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Archives of Appalachia NEWSLETTER

Vol. 1 No. 1

MARCH 1, 1979

INTRODUCING THE ARCHIVES OF APPALACHIA

On September 1, 1978, the Archives of Appalachia opened its doors for the first time. Established by East Tennessee State University in conjunction with the Institute for Appalachian Affairs, the Archives represents the continuing commitment of the University to reach out and serve the greater Appalachian community. The primary purpose of the Archives is to identify, collect and preserve those materials that document the history and development of the Southern Appalachian region. In particular, the Archives seeks the papers of those persons and organizations active at the grass-roots or local level in economic, political and/or cultural activities. Thus, the Archives hopes to attract the records of regional labor organizations, businesses, craft cooperatives, artist colonies and guilds, and self-help societies. In addition, we seek the papers of private individuals - both leaders and rank-and-file - who have participated in some uniquely Appalachian activity.

Materials that go into the Archives of Appalachia range widely. Personal collections often include private correspondence, diaries, notebooks, photographs, pamphlets and books. Organizational contributions include similar materials as well as ledger books, computer records, memoranda and office files. In this audio-visual age, the Archives does not restrict itself to paper records. Beyond photographs, the Archives also has and continues to seek tape recordings (oral histories), video-tapes and movies relating to our collecting theme. While the Archives itself does not collect published materials, one of its sub-departments, Special Collections, maintains book and pamphlet holdings on Appalachia, Tennessee, the Civil War, and University faculty. The Archives also maintains vertical files where it houses ephemeral publications, such as newsletters, and pamphlets relating to Appalachian or University topics. Finally, the staff keeps a select professional library of materials relating to archival administration, and audio-visual materials.

The current holdings at the Archives include: the Washington County, Tennessee, Court House Records 1777-1950 (predominantly 1777-1900); the papers of the East Tennessee Education Association and the Model Valley Development Corporation; and the papers and film library of Broadside Television, Inc. We also have the private papers of Bernard Cantor, B. Carrol Reece, LeRoy Reeves, and Samuel C. Williams. (For details, see "New Acquisitions.") But our task has just begun. Southern Appalachia has up to now lacked an archives solely devoted to the preservation of regional materials of historical and research value. Only through the efforts of concerned citizens can we ever hope to succeed in preserving our regional heritage. We are sincere in our purpose and hope that many in the greater Appalachian community will assist us in our task.

The Archives of Appalachia provides a wide range of services for its donors and patrons. First and foremost, the Archives serves the owners or custodians of historically rich Appalachian materials by providing a central location where these materials may be stored in a secure and environmentally sound place. These papers are then processed by our professional staff and according to arrangements agreed upon by the donor(s) and the Archives, the papers are opened to scholars and their students concerned with Appalachian research topics. Our reading room is opened from 8:00 a.m.

to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. In an effort to keep both patrons and donors informed of its activities, the Archives publishes a quarterly newsletter. In addition, the Director of the Archives teaches a course on archival administration (offered jointly by the History Department and the School of Continuing Education) that is open to all members of the community. At various times during the year, the Archives also releases its own special publications and offers community conferences and training programs. (More details regarding these events may be found below). In short, the Archives of Appalachia has already begun and hopes to continue to serve the greater Appalachian community in many ways.

The staff of the Archives includes: Dr. Richard M. Kesner (Director), Mildred Kozsuch (Head Processor), Kathryn Wilson (Office Manager and Head of User Services), Pollyanna Creekmore (Appalachian Bibliographer and Special Collections Librarian), Deborah Kay Anders and Harold Handy (graduate assistants), Martha Smith (Administrative Assistant for Archives publications and grants), and five student assistants. Dr. Kesner comes to the Archives of Appalachia from the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University (Detroit, Michigan) where he served as Research Associate and Archivist for an NHPRC project. Mes. Kozsuch, Wilson and Creekmore have served on the staff of the Sherrod Library (ETSU) for many years and are well acquainted with the resources and research interests of the region. Ms. Anders and Mr. Handy are both graduate students in ETSU's History Department, and Ms. Smith is an English major. There is a formal division of labor within the Archives but for the most part, all staff members participate in many different aspects of the program from collection processing to reference services. While some training is done on the job, the student staff participates in the University's archival training program and the full-time staff has or will shortly receive additional outside training at professional archival training seminars.

The Archives of Appalachia is located in the Sherrod Library on East Tennessee State University's main campus. Positioned on the first floor of the Library, Room 169 serves as the main entrance to the Archives. Our facilities include a reading and research room, separate security and storage areas for our manuscript and book collections, a specially adapted audio-visual archives, processing areas and a set of offices for our staff. Researchers may use the Archives between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. For further information, call (615) 929-4337.

NEW ACQUISITIONS

Since this is the first issue of the Archives of Appalachia Newsletter, there is a lot of catching up to do. For the sake of brevity, many of our smaller collections will be treated summarily in what follows. Needless to say, a good number of these collections have substantial historical and research value in spite of their limited size. The Bowman Family Collection, for example, chronicles the history and experiences of a Tennessee-Virginia family during the 19th century through their correspondence with one another, (collection size - two linear feet). The Harry and William Faw Collection includes a set of rare newspapers and memorabilia from the Civil War and President Andrew Johnson's impeachment proceedings, (collection size - one folder and two over-size folders). The Sidney Gordon Gilbreath Collection is limited to a single folder containing the handwritten autobiography of Mr. Gilbreath, while the Major F.S. Heiskell Collection includes both correspondence and scrapbooks of this noted early 19th century Tennessee journalist and proponent of "scientific agriculture," (collection size - one linear foot and five scrapbooks). The Theodore A. Honour Collection

captures the observations and philosophy of a Confederate officer during the Civil War through letters to his wife and family members, (collection size - 18 file folders). Other small personal collections include the diary of Samuel Hervey Laughlin, 1845-75; and the research papers of Robert Peplies, Chairman and Professor in the Geography Department, ETSU; Le Roy Reeves, local geneologist, designer of the Tennessee State flag and founder of the Tennessee National Guard; and Judge Samuel C. Williams, a noted scholar of Tennessee legal and political history.

The Archives also holds a number of small collections donated by regional organizations. We have, for example, the nineteenth century records of the Blountville Circuit, Holston Conference Methodist Church as well as the early records and charters of the Johnson City Kiwanis Club, the Johnson City Rotary Club and the Daughters of the American Revolution, John Sevier Chapter. In addition, we have the early records of the Watauga Personnel and Guidance Association. Each of these collections include scrapbooks and non-archival materials, such as pamphlets and photographs that have subsequently been transferred to the Archives vertical files or the audio-visual collections. Collections range in size from two file folders in the case of the Blountville Circuit Collection to ten linear feet in the case of the Rotary and Kiwanis Club Collections. The Archives also has just begun to accession the records of the Model Valley Industrial Development Council. Centered in Clairfield, Tennessee, this organization helps local citizens develop community business concerns. Finally, the Archives has received the records of the Tennessee Survey of Higher Education conducted during the 1960's. Beyond the statistical information pertaining to Tennessee educational institutions, this collection includes a wealth of printed matter relating to educational trends of the 1950's and 60's nationally, (collection size - 14 linear feet).

As with all collections accessioned by the Archives of Appalachia, the materials mentioned above, once processed, will be entered in the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections. Depositories and researchers interested in specific collections may write to the "Head of User Services" c/o the Archives for more details. From time to time, the Archives plans to issue a general guide to its collections. This and all other Archives publications will be publicized in the Newsletter.

NEW ACQUISITIONS: COLLECTIONS OF PARTICULAR NOTE

Broadside Television Incorporated began in 1973 as a non-profit organization devoted to placing events and experiences unique to Central and Southern Appalachia on film. Originally, all Broadside productions were meant for regional telecasting via cable television. In 1978, Broadside closed its doors having produced in its brief life hundreds of video-films of high research value. The papers and tapes of Broadside Television, Inc., are now part of the Archives of Appalachia (collection size - 28 linear feet of papers and approximately 600 video-tapes). Among the topics covered by the Broadside materials are mountain arts and crafts, folk songs, story telling, snake charming, Indian customs and crafts, community events, and civic and community meetings. Almost all of the films produced by Broadside were produced on-sight throughout Appalachia.

Complimentary to the Broadside Collection in content is the Archives' Burton-Manning Collection. Named after Profs. Tom Burton and Ambrose Manning of the East Tennessee State University English Department, this collection includes approximately three hundred hours of tape recordings. Students operating under the direction of Burton and Manning have collected and processed a unique folklore collection ranging

from limericks, to childrens' songs, to stories, to personal and family histories, (collection size - 12 linear feet of papers and 158 reel-to-reel tapes). The research applications of these two audio-visual collections are too numerous to list here.

The Bernard H. Cantor Collection includes a wide range of material relating to the labor arbitration work of a prominent Johnson City, Tennessee Attorney, Bernard H. Cantor. Important among these materials are the arbitration awards written by Mr. Cantor between 1958 and the present, nearly six hundred awards in all. The collection also includes all of the major arbitration decisions affecting the United Mine Workers and a series of major contract agreements between Appalachian-based unions and industries. The Cantor Collection therefore includes both arbitration awards and contracts relating to the coal miners, textile workers, communication workers and steel workers.

Founded in 1904, the East Tennessee Education Association continues to serve Northeastern Tennessee educators. Through conferences and seminars, the ETEA seeks to inform its membership of new trends in education and to upgrade teacher training in the State. The collection includes administrative records, correspondence, and ETEA publications, (collection size - 36 linear feet).

B. Carroll Reece served for many years as the Congressman for Tennessee's First Congressional District. He rose to the chairmanship of the National Republican Party and was responsible for the management of two Republican national conventions. ETSU has a museum named in his honor which houses many of the artifacts he collected as a war hero and politician. Though incomplete, his papers in the Archives of Appalachia do shed some light on his accomplishments as a Republican Party official and congressman, (collection size - 26 linear feet).

The Rogersville Card and Label Company is a rather unique Appalachian company. It began as a press founded by the International Pressmen's Union to print playing cards and to train its apprentices. With the invention by one of the union members of an eight-color press, the Company turned to the label production that made its reputation. Now a subsidiary of IPC Dennison Company, the Press produces labels for Van Camp's, Campbell's, Gerber, Philip Morris and many other firms. The Rogersville Card and Label Collection includes a comprehensive sampling of the company's labels since it opened its doors in 1926 as well as photographs of the press room and plant operations, (collection size - four linear feet and two oversized folders).

Through Prof. Robert W. Peplies, Chairman of the ETSU Geography Department, the Archives has received a collection of approximately five thousand aerial photographs of Appalachian counties (mostly East Tennessee) taken by the Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service. These photographs capture both rural and urban development in Appalachia during the period 1936 through 1968. Once processed, the Soil Conservation Service Collection will provide researchers with an opportunity to study changes in the Appalachian landscape over time.

As part of Tennessee preparations for its Civil War Centennial, the State established a Tennessee Civil War Centennial Commission. Mary Hardin McCown served as an advisor for Washington County, Tennessee on that Commission and she has donated her project papers to the Archives. The collection includes correspondence, reports and newsletters discussing the the history of the Civil War as it affected Washington County residents who participated in the struggles and the background materials justifying the positioning of historic markers, (collection size - one linear foot).

Central to any thorough understanding of Appalachia and its development is a knowledge of the Appalachian diaspora - the continual migration of Appalachians north and west. One of the agencies that has labored to chronicle the impact of the diaspora on displaced mountain folk and to report on their condition in the cities of the North is the Urban Appalachian Council. Located in Cincinnati, Ohio, the Council serves as a clearing house for Appalachian community groups throughout urban Ohio. While the Archives has just begun to accession papers relating to the activities of this organization (collection size - one linear foot), it is hoped that the tie between the Council and the Archives of Appalachia will grow with time.

The Archives largest collection is the Court Records of Washington County, Tennessee. The collection consists of both loose and bound court records relating to criminal, civil and chancery court cases dating back to 1777. In addition, the Court records include data relating to taxation, school operations, road repairs, and public elections within the County. The collection also includes a wide range of business records dealing with family enterprises operating in 19th century Jonesboro (formerly Jonesborough, the County seat). While some materials in the collection date from the 1930's and 40's, most of the Court records date back to the late-18th and 19th centuries, (collection size - 500 linear feet of loose documents and 168 bound volumes).

A Call for Your Help!

The identification of materials that ought to go into the Archives of Appalachia is a community responsibility. If you hold materials that may have research or historical value, please contact Richard M. Kesner, Archives Director, at 615-929-4337. The Archives will arrange for the appraisal, transportation and processing of these records and documents. Without your help and vigilance, much of our heritage will be lost. Kindly give us a hand! Also, the Archives can use volunteer workers to help process its manuscript collections. If you are interested, contact the Director. Thanks much.

SPECIAL ARCHIVES EVENTS:

ARCHIVES COURSE TO BE OFFERED AT ETSU

The Director of the Archives of Appalachia, Dr. Richard M. Kesner, will be teaching a course on archival administration which is offered jointly by the History Department (Course #4920/5921) and the School of Continuing Education. The course is open to all members of the community for continuing education credit as well as to all qualified University students for academic credit. This course has been designed for a single quarter and will be offered during the Spring term on Thursday evenings. It includes a ten lecture sequence but time will be allotted for discussion and demonstration during each class meeting. On occasion, the instructor will invite specialists in such fields as microfilming and museum display to lecture to the class. The course will be offered in the reading and research room of the Archives of Appalachia (Room 169, Sherrod Library) so as to facilitate demonstration of archival methods and procedures. The course is designed to at least touch upon all of the major aspects of archival administration. Lecture topics will include: Basic Archival Concepts and the Development of Archives; Modern Records and Filing Systems; Principles of Manuscript Arrangement; Archival Security; Fieldwork, Collection Expansion and Grants; Legal Problems; Vital Records Program and Disaster Planning; and Computer Records. For information about the course, call Dr. Kesner at 615-929-4337.

COMMUNITY MEETING AND CONFERENCE: CONSERVATION AND COMMUNITY ACTION

The Archives of Appalachia is going to sponsor a conference on preserving papers, books, photographs and paintings. It is scheduled for the evening of April 27, 1979, and all day Saturday April 28, 1979. Many of us are aware and proud of our historical heritage and have contributed through clubs, public libraries and civic organizations to the dissemination of information on our community and its history. While participation in these activities is enthusiastic and widespread, few realize that time, the environment and neglect are robbing us of those materials that document our past. Fire and flood have destroyed many valuable books and papers but these losses are actually insignificant when compared to the damage caused by light, heat, humidity, and ignorance. Conservation is the science of protecting papers, books and artifacts from the ravages of the environment and the art of restoring those objects that have already suffered damage. Though some conservation efforts require highly specialized training, other conservatorial practices can be carried out by anyone. The whole point of our little conference on "Community Action and Conservation" is to bring before concerned citizens the basic facts. We hope to demonstrate conservation measures that you can do around the house and that your public library, court house or club can do at limited cost to protect their valuable books and records. We urge all to attend and to bring with them damaged papers, books, photographs and paintings. Our experts will explain to you what has happened to your treasured possessions and what - if anything - can be done about it.

The conference is open to all who are interested. Our guest speakers will have samples of their conservation work and slides to show you. During the discussion periods and coffee breaks, you will have an opportunity to speak with them informally about specific problems. Our job is to create great community awareness of the need for personal and community conservation efforts. But we cannot succeed without your help. Please join us! The conference will be free and open to the public.

Conference Program:

Presented by East Tennessee State University at the Archives of Appalachia in Room 169
in the Sherrod Library

April 27, 1979, Friday

- 7:30-9:00 p.m. A Community Round Table: "Saving our Historical Heritage". The Hows, Whys and Wherefores of Conservation with Dr. Richard M. Kesner, Director of the Archives of Appalachia, Moderator, and Panel Participants Alvin Gerhardt, Director of the Rocky Mount Historical Association, Craigie Huston Hemenway, Photographic Specialist, and Cynthia Stow, Director of the Cumberland Art Conservation Center.
- 9:00-10:00 p.m. Light Refreshment and Informal Discussion: An opportunity for community response to the issues raised during the round table and a chance for the audience to get to know the guest speakers and to learn about their backgrounds.

April 28, 1979, Saturday

- 9:00-10:30 a.m. Papers and Books: Are We Losing Our Libraries Before Our Very Eyes?! Session Moderator Dr. Richard M. Kesner. Guest Speaker

- Alvin Gerhardt. Through slides and prepared notes, Mr. Gerhardt will discuss the importance of paper conservation, the enemies of paper and what the individual and the community can do to arrest paper deterioration.
- 10:30-11:00 a.m. Coffee Break
- 11:00-12:30 p.m. Photographs: A Picture Will Tell a Thousand Words, If It Lasts! Session Moderator Dr. Richard M. Kesner. Guest Speaker Craigie Huston Hemenway. Ms. Hemenway will use samples of her work to demonstrate how the environment can affect the quality and indeed the life of photographs. Specific community problems will be discussed.
- 12:30- 2:00 p.m. Lunch Break
- 2:30- 4:00 p.m. Paintings and other Works of Art: Protecting and Restoring the Artist's Impressions. Session Moderator Dr. Richard M. Kesner. Guest Speaker Cynthia Stow. By using slides and examples supplied by the audience, Ms. Stow plans to discuss the dangers faced by art works in storage and while on display in the home or the local library or office. She will also discuss preventative and corrective measures that individuals can employ in protecting their own paintings.
- 4:00- 5:00 p.m. Tour of the Archives of Appalachia by Dr. Richard M. Kesner. Light refreshments will be provided and another opportunity for members of the community to talk over problems with conference panelists.
- 5:30- 7:30 p.m. Dinner Break
- 8:00- 9:30 p.m. Community Forum: Dr. Kesner, Mr. Gerhardt, Ms. Hemenway and Ms. Stow will all sum up their experiences and observations from the day's workshops. The panel will then raise the issue of what can be done in communities like Johnson City to protect libraries and art works (either private or public) from the ravages of time and neglect. The audience will be encouraged throughout to ask questions and to make their feelings known.

ETSU EVENTS SPONSORED BY THE INSTITUTE FOR APPALACHIAN AFFAIRS

American and Appalachian Farm Displays: March 31 through April 28, 1979.

The American Farm Exhibit, created by the California Historical Society and brought on to ETSU's campus by Prof. Michael Smith, Director of the University's Humanities Program, includes numerous drawings and photographs of American farming scenes and artifacts. The exhibit takes up approximately 1000 feet of wall space, filling the Main Ballroom of the Culp Student Center. To complement this display, the Institute for Appalachian Affairs will assemble an exhibit on the Appalachian Farm to be located in the Culp Student Center Gallery. Both exhibits are free and open to the public.

Second Annual Homefolks Festival: April 21, 1979

Jointly sponsored by the Institute and the University Center Programing Committee, the Festival will run all day and into the night and will include exhibits of traditional and modern Appalachian crafts as well as mountain music concerts. If weather permits, daytime activities will take place out of doors. Otherwise, all day and night activities will take place in the Culp University Center Rathskeller. This event is free and open to the public.

STAFF ACTIVITIES

Mildred Kozsuch recently received a grant from the East Tennessee State University Research Development Council to assist her in the preparation of a book entitled The Journal and Civil War Letters of William McNeely Gourley. The Gourleys were prominent early settlers in Carter County, Tennessee. The Journal discusses the history of the family in the pre-Civil War period and is supplemented by a series of letters dating from the Civil War. Ms. Kozsuch plans to expand the volume to include a brief history of the Gourley family from 1800 to the present. Ms. Kozsuch also plans to attend the June, 1979, session of the National Archives and Records Service Institute on Modern Archival Administration in Washington, D.C.

Pollyanna Creekmore will be the principal speaker at the Topeka (Kansas) Genealogical Society's Eighth Annual Workshop on Saturday, April 21, 1979. Ms. Creekmore's presentations will deal with research sources for Tennessee and Kentucky history and genealogy. For some time now, Ms. Creekmore has been engaged in compiling a "census" of persons residing in Tennessee from 1776 to 1830. Once completed, this work will serve as a substitute for the missing early population schedules of the Federal decennial census records for Tennessee.

Richard M. Kesner has recently published scholarly articles in the Journal of European Economic History, Albion, and the Stanford Journal of International History. ETSU Press has just come out with his A Primer for the Conservation of Books and Manuscript Materials which draws together basic information on paper conservation previously released through the Library of Congress Preservation Department. In addition, the Midwestern Archivist will publish his article, entitled: "The Computer's Future in Archival Management: An Evaluation," in the next issue of the journal. As part of a grant he has received from the American Council of Learned Societies, Dr. Kesner will be on research leave in Great Britain during June and July, 1979.