

# NEWS

APPALACHIAN CENTER  
BEREA COLLEGE

# LETTER



Gordon B. McKinney • Thomas Parrish, Co-Editors

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## Looking Forward

**January 21-27:** Basketry, blacksmithing, intermediate mountain dulcimer, weaving (18th-century household textiles), woodcarving, woodturning—here's an opportunity for those with experience in crafts to add to their skills through instruction by some of the country's finest practitioners. John C. Campbell Folk School, Route 1, Box 14A, Brasstown, N.C. 28902-9603. Sessions during succeeding weeks will take up everything you ever wanted to do in the area of crafts.

**January 28-February 17:** New Opportunity School for Women, Berea College. This free three-week chance to explore educational and career possibilities (for women 30-55) is offered several times during the year. For information about all sessions, contact the New Opportunity School for Women, College P.O. Box 2276, Berea, Ky. 40404; phone 606/986-9341, ext. 6676.

**February 23-25:** The first of five 1996 weekend craft sessions at the John C. Campbell Folk School will feature instruction in splint basketry, calligraphy, clay whistles, kaleidoscopes and woodcarving (limberjacks), together with dance.

**March 3-8:** Elderhostel, Berkeley Springs, W.Va., conducted by Augusta Heritage Center, Davis & Elkins College, 100 Campus Drive, Elkins, W.Va. 26241; phone 304/637-1209.

**March 29-31:** 19th annual Appalachian Studies Conference, Unicoi State Park, Georgia. You can get details from Curtis W. Wood, Department of History, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, N.C. 28723; phone 704/227-7243.

**March 21-22:** Berea College Appalachian Fund Affiliates Conference, Berea College. Representatives of all the organizations helped by the fund will give progress reports; members of the public are especially invited to attend. The sessions begin on March 21 at 2:00 p.m. in the activities room of the Alumni Building on campus.

**April 16-17:** Spring Assembly, Coalition for Appalachian Ministry; Parchment Valley, Ripley, W.Va. The theme is "Unleashing the Power of the Laity." Details from the coalition at P.O. Box 10208, Knoxville, Tenn. 37939-0208; phone 423/584-6133.

**April 18-20:** "Intersections in Vernacular Music," a conference celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Center for Popular Music at Middle Tennessee State University. Papers will explore "convergences" of folk and popular cultures, regional and national traditions, community and mass-mediated "musics" (i.e., kinds of music), etc.; the

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Berea College Public Relations

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## Where the Jobs Are

The recent report of the Kentucky Commission on Poverty highlights an old truth with special meaning for Appalachians: If you want a job, one of the best ways to get one is to go where the jobs are.

In putting this principle into practice back in the 1950s, mountain people created one of the great migrations of all time, from Appalachia to cities in the Middle West (and, as well, in other parts of their own states). The people moved with regret, but move they did.

Currently, according to the report, industries and business firms in much of Kentucky have numerous jobs going unfilled while high unemployment figures mark other parts of the state. "We don't have the jobs where people are," said one commission member, "and the people don't seem to want to go where the jobs are."

Though this is clearly the case, it also seems to be true that a substantial proportion of those unfilled jobs demand kinds of education and training that many jobless people lack, regardless of where they live. Hence the commission's advocacy of offering businesses tax incentives to hire the unemployed may amount to sidestepping the problem.

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eminent Bill C. Malone will keynote the whole affair. Though the conference isn't for quite a while yet, you should submit your proposal for a paper right now, if you haven't done it already. Write to Paul F. Wells, Director, Center for Popular Music, Box 41, MTSU, Murfreesboro, Tenn. 37132. **April 21-26:** Spring Dulcimer Week, sponsored the Augusta Heritage Center of Davis & Elkins College (see address and phone number above). An outstanding staff will be on hand to teach you both mountain and hammered dulcimer.

**June 4-6:** Second Old-Time Music and Radio Conference, Andy Griffith Playhouse, Mt. Airy, N. C., sponsored by the Old-Time Music Group, Inc., P.O. Box 3014, Elkins, W. Va., 26241. The keynoter will be Alan Jabbour, director of the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress. If you want to stick around for a couple of days more, you can attend the 24th annual Mt. Airy Fiddlers Convention at Veterans' Park in Mt. Airy.

**June 10-28:** Berea College Appalachian Center summer seminar: "Politics in the Southern Mountains." The course will cover the development of partisan politics in Appalachia from the 1830s to the 1990s. Local, regional, state and national issues and personalities will be examined; contemporary regional political figures and scholars will participate in selected classes. For full details, contact the Appalachian Center, C.P.O. Box 2336, Berea, Ky. 40404; phone 986-9341, ext. 5140.

**September 1:** Deadline for papers for the 1997 annual conference of the Sonneck Society for American Music, which will be held in Seattle. Though papers and performances will involve all aspects of North American/Caribbean music, the sponsors invite prospective participants to give thought to the Pacific Northwest. Next September may seem a long way off, but the society encourages prospective participants to submit their proposals as early as possible. All materials (written or cassette) should go to Rae Linda Brown, University of California, Irvine, School of the Arts—Music, Irvine, Calif. 92717.

## A Map for Speech

Of all the Appalachian expressions that puzzle people from outside the area, probably the most confusing is "I don't care to" meaning "I don't mind" or even "I'll be glad to."

Such forms, together with sentences like "I seen it" and words like "hit" for "it," make up the raw material of a Morehead (Ky.) State University linguistics professor's ambitious project to assemble a linguistic atlas of Kentucky. ("Hit," incidentally, represents a perfect example of the survival of a once-standard word; a first cousin of "he," it was the Old English ancestor of "it.")

As reported by the *Lexington Herald-Leader*, the professor, Terry Irons—who hails from across the river in Ohio—makes an interesting distinction between Southern speech (characteristic of the flatlands of Appalachian states) and mountain speech, which he sees not as a particular form of Southern speech but rather as an entity in itself.

What makes a speech pattern generally acceptable, Irons tells his students, is simply its being employed by the

dominant social class of an area or a country. Certainly if you dream of becoming ambassador to France or even president of Berea College, you will be well advised to cherish "hit" but opt for "it."

And you may need to be careful in general, particularly if you have a decided accent. On a trip to Ohio with Irons, one of his Morehead colleagues ran afoul of a waitress who took offense at his request for some ice. Desperately, the professor explained that he merely wanted "little cubes of frozen water."

## LETTER

### Conception of the ARC?

TO THE EDITORS:

I can add a small footnote to your article about John Whisman (Summer 1995).

Well before there was any such thing as the Appalachian Regional Commission, I was part of a Council of the Southern Mountains committee on economic development. Whisman was present at what may have been the last annual council conference held in Gatlinburg, and the discussion turned to a possible idea such as the ARC became. As I remember it, he was working for the then-governor of Kentucky, who did nothing to really push the idea. Several years later Whisman went to work for the governor of Maryland and sold him the idea. This governor then called a meeting of the other Appalachian governors and got them, as a group, behind the idea. With this pressure the U.S. Congress saw the light and created the ARC.

I have always had the feeling that Whisman developed the idea from that original meeting. Certainly he was the person who made it happen.

STUART L. FABER  
Cincinnati

*Any other memories, agreements, disagreements, about the conception and gestation of the Appalachian Regional Commission? Let us hear from you.—Editors.*

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"Trapped" was the word used by one commission member to describe the plight of many unemployed mountain people. So the greatest need may be for more education and training, together with a focus on helping people overcome the complex factors that make moving literally impossible for many.

The persisting poverty in Appalachia exists in a changing overall context, in which, figures show, American society is becoming decreasingly egalitarian, with a growing chasm between the well-off and the poor—the largest such gap in any industrialized country. Self-interest, if nothing else, ought to enlist the prosperous in fresh efforts against poverty, since lost productivity and increasing dependency threaten everybody.



**FIDDLERS** were front and center throughout last October's Celebration of Traditional Music at Berea. On page 1 the veteran Walter McNew (r.) talks with a fellow fiddler who came to the celebration. Guests included (above r.) the University of Kentucky's Ron Pen.

## EYE on Publications

*Troubled Waters*, by Richard A. Bartlett (University of Tennessee Press). The publishers describe this book as "dispassionate yet disturbing." It's disturbing, all right—amply so—but the preface, at least, is as impassioned a piece of writing as we've seen for quite a while.

Subtitled "Champion International and the Pigeon River Controversy," *Troubled Waters* (a volume in the Outdoor Tennessee series) tells the bitter story of the battle between the company that polluted the river and the citizens who have fought to bring about a cleanup. The struggle has gone on through most of the 20th century, and if you've ever seen or smelled the brown foam on the river you know just what the battle has been about. Particularly aggrieved have been the citizens of Cocke County, Tenn., and its county seat, Newport, through the middle of which flows the effluvium from the plant that makes paper across the state line, in Canton, N.C.

The battle, intermittent since the establishment of the paper mill in 1908, has taken on particular intensity during the last decade. Two organizations—the Pigeon River Action Group and the Dead Pigeon River Council—have led a citizen drive against the pollution, and all hands agree that the river is cleaner now, though some observers believe that Champion has acted not in response to the protests but simply from economic motives—but if the movement is in the right direction, the purity of the company's motives may not be the vital question.

Fairness, says the author—an emeritus professor of history at Florida State—requires that we recognize both people's need for jobs and income and people's right not to

have a filthy river stinking up their city. Though he credits the author with devotion to fairness, Jim Casada, the editor of the Outdoor Tennessee series, who wrote the preface, declares that the weight of the evidence has inevitably produced a "scathing condemnation" of Champion and its works.

*Come and Go, Molly Snow*, by Mary Ann Taylor-Hall (Norton). Carrie Marie Mullins is a bluegrass fiddler who occupies a difficult spot as the only woman in a band whose leading spirit, Cap Dunlap, is the man she loves—all out, and completely against her better judgment.

There's little point in—and much to be said against—commenting on a novel of relationships by summarizing the story. It's a lyrical book, as the publishers declare, but it's a lyricism that thrums with hard-edged music. The most useful comments, really, are the reactions of careful readers. "Music—the melding of grief and desire and sex and nature into music—is the soul of this lovely book," Bobbie Ann Mason tells us. "Elvis would have loved it!" It is "more finely crafted than a wooden instrument and more deeply honest than a mountain song," says Pam Houston. Wendell Berry extends his blessing: "This book has an authority as generous as its compassion. It is just beautifully written."

*The Dividing Paths*, by Tom Hatley (Oxford University Press). Like the Chinese, the Hebrews, the Greeks and innumerable other peoples (including, to be sure, Americans living in "God's country"), the Cherokees used to believe that they dwelt in the center of the universe and were, in their phrase, the "principal people." Unfortunately for these native Americans, however, the Europeans of various origins who came across the Atlantic did not share

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their view. In this study of cultural encounter, Tom Hatley traces the interaction of the Cherokees and the English settlers of South Carolina from 1680, when Charleston was established, until 1785, when the Cherokees signed the first of their treaties with the United States.

"The Cherokees and Carolinians have inspired writers and historians throughout their encounter," says the author, a native North Carolinian who received a doctorate in history from Duke, "and I have benefited from this three-century stream of telling and insight." During the period covered by his story, the traffic between the two cultural groups was at its highest, and the author focuses on this series of contacts and exchanges. Cherokee history and that of the colonial settlers cannot be understood separately, he says, but are inextricably linked. No sentimentalizer, the author observes that "each society served as a mirror for the other, revealing weaknesses and strengths in an intense comparative light, but at the same time distorting the underlying humanity of each."

Looking ahead to the half-century between the Revolution and the Removal in 1838, Hatley comments that during this period "the Cherokees would engage in a remarkable renaissance, managed and presented to the American public by *métis* Cherokee planters and white sympathizers and missionaries." But these resuscitators "remained profoundly in the middle, between two societies whose drift apart already had a long history and momentum behind it." The tragedy lies in the possibility that in a different context, all could have gone differently.

*Hell and Ohio*, by Chris Holbrook (Gnomon Press, P.O. Box 475, Frankfort, Ky. 40602). A collection of clean, sharp stories set in what one is irresistibly tempted to call Gurney Norman country—though the tone is different, just

as today is different from the 1960s world of *Kinfolks*. In these stories, as Jim Wayne Miller puts it, "marriages are stressed and strained. Parents and grandparents search for lost cemeteries and homeplaces; children and grandchildren try to find their way to the future through an unsettled and uncertain present."

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**Sound Notes**

‡The Berea College Appalachian Center offers a brand-new release, *Snakewinder*, featuring old-time Northeast Kentucky fiddle tunes played by Roger Wilford Cooper, with guitarist Robin Kessinger. The cassette—AC007—is \$8.00 plus \$1.25 s/h from the Appalachian Center, College P.O. Box 2336, Berea, Ky. 40404.

‡From the Augusta Heritage Center comes a solo fiddle tape by Delbert Hughes, titled "The Home Recordings" (AHR 015). For information about this and other recordings, phone the center at 304/637-1209. The address is Augusta Heritage Center, Davis & Elkins College, Elkins, W. Va. 26241.

**In *Appalachian Heritage* ...**

Highlights of the Fall 1995 issue of *Appalachian Heritage* include "Medical History Notes From Appalachia," an account of the twists and turns in the development of the hospital chain now known as Appalachian Regional Healthcare, and a profile of Tillman Cadle, a tough and colorful Tennessee labor organizer of the 1920s and 1930s who later became a folklore collector with an apartment in Greenwich Village.

You can obtain the magazine (\$6.00 a copy, \$18.00 for a year's subscription) from *Appalachian Heritage*, Hutchins Library, Berea, Kentucky 40404.

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