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Archives of Appalachia NEWSLETTER



VOL. VIII, NO. 1

FALL, 1986

TENNESSEE ARCHIVISTS MEET

On November 7-8 archivists from across the state gathered in Johnson City for the fall meeting of the Tennessee Archivists. Hosted by the Archives of Appalachia, the meeting served as a platform for discussions ranging from automation in archives to similarities between museum curators and archivists. Thirty-seven registrants attended the conference.

In the fall of 1985, Tennessee Archivists decided to offer a series of basic training workshops in conjunction with their semi-annual meetings. Preceding the meeting in Johnson City, Lisa Fox, Southeastern Library Network (SOLINET) preservation program coordinator, conducted the second in this series of workshops focusing on the conservation of library and archival materials. This training session explored the causes of deterioration as well as offered advice on ways to slow deterioration. Discussions centered on providing stable environmental conditions, using proper storage supplies and processing techniques, regulating the use of materials and administrative planning. The twenty-one participants were provided with a comprehensive overview of conservation practices which could easily be applied in small repositories.

The meeting opened with a session on automated access systems. Norma Thomas, East Tennessee State University, described the development of the Archives of Appalachia computerized subject access system through the use of packaged software and an Apple microcomputer. James Lloyd, now at University of Tennessee-Knoxville, explained at Western Carolina University "OMMS" was created in part utilizing the MARC format to provide subject access to Cherokee records. The second session centered on strategies used in building donor and researcher constituencies at different types of archives: religious, county and city. William Sumners, Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives; Virginia Lyle, Metro Archives, Nashville; and Ozelle Scruggs, Greene County Records Project discussed their respective projects. Friday's final session concerned the issue of educating the archivist. John Thweatt, State Library and Archives, explored the relationship between the archival and historical professions. Sally Ripatti, McClung Collection, Knoxville Public Library, discussed the role of library science training. Marie Tedesco, Archives of Appalachia, ended the session with a discussion of the benefits of attending short-term institutes.

Saturday's session focused on the relationship between archivists and museum curators. Daniel Bell, Jonesborough-Washington County History Museum and Helen Roseberry, B. Carroll Reece Museum emphasized that although both professionals were "keepers of the past", curators preserve artifacts for exhibitions in order to transmit knowledge to the general public, while archivists preserve information primarily for scholarly researchers. Alvin Gerhardt, Rocky Mount Historical Association, discussed problems curators will face in the future. The conference ended with the Tennessee Archivists business meeting and a slide presentation by William Kennedy on the development and accomplishments of the private preservation group, the Jonesborough Civic Trust.

For more information on Tennessee Archivists and upcoming activities, please contact the organization's president Jean Waggener, Tennessee State Library and Archives, 403 Seventh Ave. N., Nashville, Tennessee 37219 or vice-president/president-elect Sally Ripatti, McClung Collection, Knoxville Public Library, 500 West Church Ave., Knoxville, Tennessee 37902.

TIME CAPSULE CEREMONY

On October 2--the 75th anniversary of the first day students attended classes at East Tennessee State Normal School--President Dr. Ronald E. Beller placed a time capsule in the columns at the entrance to the amphitheater as part of the university's 75th birthday party. The time capsule, made of copper by Dan Jenkins of the university physical plant, will be opened by East Tennessee State University centennial celebrants in 2011. It contains a variety of materials recalling the school's 75 years and the celebration of the 75th anniversary and includes letters to centennial celebrants from President Beller, the presidents of the faculty and staff senates, alumni association and student government, the university historian and the chair of the 75th anniversary committee, Helen Roseberry. These items (a small sample of the full documentation preserved in the University Archives and Reece Museum) were treated for permanent preservation by technical services archivist Norma Thomas.

Speaker for the ceremony marking the placement of the capsule was Russell Hippe, chairman of the Tennessee Historical Commission, who explored the relationship between tradition and vision, ETSU's 75th anniversary theme. At the same ceremony certificates were awarded to winners in the student essay competition (see story below), Dr. Helen Hollingsworth presented a scholarship on behalf of the University Women's Club and Mrs. Judith Beller dedicated a relief sculpture, "Appalachia", a 75th anniversary gift to the university from its creator, Don Drumm of Akron, Ohio.

ESSAY CONTEST

As part of the 75th anniversary celebration, the University Archives and the Department of English co-sponsored an essay contest which was open to all students enrolled in freshman English in the spring 1986 semester. The contest aimed to encourage research in university records and to foster an appreciation of the university's history. Three judges—two from within the ETSU community and one from without—evaluated the essays for content, organization, style and research in archival sources. Four winning essays, plus three honorable mentions, were selected for publication in a commemorative booklet. The winning authors earned monetary prizes: \$175 for first place; \$150 for second place; and \$125 for third place. In addition, the winners received certificates of achievement, presented to them at the October 2, 1986, celebration of the school's 75th anniversary. (see related story on the time-capsule ceremony).



Essay Contest Winners. From left to right: Second-place winner Robert E. Taylor; third-place winners Julia E. Tucker and Kelly Barnes; and first-place winner Elizabeth Davisson.

The first-place essay by Elizabeth Davisson, "The Woman Teacher and the Normal School," focused on both the role of women in education in the early twentieth century and on the career of one East Tennessee State teacher, Ina Yoakley. The second-place essay by Robert E. Taylor, "The Evolution of East Tennessee State Normal School, 1909-25," detailed the early history of the institution. Two essays tied for third place: Julia E. Tucker's, "Social and Political Changes at East Tennessee State, 1960-86," and Kelly Barnes' paper, "Underground Publications." Both of these essays discussed changes in student life at East Tennessee State.

The honorable mention essays had a sports flavor. Nancy Pierce traced "The History of East Tennessee State Football" and Roger Payne documented the "Building of the Minidome." The third honorable mention essay, "A Rising School" by Paula Jones, examined the beginnings of East Tennessee State.

SOURCES IN THE ARCHIVES: SNAKE HANDLING IN APPALACHIA

One of most controversial religious practices in twentieth-century America is the handling of snakes during religious services. Snake handlers belong to fundamentalist holiness churches which subscribe to a literal interpretation of the Bible. Believers adhere to the words of St. Mark (16:17-18): "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover." If so moved, a believer in the "anointed" state may handle snakes as a demonstration of his/her faith.

Snake handling as a religious phenomenon began in the United States in 1909. In that year George Went Hensley of Grasshopper Valley, Tennessee, inspired by Mark 16:17-18, became convinced that the verses were commands which he was bound to obey. Shortly after handling a rattlesnake himself, Hensley began evangelical work. Eventually the practice of snake handling spread to other parts of the South and to the Midwest. Today the practice survives primarily in rural areas of the South.

The Archives of Appalachia holds a number of different sources on snake handling. A compilation of these sources, "Archives of Appalachia: Materials on Snake Handling," has been made and is available in the Archives. There are books in special collections, and copies of magazine and journal articles, and an MA thesis in the vertical files. Among the best materials, however, are the audio and video tapes which focus on the subject. Contained in the Burton-Manning Collection are two audio tapes which include the views and opinions of members of snake-handling churches. The Burton-Headley Collection includes 32 video cassettes which relate to snake handling. Among these are the documentaries, "They Shall Take Up Serpents," and "Carson Springs A Decade Later." Other videos in the collection include footage used in making these documentaries, interviews with church members and recordings of church services.

STAFF NEWS

From August 26 to August 30, 1986, director Ellen Garrison attended the annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists in Chicago, Illinois, where she presented a paper, "L'il Abner Revisited: The Archives of Appalachia." As chairman of the Waldo G. Leland award committee, she also presented the annual award for the best archival publication to the Toronto Area Archivists Group for An Ounce of Prevention.

Director Ellen Garrison has been appointed chair of the 1987 nominating committee of the Appalachian Studies Conference.

Funding from the Center for Appalachian Studies enabled the archives to hire Terri McFeature as secretary, beginning July 28, 1986. A 1984 ETSU graduate, Terri majored in business management and hopes to pursue a business career.

Graduate Assistant

Timothy Cook joined the staff of the archives as a graduate assistant with funding through the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services. He has been supervising the student assistants in ongoing photograph and manuscript processing projects.

From Glendive, Montana, Cook received his Bachelor of Arts degree in history from Montana State University. After completing his master's degree, he plans to attend Dalhousie University at Halifax, Nova Scotia, and work toward his doctorate in history.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

ARCHIVES OF APPALACHIA

FIELD RESEARCH IN FOLKLORE COURSE PROJECTS, Summer 1986. 0.5 l.f. Includes cassette audio tapes, dub sheets, biographical data sheets, release forms, typed transcripts and photographs relating to interviews done by students for course. Donated by Dr. Tom Burton, English department, ETSU.

FIRST TENNESSEE DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT RECORDS, c. 1965-1979. **ADDITION**. 10.5 l.f. Contains proposals, studies, plans and reports concerning environmental issues, transportation, economic development, recreation and tourism in East Tennessee and surrounding areas in North Carolina and Virginia. Material is primarily the product of First Tennessee Development District but includes some material of other agencies. Donated by Kenton Rea, librarian on behalf of the agency.

KIWANIS CLUB RECORDS, 1950-1953, 0.5 l.f. ADDITION. Additional materials consists of the club president's files accumulated during the term of Charles Sherrod, Jr. The records include newsletters, pamphlets, committee reports, annual achievement reports, speeches and newsclippings concerning the activities of the club in Johnson City, Tennessee. Donated by Charles Sherrod, Jr., Johnson City, Tennessee.

LUCY REPASS MCPHERSON PAPERS, 1939-1955, 1 l.f. Includes 3 personal scrapbooks relating to McPherson's activities while attending University Training School and East Tennessee State College. The collection also includes photographs, loose newsclippings and memorabilia. Some material concerns McPherson's mother, Grace Repass' activities in Eastern Star. Donated by Lucy McPherson, Johnson City, Tennessee.

MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS, 1888, 1 item. ADDITION. Handwritten diary of a lady from near Loudon in East Tennessee. Contains total of 64 pages of material. (20 pages copied poetry and sermons, 32 pages of daily personal entries and 12 pages of recipes.) Purchased by Sherrod Library.

WASHINGTON COUNTY (TN) AMERICAN BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE RECORDS, 1975-1976. 0.5 l.f. Includes committee constitution, by-laws, meeting minutes, newsclippings, correspondence and proposals concerning the committee's plans for the local celebration of the American Bicentennial. Donated by Frank Tannewitz, Johnson City, Tennessee.

WASHINGTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE HISTORIC STRUCTURE SURVEY, 1985-1986, 9 computer diskettes. Consists of 9 computer diskettes storing information resulting from survey of historic structures in Washington County, TN. Survey completed by Dr. Dale Royalty of the history department as a grant project. Survey provides information on the location, ownership and construction for each building. Donated by Dale Royalty, ETSU.

UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

MOODY, CLINTON P. CARTOONS, September-November 1978, 7 items. Seven 8x10 color cartoons drawn by Moody for the ETSU football program covers. Donated by Majid Ejlali, ETSU.

RIFLE TEAM RECORDS, 1977-1986. 3.5 l.f. Photographs, team history and scrapbooks, and general office files concerning daily operations of department, recruiting, NCAA and Southern Conference, team matches and tournaments and departmental budget. Donated by Paul L. Anderson, ETSU.

WETS-FM RECORDS, 1986. ADDITION. 11 audio-tapes. 11 7" reel-to-reel audio-tapes of programs produced by Ed Price for airing on WETS-FM. Subjects covered include: the film industry and film music, folk music, contemporary country music, child molestation, highland games, Davy Crockett, Douglas Forbes, the brain and the supernatural. Donated by Ed Price, WETS-FM, ETSU.

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Pittman Community Center: A Mountain Mission was given to the archives by Gene Aiken.

Mildred Kozsuch donated a copy of the book she edited, Historical Reminiscences of Carter County, Tennessee.

The Elderly in Appalachia: Appalachian Data Bank Report #3 was donated by Dr. Ronald D. Eller.

Lloyd Winters donated two volumes of Book of Art Printing.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Archives of Appalachia thanks the following donors for a variety of items relating to Appalachian culture, local and university history:

Thomas Burton
Shawn Hite
Judith Kite
Danea Taylor Walters
Robert Patton
McBerney Burleson
Greg Walters
Majid Ejlali
Mildred Kozsuch
Colin Baxter
Charles Gunter
Kathryn McKee
Howard A. Hayes
Velma Cloyd
Bobbi Lewis
Barbara McDermitt
Frank Tannewitz
Ronald D. Eller
Judy Woodruff
Helen Roseberry
C. Edwin Parker
Estel Harman
Dorothy Baird Carpenter

ARTS AND CRAFTS BIBLIOGRAPHY

Kentucky's Traditional Arts and Crafts: A Bibliography by Charles E. Martin is available as Volume 31 of the Kentucky Folklore Records. In addition to the fifty-eight page list of titles, the bibliography has an introduction, a subject index, a chronological index of articles, a chronological list of main subject areas index and photographs. Send \$10.50 to Kentucky Folklore Record, Box U169, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, KY 42101.

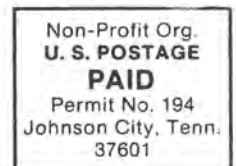
Historical Maps of Washington County

As a result of the State Homecoming '86 activities in Washington County, three maps have been printed on county schools, mills and cemeteries. Information on these maps can be obtained from the ETSU Archives of Appalachia and the Johnson City Public Library. These maps may be purchased at the Jonesborough Visitors Center and the Washington County-Jonesborough Library at \$4 per map or three for \$10. Two more maps in this series are to be printed on old homes and churches before 1850. Those serving on the Historical Maps Committee are Ruth Broyles, Houston Campbell, Bob Slonaker, W.A. Maloney, George St. John, Wayland Crouch and Mildred Kozsuch.

New Documentary on Snake Handling

Dr. Thomas Burton, professor of English, and Dr. Thomas Headley, professor of communications, have collaborated on a third documentary on snake handling. Their previous two works, "They Shall Take Up Serpents," and "Carson Springs: A Decade Later," examined the practice of snake handling during religious services. The third documentary, "Following the Signs: A Way of Conflict," explores the relationship between the legal community and snake-handling churches. The premier screening took place on September 22, 1986, at the D.P. Culp Center at ETSU. The tape will be aired in January 1987 on local PBS channel 2. Thereafter, the documentary will be offered to SECA (Southeastern Communications Association) for regional public television broadcasting.

Archives of Appalachia
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