ballads of his own composition. Photo by Yusef El-Amin



Hal Cannon, artistic director of the Western Folklife Center. Photo by Yusef El-Amin



L.S. Ranch, near Tascosa, Texas, 1908. The boys linger at the chuckwagon for a session of storytelling after the day's work is done. (S59-110) Photo by Erwin E. Smith. The Erwin E. Smith Collection of the Library of Congress on deposit at the Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas

ties, song texts began to appear in western newspapers, farm and cattlemen's magazines, and even in a few nationally distributed periodicals.⁸

Like so many other folk expressions in the United States, then, cowboy songs and poetry are not solely the result of oral tradition. Folklorists once wrestled with the question of how any tradition can be "pure" in the technological age, with, as Fife says, "song folios and sheet music, acoustical recordings on cylinders and 78 rpm records before World War I; radio, movies, electronic recordings, and television thereafter."⁹ Cowboys and others in farm and ranching communities have rarely found these academic questions troubling. And, in fact, Hal Cannon describes the history of cowboy poetry as an oscillation

between periods when the tradition was maintained orally or through print.

Cannon says it was not until the early twentieth century (from the 1910s through the 1940s) that nostalgia for a passing way of life led to the popularity of books and pamphlets on cowboy life, many of them highly romantic. A favorite poet was Bruce Kiskaddon (1878-1950), whose popularity, Cannon's informants tell him, results from the fact that he "tells it like it is."¹⁰ Kiskaddon worked as a cowboy until 1926, when he went to Hollywood with a couple of friends to get a job as a chariot driver for the original silent version of *Ben Hur*. He stayed in Los Angeles for the rest of his life, working as a bellhop and writing poetry about his cowboy experiences for *Western Livestock*, a monthly magazine read by many

people in ranching communities throughout the West.¹¹

Kiskaddon's book *Rhymes of the Ranges* provides a good introduction to the themes of cowboy poetry. As might be expected, there are poems about cows, horses, clothes and gear, and the day-to-day work; there are also poems espousing a moral code that links cowboy poetry with other classic American literary productions, such as *The Scarlet Letter* and *Huckleberry Finn*.

The possibilities for personal freedom and independence offered by the frontier and wilderness of the western landscape have deeply affected American social attitudes. As a result of these possibilities, Americans tend to admire people who defy or escape the rules of conventional

society and devise a code of their own based on personal inspiration or practical experience. Hawthorne's Hester Prynne is ostracized by her Puritan New England community for adultery, yet maintains a belief in her own righteousness on the basis of a Higher Law; Twain's Huckleberry Finn acknowledges the conventional attitudes of his day toward slavery, yet defies them on the basis of his own friendship with Jim.

In the cowboy, we find a personage who responded to his time and place in this characteristically American way: with resourcefulness and independence (combined with disdain for social convention), and a gritty unwillingness to be defeated by difficulty (combined with a self-deprecating humor in the face of it).

Several of Kiskaddon's poems serve as illustrations: In "That Little Blue Roan," the horse takes on some of the attributes of the cowboy himself. He is tough and ornery, "No hoss fer a kid or a man that was sick. / But Lord what a bundle of muscle and bone; / A hoss fer a cow boy, that little blue roan." And his instincts are unsurpassed in doing his work and in finding his way through a tricky situation that arises from open-range cattle culture. When the cowboy is about to use his own brand on the calf of another rancher's cow, the roan's gaze at nearby piñon pines warns the cowboy that they are not alone. He uses the brand of the calf's mother instead of his own, just as "out of the pinons two cow men appears." Thus, the little blue roan saves the cowboy from a potentially dangerous situation.

In "The Cow Boy's Dream," a buckaroo who dreams he has gone to heaven finds that he can't give up earthly ways, such as his amorous feelings for an attractive lady angel. He is discovered by the "Judge of Creation" and forced to leave: "He's a buckaroo, I know them well / They don't allow them even in Hell." The cowboy awakens to his hard life of nasty weather and dreary chow, and wishes he might have stayed in heaven. But the poem makes clear that he would not have changed to accommodate the rules of the place. The "boss of all creation" is more understanding in the poem "Judgement Day." When the buckaroos come forward, the "judgement book" is exchanged for the "range law book," because "You can never judge a cow boy / By another feller's laws."

O.R. Range, Arizona, 1910. Men making a cinch and J.W. Haverty of Fort Huachuca reading. (S6-80) Photo by Erwin E. Smith. The Erwin E. Smith Collection of the Library of Congress on deposit at the Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth, Texas



The Legend of Boastful Bill

by Badger Clark

At a round-up on the Gila
One sweet morning long ago,
Ten of us was thrown quite freely
By a hoss from Idaho.
An' we 'lowed he'd go a-beggin'
For a man to break his pride
Till, a-hitchin' up one leggin',
Boastful Bill cut loose an' cried:

"I'm a ornery proposition for to hurt,
I fulfil my earthly mission with a quirt,
I can ride the highest liver
'Twixt the Gulf an' Powder River,
An' I'll break this thing as easy as I'd flirt."

So Bill climbed the Northern fury
An' they mangled up the air
Till a native of Missouri
Would have owned the brag was fair.
Though the plunges kept him reelin'
An' the wind it flapped his shirt,
Loud above the hoss's squealin'
We could hear our friend assert:

"I'm the one to take such rockin's as a joke;
Someone hand me up the makin's of a smoke.
If you think my fame need brightnin',
Why, I'll rope a streak o' lightnin'
An' spur it up an' quirt it till it's broke."

Then one caper of repulsion
Broke that hoss's back in two,
Cinches snapped in the convulsion,
Skyward man and saddle flew,
Up they mounted, never flaggin',
And we watched them through our tears,
While this last, thin bit o' braggin'
Came a-floatin' to our ears:

"If you ever watched my habits very close,
You would know I broke such rabbits by the
gross.

I have kept my talent hidin',
I'm too good for earthly ridin',
So I'm off to bust the lightnin'—Adios!"

Years have passed since the ascension;
Boastful Bill ain't never lit;
So we reckon he's a-wrenchin'
Some celestial outlaw's bit.
When the night wind flaps our slickers,
And the rain is cold and stout,
And the lightnin' flares and flickers,
We can sometimes hear him shout:

"I'm a ridin' son o' thunder o' the sky,
I'm a broncho twistin' wonder on the fly.
Hey, you earthlin's, shut your winders,
We're a-rippin' clouds to flinders.
If this blue-eyed darlin' kicks at you, you die."

Star-dust on his chaps and saddle,
Scornful still of jar and jolt,
He'll come back sometime a-straddle
Of a bald-faced thunderbolt;
And the thin-skinned generation
Of that dim and distant day
Sure will stare with admiration
When they hear old Boastful say:

"I was first, as old raw-hiders all confest,
I'm the last of all rough riders, and the best.
Huh! you soft and dainty floaters
With your aeroplanes and motors,
Huh! are you the greatgrandchildren of the
West?"

From recitation, original, by Charles Badger Clark, Jr. As printed in John A. Lomax, Songs of the Cattle Trail and Cow Camp (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1950)

Badger Clark (1906-1957) was born in South Dakota, the son of a Methodist minister. He spent four years in Arizona for his health, working on a ranch near Tombstone and writing verse. His book *Sun and Saddle Leather* was first published in 1915. He returned to South Dakota in 1910 and, for the last twenty years of his life, was the state's poet laureate (see John I. White, *Git Along Little Dogies: Songs and Songmakers of the American West* [Urbana, Chicago, London: University of Illinois Press, 1975], pp. 126-36).

Ideas about conventional morality and individual worth come together in one of Kiskaddon's most interesting poems, "The Bronco Twister's Prayer." In the absence of a minister, a bronco twister (breaker) is called upon to speak a few words at a funeral. At first embarrassed because of his lack of education, he nonetheless rises to the occasion with memorable eloquence. Thus, the rough-and-ready cowboy, however unfit for polite society, is fully capable and worthy of speaking even to the Deity when called upon to do so:

No, he wasn't educated. On the range his youth was spent.
 But the maker of creation knew exactly what he meant.
 He looked over toward the mountains where the driftin' shadows played.
 Silence must have reigned in heaven when they heard the way Jim prayed.

Years have passed since that small funeral in the lonely grave yard lot.
 But it gave us all a memory, and a lot of food for thought.
 As we stood beside the coffin, and the freshly broken sod,
 With that reckless bronco breaker talkin' heart to heart with God.

Since Kiskaddon's time, Cannon says, there has been an "underground tradition" of western ranch people writing and reciting poetry within their own communities, for their own communities. The impetus for the recent revival of general interest in cowboy poetry occurred in an unlikely place. In 1980, four years after the founding of the American Folklife Center, state folklorists and folk arts coordinators came to the Library of Congress in Washington to discuss their work and share ideas. A number of western folklorists at the meeting wondered among themselves about working on a regional project in the West, and Jim Griffith of Arizona proposed the idea of something pertaining to cowboy poetry. After five years of research and planning, the first Cowboy Poetry Gathering was held in Elko, Nevada, in 1985.

The popularity of the Elko Cowboy Poetry Gathering and events like



Meeting of state folklorists at the Library of Congress, 1980. Back row, center, are Jim Griffith and Hal Cannon.

it all over the western United States surprised even those who worked to bring it about: folklorists Hal Cannon, Carol Edison, Meg Glaser, Jim Griffith, Pat Jasper, Mike Korn, Steve Siporin, Gary Stanton, and others. "We tremendously underestimated the vitality of the poetry tradition," said Stanton.¹² Currently, the event lasts several days and attracts as many as eight thousand people.

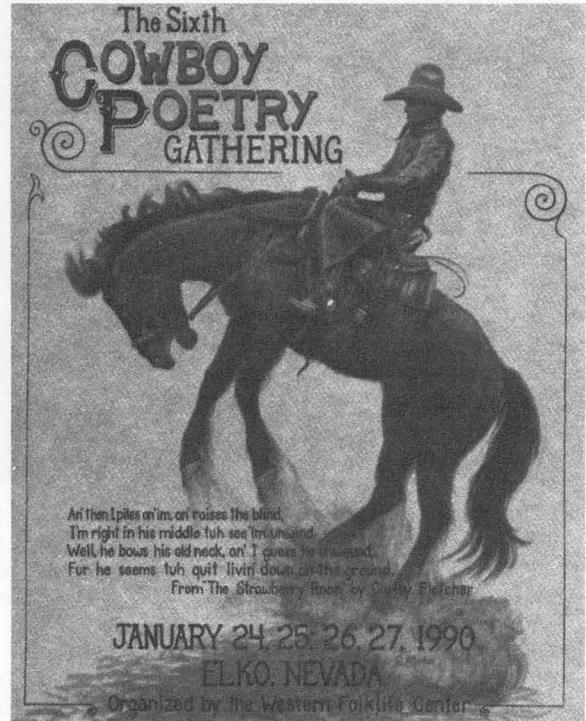
And there are now many new volumes of cowboy poetry in print or scheduled for publication, demonstrating Cannon's thesis about periods of recitation leading to peri-

ods of publication. With the popularity of everything else cowboy, from clothes to country western music and dance, how could cowboy poetry not be a success? To be sure, a good deal of this general popularity has to do with a superficial desire on the part of city and suburban folk for association with an imagined way of life. But there are deeper reasons for the staying power of the cowboy image (and for cowboy poetry).

For Americans, the cowboy embodies traits of independence and resourcefulness we admire. In celebrating cowboy life, this century-



Teresa Jordan and Linda Husa at the Library of Congress for Cowboy Poetry Day, April 7, 1994. Ms. Jordan described the way women have come to play a larger role in the Elko Cowboy Gathering, writing about their experiences as ranch women working both inside and outside the home: "This is a fresh poetry, nourished by both beauty and crisis. Rural women have only recently begun to write this honestly about their lives." (From the introduction to *Graining the Mare: The Poetry of Ranch Women*, edited by Teresa Jordan) Photo by Yusef El-Amin



Poster from the sixth Cowboy Poetry Gathering, Elko, Nevada, January 1990. Courtesy of Hal Cannon

old tradition of verse recitation may be one the best of many artful creations that have sought to express these themes. Part tall tale, part documentation, part sentiment, part humor, part philosophy, cowboy poetry "tells it like it is"—but tells us more. It attempts to define a proper stance in response to the conditions of western life. To tell the truth about a thing, to get it right, and to show the reader or listener how to think and feel about it—that is what poetry has always tried to do.

Notes

1. Kim Stafford is director of the Northwest Writing Institute at Lewis and Clark College, Portland, Oregon. His father, William Stafford, was Consultant in Poetry at the Library of Congress, 1971-73.

2. See, for example, Lonny Taylor, "The Open-Range Cowboy of the Nineteenth Century," in *The American Cowboy*, by Lonny Taylor and Ingrid Maar (New York: Harper and Row, 1983), pp. 16-27.

3. "Introduction," N. Howard ("Jack") Thorp, *Songs of the Cowboy*, Variants, Commentary, Notes and Lexicon by Austin E. and Alta S. Fife (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., 1966), p. 4.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 15. John Lomax also mentions loneliness as a motive for writing verse: "cowboys . . . in their isolation and loneliness, have found solace in narrative and descriptive verse devoted to cattle scenes." "Introduction," *Songs of the Cattle Trail and Cow Camp* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1950), p. xiii.

6. Glenn Ohrlin, *The Hell-Bound Train: A Cowboy Songbook* (Urbana, Chicago, London: University of Illinois Press, 1973), p. 38.

7. *Cowboy Poetry from Utah: An*

Anthology, compiled and edited with essays and biographies by Carol A. Edison (Salt Lake City: Utah Folklife Center, 1985), p. 8.

8. "Foreword," *Git Along, Little Dogies: Songs and Songmakers of the American West*, by John I. White (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1975), p. xi.

9. *Ibid.*, p. xi.

10. "Bruce Kiskaddon: Cowboy Poet," *Rhymes of the Ranges, A New Collection of the Poems of Bruce Kiskaddon*, edited and with an introduction by Hal Cannon (Salt Lake City: Gibbs M. Smith, Inc., 1987), p. 4.

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

12. *Historic Preservation* (May/June 1994), p. 53.

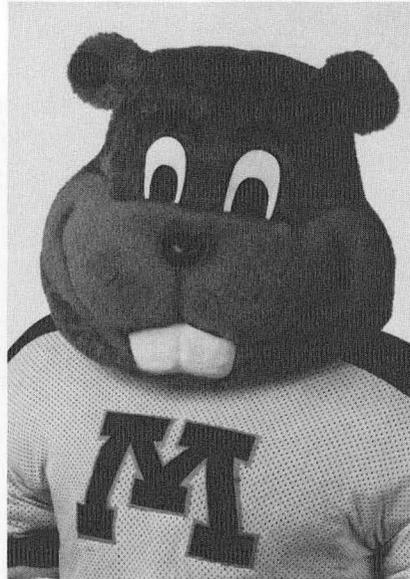
Electronic Gophers Burrow at Library of Congress

By Stephanie Hall

For the past five years, Stephanie Hall has been working at the Folklife Center on collection processing. During that time, she has made information technology a specialty, serving as liaison with other Library of Congress offices, as well as advising staff members within the Center on the uses of the computer, electronic mail, and the Internet. She follows in a long tradition of Library folklorists, beginning with Robert W. Gordon, who have used the latest technology for ethnographic collection, presentation, and access. Dr. Hall has recently been named archivist and coordinator of processing for the American Folklife Center.

Last summer a colleague came to visit me at the Folklife Center during my lunch hour and found me typing strings of numbers and letters into my computer. When she asked what I was doing, I explained that I was part of a team of Library of Congress staff members who were constructing an Internet service called a Gopher server that would make our Internet resources available to the public through user-friendly menus. She asked me in surprise, "What is a folklorist doing constructing an Internet Gopher?" I shrugged, "Nobody told me not to."

A Gopher server functions like a public library; it is a networked computer that provides free texts and services. Its users can choose items on a set of menus by moving an arrow or a light bar. Items may be read online or retrieved through electronic mail and printed out. These Gopher servers readily interconnect: menu choices on one Gopher may include items provided by many other Gophers, as well as other types of services available through Telnet (such as World Wide Web, or Dartmouth's Shakespeare Database Project). A service called Veronica makes the menus searchable worldwide. Gopher software is available free of charge from developers at the University of Minne-



Goldy the Gopher, mascot for the University of Minnesota Golden Gophers football team. Courtesy University Relations, University of Minnesota

sota, home of the Golden Gophers football team (hence the name).

The Library's new Gopher, LC MARVEL (for Machine-Assisted Realization of the Virtual Electronic Library), provides general information about the Library of Congress, gives up-to-date information about events and services, and provides direct access to both the Library's Internet services and to a large selection of services provided by outside organizations.

The project to build LC MARVEL began as an experiment conceived by the Internet Users Group, an organization of staff members who use the Internet, and sponsored by the Information Technology Services Division (ITS). The nine-member design team cochaired by Elizabeth Miller and Cheryl Graunke was made up of volunteers and included one technician and interested nontechnical staff from all parts of the Library. Team members, often working in their free time, trained

each other in the special computer skills they needed. The technician, Tom Littlejohn, hammered out the programming and security problems, while those with library experience worked at creating menus appropriate for the Library's public interface on the Internet. Then the process of filling in those menus with data and links to other computers began. Since many of us were using every scrap of our computer experience to do our part, it was fortunate that we had, and were surrounded by, a strong "can-do" spirit. Of course library professionals (including a folklorist) could build an Internet server—why not?

We learned that Gophers can use "links" to "point" to computers in various parts of the world. A link provides the server with information on how to connect to and find information on other servers on the Internet. For example (and for any Gopher administrators who may want to point their server to ours), the Gopher link to LC MARVEL looks like this:

```
Type=1
Name=Library of Congress LC
MARVEL
Path=
Host=marvel.loc.gov
Port=70
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And the link to the area on LC MARVEL that provides information about the American Folklife Center looks like this:

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Type=1
Name=American Folklife Center
Path=1/research/reading.rooms/
folklife
Host=marvel.loc.gov
Port=70
```

The MARVEL Design Team collected and created hundreds of such links to provide access to various Library computer services, such as the Library of Congress Online Catalog (LOCIS), as well as to a menu of services throughout the world,

arranged by subject, called "The Global Electronic Library."

Once the link is installed, a person using LC MARVEL only needs to select a menu item by pressing *enter*, and the computer will connect to the service. The menu for the American Folklife Center's "Reading Room" area looks like this:

American Folklife Center

1. Hours and location
2. About the American Folklife Center
3. Bibliographies and Guides/
4. Publications/
5. Directories/
6. Folklife Weekly Information Service
7. Selected Internet Resources (Not LC)

A short time ago, Internet users needed to use guides to tell them the computer addresses of all the services available to them. These guides were constantly out-of-date, because of the dynamic nature of the growing Internet. Now a Gopher menu can guide even novices to Internet services everywhere, and these services can be updated far more readily than printed directories.

In the past, electronic information services were created by technicians, often without sufficient information from the people who use those services. But the relative ease of creating a Gopher server is changing this system by making it possible for technical experts and information providers to collaborate. Involving librarians and subject specialists in the creation of LC MARVEL made it possible for people who provide reference services to be directly involved in the process of creating a network reference tool. The development of LC MARVEL's menu structure was based on assumptions about how people search for information. Reference librarians could contribute their experience in serving patrons, and I did my best to supplement this with my training in cultural studies.

The Design Team set up the basic structure of the server in a little over a month, and it was presented to the public on July 9, 1993. The process of adding data to LC MARVEL continues, and the team of staff members who build and maintain it has grown to twenty-one. The goal is to

make LC MARVEL an example of how Internet services can be constructed to guide the average user in the use of the latest technology.

The "can-do" spirit that made LC MARVEL possible is one that has contributed to the development of the new, easy-to-use systems on the Internet throughout the world. In the past few years Gopher servers, also called "burrows," have been popping up across the globe, not only at universities but also at public institutions, government agencies, companies, and other organizations. In addition, elementary schools, small groups, and nonprofit organizations have developed their own servers, or have found space on servers provided by universities and public-spirited corporations.

This movement will effect the work of folklorists and, perhaps, the lives of the peoples folklorists study. Through these new services, grass-roots organizations of Native Americans, Latinos, African Americans, and the disabled are now sharing information worldwide on the Internet.

One reason why this folklorist became involved in the creation of LC MARVEL is that Gopher can do for folklore what it has done for other academic disciplines and small interest groups. The American Folklife Center has provided an example of some of the kinds of information folklife organizations and programs can provide through Gopher servers. We have put our recent free publications online. Sometimes publications can be provided online in advance of the printed copy: an example of this is Timothy Lloyd and Hilary Glatt's *Folklife Resources in the Library of Congress*, scheduled for publication later this year. Dated material, such as the Folklife Information Service, can be provided and updated online, so that the most current version is always available. Searchable data in various forms can be provided: we include a searchable version of a list of folklife and ethnomusicology archives in the United States. This list can be searched by state, to get a list of archives in a particular state, or by any other word in the name and address. The Center plans to explore other possibilities in the future, such as providing images and sound as well as text on the Internet.

Folklore resources on the Internet are few and far between, but, as folklorists discover this resource, more material may become available. In the Global Electronic Library section of LC MARVEL, there is a menu for "Folklore, Folklife, and Ethnomusicology." There, researchers can gain ready access to folklife materials provided at the University of Guadalajara, the University of Zagreb, and the University of Maryland. Users may browse or retrieve by electronic-mail texts of Mexican songs, course information from various folklore programs, and copies of *The Ethnomusicology Research Digest*. As more folklife resources become available, we hope to include them in this menu as well.

In order for the American Folklife Center to provide information on an Internet Gopher, first the Library had to build one. Many folklorists elsewhere are far more fortunate, as Gopher servers are already available to them. Most universities and many other organizations have Gopher servers waiting to have information added to them. Space on public service and educational Gophers are available to many nonprofit organizations, such as public-sector folklife programs. Several state Gophers are being developed that state folklore programs can use. Even folklife programs that do not yet have access to the Internet can make information about their services available through this tool. Your local Gopher administrator should be able to assist you in placing information on your local server.

If you have access to the Internet, you may "visit" LC MARVEL through your local Gopher server. Choose "Other Gophers" on your Gopher menu, then choose United States, then Washington, DC. Or you may connect directly through telnet to marvel.loc.gov, then login as marvel. The Folklife Center may be found by choosing "Research and Reference," then "Reading Rooms." The "Folklore, Folklife, and Ethnomusicology" resource menu is found under the "Global Electronic Library" menu, both under "Arts" and "Social Sciences." If you have comments or suggestions for LC MARVEL, please send them to lcmarvel@seq1.loc.gov.



Gopher software's mascot Bud the Gopher Dude "surfs" (explores) the global networks with ease in this cartoon by Wendy Jedlicka, illustrator for the University of Minnesota's Gopher Design Team (reprinted with permission). "Surf's up" in an article on the Internet that begins on page 10.

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