

NEWS

APPALACHIAN CENTER
BEREA COLLEGE

LETTER



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Looking Forward

September 27-28: FOOTMAD's 15th Fall Festival of Music & Dance; Camp Sheppard, Gandeeville, W.Va. Does "FOOTMAD" make sense? Yes, it does when you realize it's simply a straightforward acronym for Friends of Old-Time Music and Dance. As you might expect, there'll be workshops, performances and contra and square dancing, with J. P. Fraley, Robin Kessinger, Stewed Mulligan and other eminences on hand. For more information, you can call 304/768-9249.

October 4-6: Old-Fashioned Sorghum Makin', John R. Simon's Family Farm, 8721 Pond Creek/Carey's Run Road, Portsmouth, Ohio 45663. If sorghum suckers and homemade pies and apple cider sound good to you, this may be the place for you to spend the weekend. All the eating (or, perhaps, eatin') will be accompanied by old-time music; you'll also find soap making, butter churning and other reminders of the past. To find out more, phone 614/259-6337.

October 5: Madison County and Berea College Woodland Management Field Day, USDA Forest Service Office, Highway 21, Berea, Ky. What do they mean when they talk about sustainability in managing forests? Find out by joining this field walk/discussion program held in a forest that's been managed professionally for almost a century. Register in advance by calling John Wilson at 606/623-4072; activities begin with coffee at 9:00.

October 10-13: Southern Folk Festival, Chattanooga, Tenn. (See separate story.)

October 10-13: 17th annual Tennessee Fall Homecoming, sponsored by and held at John Rice Irwin's Museum of Appalachia, which has been accurately described as "the most authentic and complete replica of pioneer Appalachian life in the world." The event will feature the customary bountiful serving of art, crafts and entertainment, with headliners John Hartford, Ralph Stanley, Mac Wiseman and the Grandpa Jones Family. The museum's address is P.O. Box 0318, Norris, Tenn.; phone 423/494-7680 or 423/494-0514.

October 11-13: Annual Fall Fair, Kentucky Guild of Artists and Craftsmen, Indian Fort Theater, Berea, Ky. Unusual highlights this year will be provided by storytellers, including Jess Hatmaker, with Native American tales, and the Paranoix Puppet Theater. For more information, phone 606/986-3192.

October 11-13: Black Mountain Folk Festival, Black Mountain, N.C.; featured performers include Al and Emily

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Deadlines...

We are delighted with the interest you show in the APPALACHIAN CENTER NEWSLETTER through your contribution of items, particularly for inclusion in our Looking Forward column. But from time to time we feel the need to remind all readers that we are a quarterly publication—which means, for example, that if you send us information in July about an event scheduled to take place in August, we can only wish you well; we won't have the chance to print the news. Our press times are early June, early September, early December and early March. So allow us the lead time we need, and we'll be happy to spread the word about your festivals, jamborees, workshops, competitions and everything else.



Bill Sheffield-Watauga Democrat

Traditional celebrant: Ora Payne-Watson

"Old Styles": Music Celebration No. 23

Back in 1974, when the Berea College Appalachian Center Celebration of Traditional Music made its first appearance, then-Center Director Loyal Jones explained its purpose. "We feel," Jones said, "that the old styles traditional to the

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Cantrell, Christine Kane and Peter Rowan. For details, call 704/669-6813.

October 19: Old-Time Banjo Day, Whitesburg, Ky., sponsored by Appalshop. Call 606/633-0108.

October 20-27: October Old-Time Week, Augusta Heritage Center, incorporating the October 25-27 fiddlers' reunion; Davis & Elkins College, 100 Campus Drive, Elkins, W.Va. 26241-3996; phone 304/637-1209.

October 25-27: 23rd annual Celebration of Traditional Music, sponsored by the Berea College Appalachian Center and featuring a variety of top performers. (See separate story.)

November 16: An evening with Kevin Burke and Open House, presented by FOOTMAD, with music from Ireland, Eastern Europe, France, Latin America and Appalachia; Cultural Center Theater, State Capitol Complex, Charleston, W.Va. Write to FOOTMAD at P.O. Box 1684, Charleston, W.Va. 25326 or phone 304/768-9249.

December 1: The much-to-be-welcomed New River Symposium returns on April 11-12, 1997, but much closer at

hand is the deadline for proposals for papers and other presentations; it's December 1. As is traditional with this unique enterprise, papers may deal with any kind of subject having to do with the New River—cultural history, folklore, archaeology, geography, geology, you name it—with emphasis on the interrelationships of the physical and human environments. Proposals should go to the Chief of Interpretation, National Park Service, New River Gorge National River, P.O. Box 246, Glen Jean., W. Va. 25846. If you like, call park headquarters at 304/465-6509.

December 1: This is the date of another deadline to be aware of; it's when abstracts are due for East Tennessee State University's community-based primary-care conference to be held May 20-23, 1997, in Asheville, N.C. For details, you can phone Donna Hauk at 423/439-4341.

December 26-31: Christmas Country Dance School, Berea College, directed by Susan Spalding, Berea's coordinator of dance. This year's session will mark the retirement of Patrick Napier, who has taught Appalachian square dancing at the school for 46 years. More information from 606/986-9341, ext. 5565 or 5142.

Louise Hutchins 1911-1996

Dr. Louise Hutchins, one of the Appalachian region's preeminent pioneers in family planning, died on September 3 at her home in Berea.

A graduate of Wellesley and the Yale Medical School, Dr. Hutchins came to Berea from China in 1939 with her husband, Francis, when he succeeded his father as president of the college, and quickly became the physician for the Mountain Maternal Health League, which had been estab-



"...into the light."

lished just three years earlier by a group of college-educated women to improve medical services for mountain mothers and their babies.

Born in China of missionary parents, Dr. Hutchins, after receiving her medical degree, interned at Hunan hospital in Changsha and later, during the Sino-Japanese war, worked with refugee children in Shanghai. In Kentucky she became active in maternal health when she learned that many women were worn out from having given birth to 10 or 12

children. Her aim, colleagues said, was to give the women a chance to rest between babies.

When Dr. Hutchins began her work in the mountains, the Kentucky health department did not offer family-planning services and the idea of birth control was, to many people, both revolutionary and repugnant; for years she had to fight a running battle with fear and superstition. Indeed, it was not until 1967 that the Kentucky Medical Association had its first speaker on contraception; this speaker, most appropriately, was Louise Hutchins.

Direct-spoken, with few pretensions, Dr. Hutchins was a tireless worker. "No matter how trying it was to her," said a fellow physician, "she was always in there pitching. She never complained." As the *Lexington Herald-Leader* said editorially, "She brought contraception into the light."

Jim Wayne Miller 1936-1996

Jim Wayne Miller enjoyed great success as teacher, scholar and writer but achieved perhaps his greatest renown as a constant worker on behalf of Appalachia.

A native of Leicester, N.C., he was a graduate of Berea College and went on to do research in German literature and become professor of German at Western Kentucky University. He died on August 18 at his home in Bowling Green, Ky.

Widely known as a poet, novelist, essayist and reviewer, Miller also devoted much time and effort to guiding and counseling students and others and was perhaps the key figure in the success of the Hindman Settlement School's Writers' Workshop. As Loyal Jones observed, Miller "read dozens of manuscripts from aspiring writers and wrote pages of carefully reasoned critiques. He was never too busy to take phone calls from people seeking advice or help."

"OLD STYLES" from page 1

mountains are not heard so much any more, and we want to encourage them."

Encouragement, preservation—however you want to look at it—the celebration has through the years stuck to Jones's stated purpose and thus has become an established feature of Appalachian regional life. This year it's back for its 23rd installment (October 25-27).

The customary stellar group of performers will be on hand. They are, in alphabetical order, Blanche Coldiron, Roger Howell—Jerry Sutton, Ernest Martin, Ora Payne-Watson, Frank Proffitt, Jr., the Roan Mountain Hilltoppers and the Sons of Glory. These artists will appear in concert Friday and Saturday evenings. The daylight hours of Saturday will be devoted to instrumental workshops, informal concerts and, at 2:00, a symposium: "A Singer Among Singers: Jane Gentry of Madison County, North Carolina," presented by the noted performer Betty Smith.

As usual, folk dancing will follow the evening performances, and if you're up and about on Sunday morning, you can join in a hymn-sing with festival musicians.

If you need further details, write to College P.O. Box 2336, Berea, Ky. 40404 or phone 606/986-9341, ext. 5140.

New Name, Festival the Same...Almost

Gone from Chattanooga but far from forgotten is the National Folk Festival, which for the past three years has drawn appreciative crowds to the city's riverfront. Reluctant to see a good thing come to an end, the Hamilton County Bicentennial Committee has decided to stage its own jamboree—called the Southern Folk Festival—to replace the national festival.

The new show, says the director, Douglas Day, "will



Frank Proffitt, Jr....in Berea in October

look and feel much like the old national. We're even keeping the old logo." Along with such familiar styles as blues, bluegrass and gospel, Day says, "we'll have some things that have never or only very rarely been presented in Chattanooga before, like Congolese and Vietnamese folk music, Jewish klezmer and Afro-Caribbean salsa"—all of this eclecticism representing "the diversity of the modern South." You can get full information from Allied Arts, at 423/756-2787; the fax number is 423/756-2156.

A highlight of the festival, which will be held during Columbus Day weekend (October 10-13) will be a big Saturday-night parade, to be led, if things go as planned, by a remarkable musical ensemble indeed—an Irish-Congolese-Caribbean-Native American drum corps. What festival can top that?

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Promoting Appalachian studies, scholarship and literature was his reigning passion, and much of the prominence such activities enjoy today can be credited to his efforts. "Perhaps the major archive of Appalachian literature at one time was carried in the back of his gray Buick," says Robert Morgan in a forthcoming memorial piece in *Appalachian Heritage*. "Wherever he went he carried his collection of files, books, magazines, lists, bibliographies, Xerox copies of works in progress. In conversations at Hindman when an obscure poem or essay might be mentioned, Jim Wayne would hurry out to his car to dig up a copy."

We at the APPALACHIAN CENTER NEWSLETTER had a special relationship with Miller. We noted years ago that no matter what the Appalachian conference or workshop we might be mentioning, wherever it might be held, "Jim Wayne Miller" always seemed to appear among the names on the list of participants. Such energy and devotion, we felt, ought not to go unrecognized, and so, in a kind of humorously intended acknowledgment, we began giving Miller his own adjective; at various times he was "tireless" or "indefatigable" or even a "role-model luminary," and his labors on behalf of Appalachia were "unflagging."

"Wherever he went..."



David Stephenson

Unfortunately, Miller's tirelessness has proved to have limits, and so, with deep regret, we are forced to retire our special modifiers. But we realize that they served an unintended purpose for us. Focusing on them made us see just what great contributions Miller made to his beloved Appalachian cause. ■

EYE on Publications

Rockbridge County Artists & Artisans, by Barbara Crawford and Royster Lyle, Jr. (University Press of Virginia). The quickest way to identify Rockbridge is to say that it is the western Virginia county of which Lexington is the seat. The name comes from what Thomas Jefferson called "one of the most stupendous scenes in nature," the great natural bridge he admired at the confluence of the "Patowmac" and Shenandoah rivers.

Traditionally, indeed, it has been nature that has received most of the credit for the area's aesthetic distinction. After all, the Scotch-Irish who were the chief settlers of Rockbridge could justly claim courage and perseverance, but nobody was much inclined to look for artists among these austere Ulsterites. "There was little even that could be called folk art," wrote James Leyburn in his 1961 study, *The Scotch-Irish: A Social History*, "if the term implies work that has the extra touch of originality and verve that transforms a useful object into a pleasant bit of handicraft."

But not everybody bought this negative view. For several decades now, in fact, many residents of Rockbridge have suspected that their forebears, far from suffering aesthetic impoverishment, produced an unusually rich artistic legacy—and, increasingly, with every family auction up one of the many mountain hollows, concerned locals have seen pieces of this patrimony leaving the area in dealers' vans.

Hence, "with the encouragement of many colleagues in Rockbridge and friends elsewhere," say Barbara Crawford and Royster Lyle, "we decided to document and catalogue what we could find before it was too late." (This determination explains why, for some years, a visitor to Lexington looking for Lyle would be told that his quarry was off in a remote reach of the county in search of an 18th-century tall

clock or perhaps a couple of froes or trivets.) Crawford teaches art history and design at Southern Virginia College; Lyle, former associate director of the George C. Marshall Research Library, was coauthor of *The Architecture of Historic Lexington* (1977).

The authors' intensive labors over a period of ten years or more have produced not only a thorough and handsome catalogue but a many-dimensional reference work, one of its notable features consisting of some 400 profiles of Rockbridge artists and artisans from the 18th and 19th centuries. Credit for the elegance of *Rockbridge County Artists & Artisans* should also go to the publishers, who (as is not always the case nowadays) have given this book the kind of careful production it deserves.

Book Note

Continuing its series of soft-cover reprints of Billy C. Clark novels, the Jesse Stuart Foundation (P.O. Box 391, Ashland, Ky. 41114) has published *Useless Dog*, a 1961 book described by the *Dallas News* as "Kentucky mountain magic with a boy and a dog, full of the rhythm of mountain speech and greatness." The price is \$8.50 plus \$3.00 s/h.

In *Appalachian Heritage*...

Highlights of the Summer 1996 issue of *Appalachian Heritage* include a visit with "James Still: In His World" and a second piece of historical fiction by Rhonda Strickland (her first received one of the magazine's Denny C. Plattner Awards for 1993).

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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