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Archives of Appalachia NEWSLETTER



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ARCHIVES OUTREACH ACTIVITIES CONTINUE

Archives Outreach activities this past quarter have included continued progress on the National Endowment for the Humanities-funded project to refine the existing slide-tape programs and to produce educational support materials to accompany them. As a part of this effort, the Outreach staff has conducted several showings of the slide-tape programs, using audience response as part of the guidelines for development of support materials.

In December, Dr. Helen Lewis visited the Archives as a consultant to the Outreach project staff. Dr. Lewis wrote the script and donated most of the slides for the slide-tape "Come All You Coal Miners," and she is continuing to advise the staff about development of the program and educational materials.

Also in December, Ms. Melinda Royalty was hired as assistant to the Outreach Coordinator. Ms. Royalty brings outstanding qualifications to the position and has added an important dimension to the staff. She holds both the Bachelor's and Master's degrees in English from the University of Kentucky, and in addition to teaching for several years, has worked as a writer for the Council of Southern Mountains (Clintwood, Virginia). Ms. Royalty has also worked as a writer and consultant for the Southern Appalachian Leadership Training Program and in 1980 was a S.A.L.T. fellow. Her experience in the Appalachian region has made her an asset to the Outreach project staff and we are pleased to welcome Melinda to the Archives.

APPALACHIAN OUTREACH AVAILABLE PROGRAMS

We would like to remind our readers that with NEH support, the staff is able to take the Appalachian Outreach slide-tape programs to audiences within a one-hundred mile radius of Johnson City. To arrange a showing, please call the Outreach Coordinator at (615)929-4338. A brief description of each of the available slide-tape programs follows.

COME ALL YOU COAL MINERS is a 40 minute slide-tape program based upon an outstanding collection of slides of coal miners, their families, and life in the mines and coal camps. The program also features many songs that have emerged from the coal fields of Appalachia, sung by miners or the wives and families of miners. Through the music and the narrative portions of this program, one derives a sense of the spirit and human effort that have been so much a part of coal mining in our region over the years.

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.

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 historical and contemporary 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 own communities.

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 Appalachian 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.

HOLSTON COUNTRY HOUSES: PRESERVING THE PAST is a 25 minute slide-tape program that looks at various aspects of historic preservation, its importance and its benefits to the community. Through a series of contemporary photographs and interviews with people actively involved in preserving the built environment, the program examines the history of the Devault Tavern (Leesburg, Tennessee), the Deery Inn (Blountville, Tennessee), Rocky Mount (Piney Flats, Tennessee), and the historic district of Jonesboro, Tennessee. In each case, the show focuses upon the human component in this increasingly important aspect of historical and cultural research.

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.

LONG STEEL RAIL: SOUTHERN MOUNTAIN RAILROADS is a 28 minute slide-tape program which examines the history and development of railroads in Central Southern Appalachia. Special attention is given to the railroads of Eastern Tennessee, including the East Tennessee and Western North Carolina Railroad, the Clinchfield Railroad and the Southern Railway System. The program features many old photographs of railway stations, trains, engines, and people constructing the original lines. The sound track includes many rare recordings of railroading songs, work crew chants, and interviews with people who worked for the railroads in days gone by.

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.

EXHIBITS SCHEDULE

During the month of February the exhibit on the first floor of The Sherrod Library has featured the James T. Dowdy Collection on the East Tennessee and Western North Carolina Railroad. Mr. Dowdy, a retired rail-roader, has an extensive collection of pictures, books and articles related to the Clinchfield and E.T. & W.N.C. Railroads. This exhibit depicts the route of the E.T. & W.N.C. Railroad from Johnson City through Elizabethton, Valley Forge, Hampton, Roan Mountain Station to Cranberry, North Carolina where mines are located. For many years the E.T. & W.N.C. was very important in the lives of the people in Upper East Tennessee and Western North Carolina.

The Medical Library will present "Sports Medicine" as the theme for the display cases during the month of March. Materials will include pamphlets, books, bibliographies and documents relating to the subject.

During the spring and summer months the Archives will follow with exhibits on "Logging and Logging Camps," "Mountain Home," "Bumpass Cove and Embreeville," and "Old Postcards of Johnson City, Jonesboro, and Elizabethton from the early 1900's to 1950."

STAFF ACTIVITIES

During the past quarter, Margaret Counts and Melinda Royalty have conducted several showings of the Appalachian Outreach slide-tape programs. Audiences have included many University classes, community, school, and church groups. Several of the slide-tape programs were featured during "Heritage Week" at Washington College Academy.

In December, Margaret Counts, presented a workshop on Outreach as a part of the program of the Carolinas' Conference on Archives and History, jointly sponsored by the History Department of Appalachian State University and the Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, Inc.

On January 29th two of Dr. Frederick Waage's English classes visited the Archives for a talk on the organization and sources available for research to the students. Kathryn Wilson and Mildred Kozsuch participated in the presentation with each talking on a portion of the Archives' program.

Dr. Mary Johnson brought two of her Appalachian History classes to the Archives on February 11th, and the program was repeated for her students. Margaret Counts, the Outreach Director, showed the slide-tape presentation on "Harvesting the Hardwoods," which illustrated the part lumbering played in the lives of Appalachian people during the early 1900's.

