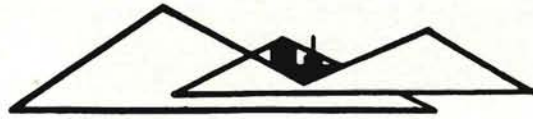


# NEWS

# LETTER



APPALACHIAN CENTER  
BEREA COLLEGE

Loyal Jones • Thomas Parrish, Co-Editors

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## Historians Share Weatherford Award

Two history professors shared the ninth annual W. D. Weatherford Award for outstanding writing about Appalachia. The award was made at the annual luncheon in Berea, held on May 14. John W. Hevener was recognized for his book *Which Side Are You On?* and Henry D. Shapiro for *Appalachia on Our Mind*. Novelist and historian Harriette Simpson Arnow, who was unable to be present, was honored with a Special Weatherford Award, in recognition of her distinguished career.

Berea College's Appalachian Center and Hutchins Library jointly sponsor the \$500 award, which goes each year to the writer of the published work which best illuminates the problems, personalities and unique qualities of the Appalachian South. The prize is donated by Alfred H. Perrin of Berea to honor the memory and achievements of the late W. D. Weatherford, Sr., a pioneer in Appalachian development, youth work and race relations.

Hevener's book is a thorough but compact account of the Harlan County (Ky.) labor turbulence of the

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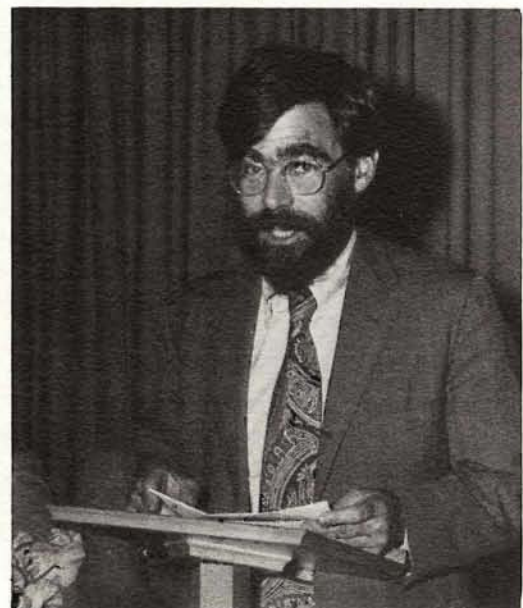
**Weatherford Winners:** Left, donor Alfred Perrin with John Hevener; right, Henry Shapiro

## Fluff to Burn

Appalachian sage Harry M. Caudill once remarked something to the effect that Eastern Kentucky is a place where old cars go to die. For years planners and dreamers have hatched schemes to rid the landscape of these gaunt and rusting corpses, but with small success; even in death they seemed able to reproduce themselves. There's no evidence that this scene is about to change in any significant way, but a new scientific development offers at least a distant gleam of hope. In Maryland a fellow named Frank Moderacki, a technological field agent affiliated with the state university and sponsored by the Appalachian Regional Commission, has developed a brand-new idea to help a Hagerstown scrap processor.

The company, called Conservit, Inc., recycles old cars and appliances and other worn-out iron and steel products by shredding and then remelting the metal. This process yields a nonmetallic byproduct called "fluff," which simply has to be trucked away to some landfill; a single shredder can produce 50 tons of fluff a day.

Enter Moderacki, who concluded that a steam boiler can be modified to burn fluff instead of coal, and that a pound of fluff has about the same BTU value as a pound of coal. In view of present energy





## FLUFF -- from page 1

problems, a fresh source of BTUs can hardly be sneezed at. And the idea of junk cars helping to solve the energy crisis is one that should delight Appalachian planners and dreamers.

## HISTORIANS -- from page 1

1930s and provides a background for understanding current strife in the coal industry. It is notable for its fair-mindedness and clarity. The author, who teaches history at the Lima campus of Ohio State University, is a native of Dunmore, W.Va.

*Appalachia on Our Mind* is quite a different kind of book, as is suggested by the subtitle: "The Southern Mountains and Mountaineers in the American Consciousness, 1879-1920." The book is thus not a history of Appalachia but a history of the American idea of Appalachia. The author argues that the emergence of this idea was related not so much to the actuality of life in the mountains as to needs felt by observers of it -- notably, local-color novelists and missionaries. Shapiro, a native of New York, is an associate professor of history at the University of Cincinnati.

Mrs. Arnow, a native of Wayne County, Ky., is the author of *Kentucky Trace*, *The Dollmaker*, *Hunter's Horn*, *Mountain Path*, *The Weedkiller's Daughter*, *Old Burnside*, *Seedtime on the Cumberland* and *The Flowering of the Cumberland*. She was honored as an author "who has chronicled the Cumberland and painted vivid portraits of its people."

The awards were presented to the two winners by Perrin and Mrs. Anne Weatherford, daughter-in-law of Dr. Weatherford, Sr. Also appearing on the program was Dr. Earl D. C. Brewer of Emory University, who spoke about his work with Dr. Weatherford in the development of the 1962 study, *The Southern Appalachian Region: A Survey*.

## Films of Summer

A number of Appalachian writers and scholars will be on hand during the first two weeks in July for this summer's East Tennessee State University film workshop. Besides talking with these visitors, participants in the workshop will view such movies as *Harlan County, U.S.A.*, *All the Way Home* and *Echoes from the Hills*. In addition, the school will offer special courses in folklore, fiction and other subjects. For information, you can write Dr. John B. Tallent, chairman of the English Department, ETSU, Johnson City, Tenn. 37601.

## New Roadside Shows

Roadside Theater, creator of *Red Fox/Second Hangin'*, has two new traveling productions that you might want to book. *Brother Jack* is a "combination of Southern Appalachian tall tales, remembrances, original stories, and both original and traditional

songs accompanied by guitar, banjo and fiddle. Many of the songs and stories were collected within fifty miles of Roadside's home by the WPA Writers' Project in the 1930s . . . The show blends these stories with original material written from childhood memory."

*The Granddaughters* is a new storytelling program (both performances and workshops) available to area schools and to other organizations. To find out more about these shows, contact Donna Porterfield or Dudley Cocke at Roadside Theater, P.O. Box 743, Whitesburg, Ky. 41858.

## Appalachian Experience

Through a new program, the Children's Museum of Oak Ridge, Tenn., is reaching out to people of all ages. "An Appalachian Experience" is an activity employing courses, workshops, festivals and public forums to make East Tennesseans and other Appalachians more aware of their cultural and historical heritage. The program is supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities and directed by Jim Stokely.

The two courses scheduled for the summer are Religion in Appalachia (Tuesdays, 7:00 P.M., beginning July 10) and The Literature of Appalachia (Thursdays, 7:00 P.M., beginning July 12). Courses meet in the Highland View Community Center in Oak Ridge. Activities began in January with two courses, The Peoples of Appalachia and The Civil War in East Tennessee; some 300 persons registered for these courses. Spring courses were The TVA Experiment and Culture of the Mountaineer. A variety of scholars and writers have been on hand as teachers.

In addition to the courses, An Appalachian Experience presents lectures in Oak Ridge and elsewhere and plans a number of other kinds of activities, including the production of videotapes and the assembly of an anthology of Appalachian writings.

## Studies Conference

Those who already have a 1980 calendar on hand may wish to note that next year's Appalachian Studies Conference (the meeting, not the organization) will be held March 21-23 at East Tennessee State University, Johnson City. The theme is *Appalachia/America*. The plan is to explore Appalachian developments as they relate to developments elsewhere in the nation and in the world.

Officers elected at this year's meeting are: chairperson--Joan Moser, Swannanoa, N.C.; secretary and newsletter editor--Anne Campbell, King Library, University of Kentucky, Lexington; treasurer and membership secretary--Polly Cheek, Mars Hill, N.C.; program coordinator--Martha McKinney, Appalachian Consortium, Inc., Boone, N.C.



## Rural Hymnody -- Singing and Scholarship



More than 200 persons showed up for Berea's symposium on rural hymnody (hymn-singing styles), held April 27-29. It was the first such conference ever held. As the pictures show, the participants were treated to a mixture of scholarship and singing. Performers and participants came from across the eastern U.S.



PHOTOS:  
Joyce Hancock except top r. and center r. (Lance Hill)



## Rural America in D.C.

If you haven't heard about the fourth National Conference on Rural America, you may be getting this news just in time. The conference is being held at the Shoreham-Americana Hotel in Washington, D.C., June 24-26. According to David Raphael, acting executive director of Ruralamerica, the sponsoring organization, this meeting will be somewhat different from previous ones. "This is going to be an 'action' conference," Raphael says. "In the past we have considered the issues and developed and refined a platform for rural America. Now the delegates will hand-carry their recommendations to the federal establishment."

For information contact Ruralamerica, 1346 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

## Coal: Ecology, Economy

If we were going to enunciate a truism of the month, it could well be that few human activities stir up as much controversy as coal mining--particularly, nowadays, strip mining.

A new organization, Friends of the Mountains, Inc., declares that "the coal industry has been waging a massive media campaign aimed at the weakening of federal regulations placed on strip mining by the 1977 strip mine law." The purpose of the Friends is to counter this campaign by ads and announcements, and they request contributions from interested persons. The address is Box 214, Flat Lick, Ky. 40935.

Quite a different viewpoint is expressed by Eugene Mooney, secretary of the Kentucky Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection. According to Mooney, Eastern Kentucky could be liberated from its "one commodity economy" in the next 10 years if the coal market were stable. But, he says, such stability is unlikely because of Office of Surface Mining regulations: "The cost of the OSM regulations to coal-producing areas will be too high," and "the impact on small coal operators will be heavy."

While advocates argue, some new developments offer promise for the reclamation of orphan strip mines. Leonard Nitzberg of Knoxville has invented a "coal crab," a mechanized tool bit that can cut away coal remaining in auger holes, and he has developed a method of blasting that will eliminate highwalls. The new equipment could make it profitable to

reclaim mines abandoned decades ago. Testing is scheduled for this fall.

The acuteness of this need is sharply demonstrated by current figures showing, to no one's great surprise, that the overwhelming proportion of mine-damaged lands in the United States is in Appalachia: 81% of the unreclaimed land; 74.3% of the land affected by mine subsidence; 69.3% of the acres of mine waste piles; and 93.5% of the miles of acid mine drainage.

## EYE on Publications

*The Hatfields and the McCoys*, by Otis K. Rice (University Press of Kentucky). A retelling, for the Kentucky Bicentennial Bookshelf, of the "best-known and most interesting of all American family vendettas." The author, a keen student of frontier Appalachia, teaches at West Virginia Institute of Technology.

*Our Mountain Heritage*, by James H. Horton, Theda Perdue and James M. Gifford (North Carolina Humanities Committee and Mountain Heritage Center, Western Carolina University). Subtitled "Essays on the Natural and Cultural History of Western North Carolina," this book was inspired by the *Roots*-generated interest of Americans in their past. The three sections, all dealing with western North Carolina, are "Our Natural Heritage," "Our Mountain Heritage," and "Our Pioneer Heritage."

*Georgia History in Outline*, by Kenneth Coleman (University of Georgia Press). The third edition of a little (118 pp.) book originally published in 1955. The author is also coauthor of *A History of Georgia*, published by the university press in 1977.

*Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, edited by William S. Powell (University of North Carolina Press). The publication of Volume I of this long-range enterprise is scheduled for July; the volume, A through C, will include 708 entries. All the persons treated in the book are deceased. Subjects are native North Carolinians, no matter where they may have won fame or notoriety, and non-natives who came to prominence in North Carolina. Some 700 persons are contributing to the *Dictionary*. The editor is professor of history at Chapel Hill.

(Note: The Appalachian Center does not sell books. If you have difficulty in obtaining a particular book, we suggest that you contact the Council of the Southern Mountains Bookstore, C.P.O. Box 2160, Berea, Ky. 40404.)

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