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Archives of Appalachia NEWSLETTER



VOL. II, NO. 3

SEPTEMBER 1, 1980

NEH AWARDS TWO GRANTS TO THE ARCHIVES

The National Endowment for the Humanities has awarded the Archives of Appalachia two grants totalling \$23,029. Both grants originate from the Research Programs Division of the Endowment and are the first awards from that Division received by East Tennessee State University. The first grant, for \$7,148, will be used to investigate the feasibility of employing microcomputers in the management of manuscript collection and in the general administration of archives. Don Hurst, Head of Systems at the Norlin Library, University of Colorado at Boulder, will join Richard M. Kesner, Archives Director, in the development of MARS (Microcomputer Archives and Records Management Systems). The project team began its research employing a Radio Shack TRS-80 configuration but thanks to the grant from the National Endowment, they are currently using an APPLE II Plus system as well. The object of the project is to develop a software system (MARS) that is independent of any particular machine and that will serve as a prototype for various archival activities including accessioning, collection description and guide generation, user services, and routine administrative tasks.

At this time, the staff has completed the development of an accessioning and a collection description module of MARS, and Don Hurst is busily working on various administrative packages including personnel management, budget management, and supply and equipment inventory management. MARS will make its official debut at the Society of American Archivists meeting in Cincinnati. Project staff members will be available for questions and demonstrations at the "Archival Automation" open house on Tuesday, September 30 and Thursday, October 2. Kesner and Hurst will present formal papers on MARS at the Microcomputer Workshop scheduled for Friday, October 3.

The other NEH award, totalling \$15,881, will be used by the staff of the Archives to copy and preserve the valuable audio-visual collections currently housed at the University. These collections include: the Broad-side Television Collection of over 600 hours of video tape and the Burton-Manning Collection of approximately 300 hours of audio records. Together these collections provide an extensive and unique series of recorded images pertaining to the folklore, oral history, and cultural traditions of the Southern Appalachians. All of these recordings are magnetic and many are recorded onto obsolete or poor quality stock.

The grant allows the Archives to select those of greatest research value and to copy these recordings onto more stable media. This process will include the production of a circulation copy available to scholars engaged in research dealing with the region. As part of this project, the Archives plans to produce a descriptive catalog that will allow patrons

to identify and order these research materials. More information will be forthcoming as the project progresses. Those interested in either of these NEH supported projects are encouraged to contact the Archives of Appalachia, the Sherrod Library, ETSU, Johnson City, TN 37614 for more details. We would like to express our deep appreciation to the National Endowment for their recognition of our efforts and for their generous support.

THE PAPERS OF THE CLINCHFIELD RAILROAD ARRIVE

The link between the Clinchfield Railroad and that of East Tennessee State University stretch back to the school's very beginnings. Both the original property for the University (then the East Tennessee State Normal School) and one of its first buildings came as gifts from George L. Carter, the Company's President. His home remains on campus as Cooper Annex. Through the years, the Railroad has retained friendly ties with the University as the latter grew from Normal School to College and finally in 1963 to University. Yet another tie has now been established between the Line and ETSU through the establishment of an extensive Railroad Collection at the Archives.

John W. Thomas, General Manager and his assistant, Robert Sams, negotiated this arrangement with the Archives Director whereby a team of staff archivists would go through the voluminous archives of the Railroad at their main building in Erwin, Tennessee and identify those records of research or historical value. A flood in 1977 damaged or destroyed a large body of these records but fortunately, many of the oldest and most valuable records survived. At the end of July, Susan Tannewitz Karnes and Karin Guinn completed their survey of Clinchfield holdings. Certain series, such as personnel records, accident reports, and engineering files, were scientifically sampled, while other records, such as company minute books, were taken in their entirety. In all, nearly 100 cubic feet of records have been transferred to the Archives as a result of this effort.

The Clinchfield Railroad Collection includes the minute books of the parent company and all of its subsidiaries in South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Southwest Virginia; the files of the General Manager and the Line Superintendent; engineering files and drawings for many company structures many of which no longer exist; accident, salary, insurance and other employee records; annual reports; and financial records. This project is a major undertaking for the Archives and would not have been possible without a generous grant of \$4500 from the Railroad itself. We are most grateful to the Clinchfield Railroad Company for their continued support of this and other Archives projects.

NEW ACQUISITIONS

Prof. W. C. Wilson Collection. For many years W. C. Wilson served as a faculty member of East Tennessee State Normal School and College. This collection includes a series of old photographs of the campus, students, and faculty.

Paul J. Kaufman Collection. The donor served as one of the founding members of the Congress for Appalachian Development (CAD) and as one of its primary legal advisors. The collection includes CAD's original articles of incorporation, a series of briefs prepared by Kaufman on behalf of the organization, and various papers and speeches dealing with related CAD activities.

NEWLY OPENED COLLECTIONS

Jessie Ackerman Collection, .5 linear feet, 1887-1934. This small collection deals with the career of Jessie Ackerman, feminist and educator, and includes correspondence pertaining to her travels as a lecturer, publications, awards, and certificates. The B. Carroll Reece Museum has retained possession of artifacts donated with these papers.

Richard C. Austin Collection, .1 linear feet, 1967. Austin serves as Director of the West Virginia Mountain Project of the United Presbyterian Church. He was also a member of CAD and served for a while on their Board of Directors. This manuscript deals with coal valley community organization and relates to the contents of the Kaufman and Ebersole/CAD collections currently housed at the Archives.

Council of Nursing of Upper East Tennessee, .5 linear feet, 1972-77. These papers chronicle the activities of the CNUET during its active years. They discuss nursing needs in the region and a number of training seminars and workshops sponsored by the Council.

Burgin E. Dossett Collection, 30 linear feet, 1948-68 (predominantly 1950-65). These are the official papers of President Burgin E. Dossett of East Tennessee State University. President Dossett served as President of ETSU during its transition in 1963 from an accredited four-year college to a full university. His papers touch upon every aspect of his responsibilities as President (1949-1968) as well as with his activities in state, regional, and national educational organizations.

East Tennessee Medicine Company, 2 linear feet, 1897-1925 (predominantly 1911-1924). The papers of the ETMC relate to its commercial activities in the region and to the operation of the Ferguson Durg Company as its mail order subsidiary. Both companies were founded by Joseph W. Cass and were run from Johnson City, Tennessee.

Magnet Mills Collection, 67 linear feet, 1916-1970 (predominantly 1944-1967). Operations of the Mill began in Clinton, Tennessee in 1906 as the Magnet Knitting Mills. The company was incorporated in 1929 and operated as one of the largest single employers of women in the State of Tennessee. Closed in 1967 after a prolonged strike, the surviving records of the company include: contract negotiations and agreements, correspondence, subject files, management and financial records, grievance and arbitration files, personnel records, publications and newsclippings. This collection is particularly noteworthy for material relating to working conditions, unionization, and the textile industry in Tennessee.

The Archives is open to scholars and students throughout the year. Our hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more information about our holdings, write or call (615-929-4338 or 929-4365). Our reference staff will be glad to help you in your research.

OUTREACH PROGRAM UPDATE

The Archives is producing a series of multi-media outreach programs. These programs are available, free of charge, for showings to out-of-school adults and may be sponsored locally by public libraries, civic and community groups, and religious and historical organizations. Each of our slide-tape programs deals with a particular aspect of Appalachian history and culture, such as the quilting bee as a social function, Pat Alderman and local history, logging and logging camps, and country music in Upper East Tennessee. To arrange for showings in your community, contact the Archives of Appalachia at (615) 929-4338 or 929-4365. We are open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Ask for the Outreach Coordinator who will then arrange to show one or more of our programs at a mutually agreeable time. We can schedule public showings for daytime or evening. Our schedule fills up quickly, so call early if you want a program on a particular date.

Remember these programs come to you free, courtesy of the Archives of Appalachia. We provide the programs, the equipment, brochures, and we can pay our travel expenses for showings in East Tennessee. We ask you to provide a room for the showings and publicity for the program. You may wish to have your local newspaper, television station or radio station run a series of pre-performance announcements. If you have an organizational newsletter, we hope that you would announce our programs in it. This project is funded in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities through a grant from the Tennessee Committee for the Humanities, Inc. Please include this acknowledgement on all of your publicity. The programs currently available include:

COUNTRY MUSIC IN THE TRI-CITIES is a 43 minute slide-tape program based upon the research of folklorists Charles Wolfe (author of Tennessee Strings) and Richard Blaustein. The program traces the history of radio and the recording industry in the Bristol-Johnson City-Kingsport area. It also explores the effects of modernization upon the instrumental and vocal traditions of Upper East Tennessee. The Carter Family, Jimmie Rodgers, the Tenneva Ramblers, and Tennessee Ernie Ford are among the performers featured in the show.

PAT ALDERMAN: THE MAKING OF A LOCAL HISTORIAN is a 25 minute slide-tape program that focuses on the highly successful career of a noted local historian residing in Unicoi County, Tennessee. The program describes Pat Alderman's first adventures as a researcher and the various projects and publications that grew out of his efforts. Through narration, oral interviews, music, and contemporary and historical photographs, the program examines Alderman's work in the context of what history is and how it can be integrated with the study of regional folklore and natural history. The program also suggests ways in which others might further their own interests in the pursuit of community and local history.

HANDS ALL AROUND: SOCIAL ASPECTS OF QUILTING is a 21 minute slide/tape program which explores some of the ways quilts and quilting have played important roles in the private lives and community activities of Americans from the era of early European settlement up to the present. Quotations from nineteenth century sources, appropriate musical selections, and contemporary oral interviews are blended with historical and modern photographs to create a colorful, lively and informative program.

HARVESTING THE HARDWOODS: APPALACHIAN LOGGING CAMP LIFE is a 30 minute slide-tape program which looks at the lives of men and women in the logging camps of Central Southern Appalachia during the 1920's and 30's. Among the subjects covered in this program are working conditions, camp life, safety and medical care, and the impact of the lumber industry on the people of the region. Through interviews with the workers themselves, letters from logging company officials and a wide range of historical photographic materials, this program explores the history of this important Appalachian enterprise and the people responsible for its success.

A JOHNSON CITY ALBUM is a 23 minute slide-tape program which combines the reminiscences of four local people with photographs which take us from Johnson City's early days right up to modern times. While the speakers relate personal experiences, the four stories together with the photographs illustrate important themes of Johnson City's development. These include the influence of changing modes of transportation, the development of educational institutions, changing styles of popular entertainment, industrial and commercial development, and the changing look of Main Street through the years. Photograph albums often serve as reminders of the past. Looking through albums, we remember things we have done and events that affected us in some way.

EMBREEVILLE is a 25 minute slide-tape program which traces the economic and social history of this small mountain community from its early settlement, through "boom and bust" periods of iron, lead, zinc, and manganese mining, up to the present controversy surrounding the Bumpass Cove Landfill. The program uses narration and oral interviews combined with historic and recent photographs which focus on the background of a social issue of widespread concern. This program is both uplifting and informative and is of special interest to groups concerned with the quality of life in their communities.

REVISED ARCHIVES COURSE OFFERED

With ETSU's transition from a quarter to a semester system, the Director of the Archives of Appalachia has completely revised his training course. It is now a formal part of the History Department's graduate program and will be offered in a two semester sequence. In the first semester, students will participate in a lecture discussion course that meets Tuesday evenings from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. During these sessions, students are introduced to most aspects of archival administration and information management, including: archival security and ethics, collection processing, grant development, audio visual materials, archival outreach and publications, and the use of computers in an archival setting. The second semester of the course is devoted to practicum where each student pursues an individual project related to archives work or some other aspect of public history. For further information about these course offerings, contact The Director, c/o the Archives for details.

ARCHIVES EXHIBITS

The Archives display area located in the corridor on the first floor of the Sherrod Library offers our patrons a varied calendar of events over the next three months. Following the Labor Day break, September will be devoted to "Historical ETSU" and will include recent photographic acquisitions pertaining to the history, development and growth of the University. In October, Nancy Inman, a local art therapy teacher, will exhibit the work of her art therapy classes in our display area as part of a special ETSU Medical School Library program. Finally, November will be devoted to historical political cartoons in keeping with the closing of the campaign season and the holding of national, state, and local elections.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AT THE APPALACHIAN CONSORTIUM

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR -- Responsible for overall operations of a non-profit three-state educational organization, including program development and implementation, fund-seeking and financial management, public relations, and administration of a regional press. Salary depends upon qualifications and experience. Completed applications, consisting of a letter of application, three references, and a resume, must be received by September 25, 1980. Send to: Appalachian Consortium, Inc., 202 Appalachian Street, Boone, North Carolina 28607. An Equal Opportunity Employer.

STAFF ACTIVITIES

First and foremost, many staff members including Laurel Horton, E. C. Ostermeyer, Susan Tannewitz Karnes, Richard M. Kesner, and Anne Sims will be actively engaged in showing the Archives' slide/tape programs throughout the region. Don't be surprised if we appear in your community and be sure to come and see how the Archives has employed its holdings in the production of these outstanding audio-visual presentations!

Laurel Horton: Laurel will present a paper on the Archives Outreach Program at the Society of American Archivists meeting in Cincinnati on October 3, 1980. She will also chair a session on "Quilting" at the annual meeting of the American Folklore Society in Pittsburgh on October 17, 1980. She will also show our program "Hands All Around: Social Aspects of Quilting" at that time.

Anne Sims and Susan Tannewitz Karnes will present a number of our slide/tape programs at the Society of American Archivists meeting in Cincinnati on September 29 and 30. "Country Music," "A Johnson City Album," and "Harvesting the Hardwoods" are the programs presently scheduled for the conference. Anne will also assist in the demonstration of MARS at the SAA Automation Drop-In Room.

Richard M. Kesner will present a paper on microcomputers and archives at the Cincinnati SAA meeting as part of a workshop featuring MARS, October 3, 1980. On October 31, he will present a more detailed discussion of MARS before a session of the Mid-Atlantic Archives Conference meeting at the University of Maryland. In November, Richard will speak before the Midwestern Archives Conference in Milwaukee on "Collecting Strategies and the Establishment of a New Archives Program," and the Society of Georgia Archivists in Atlanta on "The Computer's Role in Archival Administration: An Overview."

A CLOSING THOUGHT

The Archives of Appalachia is a community service organization devoted to the collection and preservation of the records that document Southern Appalachia's history and development. This is an awesome task and one that requires the full support and assistance of our friends throughout the region. We ask you, our readers, to alert us to the existence of collections that might appropriately belong in the Archives or persons who might serve as leads in our pursuit of research materials in the community. In this manner we can work more effectively to insure that manuscript materials, photographs, company archives, and other valuable records find their way into the Archives and ultimately into the hands of students and scholars of Southern Appalachia. Please lend us a hand in these important educational activities. Share your views, ideas and suggestions with our staff.

In the final analysis, we are able to bring all of these services to the community thanks to the continuing support of East Tennessee State University and to a variety of state and federal grants. Unfortunately, these awards do not cover all of our costs. We have therefore established an Archives Fund within the East Tennessee State University Foundation. Gifts of money or materials to this fund are tax deductible. In times like these, when funds for program development are hard to come by, we rely on our Foundation Fund for photographic supplies, staff training, conservation materials, equipment (such as a fumigator or a slide/tape unit), books and journal subscriptions. Our many free services, including this NEWSLETTER, can only continue if we receive outside support to pay for other program expenditures. We therefore ask your help. Please give to the Archives Fund. Thanks much for your kind consideration.

Finally a special thank you is in order for the kind assistance and time contributed by Nancy Fortner of the Sherrod Library in preparing the camera copy of this issue of our Newsletter for publication.

