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Archives of Appalachia NEWSLETTER



Vol. XII, No. 2

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PRESERVING VIDEO TAPES: THE CASE OF BROADSIDE TELEVISION

One of the archives' most valuable and utilized collections is the Broadside Television Collection. The bulk of this collection came to the archives in 1979 as the result of a bankruptcy proceeding. Although the collection consists of both manuscripts and audio and video tapes, it is the audio-visual materials which patrons find most useful in their research on Appalachian culture and history.

Of the 608 video tapes contained in the collection, only 162 have been dubbed onto 3/4" video cassettes. The archives accomplished this dubbing project in 1980 with funds obtained from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Unfortunately many tapes valuable to an understanding of Appalachian culture and history could not then be duplicated. The archives is now faced with the prospect of dubbing 200 or so 1/2 inch reel-to-reel video tapes onto 3/4" cassettes. Following is an article which briefly describes the history of Broadside and the problems inherent in preserving and duplicating reel-to-reel video tape.

Broadside Television was the brainchild of Ted Carpenter, a native Canadian who was raised and educated in New England. Carpenter came to Tennessee via the VISTA program. He became fascinated with Appalachian mountain culture and with the potential of portapac and small video format technology as tools Appalachians could use to teach themselves their own culture. Carpenter aimed to provide the medium through which individuals could generate the material for their own learning. His model was the community newspaper--hence the name "Broadside" Television.

Carpenter founded Broadside TV in November 1972, with the help of a two-year grant awarded by the Appalachian Regional Commission and administered by First Tennessee-Virginia Development District. Broadside received its charter of incorporation almost two years later, on Oct. 15, 1974.

In East Tennessee, where television reception was poor, cable service was well-established. Moreover, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) mandated that cable operators produce a certain number of hours of locally originated programming. Carpenter and Broadside took advantage of this ruling, and convinced local operators to turn over to Broadside their local programming budgets. Broadside thus was free to use its own discretion in regard to the types of programs it produced. In return, however, Broadside agreed to produce a certain number of hours of bluegrass music and wrestling. These subjects were among the favorites of the cable operators.

BROADSIDE TV



SW VIRGINIA: An Appalachian Video Network
Dilenoewesco
Virginia Avenue
Norton, Va. 24273
703-679-2180

TRI-CITIES:
204 E. Watauga Ave.
Johnson City, Tenn. 37601
615-926-2401

BROADSIDE TV SCHEDULE FOR WEEK OF AUGUST 27 - 31, 1973

- ALL STAR WRESTLING - 1 Hr.
 - BRISTOL MUSIC FESTIVAL - 1 Hr.
 - CROSSROAD BOYS - 30 Min.
 - MUSIC IN THESE HILLS - 30 Min.
 - GOVERNOR DUNN at Davy Crockett Park - 30 Min.
 - TV FOXFIRE - Carter County residents demonstrate traditional mountain folkways. - 30 Min.
 - PRESS CONFERENCE/SENATOR BAKER - 45 Min.
 - APPALACHIAN SCHOOLS - Benjamin Carmichael, Tenn. Commissioner of Education, Speaking at E.T.S.U. along with a tape on the Blackey School situation in Blackey, Kentucky, where a group of parents are trying to save their community school. - 1 Hr.
- May be commercially sponsored

A Cooperative Project of:
Appalachian Regional Commission, First Term Va. Development District, Warner Cable, Summers Cable, Johnson City Schools, Elizabethton City Schools, Appalachian Colleges & Universities, Washington County Utility District, Videomaker, Dilenoewesco, PGR Cable, Mountain Peoples Photo Center, Mountain Empire Community College, Clinch Valley College

SAMPLE BROADSIDE TELEVISION SCHEDULE, 1973

With subsequent grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Tennessee Arts Commission and private sources, Broadside was able to produce a variety of programs on life in Central Appalachia. Among the topics examined by Broadside were coal mining, energy and environmental needs, land use, folk arts and music, education, aging, and regional history. The Southern Appalachian Video Ethnography Series (SAVES), produced in partnership with East Tennessee State University, is of particular interest and importance. SAVES sought to explore and document traditional mountain music, crafts, and lifestyles.

Broadside also served as a tape clearing house which distributed tapes to schools and community groups throughout Appalachia. In addition, Broadside contracted with local agencies and establishments (e.g., Memorial Hospital in Johnson City) to make instructional films.

Broadside's fortunes, and those of other video producers dependent on local cable programming, changed in 1974 when the FCC dropped its requirement that cable operators provide locally originated programming. Faced with the loss of the major portion of its funding, Carpenter and Broadside had to reevaluate programming strategy. This task fell primarily to Carpenter's successors, as he left in 1975 to head the Citizens Committee for Broadcasting. The station in 1977 sought unsuccessfully to use Channel 41 as a public cable television station. A year later in 1978, unable to maintain its operation, Broadside filed for bankruptcy. One of the region's and indeed the nation's, most innovative approaches to television programming came to an end.

In 1979, a year after Broadside declared bankruptcy, the Archives of Appalachia obtained the Broadside tapes and manuscripts. Although the collection included a small number of 3/4" U-Matic cassettes, the majority of tapes were 1/2" reel-to-reel, helical scan video tapes. Most of these were Sony helical scan, but a few were Ampex brand. Invented in the late 1960s, the 1/2" helical scan format fit the portapac recorder Broadside favored. The helical scan format is now obsolete, and as a consequence it is very difficult to find a working helical scan player.

All video tapes, whether they are reel-to-reel or cassette, present preservation problems. Video tapes consist of a polyester base with a binder layer of polyurethane which holds the metal oxide particles that contain the recorded information. The binder may include lubricants to reduce friction. In order to guard against static some manufacturers backcoat tapes with polyurethane. The video tapes made by different manufacturers vary in the chemical composition of the layers, but these variations are not significant ones.

There are three major problem areas which affect the preservation of videotape: deteriorative tendencies of the tapes, environmental conditions, and handling and use of tapes. The polyester base of video tape has proven to be stable, but the polyurethane binder degenerates, especially in a high humidity environment. Over time the binder loses elasticity, which contributes to damage from handling and from the expansion and shrinkage which occurs when tapes are exposed to fluctuations in air temperature. Dioxide coatings used in older tapes accelerates the binder's deterioration. Metal oxide now in use, however, appears stable.

Poor environmental conditions accelerate tape deterioration. High relative humidity, high temperatures, fluctuations in humidity and temperature, and the presence of dust and such pollutants as chemical fumes from cleaners, insecticides, and cigarette smoke, all pose dangers to tapes.

Playing and recording tapes repeatedly also contributes to their deterioration. When played or recorded, video tape comes into direct contact with the reading head, causing the tape to shed magnetized oxide particles. Over an extended period of time repeated use causes loss of the video signal.

Poorly maintained equipment can also damage video tapes. Improper tension, misaligned or worn guides, and debris on the tape path all could damage the tape edge and destroy the video signal. Old, frequently unreliable reel-to-reel equipment, also may damage tapes.

The archivist can take certain steps to preserve video tapes. Maintaining equipment, cleaning video tapes, controlling the environment in storage areas, and making user copies of tapes will help preserve video tapes. Even in a controlled environment, the life expectancy for video tapes is predicted by many experts to range between 15-30 years.

For the Archives of Appalachia the reel-to-reel tapes in the Broadside Collection represent both a challenge and a problem. As mentioned previously, finding a working reel-to-reel video machine is the first problem. Assuming success in this regard, the next problem concerns cleaning the tapes. Video experts seem to prefer a dry buffing method which involves cleaning the tape surface with nonwoven paper.

After cleaning the tapes then will have to be dubbed onto 3/4" cassette (master cassette) and VHS cassette (user copy). There are a couple of problems here. First, the cost of buying cassettes, especially the 3/4" ones, is high, and second, dubbing onto cassette will not solve the long range storage problem. The best way to insure long-term (100 years) preservation of video images is to make copies on black and white movie film. But this process is prohibitive--about \$100 per hour.

At the present time the archives is exploring avenues to obtain funding to preserve the remainder of Broadside tapes appraised as valuable to an understanding of Appalachian culture. The urgency for obtaining funding becomes more critical as the tapes age and as it becomes increasingly difficult to find recorders which play the reel-to-reel videos. The archives is optimistic that it can obtain funding and will be able to save these worthy recordings.

[For further information on Broadside consult the following: Ferdinand Alexi Hilenski, "Broadside TV" in An Encyclopedia of East Tennessee, eds. Jim Stokely and Jeff D. Johnson, (1981); Broadside TV vertical files; Broadside Television Collection; and First Tennessee-Virginia Development District Papers, all in the Archives of Appalachia. The archives also has information on preservation of video tapes.]

TOURISM IN SOUTHERN APPALACHIA

Tourism in southern Appalachia is not a recent phenomenon. Native Americans who traveled to springs to take advantage of the waters' healing powers, perhaps can be considered the region's first tourists. Whites in the 18th

century also made use of healing waters, and later in the 19th century hotels, spas and bath houses served visitors who sought rest, relaxation and healing. Shortly after the Civil War the tourist and resort business declined, but as

railroads penetrated Appalachia and established their own resorts, the tourist trade boomed from 1890-1920. The decline of the railroad and the advent of the automobile changed the nature of tourism. Despite the lack of good roads in southern Appalachia, vacationers jumped in their cars to visit the natural and historic sites in the region. Local entrepreneurs built hotels and campgrounds to accommodate these travelers. The establishment of national and state forests, and national and state parks also bolstered tourism in southern Appalachia.

Tourism has provided much needed revenue for many areas within the southern Appalachian region. The records of the First Tennessee-Virginia Development District reflect the efforts of officials in Tennessee and Virginia to develop tourism in the years from 1967-73.

In a similar vein, the records of the Congress for Appalachian Development document attempts to develop water and land resources in southern Appalachia in 1962. Additional materials in this collection focus on the conservation and recreation potential of the New River Gorge in West Virginia and the Cumberland area of Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee. These materials also date from 1962.

The Carolina, Clinchfield and Ohio Railway Collection documents a different aspect of tourism. From 1967 through 1974 the CC&O ran excursion trains at different seasons of the year. The rail line sponsored, for example, the Autumn Leaves Special, the Rhododendron Special and the Santa Claus Special. These excursion trains aimed primarily to tap the local tourist market and to foster interest in regional natural beauty and sites.



CLOUDLAND HOTEL AND GUESTS, 1885 OR 1886
Cloudland Hotel, located on Roan Mountain at the Tennessee-North Carolina state line, was a popular tourist resort

The archives also holds materials on some of southern Appalachia's tourist attractions. The archives' Appalachian vertical files contain information on Asheville, North Carolina, long a health resort; the now defunct Cloudland Hotel on Roan Mountain, once popular as a resort; and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, one of the most extensively used parks in the national park system. Other vertical file materials detail and describe southern Appalachia's national, state and local parks and recreation areas.

The archives needs additional documentation on tourism in southern Appalachia. To find out how to donate materials to the archives, or to obtain more information about the archives, phone 615/929-4338, or

write to the archives at Box 22450A, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee 37614.

ARCHIVES EXHIBIT

The latest archives exhibit focuses on the Highlander Research and Education Center. The exhibit details various aspects of the history of Highlander. Included, for example, are the founding of the Highlander Folk School in 1932 by Myles Horton; Horton's career and importance to Highlander; Highlander's role in the labor and civil rights movements; the campaign against Highlander by the State of Tennessee; and Highlander's programs today. The exhibit is being displayed on the first floor of the Sherrod Library, at ETSU.

RECENTLY PROCESSED

The archives staff recently processed a number of collections. Among these are the following: **Graham W. Leonard Papers**, 1952-55 (correspondence and other materials which relate to Leonard's teaching in Jordan and conscientious objection to the Korean War); **John Wesley Garland Papers**, 1859-87 (one file folder containing will, correspondence, and land transactions of Garland in Tennessee and North Carolina); **Washington County Historic Structures Survey**, 1985-86 (consists of nine computer disks which contain information on historic buildings in Washington County, Tennessee. Survey was completed by the ETSU history department in 1985-86); **Whiting**

Lumber Company Records, 1928-30 (one minute book for Whiting Lumber Company, North Carolina and Tennessee); **Broylesville Flour Mill Records**, 1912-45 (account books and day books for the Limestone, Tennessee mill); **Evelyn Gaunt McDonald Collection**, 1892-1978 (photos of the Gaunt and McDonald families and yearbooks from the Johnson City Garden Club); **Tom Daniel Collection** 1945-67 (photos of Tom Daniel and some non-ETSU prints taken by Daniel, former ETSU photographer); and the **Appalachian Farm Photographs** (prints of farm life taken by six regional photographers, and originally part of a 1979 exhibit on farm life in Appalachia).

NEWS FROM CASS

The Center for Appalachian Studies and Services is experimenting with the use of the Hypercard program from Macintosh to index Now and Then Magazine. On file are "card" images that contain title, caption, author, date, year, volume, number, focus of the issue, page, and type of documentation (e.g. essay, photo, poem, interview, short story). The index can be sorted by any field (e.g. author's last name or article title). The printout of the index can be modified to allot more or less space to a particular field. The cards can be sorted by field and searched individually by advancing through the deck.



Hypercard is a ready-made selection of formats that allows for interaction and interconnection. The next step will involve building a telephone index that is connected to the main index by the telephone icon buttons on an author's "card." This will alleviate having to enter the author's name, address, and telephone number each time he/she contributes to the magazine.

UPCOMING EVENTS

CONFERENCE ON APPALACHIA AND CANADA

On June 21-22, 1991 the University of Kentucky and Northern Kentucky University will cosponsor a conference titled "Two North American Regions in Stress: A Conference on Common Development Issues and Strategies in the Atlantic Provinces and in Appalachia." The conference seeks to bring together scholars, activists and government officials from these two similar regions to explore the problems they face in common and the means developed independently to address these problems. The conference will be held at the University of Kentucky at Lexington. For additional information, please contact Jane Bagby, Associate Director, Appalachian Center, 641 South Limestone Street, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40506-0333, (Phone 606-257-4852).

COUNTRY DANCE CAMP

The Country Dance and Song Society will sponsor two weeks of dance and music at Buffalo Gap Camp in West Virginia. One program, "Family Week" (July 6-13, 1991) will feature Americans and English dance for the whole family. The other program, "English and American Dance Week" (July 13-20, 1991) will feature dancing, singing, calling and dance-band workshops for adults. For further information contact Steve Howe, 17 New South Street, Northampton, Mass., 01060, 413/584-9913.

SELECTED RECENT ACQUISITIONS

JOHN BIGGS "PAT" ALDERMAN PAPERS, 1912-1982, 1.5 linear feet, and 130 photographs. ADDITION.

Consists of 1 box of yearbooks, photographs, slides, event programs, bulletins, reports, music scores, newsclippings, and memorabilia documenting Pat Alderman's activities as a musician, college student, naturalist, and genealogist. Donated by Gloria J. Harrell, Erwin, Tennessee.

CITY OF JOHNSON CITY RECORDS, January 17, 1895-April 4, 1903, 1 ledger. ADDITION.

Consists of 1 ordinance book documenting the general operation of the Johnson City government prior to its change in 1909. Deposited by Vicky Hames, Johnson City, Tennessee.

JAMES A. GOFORTH COLLECTION, 1906-1915, 5 blueprint maps and architectural drawings. ADDITION.

Consists of 2 line maps of portions of the CC&O and South and Western Railways, 2 architectural drawings of lettering designs for the CC&O and South and Western Railways, and a 1915 map of Johnson City, Tennessee. Donated by James A. Goforth, Erwin, Tennessee.

JOHN L. KIENER PAPERS, 1987-1990, 6 linear feet. ADDITION.

Consists of 4 boxes of reports, dockets, pamphlets, periodicals, correspondence, criminal codes, event programs and bulletins documenting the personal and professional activities of Judge John L. Kiener. Donated by John L. Kiener, Johnson City, Tennessee.

* * * * *

MARAT MOORE COLLECTION, 1976-1990, 7 video tapes, 13 audio cassette tapes, 16 photographs, and .5 linear feet of manuscripts. ADDITION.

Consists of VHS video tapes, audio cassette tapes, photographs, books, pamphlets, a broadside, and a periodical documenting the history of coal mining. In addition there is information on the UMWA and on the Pittston Coal Company strike. Donated by Marat Moore, Washington, D. C.

WILLIAM HENLEY NELSON PAPERS, 1929-1990, 1 linear foot. ADDITION.

Consists of one box of photographs, pamphlets, bulletins, scrapbooks, newsclippings, and memorabilia documenting the family activities of the Nelson and St. John families between 1929 and 1990. Donated by Elinor Farina, Johnson City, Tennessee.

ALFRED BRIGGS NIX COLLECTION, 1780-1881, .2 linear feet.

Consists of 57 legal documents including deeds, surveys, receipts, a purchase agreement, attorney's notes, and correspondence documenting property acquisition activities in Sullivan and Washington counties in the vicinity of Fall Branch, Tennessee. Donated by Alfred Briggs Nix, Nashville, Tennessee.

CHARLES E. PRICE COLLECTION, 1990, .1 linear foot. ADDITION.

The addition consists of a draft copy of a book manuscript entitled, The Ghosts of Upper East Tennessee, dated October 2, 1990, documenting different types of ghost lore of East Tennessee. Donated by Charles E. Price, Johnson City, Tennessee.

* * * * *

B. CARROLL REECE MUSEUM RECORDS, 1978-1986, 4.5 linear feet. ADDITION.

Consists of three boxes of correspondence, budgets, pamphlets, minutes, reports, guest registers, and newsletters from the B. Carroll Reece Museum. Transferred by Margaret Carr, B. Carroll Reece Museum, ETSU.

AMOS M. TEMPLETON PAPERS, 1816-1924, 2 file folders.

Contains land deeds, receipts, agreements, summons, affidavits, estate papers, plat map, financial records and deeds documenting the personal and business activities of Amos M. Templeton and his family. Donated by Dwight Calhoun, Kingsport, Tennessee.

UNIVERSITY RELATIONS RECORDS, 1973-1990, 3.5 linear feet. ADDITION.

Contains 2 boxes and 1 oversized folder of pamphlets, event programs, newsletters, periodicals, financial reports and president's annual reports dating between 1973 and 1990. The records document the general administrative and student activities of East Tennessee State University. Transferred by Karen Crevelt, Office of Alumni Affairs and University Relations, ETSU.

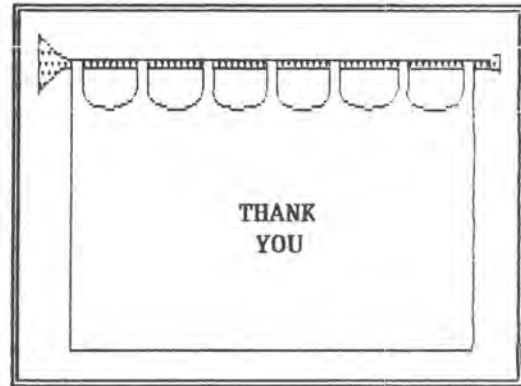
WAR IN THE MODERN WORLD COURSE COLLECTION, 1990. 1 file folder. 6 audio cassettes and 1 VHS cassette.

Consists of interviews of World War II and Vietnam War veterans conducted by students for the course, "War in the Modern World." Donated by Colin Baxter, history department, ETSU.

MISCELLANEOUS DONATIONS

The archives thanks the following donors for their support of the archives through their generous donations:

Jane Ward
Lori Thompson



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ETSU, The Sherrod Library
P. O. Box 22,450A
Johnson City, TN 37614-0002

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