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North Carolina Folklore Journal

Philip E. (Ted) Coyle, Editor
Leanne E. Smith, Assistant Editor

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The *North Carolina Folklore Journal* publishes studies of North Carolina folklore and folklife, analyses of folklore in Southern literature, and articles whose rigorous or innovative approach pertains to local folklife study. Manuscripts should conform to *The MLA Style Manual*. For information regarding submissions, view our website (http:/paws.wcu.edu/ncfj), or contact:

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North Carolina Folklore Journal

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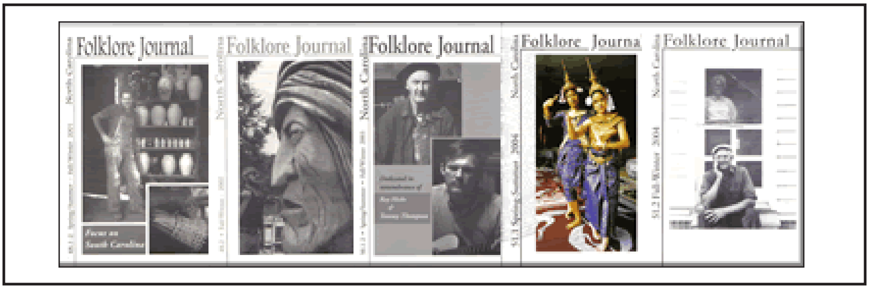
Frame photo: Haliwa-Saponi artist Henry "Moka" Lynch at the festival. Photo by Chloe Accardi.

Front cover: Henry "Moka" Lynch demonstrates his art at the 100th Anniversary Statewide Folklife Festival. Photo by Chloe Accardi. Back cover: Barbara Garrity-Blake and Chester McMillian with their Brown-Hudson Folklore Awards. Photo by Ted Coyle



Editor's Foreword

By Philip E. "Ted" Coyle

This special double-issue of the *North Carolina Folklore Journal* commemorates the 100th anniversary of the North Carolina Folklore Society. The anniversary was celebrated with a series of events and initiatives—discussed in this issue by North Carolina Folklife Institute Executive Director Joy Salyers—that highlighted the importance of our Society as both a public outreach organization and as a resource for professional and avocational folklorists in the state. Although 100 years of working to bring folklore performance and research to the people of North Carolina are certainly impressive, from a folkloristic perspective the continued vitality of this multigenerational tradition should make us even more proud. As we enter our second century, the North Carolina Folklore Society is poised to continue its focus on the deep and heart-felt traditions of our state.

With this issue it is also my pleasure to welcome incoming *NCFJ* Editor Leanne E. Smith, who has already begun to assemble another special double-issue, this time focusing on the folklore of herbs and farming. Leanne E. Smith has served as Assistant Editor of the *NCFJ* for two years, and brings a wealth of editorial experiences and a range of folklore connections to the position. In addition to her graduate degree in English from ECU (where she teaches now), she also holds an MFA in Creative Nonfiction from Goucher College, and has been a productive editor, writer, and photographer in the Greenville area.

Philip E. (Ted) Coyle is a professor and former department head in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at Western Carolina University.

Frame photo: Back issues of the North Carolina Folklore Journal.

She is also an active fiddler and dancer, and—based on her article in this issue—an aficionado of local cuisines. As editor of the *NCFJ*, she hopes to recruit new writers to publish longer academic articles, shorter essays, profiles, photo essays, book and media reviews, and student project reports from various folklife-related programs in North Carolina. I appreciate all of the authors and others who have worked with me over the past eight years. I am particularly grateful for the help of Tom McGowan, Joyce Joines Newman, Leanne E. Smith, Erica Abrams Locklear, and Alan Jabbour.

In addition to Leanne E. Smith's article, this issue also includes a comprehensive index that references all of the material published in the *North Carolina Folklore Journal* since the last index was produced by former *NCFJ* Editor Karen Baldwin in 1999. The index in this issue continues the conventions of the previous index. It is based on a serial list of each published item, cross-referenced to an author and subject list. This issue also includes Tom McGowan and Elizabeth Williams' sweeping review of films about Ray Hicks, as well as citations for our annual awards, and two book reviews. We hope that you enjoy this special issue of the *North Carolina Folklore Journal.*

One Hundred Years of the North Carolina Folklore Society

By Joy M. Salyers

During his lecture circuits on cowboy singing and other folklore scholarship in the 1910s, John Lomax encouraged the formation of state folklore organizations. Frank C. Brown, a professor of English at Duke University (then Trinity College) responded by founding the North Carolina Folklore Society to promote and support the collection, preservation, and publication of state folklore. According to the *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, "Eighty-five charter members attended its first meeting, held on 24 Mar. 1913, in the North Carolina General Assembly Senate chamber" (Baker and McFee).

In its early years, society members collected songs, stories, customs, and superstitions under Brown's direction, who served as the society's secretary-treasurer from 1913-1943. Much of the collection, including original recordings and notes, are housed in the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Duke. Plans to publish the collection were stymied for long years, apparently partly because Brown "was never able to stop collecting long enough to actually assemble his material" (Jeffrey). After his death in 1943, a series of Brown's colleagues persisted in editing and publishing the seven-volume *Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore*, which was released between 1952 and 1964 by the Duke University Press.

According to *Encyclopedia of North Carolina,* "this collection, representing the textually oriented scholarship of its time, is the most comprehensive published collection of folklore from any state in the na-

Joy Salyers is a folklorist working in Durham, North Carolina. She serves as Secretary of the Board of the North Carolina Folklore Society.

tion and serves as a benchmark and standard reference work for other collections as well as a rich source for continuing research" (Baker and McFee).

After Brown's death, Arthur Palmer Hudson became secretary-treasurer of the Society, a position he held from 1943-1964. Hudson taught in the English Department and the newly formed Curriculum of Folklore at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. In 1954, he founded *North Carolina Folklore*, a journal for the North Carolina Folklore Society, which he continued to edit until 1964.

Today the journal is called the *North Carolina Folklore Journal* and continues to recognize traditional practitioners, provide information for folk artists and folklorists in the state, and to publish articles that contribute to state folklife study. Its editors have been affiliated with universities across the state.

In 1970, the Folklore Society began presenting the Brown-Hudson Folklore Award, named after the society and journal founders. The Brown-Hudson Awards recognize people who have contributed in special ways to the appreciation, continuation, or study of North Carolina folk traditions. In 1992 the society added the Community Traditions Award, which recognizes organizations and groups that contribute to the continuation and appreciation of the state's folklife.

In addition to issuing publications, the North Carolina Folklore Society holds annual meetings combining presentation of folk arts, current scholarship on North Carolina folklore by society members, and organizational business. The society convenes the annual meeting at sites around the state to reach the greatest number of members, working with local community or university partners in places such as Greenville, Chapel Hill, Greensboro, Asheville, and Pembroke.

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Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the North Carolina Folklore Society

By Joy M. Salyers, Board Secretary

There are only a handful of state folklore societies in the United States who can boast 100 or more years of continuous existence, and in 2013, the North Carolina Folklore Society joined their ranks. At a board meeting about an appropriate way to mark the Folklore Society's centennial, I suggested holding a folklife festival, as the last statewide folklife festival in North Carolina was held in 1978. The Folklore Society's 100th anniversary seemed an opportunity to remind the public how important it is to uphold our diverse cultures and traditions, to honor the many community members engaged in cultural preservation and celebration, and to acknowledge the far-ranging work of folklorists in the state by highlighting their collaborations with folk artists and communities. We knew that with a 35-year hiatus, the infrastructure of volunteers, equipment, performer lists, and other necessary materials required for a true statewide festival would be hard to recreate. The board agreed that we should keep it small; in all honesty, I was picturing two tented stages out-

As Executive Director of the North Carolina Folklife Institute, folklorist Joy Salyers focuses her efforts on strengthening community health and infrastructure through folklife and traditional arts.

Frame photo: Orville Hicks tells a tale during the 100th Anniversary of the NCFS Statewide Folklife Festival. Photo by Chloe Accardi. Chloe Accardi is a folklorist, documentary artist, and illustrator. She holds an MA in Folklore from the University of North Carolina, and her ethnographic work currently focuses on creative identity, international street artist communities, as well as the use of writing and illustration as fieldwork tools.

side the local American Legion hall, with some craft vendors inside. Somehow, this simple vision evolved into a four-part celebration that lasted most of September 2013!

The Exhibit

We had the opportunity to design and mount an exhibit at the ArtsCenter in Carrboro for the month of September 2013 and decided on the theme, North Carolina Textiles: The Fabric of a State. Choosing just one genre of folklore allowed us to include examples from across North Carolina and to feature a surprisingly wide range of stories about the history and diversity of our state, from Native cultures to mill towns to refugee relocation.

Board member Elijah Gaddis spent hours driving the roads of North Carolina to various contacts and community partners, securing items on loan for the exhibit. The experience underscored for us the range of work folklorists have done in the state and the community relationships our field's professionals have built and continue to maintain. The widespread enthusiasm from individual traditional

The exhibit featured artifacts representing textile and weaving traditions in North Carolina, curated by Elijah Gaddis. Photo by Bill Salyers.

artists and folklorists, community groups, and institutional partners resulted in an exhibit that powerfully showcased how our deep textile traditions have enriched the lives of North Carolinians.

We had decided to think about textiles writ large, as anything that is woven or knit. Thus the exhibit included a cotton shrimp net from Harkers Island (loaned by Core Sound Waterfowl Museum) and woven baskets from Montagnard artists (courtesy of Betsy Renfew) as well as clothing, quilts, tools, documentary photographs, and other textile materials. All told, the exhibit brought together more than 30 individual items from around the state dating from 1915-2013.

Elijah Gaddis' skillful curation brought these items into conversation and evoked themes common in folklore scholarship in an accessible way. Although space does not permit an exhaustive review, one example will give a sense of the exhibit's approach. (Additional information about the exhibit can be found at www.ncfolk.org.)

Of course a whole exhibit could be mounted just on clothing, and we did not endeavor to represent exhaustively the range of clothing traditions to which our state is home. But a reed of the loom from the 1920s (loaned by Pocosin Arts) recognized North Carolina's long-standing textile industry, accompanied by a pair of raw denim jeans on loan from Raleigh Denim, an example of how that heritage is being re-envisioned today. Demonstrating the diversity within a tradition, three different skirts from Montagnard artists in Greensboro highlighted the Rhad, Koho, and Darai tribes' artistry. Clothing items showed the value of maintaining traditions such as a Hmong girl's hat, the individual innovation apparent in artist Jereann King Johnson's hand-batiked silk shirt, and how clothing eventually becomes something else, like the rag rug made from sock remnants by Davidson County weaver Fred Parnell.

The exhibit was accompanied by a commissioned participatory art piece by artist Carter Hubbard called Kitchen Window Quilt: A Living History. From the exhibit opening to its close, the public was invited to "be a part of history in the making by helping to create this community quilt." As participants of all ages wrote or drew their responses to two prompts on pieces of colored paper and attached them to the wall, the communal quilt took shape and, when filled in, itself became another item in the exhibit as well as an innovative evaluation component.

The Publication

As discussions about putting on a festival progressed, the North Carolina Folklore Society board was struck by how much North Carolina has changed since the festivals of the 1970s, and wondered if festival programming strategies have evolved along with contemporary demographics, audiences, and technologies. Through a grant from the American Folklore Society, the NC Folklore Society engaged folklorist Brendan Greaves to research and write a report he titled, "A Future for Folklife Festivals in North Carolina and Beyond: A Critical Inquiry into Some 21st Century Strategies to Sustain a 19th Century Concept" (available online at http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.afsnet.org/resource/resmgr/Best_Practices_Reports/Greaves_A_Future_for_Folklif.pdf). Greaves found a need for translating the ample critiques and observations of the history, theory, and experience of folklife festivals into "pragmatic steps for actually conceptualizing or planning a festival." Through interviews with scholars, festival organizers, and participants, Greaves' report explores issues of gatekeeping and curation, balancing "big names" that draw crowds with traditions that highlight the larger community rather than a celebrity or master artist, programming embedded and participatory performances, featuring newer traditions such as

Spinning at Carrboro Elementary School during the festival. Photo by Chloe Accardi.

Cliff Collins of Cliff's Meats in Carrboro greets hungry festival-goers.
Photo by Chloe Accardi.

cosplay or urban tattooing, the role of social media, and corporate sponsorship. In addition to providing guidance to the North Carolina Folklore Society's centennial event, Greaves' suggestions have helped folklorists from other states who are working to update their representations and celebrations of expressive vernacular culture.

The Summit

The North Carolina Folklife Institute, a statewide independent nonprofit that supports traditional arts and cultures, partnered with the North Carolina Folklore Society to support its centennial efforts and took the lead role in planning our Statewide Folklife Summit: Strong Roots and Folklife Futures, on September 26 and 27, 2013, in Chapel Hill. Two days of programming featured networking, small group discussions, and presentations by eleven different speakers, including folklorists, funder representatives, tourism/small business professionals, and community activists. Top-rated sessions were Building Coalitions that Work, Folklife Outside of Arts Programming (Public Health, Economic Development, Active Citizenship), and North Carolina in 2020 (Programming, Outreach, and Research for

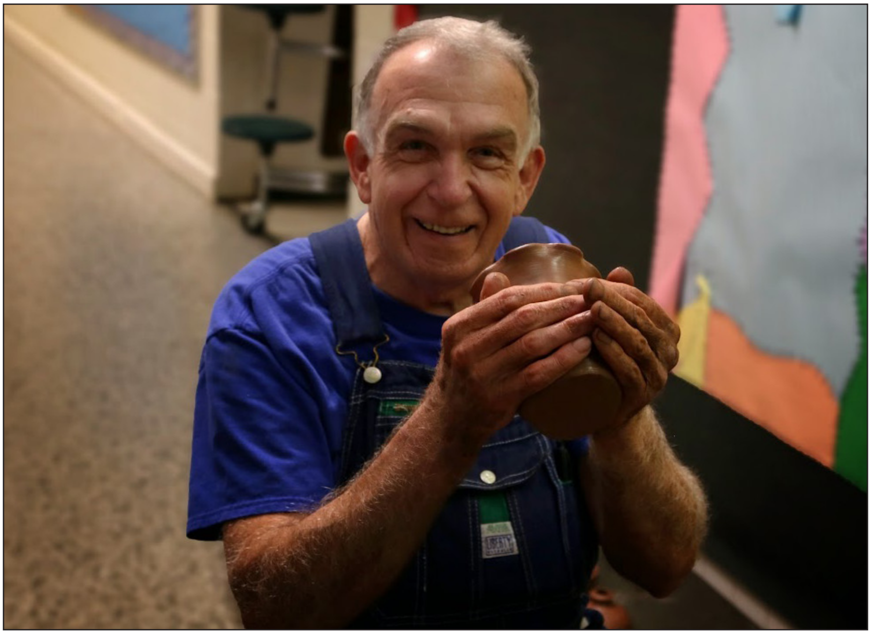
Changing Audiences and Communities). Evaluation feedback underscored the importance of bringing people together across disciplines, increasing collaborations among academics, arts programmers, and tourism professionals, providing information and training useful to people on the ground in their home communities/fields, and continuing the summit model in the future. It was exciting to honor the many ways folklorists are involved in North Carolina's cultural, civic, and economic life, and to foster a greater understanding of folklore's potential. More information, additional findings, and presentation excerpts are available at www.ncfolk.org.

The Festival

The culmination of the North Carolina Folklore Society's 100th anniversary celebration took place all day long on Saturday, September 28, 2013, in Carrboro, NC. The Statewide Folklife Festival presented over 40 acts featuring more than 150 individual performers, 6 documentary films, and more than 24 traditional "Makers" and drew more than 2,250 people.

The local elementary school formed a major hub and popular family venue for the festival. A gospel festival featured well-known

Ammie Jenkins, director of the Sandhills Family Heritage Association in Spring Lake, discusses medicinal herbs as part of the festival's Traditional Foodways for Healthy Living programming. Photo by Chloe Accardi.



Brown-Hudson Folklore Award winner Sid Luck demonstrates his pottery-making at the festival. Photo by Chloe Accardi.

artists like the Gospel Jubilators and the Branchettes. A Traditional Makers Fair celebrated old and new traditions of craft, with many opportunities to learn and participate as well as to purchase traditional items. Traditional foodways exhibits from beekeeping and native plants to medicinal herbs and the Sappony tribe's famous salsa made the connection between heritage traditions and healthy living. Special music workshops included Latino musical traditions in North Carolina, the history of mountain music, and protest music through the voices of African Americans. The value in a folklife festival stood out in the experiences of both attendees—such as the children who picked cotton bolls from a plant, watched cotton spun into yarn, and then helped operate a weaving loom to create cloth—and also participants, like the Montagnard basket and British chair caner animatedly exchanging weaving patterns despite lacking a shared verbal language.

At other venues, Tom Rankin, folklorist and former Director of Duke University's Center for Documentary Studies, curated a day-long documentary film track featuring discussions with filmmakers and community members to accompany the screenings. A narrative showcase titled Tongues of Fire incorporated storytelling, ballad

Haliwa-Saponi artist Henry "Moka" Lynch explains how he combines a carved-stone bowl with a delicately carved wooden stem to create one of his distinctive pipes. Photo by Chloe Accardi.

singing, and spoken word poetry. Folklore graduate students from UNC-Chapel Hill's Department of American Studies documented festival-goers' tattoos and the stories behind them. Dance performances included traditional Cambodian dance, Concheros dancing from Mexcio, breakdancing, and clogging. The public was invited to join in for a flatfooting workshop and a "rowdy square dance." The Folklore Society was delighted to help craft the program for the dedication of a new NC historic highway marker to Elizabeth "Libba" Cotten that afternoon.

A highlight of the North Carolina Folklore Society annual meeting is always the awards ceremony, and 2013 was no exception. For its 100th anniversary, a pre-ceremony reception honored all past and present award recipients. We were especially thrilled to be joined from Columbus County by Mary Mintz, recipient of 1981 Brown-Hudson for her work with Hallsboro students on the *Kin'lin* publication, as well as by 1980 recipient Dan Patterson and many others.

The North Carolina Folklore Society annually recognizes the work of individuals and organizations who have made important contributions to the transmission, appreciation, or study of the cultural traditions of North Carolina with two awards. The first presentation was the Community Traditions Award, received by Christine Wai and the Karen New Year Planning Committee. Dr. Katherine R. Roberts, a member of the awards committee, presented the award on behalf of the Society and highlighted the committee's work in raising awareness throughout North Carolina of the Karen culture and making sure that all Karen are able to celebrate their most important holiday.

Next the Brown-Hudson Award was presented to two recipients. First, Matt Edwards, the director of the Mount Airy Museum of Regional History, presented a Brown-Hudson Award to Chester McMillian. Edwards, who nominated McMillian, called special attention to his dedicated commitment over almost half a century to preserving and passing on the oldtime music traditions of northwestern North Carolina. At 70 years of age, McMillian is not only a supremely talented musician but also an encyclopedia of Round Peak style music, lore, and biography. Professor Bland Simpson, who had nominated recipient Barbara Garrity-Blake, presented the second Brown-Hudson Award. Simpson recognized Garrity-Blake for her leadership in collecting, preserving, and promoting North Carolina coastal folk traditions, particularly the traditions of the state's coastal fishing villages. Throughout her work as a researcher, oral historian, and writer, Garrity-Blake shows her understanding of the power of story. After the awards were presented, both McMillian and Garrity-Blake entertained the audience with musical performances.

Throughout the day, many tradition-bearers who have received past Brown-Hudson awards participated in the festival, including storyteller Orville Hicks, singer Connie Steadman, the gospel group Capital City 5, and potter Sid Luck (who had just been named as a 2014 NC Heritage Award winner, along with fellow festival participant Haliwa-Saponi musician and craftsman Arnold Richardson). Other Brown-Hudson winners represented in programming included Walter and Ray Davenport, Vollis Simpson, Tommy Jarrell, and Bertha Mangum Landis. All of the 2012 Community Traditions award recipients participated in the festival—Student Action with Farmworkers, Heritage Quilters, and the Green Grass Cloggers—as well as past awardees the Sandhills Family Heritage Association and representatives from the Sappony Heritage Camp. However, the festival was more than a nod to the past. Young practitioners who highlighted the enduring nature of tradition included Donna Ray

Norton (ballad singer and descendant of Dellie Norton), Steve Kruger, Joe Decosimo, and Trevor McKenzie (some of this generation's best string band musicians), and C. J. Suitt (a spoken word artist and one of the founders of The Sacrificial Poets). Similarly, the folklorists who helped to make the festival happen ranged from Brown-Hudson winning scholars with decades of experience to incoming students. The awards ceremony and concert were a fitting end to the evening and a testament to the wellspring of collaboration—across the state and across generations—that continues to sustain folklore in North Carolina.

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The 100th anniversary events outlined above were made possible in part by funding from The National Endowment for the Arts; the North Carolina Humanities Council, a statewide nonprofit and affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities; the Conservation Fund's Resourceful Communities Program; the North Carolina Arts Council, a division of the Department of Cultural Resources; the Fox Family Foundation; the American Folklore Society; the Museum of the Cherokee Indian; and our Centennial Circle Donors; with substantial assistance from the Town of Carrboro and the Carrboro Recreation and Park Department. Local sponsors included the Center for the Study of the American South, the Department of American Studies at UNC-Chapel Hill, Cliff's Meat Market, the Eno River Association, the Southern Folklife Collection, Carrboro Elementary School, The Station at Southern Rail, and Open Eye Café. Our special thanks to the many individuals and organizations who volunteered their time, loaned items for exhibit, donated space and equipment, and otherwise made these events possible.

2013 Brown-Hudson Folklore Award

Chester McMillian: Old Time Musician and Educator

By Matt Edwards

Chester McMillian is as deserving of this award as anyone ever has been. He has been quietly working to preserve and pass on the old time music traditions of Northwestern North Carolina for nearly a half century.

Chester McMillian was born in Cana, Virginia, to a musical family. His father and uncle were both old time musicians, and at age eight Chester began to "make music" on his own. During his youth, he played in a number of rock, gospel, and bluegrass bands. In 1962 he married Polly Freeman and moved to the Round Peak community. Within just a few years, by 1965, his musical interests were turned completely to old time. Through family connections, Chester was introduced to Tommy Jarrell, and at age 23 he began a friendship that would last until Jarrell's death in 1985. During the 1960's McMillian was a regular on the porch at Tommy's house—absorbing the traditional Round Peak tunes.

Originally a fiddle player, Chester is fond of telling folks that "he turned up at Tommy's house and was told they had plenty of fiddlers, but they sure could use a good guitar player." Over the next several

Matt Edwards is the executive director of the Mount Airy Museum of Regional History in Mount Airy, North Carolina.

Frame photo: Chester McMillian plays with his band Back Step at the 100th anniversary celebration of the North Carolina Folklore Society in Carrboro, North Carolina, on September 28th, 2013. Photo by Ted Coyle.

years he honed his skills and became one of Tommy's favorite accompanists.

During the 1970's and 1980's Chester played, recorded, and traveled extensively with Tommy Jarrell. They played college campuses and concert halls around the country, including appearances at the 1976 Bicentennial Folk Festival (with return visits to the National Folk Festival in '77, '79, and '81 with other bands). He also appeared on Jarrell's LP's *Joke on the Puppy* and *Pickin' on Tommy's Porch.*

In addition to his work with Tommy Jarrell, Chester has recorded over a dozen old time albums with various bands and has played with nearly every old time musician of consequence (including Benton Filppen, Fred Cockerham, Dix Freeman, and Charley Lowe, just to name a few). Additionally, he has recorded at and worked in collaboration with WPAQ radio on numerous projects throughout his career.

From 1980-89 he was a member of the Shady Mountain Ramblers with Whit Sizemore, and in 1986 he formed the original incarnation of his current band—Back Step—with the powerhouse fiddling of the late Greg Hooven. The bands he plays with today play only traditional tunes (mostly Round Peak style), and share that music with new audiences all the time. Today, Back Step consists of Chester on guitar, his son Nick (a Galax fiddle champion), Michael Motley on banjo, and Buck Buckner on bass. According to Grammy Award winning banjo player David Holt, "Back Step is a great band. Growing up in the heart of the Round Peak music tradition, the soul of the music is in their bones, and you hear it in every note."

When pressured for information about awards and accolades, Chester is reserved, noting only that he "doesn't really compete much anymore." After some prying, I learned he had won some 18 times at the Mount Airy Fiddler's Convention before stepping out of the solo competitive part of the festivals.

In addition to his work as a performer, Chester has also been involved in helping to document and record old time music traditions. He worked with the producers of *Sprout Wings and Fly* (about Tommy Jarrell) as well as the two follow-up pieces. He played music and made introductions for the film-makers, and was on hand for the filming of all three documentaries. Additionally, he worked with Kevin Donleavy to document area musicians in his book *Strings of Life: Conversations with Old-Time Musicians from Virginia and North Carolina.* Much like his work with *Sprout Wings and Fly*, Chester acted as a guide making introductions to area musicians and helping to collect the stories of old time musicians from throughout the region.

Chester has also been an active partner with the Mount Airy Museum of Regional History. He has played countless programs and concerts at the museum, but more importantly he has helped to build the museum's collection as it relates to old time music. He has been very active in locating, and when necessary restoring, instruments with significant local connections. Through his connections, the museum currently displays a banjo played by Tommy Jarrell in the *Spout Wings and Fly* video (Tommy's fiddle is in the Smithsonian), and more recently he helped facilitate the long-term loan of Charlie Lowe's banjo for exhibition. It should be noted that he also personally funded the restoration work the instrument needed to make it ready for display.

Perhaps more important than his musical lineage or the competitive awards is the impact he has made on countless young musicians over the last 38 years. In 1975, Chester built a small shack behind his house and began teaching lessons. In the early years he charged a

Chester McMillian plays with his son Nick McMillian and his band Back Step in Carrboro, North Carolina. Photo by Ted Coyle.

modest fee, but eventually came to the conclusion that the people he'd learned from hadn't charged him, and he needed to share what he'd learned for the future generations. By his own account "there's no telling" how many people he taught throughout the years, but the lessons were well learned. Many of his students continue to compete and win at fiddler's conventions around the country.

If that weren't enough, over the last three years, Chester has decided to make his music work for his community. He continues to offer lessons, and currently has eight regular students, but now he "charges" a canned food donation for the lessons. With his "payment" he has created a "backpack" food program for kids and families in need at Cedar Ridge Elementary School near his home. When he started the program, they were providing a backpack of food once a month to 28 families, and during the holiday season this year they were able to expand to 32 families. His goal is simply to make sure that no one goes hungry.

In 2012 Chester started teaching youth programs at the Chestnut Creek School for the Arts using the Junior Appalachian Musician Program model. He was so impressed and inspired by what he saw in that program that he wanted to bring it to Surry County. In early 2013 he launched a music education program based loosely on the JAM model for the disadvantaged youth of The Children's Center in Surry County. He has procured donated instruments for the students to use and teaches classes twice each week on-site at their residential facility. He continues to advocate for the creation of a countywide JAM program to help preserve and pass on the musical traditions of the area for future generations.

Chester's continues to teach, travel, and make music whenever he has the chance. As his budget allows he continues to play at major festivals, including the Chicago Folk Festival in 2006, Fiddletunes (Port Townsend, WA) in 2008, and the Blackpot Festival in Lafayette, Louisiana, in 2009. At 70 years old, Chester is an encyclopedia of old time music, lore, and biography, and he is and has been willing to share those traditions to pass them on to future generations. His work epitomizes the spirit of the Brown-Hudson Folklore Award.

2013 Brown-Hudson Folklore Award

Barbara Garrity-Blake: Musician and Public Scholar

By Bland Simpson

Barbara Garrity-Blake has long been one of the most creative, innovative, and imaginative citizens in the Carolina east, and I know of no one else quite like her. She is simultaneously an energetic artist-participant, a keen observer, an engaged public scholar, and a fierce advocate for the coastal Carolina culture she so dearly loves.

For over a generation, she has been the joyous co-leader, with her boatbuilding husband Bryan Blake, of the great, highly-spirited Down East Cajun and acoustic-roots band, the Unknown Tongues, appearing locally, often, at such important venues as Fort Macon State Park and the North Carolina Seafood Festival, touring widely as well, and also founding at home a notable, annual folk-feast at the Gloucester Mardi Gras, which occurs each February and has become a significant destination. Most recently, Barbara and Bryan have founded a summertime festival—"Wild Caught"—to emphasize and promote opportunities for fresh North Carolina seafood and those who catch, market, and distribute it. Highly talented as a bassist and frottoir player, Barbara Garrity-Blake also plays guitar and sings exu-

Bland Simpson is Kenan Distinguished Professor of English & Creative Writing at UNC Chapel Hill and the longtime pianist for the Red Clay Ramblers.

Frame photo: Barbara Garrity-Blake interviews brothers Al and Gary Dudley. Photo by Scott Taylor.

Barbara Garrity-Blake receives the Brown-Hudson Folklore Award from Bland Simpson at the 100th anniversary celebration of the North Carolina Folklore Society in Carrboro, North Carolina, on September 28th, 2013. Photo by Ted Coyle.

berantly with fiddler Marjorie Misenheimer in another fine musical act, the popular duo the Lost Girls.

In two important books, *The Fish Factory* and *The Fish House Opera* (the latter co-authored with Susan West), and in numerous other articles and essays, Garrity-Blake's writings have shown an extraordinary comprehension of and sympathy for the culture and working world of commercial fishing. Significantly, her informed advocacy and broad comprehension of coastal Carolina matters have led to her service on a number of state boards, including her appointment by the governor to a position on the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission from 1999 till 2007.

Her superb organization of "Raising the Story of Menhaden Fishing," an oral-history research and programming project with the Core Sound Waterfowl Museum, funded by the NC Humanities Council, created much interest and led to terrific outreach toward and impact within the Carteret County fishing populations from this world, and to many people well beyond it. Her current project, "The Road at the Water's Edge," is a collaboration with Core Sound Waterfowl Museum and Heritage Center leader Karen Willis Amspacher, under a forward-contract with UNC Press and with projected publication in 2014 or 2015.

The closing chapter of Garrity-Blake's *The Fish Factory* is as fine and penetrating a piece of dramatic nonfiction as any I have read in years. What the fisherman says at the end, to the menhaden captain ("I know why you do it, Captain—'cause it's in your heart!") could, in truth, also be said of her, for one cannot help but observe and marvel at the deep, heartfelt verve she brings to all she touches: her very being intertwining as it does with music, boats, fishing, indeed, with coastal life in totality; her very high standards as a musical artist and as a keen, analytical scholar; her tirelessness, thoughtfulness, and productiveness as a widely renowned and effective regional leader—all this taken together is why she has become one of the most beloved celebrants of all that is best about our coastal provinces.

Like so many others, I have read her writings with great appreciation; relished and loved her music (and joined in, happily, on occasion); and respected and followed her leadership. Barbara Garrity-Blake is most deserving of the NCFS's Brown-Hudson Folklore Award; her wide range of admirers rejoice in her receiving this honor.

2013 Community Traditions Award

Christine Wai and the Karen Planning Committee: Preserving Karen Culture in North Carolina

By Flicka Bateman, Ed.D.

For almost a decade, the US Department of State has granted priority status for admission to refugees from Burma. Out of the annual quota of approximately 18,000 slots reserved for refugees from South East Asia, 17,500 have been filled each year by refugees from Burma. It is estimated that currently 700 such refugees live in Orange County and approximately 6,000 now reside in North Carolina.

These refugees began arriving in large number to the Chapel Hill-Carboro area in 2006. They include Burmans (Burmese), Chin, and Karen, the largest ethnic minority in Burma. After years of persecution in their native country and fleeing the Burmese army, thousands of Karen crossed the Burma-Thai border to enter refugee camps. Here they languished for years waiting for the situation to change in their own country. After abandoning that dream, they began waiting again—this time waiting to be resettled in another part of the world.

Flicka Batemen is Director of the Refugee Support Center in Carrboro, North Carolina.

Frame photo: Christine Wai speaks at the 100th anniversary celebration of the North Carolina Folkore Society in Carrboro, North Carolina, on September 28th, 2013. Photo by Ted Coyle.

As the most persecuted of the ethnic groups in Burma, the Karen have always steadfastly held on to their culture. Even though their language was forbidden by the government and cultural celebrations were held in understated ways to minimize attention from Burmese soldiers, the Karen culture continued to thrive. As Karen are forced to flee and move to refugee camps where their children are born and raised with no contact to their native country, retaining their culture has become even more paramount. Finally, after being resettled from camps to the few countries in the world that accept refugees and having to adapt to Western culture in order to succeed, the Karen have become adamant that passing on their traditions is a necessity if the Karen culture is to survive.

Christine Wai has done more than any Karen person in the area to ensure that the Karen culture is not lost. She was born in a refugee camp and lived there until she was 13 when she was resettled with her family to Carrboro in 1999. The first few years she was here were spent learning English, adjusting to a very different culture, and overcoming obstacles to feeling integrated into American society. Also in those early years that Christine was here, there were very few other Karen in the area. Important Karen holidays and traditions were either not marked by celebrations or were observed in a low-key way in Karen families' apartments.

Ask any Karen what their favorite holiday is, and universally the answer is "Karen New Year." Ask any Karen who the brain and worker bee is behind each successful New Year celebration, and the answer is "Christine." She is able to get Buddhist Karen, Christian Karen, Pwo Karen, and Sgaw Karen to work together to produce a festival each year that perpetuates their commonly held traditions and that unifies them as a distinct ethnic culture.

The Karen New Year celebration is held on an alternating basis in Chapel Hill-Carrboro, Raleigh, and High Point. Karen representatives from those areas serve on the Karen New Year Planning Committee, regardless of whose turn it is to host. Christine is the coordinator of that committee and is totally involved regardless of the location. She is responsible for the traditional decorations and for the program, including securing the speakers and performers of traditional Karen dances and songs. She organizes the meal, which involves the assignment of specific dishes to various families in the community to cook and bring; the set up and serving of the meal; and the clean-up. She is in charge of writing and distributing hundreds of invitations to the Karen community, a uniquely Karen custom to Americans who assume an open event needs no personal invitations. When the day-long celebration is held in Chapel Hill-Carrboro, it is Christine who goes through the bureaucratic maze of renting Carrboro Elementary School for the event.

Clearly all of this cannot be done by one person. Yet the organizing, coordinating, and overseeing of all aspects of Karen New Year falls to Christine. She is able to delegate some of the work and also relies on her Karen Htee Moo Youth Group, which she started while a senior in high school, to assist in many ways. Getting Karen people to agree on when and how Karen New Year is to be celebrated is no easy feat. She is able to accomplish this through her respectful manner in dealing with all Karen, especially those older than she, and through her credibility as someone who delivers.

Another way Christine contributes to the perpetuation of the Karen culture is through the leadership of her youth group. As a high school senior she was enrolled in two AP courses and was working two part-time jobs. Nonetheless, she found time to organize and start this group for adolescents and young adults in her church as well as for youth from the general Karen community. She continued to be its leader throughout her four years in college and is still the leader today. Her primary goal for the group is to preserve Karen culture; simultaneously she supports the young people as they try to adapt to American customs and helps them with ways to accomplish this without losing their Karen ethnic identity. Writing and sharing poetry in Karen, performing traditional music and dance, discussing the latest web-based information about news from Burma and Thailand, and speaking only in Karen and wearing traditional clothes at all meetings are typical activities of the group. For the past two years, this group has performed at the annual Community Diversity Dinner held at McDougle Middle School.

Educating the mainstream majority about the culture of a minority is an essential tool for ensuring that culture's continuation. Christine has been teaching Karen language classes to Americans through the CHICLE Language Institute in Carrboro for the past four years. The demand for classes comes from public school teachers who work with many Karen-speaking parents and students, staff from non-profit organizations who serve Karen and other groups from Burma, and from volunteers who are involved with the Karen population through faith communities or other organizations. Part of each class session is devoted to some aspect of Karen culture; therefore, participants grow in appreciation of the culture as well as

Christine Wai receives the Community Traditions Award from NCFS member Kathy Roberts at the North Carolina Folkore Society meeting in Carrboro, North Carolina, on September 28th, 2013. Photo by Ted Coyle.

in rudimentary knowledge of the Karen language. In addition, she speaks to interested community groups who have ongoing contact with the Karen and who want to learn about their culture. Past speaking engagements have been to UNC student groups who volunteer as tutors, staffs of UNC Hospital and other facilities that provide health care services, and congregations of faith-based organizations that sponsor Karen refugees when they are first resettled.

By making sure that all Karen are able to celebrate their most significant holiday and by raising mainstream Americans' awareness of the Karen culture and the refugee experience, Christine Wai honors her people and their struggle, and so is an outstanding person to represent Karen community traditions in North Carolina.

Jack and the Camera: The Depiction of Ray Hicks in Film and Video

By Thomas McGowan and Elizabeth Williams

Ray Hicks: Appalachian Icon

In Robert MacNeil's recent PBS language series *Do You Speak American?*, he and linguist Walt Wolfram discuss the features of Appalachian dialect by playing a DVD of Ray and Rosa Hicks speaking from their home near Beech Mountain, North Carolina. That MacNeil returns to footage from his previous *Story of English* series to show the now-deceased mountain folk figure on camera speaks to the special place Ray Hicks held in representing Appalachian culture and to the use of film and video to present him as a popularized representative of Mountain speech and folklife. The scene uses video within video, a reflexive frame that makes us aware of the use of the instrumentality of film to present Ray Hicks as an icon in the modern representation of Appalachian culture—mountain man; folk herbalist; independent rural farmer; "great North Carolina mountain Jack-tale teller" and "Old Man of the Mountain" (Sobol, *Storytellers' Journey* 62 & 104); good-humored jokester; downhome harmonica player and philosopher; popular star of the Jonesborough, Tennessee, National Storytelling Festival; National Heritage Fellow; "A Man Who Became

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Frame photo: Cropped screen shot from A Film about Ray Hicks, Beech Mountain, North Carolina. *Thomas G. Burton–Jack Schrader Collection, Archives of Appalachia, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN.*

a Name" (Burton, "In Memoriam" 108); and twentieth-century natural man. From 1971 to two years before his death in 2003, a significant corpus of films and video presented and investigated Ray Hicks and his family at home and occasionally on the road. Only one of these documentaries is listed in the filmography for Hicks's entry in the catalog of *Masters of Traditional Arts*, and hardly any critical analysis has appeared about them.

These documentaries fall into two distinctive sets: a collection of films and videos with Ray Hicks and his family as the subject, often providing a study of their way of living with special emphasis on the preservation of old ways and worldview, and a second set that uses scenes and clips of Ray Hicks to support a theme beyond the family: the development of storytelling, the music and folk arts of the Appalachian region, or the characteristics of Appalachian English and its sociolinguistic settings. All the programs are folkloric films "focus[ing] on traditions, those expressive forms of human behavior which are communicated by interactions and whose formal features mark them as traditional" (Sherman, *Documenting* 63). But the imposing figure of Hicks leads to a special attention on the tradition bearer, "Ray Hicks himself" as one narrator comments before introducing that striking regional voice (Burton, *A Film*). Across thirty years of documentaries, folklorists, linguists, and filmmakers have shaped and edited scenes expressing in an extraordinarily personal and familial way the preservation of older settings, behavioral forms, arts, and ways of working in Ray Hicks's daily life.

The first set of documentaries has a common perspective: the character and activities of Ray Hicks and his family. The filmmakers use what Sharon Sherman has described as a narrowed "content focus [to] follow one individual through a series of interactional events that structure their films" ("Studying" 444). Hicks became an icon of Appalachian independence, cultural preservation, and bucolic pastoral serenity and expressiveness celebrated not only in film, but also in extensive scholarly and popular journalistic writing (Williams 302-06). A stock of common images across the years express the themes of Ray Hicks's iconography: the Hicks homeplace and its evocative setting; his lanky stature, bib overall dress, and hats; working the land and the woods to harvest local flora for sale; passing the time on the Hickses' front porch or in their living room—later decorated with Rosa's paint stenciled walls and heated by wood stove implemented with Ray's ingenious tin-can convection devices; and Ray's storytelling and strikingly individual manner of Appalachian speech. Jerry Williamson has commented on the pejorative depiction of the hillbilly in popular film: "As rural memory, the hillbilly is not [. . .] easily dismissed. Its denizens perversely refuse to modernize, obviously miss the need to be embarrassed [. . . . They] are the last living organism on the planet" (ix). But documentaries on Ray Hicks, while emphasizing his holding out against change and holding onto older ways, never seem to connote perverseness and embarrassment in their depictions. Almost universally they convey a bucolic setting where old ways still work, with occasional hints of the threat of change, yet recognizing the power of ongoing tradition and the role of unusual tradition bearers.

Burton-Schrader, ***A Film about Ray Hicks***

Folklorist Thomas Burton of East Tennessee State University came to the Beech Mountain area to study the continuation of balladry in the community. His visit led to *Some Ballad Folks*, studying singers and publishing the texts of old songs preserved by family traditions. But his work also introduced him to Ray Hicks, with whom he formed a long friendship. Remembering Hicks after Ray's death, Burton noted, "He has become the prototype of the mountain storyteller in appearance and speech—but [. . .] he was a flesh-and-blood human being [who] found life hard" ("In Memoriam" 138). In 1971, Tom Burton and Jack Schrader, a faculty colleague from East Tennessee State University's art department, produced the first documentary on Ray Hicks, an eighteen-minute program plainly titled *A Film about Ray Hicks, Beech Mountain, North Carolina*. This 16 mm color folkloric film does not focus on Ray's notable Jack Tale telling or the music traditions that had drawn Burton to the Beech (Burton, "Re: A couple"). For Burton, Ray Hicks became an exemplar of a way of life that preserved old work ways in a setting strikingly evocative of past connections, and the collaboration of folklorist with artist Schrader produced an artful documentary, sadly not distributed widely, but happily now included in the recent DVD *Ray Hicks and Other Beech Mountain Folks*, distributed by the Archives of Appalachia.

The film opens with a long shot from the Hicks homeplace. The camera, like visitors over many years, looks north—down the ridge, across mountain valleys, and toward the imposing escarpment of the Appalachians running along the North Carolina-Virginia-Tennessee border. It is a long camera shot and scene shown at least once in many films and videos on Ray Hicks. Mt. Rogers, Whitetop, Rocky Face, and other summits stretch across the field of view, forming a horizon of peaks and ridges. The camera pans across the stretch of the distant mountains while Ray Hicks sings "Wayfaring Stranger" on the sound track, a mournful sound quickly overspoken by the voice of narrator Ralph Crass. The voice-over narration delivers a plain message: "These highlands are in western North Carolina. The man singing is Ray Hicks." Like the film's title, this opening narration avoids statements of value or generalization. The mountains are "highlands"; they aren't identified as the connotatively rich Appalachians. The narrative establishes the film's initial "expository mode" (Nichols 34), but Crass's tone is straightforward and plain, his observations direct and understated.

The scene then switches to a medium shot of another oft-repeated image in Hicks filmography: the Hicks homeplace, a two-story gabled I-house, tucked into a ridgeline on the lower slopes of Beech Mountain, its shingling unpainted, its tin roof rusty. That homeplace centers activities in the film. In the following scene, Rosa Hicks moves down a path that leads to her kitchen. Ray and his sons Leonard and Ted return to it from working in the woods. Mother Rena moves from her flower garden up to the house. The family sorts and packs harvested herbs on the front porch. In the film's final scene, Ray moves about the dark interior of the house occasionally silhouetted against the light of windows. Throughout the Burton-Schrader film, the movement of the Hicks family follows well-established paths and always returns to this family center, the house that has become a visual icon in much of the photography, film making, and even Bob Timberlake paintings of the Hicks homeplace.

Crass's voice-over narration quickly establishes a dominant interpretive theme. As Rosa Hicks in a medium long shot walks down a path to the house and over the soft sounds of harmonica playing by Ray, the narrator emphasizes the film's theme of continuation of the past into the present: "Her life is much the same as that of her mother and of her mother's mother: bearing children, feeding her family, and assisting her husband." Rosa moves into her kitchen doing activities that the narration now has established as generational and traditional.

The scene sequence moves to a closeup of Ray Hicks playing the harmonica, whose sound had been a soft undercurrent to Rosa's walk and work. Narrator Crass again makes a plain introduction: "And this is the man himself—Ray Hicks," an introduction that leads into a restatement of the film's thesis: "On the land of his forefathers and in their way, he raises his food, draws his spring water, and cuts his wood. And in the same tradition, he sings his songs and tells his tales." A series of quick scenes illustrates this continuation of tradition: Ray's mother watches him playing harmonica, and then we watch him, too. Rosa continues her work in the kitchen. The opening narration has emphasized activities across generations in this evocative place.

The film emphasizes the work of the family, and the homeplace and family activities that frame it. A series of shots shows Ray and his sons Leonard and Ted working in the woods, gathering moss. Narrator Crass quickly surrenders his authoritative voice-over, remarking, "But since Ray enjoys talking, we should listen to Ray talk about himself." For the rest of the film, Ray Hicks's voice will be the sole narration. Photographed without sound synchronization on a Bolex camera, the film incorporates Ray's words, recorded on a Wollensac 1/4" reel-to-reel (Burton, "Re: A couple").

Ray explains the details of work, but also expresses the desire for his sons "to carry on" the work, although he realizes the pressure of change. The switch to observational mode places his distinctive speech and downhome natural philosophy at the center of the film. The work scenes occur under a series of alternating light conditions that the exposure range of 16 mm film contrasts starkly, provoking symbolic interpretation. Moss gathering occurs in bright patches of landscape, but also in darker forest. Ray works, and sons Leonard and Ted assist, even though the father's voice reminds the viewer that the best moss is gone. Returning to the homeplace with bundles of moss carried on their shoulders, father and sons form a strikingly expressive group. The camera positioned at a low angle looks up to a ridgeline, and they and their burdens appear in dark dramatic silhouette against a blue sky. In their single file, the sons follow in their father's footsteps.

There is no dialog among the workers, but Ray's voice-over narration deepens the feeling of these beautifully photographed scenes. His remarks place the tasks in a larger philosophical worldview, expressing his enjoyment of working in the woods and reminiscing on the old ways of doing things. For the rest of the film, his voice and view become a unifying medium, dominating the viewer's awareness, and the visual content falls within his values and ordering of existence. Ray and his sons work in the woods in an ordered physical way, but its hardness is assuaged because "What makes jobs hard is trying to rush it." Their work contrasts with modern industrial work that Ray is avoiding by his reliance on the agrarian and pastoral livelihood of work in the Appalachian natural hinterlands. We as the audience know the distance and the challenge of maintaining the work, but only in a final scene does Ray comment on the passing of the environment essential to it.

The film's second set of work scenes pictures Ray performing field tasks near the house, including a sequence where he uses old implements to harvest and flail buckwheat, preparing it in a way "I learned from my grandfather Ben." While working, he sings "John Henry," a song that in later festival performances he sometimes digressed into while telling a Jack Tale. In this filmed work scene, the song emphasizes work and endurance, the African-American identity of the song story's protagonist somehow lost for its white Appalachian singer.

The work activities may seem unusual to the viewer, but in their filmic presentation they form a picture of useful and satisfying economic activity. Ray describes the folk medicinal power of herbs, and an old typed list from a marketer attests to their marketability. Subsistence farming, "wild crafting" as locals describe herb gathering, and home preparation and cooking form a still-working economic and social structure maintaining old family ways and providing basic needs enjoyed among bucolic traditional pastimes in the Hicks living room and on their front porch. Only late in the film, does Ray lament that "herbs is gone and galax is gone [and] people live in dwelling houses where [we] used to gather herbs." The words are spoken over a series of shots that move from a scene of the Hicks family wrapping herbs in newspaper and cardboard boxes on the front porch of their homeplace to a photo of a store where this local economy can continue, but then the camera pans from the land around the Hicks house and jumps to a scene of bulldozers clearing land around a dirt road, tearing the ground and mauling trees. The bulldozers and Ray's nostalgic comments introduce the threat of change and modernization, important issues in Alan Lomax's later *Appalachian Journey*, which uses a conversation between Ray and Stanley Hicks to complain about tourist development. Years later, son Ted Hicks will lament the inability to do this work because of his health and the loss of gathering places in his conversations with Lisa Baldwin (52).

As the film credits roll, Ray Hicks arises from an old car seat adapted as a settee in the Hicks living room, and then the camera pans the mountain scene that opened the film. The sound records Ray again singing "Wayfaring Stranger," a song now expressive not only of a religious sense of displacement in secular struggles, but also intimating the problem of continuing the old ways. In a final scene, Ray Hicks moves about a darkened house interior, his profile occasionally highlighted before sunlit windows. The viewer wonders about the symbolism of the dark, but the memory of the vigor, energy, and dignity of family activities and the logic and spirit of Ray's explaining and reminiscing in the film's voice-over narration provide an enduring optimism—a pastoral optimism, somehow outdated but still working and still to be appreciated in later films and writing on Hicks, his life and storytelling, and life on the Beech. Although Burton "wanted to avoid romanticizing Hicks" ("Re: A couple"), his collaboration with Schrader creates a short observational documentary invoking "the humane-romantic sensibility" (Nichols 36), presenting the authority of Hicks's own voice for verbal exposition, and, like the work of Robert Flaherty "br[inging] back images—poetic, wonderful images—that celebrate th[e] land and affirm the harmony people can enjoy with it even in the midst of technological change [. . .]" (Nichols 183).

Barret, *Fixin' to Tell About Jack*

The second documentary on Ray Hicks continues the emphasis on him as bearer of continuing folkways and rural philosopher, but develops his Jack Tale telling as a central theme. Produced and directed by Elizabeth Barret of Appalshop, the regional development media company in Whitesburg, Kentucky, *Fixin' to Tell About Jack* initially focuses on Hicks's gathering of herbs and the natural philosophy that guided him in that activity and in life, but moves into a presentation of his telling "Soldier Jack" or "Whickity-Whack" in a composite text combining two separate tale performances. The original 16 mm film was released in 1974, but a year later appeared in a VHS video format, whose container card added the subtitle "A video documentary of Ray Hicks, Storyteller from Beech Mountain, North Carolina," emphasizing its oral narrative content. This program, for twenty-five years the best-known and most-widely distributed of the Ray Hicks films, is the only one listed in his *Masters of Traditional Arts* filmography, and quotations from its performance of "Whickity-Whack" appear in the discussion of Ray Hicks in Steve Siporin's *American Folk Masters* (41).

In a review essay on Appalshop, later described as "the first discussion" of folkloric films in the *Journal of American Folklore* (Sherman, *Documenting* 288 n.1), Carl Fleischauer had criticized the formats of the group's early documentaries, recommending that Appalshop use "A more 'observational' approach [that] would allow an event or process to 'work itself out'" (278). Barret's direction creates a film that fulfills Fleischauer's recommendation to "show more of the whole person in the whole act [. . .] showing as much bodily movement and gesture as possible, the sorts of movements and relationships studied by specialists in kinesics, proxemics, choreometrics, and the like" (278). Her film focuses on Ray Hicks, pictures him in a series of expressive actions, most notably telling a Jack Tale in two important contexts, and provides many closeups of his facial and hand gestures.

Barret opens her film with Ray at home in the living room, another recurring setting in writing, photography, and scholarship about him—a "milieu" that Joseph Sobol has labeled "the real source and home place of Ray's art" ("Jack in the Raw" 4). Even before the title rolls, Ray appears in a medium front shot saying he will play "a little jig" on harmonica. Superimposed on this short clip of Ray's harmonica playing appears the film title, a plain identification of "Ray Hicks, Beech Mountain, North Carolina." Then the film moves to Ray Hicks working in the woods, continuing the motifs of gathering of herbs and floral ornaments that the Burton-Schrader documentary had ennobled with a mix of direct documenting and dramatic light conditions and camera angles that provided visual commentary reminiscent of Robert Flaherty's anthropological films. Barret's directing, however, provides a more straightforward presentation of Hicks in the woods and at home, operating in an observational mode, using considerable sound-sync commentary by Hicks, extended film takes, and none of the insertion of old photographs characteristic of the middle sections of the Burton-Schrader film.

Against a sequence of shots establishing setting by showing Ray hoeing in a field and views of the nearby ridges and finally the unpainted Hicks homeplace, in voice-over narration, Ray himself tells background information on the original social scene, functions, and content of the Jack Tales. The tone of his voice is striking in this commentary; the unusual rhythm of his speech with rising pitch tones and drawn out vowel glides that became a signature of his public telling are more apparent here than in the reminiscences of the Burton-Schrader documentary.

The scene then moves to the living room of the Hicks homeplace: wife Rosa moves about, mother Rena sits in a chair, and Ray sings "Amazing Grace." Against the sounds of the hymn, Ray begins recounting Hicks family genealogy, and the camera zooms in on Rena Hicks. But then both sound and visuals jump to an interruptive clip of an interview by Barret of Mrs. Hicks on the subject of Jack Tales and the new generation. This interactional technique will pop up again: in the middle of the "Soldier Jack" story, the scene shifts to Ray sitting on the front porch, and Barret asks, "Do you think there ever was a Jack?" and another question later prompts Ray to remark on how energized telling tales makes him even when tired, again sitting on a wooden bench on the house's front porch. Barret's end in these short interruptions, however, seems not to develop a sense of reflexivity to the documentary medium, but to add bits of background information about the Hicks family tradition of Jack Tale-telling and Ray's attitude toward and identification with the character Jack, a subject also investigated in a *North Carolina Folklore Journal* article by Barbara McDermitt.

The remaining twenty minutes of the documentary feature a composite telling of "Soldier Jack," an unusual tale of the adult Jack, but a favorite of Ray Hicks. In Barret's film, however, the recording of the tale narrative is framed by a scene of Ray working in the woods, commenting on how the "repeating" of the galax seeds is part of a natural cycle. The Jack Tale telling, in fact, begins as a voice-over spoken against a continuing take of Ray working, harvesting, and bundling galax leaves. Although later shots establish a sound-synchronous performance in two natural contexts for this Jack Tale telling, Barret's direction here places the entertaining tale in a philosophic context of a theory of natural rightness, a worldview of Hicks's own philosophy that the magic of the tale disturbs in Jack's capturing Death in a sack through the use of the humorous formula "Whickity-Whack" in "Soldier Jack." A transcription of this telling appears in the *North Carolina Folklore Journal*'s Jack Tale special issue (McGowan 78-83).

Two minutes into the tale narration, the camera moves the viewer to the first natural context for Jack Tale performance: the Hicks living room. Ray performs the tale at home with his mother apparently as audience; the presence of camera crew and their equipment do not seem to intervene as Ray gets caught up in the tale. His performance is a quiet one, without striking dramatic gestures or attempts to engage the audience. The second interruption of porch comments is followed by a change in the setting of the storytelling: instead of returning to the parlor scene, the film suddenly introduces a series of closeups of children listening to Ray's performance in a new setting. The camera zooms out from these closeups to present Ray in a sunny outdoor scene, seated beneath a tree with a group of young children assembled about him in a tight half-circle.

The scene seems staged for Barret's film, yet as induced natural context it does recall the development of the school class as setting for Jack Tale telling. Jane Hicks Gentry "shared stories and songs in chapel and in classes" as barter payment for her children's tuition at the Dorland Institute in Hot Springs, North Carolina, in the early 1900s (Smith 7). Richard Chase, the children's book writer who popularized the genre, became a notable professional teller who visited classrooms to tell his renditions. But more importantly, before his enshrinement at the annual Jonesborough festival of the National Association for the Preservation and Perpetuation of Storytelling (later the National Storytelling Association), performances in school classes in North Carolina and east Tennessee had been the most frequent outside setting for Ray Hicks's own storytelling. The school-age audience too has a special influence on Ray Hicks's style: in this second part of "Soldier Jack," his gestures are much more animated, his manner more dramatic, and his interactions with the enjoyment of the young audience more noticeable. The viewer wonders about how staged the outdoor scene may be, yet its audience and Ray's response to the children enact an important function of the Jack Tales and the context produces a representative performance.

Barret's editing of *Fixin' to Tell about Jack* provides a full performance of a Jack Tale text, albeit in a divided composite form because of the two different contexts, and frames the tales in the worldview of Ray Hicks's natural philosophy. To the recurring images of work in the woods, entertainment in the living room, and the unpainted Hicks homeplace established in the Burton-Schrader study, Barret adds scenes of Ray's tale telling, performing with different audiences, but still in local scenes. The camera work in her film is more direct in its perspective, not as evocative of the pastoral romanticism of the Burton-Schrader film, but still expressive of the individualistic rural independence and traditionalism that Hicks embodies. Like the Burton-Schrader documentary, an artistic ordering of scenes advances the argument of tradition persisting in Ray Hicks's work and words.

Luke Barrow's Videos

In 1995, Luke Barrow, an undergraduate student who grew up in Avery County and had taken courses in the Curriculum in Folklore at the University of North Carolina, visited the home of Ray and Rosa Hicks. Barrow's enterprise, which he labeled Fandangle Films, produced a considerable amount of video footage that he arranged into five programs, now distributed by Chip Taylor Communications as its *Appalachian Storyteller Ray Hicks* series. The original project met independent study requirements for courses with Terry Zug in the UNC Curriculum in Folklore and in the University's Communication School (Barrow, "Re: Film").

The title of the series' opening program, a thirty-minute documentary, purports to present a filmic autobiography—*My Life: I've Traveled the Mountains*, but the main narratives in its first part are a loose set of reminiscences by Ray Hicks about being attacked by a cougar, courting, and dancing and music playing in the community. Ray himself presents all the narrative, speaking on camera working in his herb garden or seated in the living room of his home. His narrative continues as voice-over for occasional visuals of a set of black and white photographs of Ray's brother-in-law Lindsey Hicks in Army dress uniform, Ray and Rosa early in their marriage and later with three small children, a family stringband, and Ray dancing, the last snapshot taken by Anne and Frank Warner during their song collecting expeditions to Watauga County in the 1940s. In other scenes, Ray works with herbs and explains their uses, but the commentary and setting never verge on the philosophic seriousness of the Barret film's garden scenes. In the outdoor scenes, the camera follows Ray like a visitor, and he appears in a surprising costume: his usual bib overalls, but with a newly laundered dress shirt, whose tails pop out on each side, and a baseball cap worn backwards.

Notable in this first program are a set of self-reflexive comments made by Ray about his language, storytelling and its popularity, and festival appearances. Against a medium shot of Ray working in a field with his house and mountains in the background, his voice-over comments discuss an unidentified "they" who "say that I've got some words that goes back to Dan'l Boone and Davy Crockett. He says, 'Gawd, Ray, you got words that goes back further than that.'" The "he" in this metalinguistic reflection is likely Alan Lomax, who visited Ray doing the fieldwork that led to his *Appalachian Journey*. Ray continues in his living room to talk about the size of his repertory of what he labels "lifetime stories," remarking, "I could sit up all night and not tell the same one over." He then comments on the religious criticism of storytelling, noting that his mother probably didn't tell the stories because she was so religious, but Ray justifies his practice by reporting the speech of a minister he encountered in Cullowhee, North Carolina, very likely at the Mountain Heritage Day festival sponsored by Western Carolina University. The unidentified minister told him, "Ray, don't quit. . . . Anything that makes people feel that good and no hardness can't be wrong with God. Keep it, a-goin', Ray." Ray even theorizes a bit about what made him "the leader of the storytelling," proposing that his speech and the "feeling in [his] speech" affect audiences.

All of these scenes are filmed in and around the Hicks homeplace, but the latter part of this opening video presents a montage of shots at the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, Tennessee. Road shots of Ray, Rosa, and cousin Orville Hicks move the setting to Jonesborough with street scenes of booths, a storyteller performing, and dancers and storytellers in the Festival's main tent. In the single moment of reflexivity on documentary filmmaking in the series, Barrow shows Ray being filmed by a college-age production crew, whose young woman interviewer seems rather ignorant of the geography of Banner Elk, North Carolina, when Ray tries to tell her where he lives.

The remainder of the video mainly presents a medium shot, taken from a low angle, of Ray performing on the Storytelling Festival's tent stage. He tells, not a Jack Tale, but a long personal experience narrative on voting-place moonshine drinking with humorous digressions on "medicine," drawing considerable laughter when he comments, "A lot of them be sick all the time." Ray's diction heard in the large-tent setting is more difficult to understand than the homeplace shots, but the audience, occasionally shown reacting, laughs uproariously at the narrative. Barrow's first program moves Ray Hicks from his oft-photographed homeplace to Jonesborough, where his performances undergo "institutionalization [. . .] and incorporation into a finished, ritualized festival form" (Sobol, *Storytellers' Journey* 106). In a basic way, Barrow's video establishes the move from homeplace to national recognition in Jonesborough, a journey that Charles and Jane Hadley will investigate much more deeply—and with a budget and film crew—in the last documentary of Ray Hicks.

Three of Barrow's videos in this series present performances of Jack Tales. All open with the evocative panoramic pan of the chain of dominating peaks that stretch across the horizon in the view from the Hicks homeplace and a short sound track of Ray playing a harmonica tune. This opening scene stresses a strong sense of beautiful regionalism, but after this repeated opening sequence, the videos turn to a more limited setting and less grand view.

These videos document, using two cameras, performances by Hicks of three Jack Tales in a small auditorium at Lees-McCrae College with an audience from the Banner Elk Elementary School (Barrow, "Re: Film"). The grade school had been the setting for Jack Tale performances by school teacher Marshall Ward, another noted member of the Hicks-Harmon storytelling family, as part of Friday afternoon "programs" in his fifth-grade curriculum during the 1950s and '60s (Gutierrez 159), and later became a scene for visits from Ray, who lived some winding miles up N.C. Highway 194 from the school. Schoolrooms and auditoriums were a natural context for Ray's performances in the 1960s and '70s so that Barrow's returning Ray to the nearby auditorium with an audience of local children provides an especially fitting setting for storytelling, and filming.

Barrow does not try to shape any special angle on Hicks's folk philosophy or way of living in these three videos. There is no expository narration; the sole sound is Hicks telling the tales on camera. The main camera angle is a straight front shot that centers Hicks on the edge of a small stone-faced stage and before a group of thirty youngsters seated cross-legged on flag-stoned floor. Barrow varies the zoom, but the majority of filming uses a head-to-waist shot that shows Ray's gestural style, including hand gestures and his rhythmic body rocking during the storytelling. Occasionally the camera zooms close up to show his facial gestures or hands, the view opens to a wide angle showing Ray and the entire audience, or a second camera offers a side view of Ray and the audience or closeups of student reactions in the audience. The visuals give a strong sense of the storytelling as communicative event and depict the texture of the storytelling performance in a direct observational way.

Ray tells three Jack Tales from his repertory: a favorite of his, "Jack and the Fire Dragon"; a favorite of Marshall Ward, "The Cat and the Mouse"; and the Jack adaptation of the Bremen Town Musicians, "Jack and the Robbers." Although a listing on the Ferrum University Jack Tale website annotates the performances as "Based on Richard Chase's *Jack Tales*" (Hanlon), the performances are not noticeably indebted to the renditions written by Chase in print. Hicks develops the plots with a loose unity common to his tale telling. There are no striking echoes of formulaic phrases, dialog sequences, or phrasal runs from the printed text. He tells the tales with a special energy that the school audience seems to elicit from him, and he enjoys playing to the reactions of the children. Barrow's occasional cuts to audience reaction or closeups of Ray portray nicely the comfortable interplay between the children and him.

The three videos are straightforward "films documenting texts" (Sherman, *Documenting* 442), but camera angles and occasional shifting of perspectives in the scene provide a helpful expression of the storytelling performances as communicative events. The excellent sound quality presents Hicks's idiolect and narrative style clearly. Barrow, in fact, refused Chip Taylor's request for subtitling, responding that viewers should listen "carefully" to Ray's diction (Barrow, Telephone). Even without explicit exposition, these videos give a sense of the function of storytelling. Hicks uses his performance to entertain the children, but he also has a strong allegiance to describing the artifacts of an older time and to connecting story episodes and conflicts to the real world of his growing up. The explosive fire of the Fire Dragon draws a comment on the smoke of steam-driven sawmills from Ray's youth, and Hicks compares Jack's loneliness in the underground world to encounters in the woods. The natural context of the school audience, a setting in which he has long practice and experience, draws Hicks into a focused development with occasional elaborative digressions, but not the longer expansive personal extravagance in digression that sometimes occurred in larger public sessions such as the tent-stage with its audience of thousands at Jonesborough as seen in this series' opening video.

Ray himself provides short metanarrative comments at the start of each performance. "Jack and the Fire Dragon" is "another that was told me at the old fireplace," and then Ray comments on having "a dozen" tales that he tells. With handkerchief in hand, he introduces "Jack and the Robbers" as "one that I loved when I was a kid, and I'm gonna tell it." Then he shifts into comments on whipping and the demands of life in earlier generations: "They lived hard." But the reminiscence quickly leads back to the tale plot where Jack's treatment leads him to leave home, with an especial sympathy for the plight of the animal helpers he will enlist on his journey. Ray precedes "The Cat and the Mouse" with the most expansive metanarration stressing the entertainment function of tales in the old days, commenting on the popularity of ghost stories, and associating himself with the Jack character.

Although the least artistic and most narrow in both camera and philosophic investigation among Ray Hicks documentaries, these three Jack Tale videos provide full texts of Ray Hicks performing Jack Tales in a natural context. They are now the most available complete presentations of Ray's performing in the genre he was most noted for and provide an excellent resource for the study of his repertory and performance style, filmed in a productive natural context and without the hype of the Jonesborough festival.

A final video, *Blue Ridge Music and Ballads*, presents an assortment of harmonica and singing performances by Hicks on the front porch of the family homeplace, in its living room, or in the Lees-McCrae College amphitheater with its audience of children. The video provides no narrative commentary on or even identification of the tunes except for Ray's own brief commentary before some of the songs, but unlike many of the clips of Ray's harmonica playing and singing, he completes full performances of each tune on camera, including harmonica introductions, a cappella singing of all verses in the variant, and some harmonica conclusions. In one porch scene, Ray discusses learning to play the harmonica, a skill he didn't pick up from the "recipe," the instructions that came with the instrument box, but rather he learned by performance and experimenting. The video's camera work documents gestures and playing techniques, including closeups of Hicks's hands in his harmonica playing. The school auditorium shots occasionally open to a wide angle that shows the children's reactions. While Hicks's harmonica playing and singing are mentioned in writings about Ray and pictured in other documentaries, the Barrow video is unusual in filming complete performances of songs, rather than fragments.

Luke Barrow, who himself grew up in Avery County and attended Banner Elk Elementary School, began his Mini-DV videographing of Ray Hicks as part of a small course project at the University of North Carolina, but the sense of the need to preserve notable folklore spurred him to return home and do extensive filming of Ray Hicks at home and in a particularly appropriate school program (Barrow, Telephone). The set of tale and music performances provide excellent folklore text videos, observational documentaries that in their close presentation of complete performances and lack of expositional intervention provide opportunities for the study of Hicks's repertory and style beyond written texts and Sandy Paton's ground-breaking Folkways record.

Appearances in Two Classics on Regional Music and Language

A series of scenes with Ray Hicks appear in *Appalachian Journey,* part of Alan Lomax's five-segment 1990 *American Patchwork* series that celebrates the diverse "patchwork" of American culture, particularly its music traditions. This segment includes scenes from the Sodom community in North Carolina, including a young Sheila Kay Adams singing ballads, Tommy Jarrell in Surry County, and other places in the Appalachians, but Lomax also selects North Carolina Piedmont musicians—Joe and Odell Thompson and Algia Mae Hinton—to argue for Black influences on banjo and dance traditions in the Southern Mountains. Brett Sutton notes that besides "performances [. . .] interesting in their own right," Lomax also uses the programs as "vehicles for the presentation of a number of issues, including interethnic cultural change, the struggle for political and economic autonomy, the role of tourism, and the effects of modernization" (*JAF* 465). Lomax's visits with the Hicks family conclude with commentary on issues of tourism, development, and government appropriation of land.

Ray Hicks first appears in *Appalachian Journey* after Lomax visits Stanley Hicks in a location that Lomax describes as "way up in the Smokies . . . near Boone, North Carolina." Stanley on a Blue Ridge Mountain road tells Lomax a tall tale about his pet catfish that drowned on his way to school, and in the next segment, Lomax, in what Sutton describes as "a video editing bay, surrounded by monitors" (*Ethnologies* 272) remarks on the Hicks "family that came from Northern Ireland and has just an endless amount of stories and ballads and dance traditions." He describes, "Ray Hicks is seven-feet tall or just close to it," while the film moves to a scene of Ray Hicks full length standing in front of a small weathered barn, singing a verse from a local song with lyrics that include lines from "Gold Watch and Chain" and "One Hundred Miles" and then playing his harmonica.

In a cut back to his studio, Lomax describes Ray as "the greatest of American folk tale tellers" and associates him with the narratives "of the adventures of Jack" and other stories, noting that Ray "embellishes them, and they grow under his telling." The film moves to a performance by Ray of later episodes in a variant of the *Wonderful Hunting Trip* (Stith Thompson Tale Type 1890). In *The Jack Tales,* Richard Chase labels the tale "Jack's Hunting Trips" (16). Hicks is filmed in a medium shot telling the tale, sitting on the front porch of his house. The sequence illustrates Ray's hand gestures, head scratching, characteristic wide-eyed looks, and the pitch rises of his vocal style well. The camera moves from Ray to pan his audience on the porch, Stanley Hicks, Hattie Presnell, and the young Frank Proffitt, Jr., whose smiles express their enjoyment of Ray's performance. The context of the Hicks homeplace as a setting for music and tale sharing had been well pictured in Anne and Frank Warner's photographs of their visits there (Warner 198 and 260), and it continues to be a motif in Orville Hicks's remembering his boyhood visits. Lomax, in fact, will use the Hicks homeplace as context for music and tale performances by Stanley Hicks and Frank Proffitt, Jr., discussion of female morality in the Tom Dula story, and even a whimmy-diddle demonstration by Estill Presnell.

After presentations of music by Tommy Jarrell, Joe and Odell Thompson, Kyle Edwards, Nimrod Workman, and others and discussions of railroads, Black and White collaboration in American folk music development, and coal mining, the film returns to the Hicks homeplace. The shift is visually abrupt: stark aerial photos of landscapes denuded by strip mining are followed by a shot of Stanley and Ray and Edd Presnell seated in the shade of Ray's porch on a sunny day. Lomax in a transition discussion shot in his studio has introduced tourism and government appropriation as taking the land of "the original settlers." The next sequence records a conversation between Ray and Stanley on the Hicks porch. Ray in a closeup comments to the camera that it was on "the south pinnacles [of Beech Mountain] above Banners Elk that they put the Land of Oz up there," but Stanley takes over the conversation describing the tourist facilities of Beech Mountain development and lamenting the loss of hunting and horse-back riding settings from his youth with a surprisingly quiet Ray listening and once nodding in agreement. The film then shifts to a long shot of the weathered Hicks family homeplace taken from the slope above—the iconic scene that appears in almost every film on Ray and in two notable Bob Timberlake paintings. The house provides a text for Ray's final word in *Appalachian Journey*. In a medium shot by the corner of the front porch, with harmonica music in the background, Ray in overalls and a beat-up brown Fedora gestures toward the house and avers, "I've got the feeling that I wouldn't give that building up there for all of nature. I don't know if it'll last me or not, but I believe it will. I want to go out with this. I don't want it to change." He utters his final wish with few of the pitch rises of his storytelling style, and the editors of Lomax's film include no dialog subtitles as they had in some earlier scenes. It is a wish that emphasizes Ray Hicks's conscious maintaining of old ways against modern changes in the mountains, a theme much expanded later in the Hadleys' *Ray and Rosa Hicks: The Last of the Old-Time Storytellers.*

Ray and Rosa Hicks appear in a segment of *The Story of English,* an Emmy Award-winning series on the development of the English language, produced by MacNeil-Lehrer Productions and the BBC. It first appeared on the BBC and PBS, and its nine-part videocassette series and DVD boxed set have been used in college courses in the history of the English language. It is also available on line from the Top Documentary Film website, where a review describes it as "Part travelogue, part linguistics, part history, and all fascinating [. . .] a unique blend of solid scholarship and engrossing entertainment." The Hickses appear in Part Four of the series *The Guid Scots Tongue,* which develops a discussion of Scots and Ulster English and their relation to the development of Appalachian English. The introductory titles in each part of the series incorporate a sequence of photographs of leading speakers or writers in the film. *The Guid Scots Tongue* title sequence starts with a Scottish piper and a painting of Robert Burns, and toward the end of the sequence appear photos, arranged in oval frames with blurred edges, of Ray Hicks playing the harmonica on his home's front porch and Stanley Hicks playing a fretless banjo.

After discussions of Scots, Ulster English, and the migration of Scots Irish to the Philadelphia area and into the Southern Mountains, the film moves to a discussion of Appalachian English. During a pre-production meeting at Appalachian State, a faculty member had recommended filming in some everyday contexts such as a local tobacco auction or court case with Appalachian speakers and including National Heritage Award-winner Bertha Cook as an example of a female speaker. But this section opens with a scene of wood-carver Willard Watson tending a still in the woods. Scholar Cratis Williams, dressed in a double-breasted blazer, joins him and asks Willard what he is doing. Willard responds he is "making moonshine on Wildcat Road." Then in scenes shot on a porch, Cratis Williams describes distinctive aspects of Appalachian pronunciation and syntax. The film's following section with Ray and Rosa Hicks offers illustrations of this regional speech.

The Hicks section begins with a long shot panning green hillside and moving to the Ray Hicks homeplace. In a voice-over, MacNeil associates Professor Williams's observations to the bucolic scene: "pronunciations like these are found all over the Appalachian Mountains." Throughout the discussion MacNeil says "Appalachian" with the General American long-a pronunciation, rather the regional short-a sound. The scene then shifts to a medium shot of Ray seated on his front porch energetically playing his harmonica. The camera pans, showing rustic objects on the porch, ending up focused on Rosa Hicks sewing. MacNeil in voice-over observes, "Two typical mountain people are Ray Hicks and his wife Rosie." In a closeup, Rosa remarks on her and Ray's "being growed up in the mountains" with subtitles running for this reminiscence and a series of shots showing rooms and quilted bed in the Hicks home.

The film then returns to Cratis Williams's porch discussion where he describes the use of "hit" as singular neuter pronoun in Appalachian speech. The next sequence uses a description by Rosa Hicks of the isolated location of their home and the difficulties of getting to it. MacNeil in voice-over remarks on her use of "hit," which leads to a series of landscape shots of the Hicks home and yard and its hilly setting. In a voiced-over story, Rosa gives a delightful account of difficulties getting there: ". . . Then you get in a car or truck and go as far as you can go in hit. . . . Then you crawl on your hands and knees as far as you can come . . . ."

Rosa's recitation of the difficulties in getting to her house is followed by a sequence picturing a station wagon driving along dusty Andy Hicks Road to the Hicks homeplace. Rosa's voice-over describes the house as "an old-timey one. It looks haunted, but it's not." The car's occupants, a father and his four young boys, walk down to meet Ray in the yard. MacNeil in voice-over observes, "Ray Hicks is famous 'round here. People come from miles around to hear him tell folk tales in one of the last true Appalachian accents." Ray and the family exchange greetings with one of the children saying, "Howdy, Ray." The "Howdy" utterance pair will become a linguistic point for MacNeil to wonder about in the later incorporation of this scene into *Do You Speak American*?

In the film, Ray, seated on the corner of his front porch, then tells the family an episode of the Jack Tale "Whickity-Whack," in which Jack traps six devils, who "had a sword a piece," in his magic sack. In his performance, Ray gesticulates showing Jack's actions with the sack, and he pronounces the "w" in "sword" repeatedly. This tale is also the center of Elizabeth Barret's earlier *Fixin' to Tell about Jack.* The film concludes this section by moving from the storytelling scene and the Hicks homeplace to a series of Appalachian landscapes with MacNeil concluding that "the broadest Appalachian accents still linger up here."

Although *The Guid Scots Tongue* in its commentary emphasizes the typicality of Ray and Rosa Hicks as examples of Appalachian speech, its cinematic development, in many ways, shows the exceptionality of their maintaining old ways and the special quality of Ray's storytelling. Other films openly emphasize their exceptionality, but this linguistic study attempts to use them as "two typical mountain people." Commentary emphasizes their typicality, but the selected cuts seem to recognize the specialness of the Hickses as tradition bearers. No commentary is provided on the exceptional idiolectal pronunciations of Ray's speech, particularly in storytelling.

Rosa Hicks's description of the location of their house and the family visit are incorporated in MacNeil's 2005 video *Down South*, Part Two of his series *Do You Speak American*? MacNeil and N.C. State linguist Walt Wolfram review a playing of the two-minute video sequence on the deck of the riverboat *Belle of Cincinnati*. Wolfram politely responds to MacNeil's comment that "Howdy sounds more like Texas to me," by saying, "Well, they do use some of that in Appalachia," pronouncing the region's name with the local short-a that contrasts with MacNeil's General American pronunciation throughout both films. Wolfram then lists characteristic dialect features exemplified in the Hickses' speech, a review that focuses on dialectal typicality in contrast to the broader sense of exceptional tradition bearing in the original *Story of English* sequence.

Appearances in Two Videos on Regional Storytelling

Ray Hicks appears in two videos made to illustrate the form and function of traditional oral narrative in the Upper South. *Voices of Memory* was an hour-length program made for viewing on state educational television, the Kentucky Network, in 1989. *Tall Tales of the Blue Ridge: Stories from the Heart of Appalachia* was produced in 1992 by the Eastern National and Monument Association and the Blue Ridge Parkway for sale in the Eastern National bookshops along the Parkway. Both videos present Hicks's storytelling as part of a discussion of storytelling among cultural groups in the Upland South, picture him in representative natural contexts, and provide helpful commentary by folklorists on the function, form, and special role of his storytelling.

Voices of Memory, written by John Morgan, opens with a scene of summer camp ghost storytelling, but moves into an interesting discussion by narrator Bob Hutchison on the function of stories to control behavior and express cultural values, emphasizing that even today oral narrative plays an important role in communities. The first long section of the video program is an excellent presentation of Cherokee storytelling, using short performances and the reenactment of John Mooney's voice to show the notable continuation and revival of legends and animal and plant lore among the Eastern Band, the special role of Cherokee tradition bearers, and the work of the Saving Voices Project in conserving language, stories, and beliefs.

The Cherokee discussion is followed by a series of mountain shots with narrator Hutchison introducing the migration of European groups into the region, carrying "cultural baggage." This "hardy breed . . . isolated from major colonial towns," according to the voice-over narration maintained its own traditions in the mountains "one generation to the next," including storytelling. Stanley and Ray Hicks are presented, as they also are in Alan Lomax's *Patchwork* series, as notable examples of the continuation of traditional oral narrative. Here, however, the folklorist commentator is William Lightfoot, Professor of English at Appalachian State University. The video moves between short clips of storytelling by Stanley and Ray to commentary by Lightfoot, seated before a window that opens on a pastoral Blue Ridge farm scene outside. In the film, Lightfoot serves as a kind of figurative academic window opening a view into the structure and function of the Jack Tale.

Stanley tells an episode from "Jack and the Critters," in which Jack criticizes the King for shooting a lion that Jack was training for the King's "riding horse." The video frames Stanley in a medium shot that illustrates well his individual narrative style and good humor, but never presents a full performance of any Jack Tale by Stanley or Ray, probably because of the length of the genre, one characteristic described by Lightfoot. Ray will only tell a short section from an episode in "Sop Doll" as the video continues.

A notable aspect of this video is Lightfoot's folkloristic exposition that summarizes well the characteristics of the Beech Mountain Jack Tale as märchen, discussing similar aspects to those that Lightfoot explains in his excellent article in the Folklife volume of *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* ("Jack Tales" 307-09). For many years, this Jack Tale section of *Voices of Memory* was shown on a continuous loop on a television in a display on the Beech Mountain Jack Tale at the now-closed Appalachian Cultural Museum in Boone. It was a popular stopping place in the museum in a display corner, separating a display of artifacts from Richard Chase's collecting and performing and original drawings for Gail Haley's adaptation of the genre in her *Mountain Jack Tales,* a book which she dedicated to Ray Hicks.

The next section of the video includes shots of Ray playing the harmonica with voice-over exposition by Lightfoot of Jack Tales as expressions of Appalachian life: he argues that Stanley and Ray Hicks are "encyclopedias of Appalachian culture . . . They admire people who know their environment, who know trees and plants and herbs and animals." But this voice-over exposition is followed by a notable on-camera interview between folklorist Lightfoot and Ray Hicks in the living room of the Hicks homeplace. From an opening shot showing Lightfoot, Ray, and the stenciled wall decorations of the front room, the camera moves to a medium shot of Ray dressed in a neat pair of overalls. Lightfoot elicits a revealing confession by Ray about his sense of Jack as trickster and his own way of living: "I had to be Jack to survive. Well, that's the truth. I—I wouldn't have been a-livin' if I'd done the good like I teach to do all the time, not take no herbs and everything without asking first . . . And it took trickin' people if you got his back agin the wall—if it took trickin' people, where you got at, you'd trick him if you could."

Voices of Memory follows its Jack Tale section with discussions of the role of the Griot in African-American storytelling and a very interesting presentation on the telling of local character anecdotes in rural Kentucky, featuring commentary and collecting by folklorist Lynwood Montell. Despite its lack of full Jack Tale performances, Lightfoot's exposition and productive interviewing of Ray present excellent commentary on the form and function of the Beech Mountain Jack Tale. A later video, *Ray and Rosa Hicks: The Last of the Old-Time Storytellers,* will also use Lightfoot's insights to interpret and valorize the Hickses' way of living.

Tall Tales of the Blue Ridge: Stories from the Heart of Appalachia opens with a series of quick shots of various settings for storytelling, including a brief scene of Ray's son Ted conversing with two local young men in the Hickses' front yard. Jean Haskell Speer, then director of the Archives of Appalachia at East Tennessee State University, introduces the subject of storytelling in this film that records performances by Ray Hicks at home, Donald Davis in a general store in Pensacola, N.C., and Sparky Rucker in an elementary school classroom. In her introduction, Speer emphasizes the "special genius of memory, wit, creative speech, and local wisdom" that the tellers embody in their expression of interests and values.

The ten-minute sequence on Ray Hicks is especially interesting for its presentation of a variety of shorter tales, not the long Jack Tale genre, told by Ray in a productive natural context induced for the filming. In a series of shots establishing setting, the camera moves from a long shot of the Hicks homeplace to closeups of objects on the porch and an interior scene of Rosa in the kitchen. The participants for storytelling then parade in from the front room and seat themselves around the Hicks kitchen table: Ray and Rosa, son Ted, cousin Orville Hicks, wearing a leather Confederate soldier's cap, and neighbor Bennie Harmon in baseball cap. It is a group that frequented the Hicks home for storytelling and their appreciative interaction leads Ray to tell a series of short tales on camera. Bareheaded, dressed in neat overalls and a dark shirt, and clutching a handrolled cigarette, Ray opens with a joke that plays with the hypothetical metaphysics of quintessential properties and their consequences. He begins, "If all the men was in one man, what a great man that would be," and leads through a progression of the hypothetical formula through a chopping ax, a tree, and the ocean, concluding, much to the delight of the gathering of neighbors, "And if that great man took that great ax and chopped down that great tree and it hit that great ocean . . . what a great splash that would be!" The camera films Ray and Rosa at the head of the table showing his facial and hand gestures and her reactions, and occasional quick switches to closeups of his audience show their enjoyment of his playing with the stories, presenting a delightful sense of storytelling as shared communicative event. The edited ten-minute session then moves into a series of personal experience narratives with playful exaggeration. Ray's "little dog" that can tree anything leads him to a hole where a groundhog bites his thumb so that it "turned black," and in a following story, Ray, leaves off galax gathering and hunting "rough grouse" and sits beside a tree, where a squirrel suddenly sits on his shoulder. The story ends with the mountain boomer chattering in animal talk, reporting on its encounter with the stone-still Hicks. Ray's final narrative tells of his walking a long distance to court Rosa and picking two special apples. But the apple tree then attacks him. The short length of this set of stories, the depiction of the enjoyment of the participants in the gathering, and the focus on Ray in a relaxed home setting give this video special note (as does an excellent telling by Donald Davis later of the story of his uncle's prize hound, its tracking an old scent of a fox from North Carolina to New Jersey, and the uncle's clever purchase of the old fox coat in a second-hand store to manage the hound's return to the mountains).

The Hadleys' Major Video

In 1998 Charles and Jane Hadley, faculty at Queens College in Charlotte, North Carolina, organized the most ambitious, longest, and most expositional of the Hicks documentaries: *Ray and Rosa Hicks: The Last of the Old-Time Storytellers.* Well-funded and using the more flexible opportunities offered by modern video technology, the film produces a full presentation of the special arts, philosophy, and activities of Ray and his wife Rosa, but provides considerable exposition and explanation, including commentary by folklorists Glenn Hinson of the University of North Carolina's Curriculum in Folklore and William Lightfoot of Appalachian State University.

The Hadleys' video uses a loose seasonal frame: the cassette box summarizes, "This film describes Ray and Rosa's life through the four seasons, presenting a year in the life of this special couple." However, the scene sequence of the "celebration" isn't consistently ordered by season, and the description is complicated by exposition, interpretation, and even small expressions of filmic reflexivity. The film develops an extensive exposition of the storytelling, music, folkways, herblore, and daily activities of the Hickses in a series of interpretive frames. Ray's and Rosa's voices are an important expression of emic perspectives on local lore, but the documentary also shows their encounter with outside forces, most notably the special recognitions of the National Storytelling Festival, its "canonization" of Ray as "Old Man of the Mountains" and his "function as Jonesborough icon" (Sobol, *Storytellers' Journey* 104-05), and includes professional scholarly commentary.

The video opens with no sound, only a black and white photograph of a middle-aged Ray and Rosa, posed before their summer garden, he with a happy smile and she with a slight grin, he in his trademark overalls and she in a dress with a busy print. Ray's arm reaches across her shoulder and holds her hand, a picture of plain rural affection. Then against a closeup photo of Ray gesturing and apparently telling a story, narrator Ed Grady announces, "Ray and Rosa Hicks: the last of the old-time storytellers." His announcement distinguishes that this exploration will not only be a film about the well-recognized Ray, but includes Rosa as companion teller. Although earlier documentaries give Rosa's role considerable coverage on camera, the Hadley film raises her to the same activity: her singing, cooking, gardening, and daily life too are somehow narrative. The Hickses are partners in the opening photograph, but also as narrative chroniclers who embody a special excellence: the respect for the "old-time" ways.

The camera then moves to what has been an emblematic shot in Hicks filming: the long shot of the mountains beyond the homeplace. But here, a montage of representative beautiful mountains in various seasons runs before the viewer while a soft banjo tune played by Frank Proffitt, Jr.—not identified, however, as Hicks' relative and enthusiast—sounds in the background. The serious voice of narrator Ed Grady then sets the scene and makes a basic distinction that the film will develop: "High up in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, in an area known as the backcountry, Ray and Rosa Hicks lead a simple life, but they are not simple people." Grady notes that Ray "is renowned for telling Jack Tales . . . But the Hickses' story is better than any Jack Tale." The simplicity of the emblematic opening shot and the plain photograph, narrator Grady argues, must be viewed with a new sense of complication and sophistication that the film will investigate.

Unlike the previous Hicks documentaries, the Hadleys' exploration immediately admits its form as documentary by drawing attention to the interaction of filmmaker and subject. The next scene begins with Charles Hadley interviewing Ray Hicks in front of his farmhouse. The camera looks over the shoulder of interviewer Hadley and then moves to a medium shot of Ray with the unpainted house behind him. To Hadley's question about being "last," Ray replies, "I'm the last storyteller tellin' them *right*," a claim of especial skill and traditionality that the film investigates in the larger context of the national storytelling revival and its celebrative development in the Jonesborough, Tennessee, National Storytelling Festival. Here, the video is recognized as using interviewing and filming—fieldwork—but then two outside voices add the complication of scholarly interpretation to the documentation. In counterpoint to Ray's personal claim of performative rightness appears a set of enthusiastic folkloristic generalizations. Folklorist William Lightfoot appears in a medium shot seated before a piano at his home announcing, "Ray and Rosa are important because they are like time capsules or encyclopedias of Appalachian folk culture." Then again in a medium shot, Glen Hinson appears before a quilt, providing a new complication to Lightfoot's enthusiastic comment: "The celebration of Ray Hicks is absolutely caught up in the *romance* of the mountains." The remarks of the two folklorists establish an attention to interpretative issues: the remarks and actions of the film's social actors will receive scholarly validation and complication by these two scholarly commentators throughout.

A common sequence throughout the film becomes synchronous-sound shots of Ray or Rosa performing a task, a song, or a story, quickly followed by insertions of short commentary by these two identified folklorists. Lightfoot will discuss economic factors and self-sufficiency in folk groups, characteristics of Appalachian culture taken from Loyal Jones's writing, the role of active tradition bearers, and the dynamics of tradition and intervention in individual performance. But most of all, his scholarly opinion, delivered with a west Kentucky accent, will argue early that what some outsiders label "backward" is "wonderful" in Mountain folklife. Hinson will in early scenes introduce ideas of "performance as everyday artistry," using concepts from Erving Goffman and Richard Bauman, and a recognition of the idea of Appalachia, the complicating perspective in Appalachian Studies scholarship much influenced by the writings of Henry Shapiro and David Whisnant. He will even recognize the influence of outsiders in the reception of Appalachian culture, remarking, "the outside reformers—one of the things they did was valorize . . . foreground certain art that they saw as *truly* representative of the Appalachian people." Incorporating Hinson's remark, in fact, makes the viewer also aware of this film as a foregrounding and valorizing of the daily life and extraordinary festival performances of the Hickses.

Another technique, used by Barrow in his earlier film, is the montage of quick interviews at Jonesborough. The collection of commentators includes professional storytellers and Jonesborough visitors, including both African-American and Euro-American speakers. The comments are direct and appreciative. They contribute to the sense of sophistication that the film has established as theme. The video introduces a set of voices and faces from the professional storytelling world, all identified by a subtitle. In closeup shots from the Jonesborough National Storytelling Festival, Jay O'Callahan and Connie Regan-Blake establish another set of professional commentators; their voices will continue, cut into later scenes of Ray and Rosa at the Festival. Professional storyteller Carolyn Moore remarks, "If you define sophistication as someone who's at home in their own culture, I've never met a more sophisticated person than Ray," and her comment builds on the video's opening argument and emphasizes the abilities of Ray and Rosa to perform at home. Other Jonesborough professionals, including an African-American speaker, subtitle identified as "Rex Ellis/Director, Center for Museum Studies/ Smithsonian," appear, lauding different aspects of Ray Hicks's storytelling art, his role at the Jonesborough event, and his influence on the revival of storytelling. Their comments, more emotional, impressionistic, figurative and subjective, and less folkloristic, establish another angle for appreciating the power and reputation of Ray's stories. For O'Callahan, Ray is "almost like a mountain speaking."

A set of home scenes illustrates the "make do" attitude and plain folkways of the Hickses. Narrator Grady notes that Rosa must carry water to her kitchen from the spring house and "like generations before them, the Hickses . . . make do. Hardly anything goes to waste." Rosa's path to the kitchen formed a short sequence in the Burton-Schrader film, but this longer more developed video shows closeups of Rosa stringing beans, preparing fruit for canning, and working in the kitchen, actions now foregrounded by Hinson's earlier discussion of everyday performance. But the pastoral domestic ease of these actions is opposed by Ray himself and Connie Regan-Blake, talking about his "hard times" and the relation of his Jack tales to coping with life's challenges.

Central outdoor scenes occur not in the darker woods settings of the Burton-Schrader and Barret films, but in more domesticated natural settings. Ray guides the Hadleys on an easy walk through a bright rhododendron dell, where he can show them herbs to smell and taste. Walking about the land with a cane, Ray talks about his Cherokee grandmother, who passed on her knowledge about herbs and plants and healing. Suddenly, following a comment about the mountains as plant environment, Ray breaks into the verses of "I'm A'goin' across the Blue Ridge Mountains," an associational shift characteristic of the unusual digressions in his public performances. The summer season brings visits by the Hadleys to the Hickses' family flower and herb gardens, whose colorful richness and profuse diversity the camera pictures in closeups of plants. Guide Ray explains various plants to Charles Hadley, who appears as an observer occasionally on camera, reminding the viewer of the interactional mode working in the filming. Ray, the knowledgeable herbalist, names plants, distinguishing local and better-known titles. In kitchen and garden scenes, Rosa remarks on the use and preparation of plants. And sudden short interruptions by Lightfoot insure that we recognize her as "master gardener" and bearer of folk remedies and practices.

Midway through the film, folklorist Hinson's comments on mountain talkers and their contexts lead to an investigation of the development of Ray as public performer and his relation to the Jonesborough Festival and the storytelling revival. A series of "day before Jonesborough" scenes shows family preparation of crafts for sale at the festival, and over a night shot of the symbolic house, narrator Grady remarks, "The night before—an unquiet sleep." The family packs cousin/nephew Orville Hicks's truck with cardboard boxes of sales items, and drives down dusty roads to make what narrator Grady calls "the pilgrimage across the hills," a trip which the video films in a montage of beautiful fall mountain scenes, seen while an as yet unidentified nephew, Frank Proffitt, Jr., sings "Going Across the Mountain," with fretless banjo accompaniment as voice-over.

A quick series of shots in Jonesborough establishes the Hickses' comfortable position among old professional friends at the festival and with tourist visitors. But over shots of a local antique store, folklorist Hinson's voice reminds the viewer of the dynamics of tradition, change, and cultural intervention happening in the festival setting. Connie Regan-Blake's introduction of Ray in the festival's main tent continues the film's use of professional storyteller comment to express the special mystifying and unifying effects of Ray's storytelling: she comments that "every word . . . is like mythic language, it takes us deeper into who he is and into who we are. And that language takes us up, too. Sometimes I think I'm in heaven when I'm with Ray Hicks." While she notes that some folks have difficulty with his accent, she encourages the crowd "to just let it come on" for "on the inside we're breathing the same air that Ray's ancestors and all of our ancestors breathed . . . so somewhere in your body you're going to understand every word." Crowd shots and clips of him telling a story show the audience's enjoyment of his tale. But in a surprising choice of tale, Ray doesn't tell a story from his usual repertory; instead he borrows "Mule Eggs," the signature tale that his driver, cousin Orville Hicks, tells. Despite the festival's and the film's emphasis on the remarkable individuality and originality of Ray Hicks, in this central scene, he tells a tale from his younger relative's repertory, not his own—a borrowing that no one acknowledges on camera or in voice-over. Carl Lindahl transcribes a Library of Congress recording of this unusual performance in Volume One of his excellent *American Folktales: From the Collections of the Library of Congress* (155-58).

A montage of shots of Ray and Rosa, comments by storytellers, and reactions by audience members give an excellent sense of his special role in Jonesborough, but then another montage of beautiful mountain scenes returns the viewer to the Hicks homeplace, where narrator Grady assures the viewer, "Back home, after the frenzy of Jonesborough, the Hickses return once again to their routine tasks." It is a place where "People come to the Hickses more than they come to people," and so, in the film's logic and desire to show international recognition of Ray, the next visitor is Martin Kettle, a British reporter from *The Guardian*, who interviews Ray in the living room. These scenes with visitors display the generous hospitality of the Hickses, an openness that allows filmmakers to visit and document the everyday details of their lives and which a range of friends and visitors experienced in this storied home.

It is "a home" that in narrator Grady's words "is never quiet for long." A wintertime visit by the Hadleys leads to a series of scenes showing Ray's and Rosa's music traditions. We hear fragments of a song and harmonica playing by Ray. The comments of folklorist Hinson introduce the concept that "Miz Hicks represents a whole world of song up there. There's always been a women's area of song in the mountains," with special emphasis on "the private voice in the home and the yard." On camera, Rosa sings "Morning Star," her song occasionally overlaid by appreciations by Hinson of her place as bearer of "an older tradition."

The music theme moves the film to "another attempt to hold on to the pioneer heritage of Appalachia," the Old Christmas celebration at the Erwin Presbyterian Church in east Tennessee. The new setting provides another opportunity for a performance by Ray, but introduces a new commentator for the film's exposition: the church's pastor, Rev. Thomas M. L. Wade, comments that people "are searching for a rock to hold on to, to give them some stability." And Ray's storytelling and participation in the local revived custom now take on a pastoral function that becomes even more developed in a following scene of sermon-like testimony by Ray to Hadley, seated in front of the Hickses' porch. Ray discusses an encounter with despair and temptation by the devil to commit suicide, but his distress was relieved by a voice announcing, "Hold on, your time's a-comin'." The praise of Ray has moved from folkloristic valuing, to professional storyteller adulation, and now to religious realization in a personal experience narrative.

The next set of voices of appreciation of the Hickses in the film, however, comes not from that mature scholarly and professional discourse, but from a group of high school students from Shelby, North Carolina, who visit the Hickses. The encounter—"It was different," one teenager says—leads them to appreciate the special sincerity of the couple's "love stories" and a realization about essentials in living, that "[some] things aren't really needed," as young Dustin Bridges remarks. "When you step back into nature, you see how peaceful and calm and how wonderful life can just be," a Thoreau-like conclusion that the video then develops in a montage of closeups of bees in sunflowers, mountain ridges, and running streams, reminiscent of Les Blank's filmic style. The teenagers' voices provide a new younger down-to-earth valuing of the Hickses' songs, stories, and lifestyle. But the serious interpretive voice of folklorist Lightfoot provides a final scholarly judgment explaining that the Hickses "haven't read all the classics, so what do they know? What is in their heads and their culture? It's what Jack would do. It's more than fictional stories; they're kind of like scriptures—valuable lessons to life: how to behave, how to live, how to treat other people." Spoken against a shot of Ted Hicks picking beans in the garden and then shelling them with his father Ray, Lightfoot's words become not a comment on the Jack Tales as conduct book, but a final judgment on the example of the Hickses in the Hadleys' film. Older folklorists and teenage visitors agree in this final sequence in praise of the basic morality and decentness of Ray and Rosa Hicks, which then gains expression in a closeup of Rosa, working in her kitchen and singing lines from "A Little Black Train A'Comin'" that stress the need to "get your house in order."

The film's final scene is separated by a moment of black screen and silence after Rosa's song. It is a scene that replaces the expositional sequences of Hicks family action interpreted and valorized by expert commentary from folklorists and storytellers. Instead, in one long camera take, Ray walks up the hill from his house. Aided by his homemade wooden cane and bent in posture, he moves toward the camera, creating a medium long shot that catches the blue ridge of the mountains in the distance above the colors of the Hicks home and its decorative shrubs. The video now returns to a voice-over of Ray Hicks himself, the same technique that Burton and Schrader used in their 1970s film. Ray's own words become the final voice of the film, remarking on insights into life and death that he "caught . . . a few years ago." And our last vision is the quiet folk philosopher, alone, seated on a rock, silhouetted against a blue sky.

Produced for broadcasting with its 58-minute length, the Hadley video has attracted considerable popularity. It has been shown a number of times on WUNC-TV, the public television station of the University of North Carolina—and in some past fundraising campaigns, the station used it as a reward for higher pledge categories.

A Concluding Overview

The introduction to the DVD *Masters of Traditional Arts* uses a clip of Ray Hicks performing "Whickity-Whack" at the 1983 National Heritage Fellowship awards as a ghosted background. In a whitened medium close shot, Ray gestures dramatically for twenty seconds as a description of the National Heritage Fellowship program runs up the screen and small photographs of winners of this National Endowment for the Arts honor run across the bottom. This opening blurred image of Hicks recognizes his special role as representative icon of the traditional storyteller, but its ghost-like quality inadvertently presages the loss of a notable tradition bearer.

Ray Hicks died 20 April 2003. This film corpus that provides us with a continuing presentation of his art and his striking philosophy of life has been little recognized and discussed. The films will never equal the encounter with Ray as person, storyteller, and tradition bearer, but they are the only remaining encounter with his performance left us. The range of films offers unusual opportunities to encounter Ray Hicks. The early Burton-Schrader 16mm film pictures a family at home and afield engaged in old ways. Luke Barrow's series provides four separate full performances of Ray telling significant Jack Tales and singing and playing harmonica of his favorite tunes. Barrow's overview video, in some ways, presages that later Hadley investigation of the Hickses; both use the journey to Jonesborough as an important complicating of the Hickses' public lives. Finally the Hadley video provides a kind of definitive overview of the special roles of both Ray and Rosa Hicks, including scholarly and professional storyteller commentary to deepen the perception of tradition, performance, and philosophy in the Hickses' lives and living.

The philosophy of Ray Hicks dominates these filmmakers' art. As Sharon Sherman observes, "if the filmmaker focuses on individuals, they will speak for themselves. In this way, the feelings of the individual shape the work of the filmmaker . . ." (*Documenting* 70). In the Burton-Schrader program and the Barrow series, Ray Hicks's voice in its distinctive way dominates our reception of the films. In the Hadleys' longer and more complicated film, Ray's voice still always gets the last word. The interpretations of scholars establish a more complicated frame for our understanding, but their comparative context only makes Ray's and Rosa's comments richer.

The Hicks homeplace has changed. Son Leonard, pictured walking in his dad's steps in the Burton-Schrader documentary, has returned home. He and his brother Ted altered the old unpainted I-house to include running water and indoor bathroom facilities. The additions were, in one way, a present to their mother Rosa, Ray's helpmate and companion to the public festivals that celebrated his continuing old ways and not accepting the change that the rest of us have long succumbed to. But before their deaths, both Rosa and son Ted had moved from home to a continuing-care facility because of health problems.

Sharon Sherman has recognized the power of the folkloric film to increase our awareness of ourselves: "Most significantly . . . film displays the similarities of our common experiences, the ways in which tradition is shaped, the ways we are constantly transforming, and the ways we wish to present and view ourselves" (*Documenting* 255). Somehow, however, the representation of Ray Hicks in folkloric films does not conform neatly to the generalization that Sharon Sherman warms us with. We certainly see tradition and presentation of self in the film studies of Ray and Rosa. We feel a closeness because of their open hospitality at home and the performed gregariousness of his storytelling in public festivals, but there always was a striking individuality about Ray. Ray may well be Jack, and we may feel a connection to both of these Appalachian archetypes. We can imaginatively become Jack, but somehow we are not Ray, for we are always struck by the special idiosyncratic delightful persona of Ray Hicks, a persona now perpetuated in the lights of 16 mm and the pixels of video. Orville Hicks, who continues Ray Hicks's Jack Tale traditions, composed a song, "The Ballad of Ray Hicks," to honor his relative and storytelling mentor. He sang it to Ray during his final illness and again at Ray's two local funerals. Its chorus insists, "No, no, there'll never be another Ray / for when they made that man, they threw the mold away."

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"All it needs now is eatin'"—Fish Stew and the Washington's Day Fox Hunt at Albertson, NC

By Leanne E. Smith

On the Saturday closest to George Washington's birthday—either before or on the day itself—local residents, hound hunters, and food fans gather for breakfast, barbecue, and fish stew at the Albertson, NC, Washington's Day Fox Hunt. Albertson—with the first syllable pronounced as "all"—is the Duplin County community at the convergence of Highways 111 and 903, and Sheep Pasture and Piney Grove roads about eight miles south of Hwy 111's intersection with Hwy 55. It's not a municipality, but the residents have a community mindedness that some towns don't have, and they try to create social opportunities and use local foodways to raise funds for local resources.

The community centers, churches, and other organizations in Duplin County sometimes seem to have so many fundraising dinners that residents could go most weekends without cooking at home and spend their food budget in ways that directly support their community. Proceeds from the Albertson Fox Hunt—the food, the raffle, and the field trials—benefit the Ruritan Club, the volunteer fire de-

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Frame photo: Willie Rouse, Sandra Rouse Dixon, and Braxton Grady serving fish stew inside the Albertson Community Building. Saturday, February 16, 2013. Photo by Leanne E. Smith.

partment, and the recreation center. Some of the funds also used to go to the Grady-Outlaw Memorial Library, the only private library in Duplin County, but now that the building and land are paid off, the annual Stew Fest competition in November on the library grounds helps pay its ongoing expenses. Next to the library is the volunteer fire department's building—the home for the 100+-year-old Albertson Fire Company, on Sheep Pasture Road—where volunteers cook the barbecue and host dog registration for the Fox Hunt field trials. The activity hub for most of the Hunt day's events, though, is beside the post office near the corner of Hwy 903 and Piney Grove Road at the Albertson Community Building—the Ruritan Club.

Before sunrise, breakfast starts. Volunteers begin the cooking around 4 a.m. at the Ruritan Club. Most of the earliest breakfast seekers at the event on Saturday, February 16, 2013, were hunters—individuals, friends, and families in woodland camouflage clothing. Passing the raffle table just inside the front door to the left ($5.00 for a chance at either a shotgun or $800) and then the table full of trophies waiting for the day's field trials winners, the line formed for the $7.00-plates of biscuits, grits, sausage, and scrambled eggs. On the wall by the line, two glass-front cases hold Ruritan certificates and a handful of Fox Hunt photographs from decades ago, not long after World War II—back when foxes were plentiful enough to be a focus of the Hunt.

Fox hunt group. Circa 1950s. Photo: Albertson Ruritan Club Collection.

Today's Fox Hunt: Field Trials

Red fox populations dwindled by the mid-1950s in many eastern NC counties, but the Ruritans at Albertson altered their plans so they could still have an event ("Red Fox" 1). Since the mid-1980s, the Hunt has actually been a field trial event, which isn't about catching or killing a game animal. Instead, it's about scents, running, and times. North Carolina's fox hunting and trapping regulations vary by county, adding up to "27 fox hunting seasons with weapons in 85 counties and 22 fox trapping seasons in 38 counties" as of August 2013 ("County Fox" 1). Duplin County's guidelines currently allow for "open season from August 2 to March 15 for hunting foxes with dogs, and permits the use of guns and dogs when the season is open for any other game" ("County Fox" 15). Beyond the by-county particulars protecting wildlife, field trials like today's Albertson Fox Hunt prolong the months when friends and families can spend time together outdoors in hunting related activities. Decades since the vintage photos were taken at Albertson, the events are still intergenerational—and today some people joke that they have noticed that the bigger the trophy, the smaller the kid is who gets up to accept it for the family at prize time.

After breakfast, the Albertson Ruritans hold a short memorial service to mention the Club members who have died since the last Hunt. The gathering is reminiscent of the time in the vintage photographs at the Club, when the hunters posed with their dogs at the local-community event. Now, though, the event draws more hunters who don't know the Ruritans. They are mostly interested in the field trials and forego the service. For some now, the Hunt at Albertson is another weekend like many in the field trial circuit, just different dogs in a different place. But there's more food at this event—and the combination of the field trials, breakfast, barbecue, and fish stew as one multi-part happening attracts more people and raises more funds for the community causes than just one of the day's events would on its own.

On the day of the 2013 event, the hunters had eaten breakfast and cleared out of the Club by 6:30 a.m. When the stars dimmed and the sky lightened above the trees in a cloudless sky, their trucks trailed east a little more than five miles from Albertson: along Piney Grove Road to a right turn onto Liddell Road at the white store with the double red doors, headed towards Deep Run before turning left onto Pink Hill Road and parking on the side of the road with tailgates facing the woods. The dogs, many of them lanky Walker Hounds, danced in their truck-bed dog boxes, whimpered, and pressed their twitching noses through the bars. Close to 7 a.m., the dogs cast off with no gaggle, meaning that they jumped from the tailgates and sprinted into the woods without making noise that would warn wildlife away from the field trials. That's the way the hunters want it—quiet at first, and then within a few minutes, they hope they'll hear a gaggle: the dogs baying to signal they've caught a scent of something, likely a deer, perhaps a fox, rarely even a bear.

Longtime foxhunter and hound breeder Jim Eubanks shared his memories of hunting—primarily in Pitt, Lenoir, Craven, and Jones counties—with an interviewer for a 1990 publication about Pitt County folklife. In his lifetime, he had observed potential hunting grounds decrease because of shrinking land tract size, especially near towns, and he eventually created his own rural hunting area. Some eastern NC foxhunts used to be held at night when the nocturnal foxes were more active, and for Eubanks and his friends, much of their enjoyment came not from ultimately capturing a fox, but from listening to the chase. The dogs would bay, and Eubanks would listen for their different voices, known as tongues, some so distinct he knew which dogs were running where in the pack. "The ideal hound," Eubanks said, "is the one that can run the front with a good tongue—and look good doing it" ("Fox Hunter" 54).

Similarly, today's field trials at Albertson are not about the prey, but about the hounds. A hound "can run no faster than his [or her] nose," Eubanks said ("Fox Hunter" 54). And fifteen minutes is a long time for the dogs to pick up a scent, according to hunters in Albertson in 2013. Though windy and wet weather can affect their ability to smell, some hunters that day thought the breeze at the top of the trees and along the road shouldn't have distracted the dogs in the woods. Some of the dogs must have just been more interested in the trucks and the people than a to-be-determined animal in the woods. One looped around parked vehicles and seemed to follow scents back to the hunters—but when a garbage truck roared by, the dog knew it was a big find and sprinted down the double yellow line to follow it.

For a field trial more typical than the breezy Fox Hunt day, the short part of the morning is supposed to be the time it takes to hear a gaggle and for the dogs to reach the crossing. In this sport, a crossing is both a place and a time in the event's action. Hunters familiar with an area selected for a field trial know the deer paths. Where those paths intersect with a road is the place called a crossing. Judges

This photo appears with the 2006 version of Sparrow's article in the Encyclopedia of North Carolina. *Photo: Conservation and Development Department, Travel and Tourism Photo Files, North Carolina State Archives, Call # Con. Dev. 4650.5B, Raleigh, NC.*

position themselves there and wait. When the dogs are close to the crossing, the first animal out of the woods will be whatever they've found, nowadays often a deer.

For a 7 a.m. castoff, the first crossing—when an animal runs out of the woods with dogs behind it—typically happens before 8. The first dog out of the woods after the animal has the best time. The event registration number that's either on a jacket the dog is wearing or painted directly onto the dog's fur shows whose dog it is, and thus who can collect the first-place prize money. If the next dogs out aren't in a pack, the numbers are easy to see, and the judges can designate second and third places. With a racing pack, though, they can't distinguish individual dogs' numbers.

The long part of the morning that sometimes stretches into the afternoon is the hound roundup, but some hunters choose to forego the low-tech method of walking through the woods calling their dogs. If dogs wear tracking collars or other locater devices, hunters can monitor the dogs' locations with hand-held sensors that look like miniature cousins of the vintage rooftop Yagi-Uda television antennae. They can stand by the woodline or sit in their trucks and wave the sensors with one hand while looking at the reader in the other. If they feel like the dogs are wandering beyond the sensors' several-mile range, they'll drive to follow them so they can keep receiving the signals. That way, if no dog has crossed yet, they'll know if their dogs are nearing the crossing, possibly in prize range. The post-trial searches can take a few minutes or hours, or longer in some cases. Trophies are awarded at the Ruritan Club after the lunch rush, but if they gather their dogs in time, the benefit for the hunters at Albertson is making it back to the Ruritan Club in time for lunch.

Fish Stew, Here and There

People who aren't involved with the waiting and searching required for the field trials gravitate to the waiting and watching required for the food—several hours each for the barbecue and the fish stew. Barbecuing the pork is an overnight job that takes a stretch of hours for wood-cooking the pig so it's ready to prep and pack in the morning. It's Eastern NC style—smoke-infused, chopped, and seasoned with sweetened hot pepper vinegar for punch—$6.00 for a pound at the 2013 Fox Hunt. For $7.00 per plate, starting around 10 a.m., volunteers served pork barbecue or barbecue chicken from large coolers into take-out boxes with cole slaw, potato salad, and hushpuppies.

Some locals may wait around all morning at the Club or arrive early to socialize at least until the lunch sales open, while some people come just to eat there or take some home to eat later. Barbecue is certainly labor-intensive and place-distinctive, but fish stew is more difficult to find—and Albertson is a must-try source. The community's stew tradition is most known through the Stew Fest held annually in November to raise funds for the Grady-Outlaw Memorial Library, and through the Fox Hunt. Some people get to the Club on Hunt day well before noon so they can buy, by the bowl or the quart, some of the stew of fish, eggs, onions, and potatoes before it sells out—which it does, early.

Fish stew has a long history in river-rich eastern North Carolina where anadromous fish migrate from the Atlantic Ocean to spawn in fresh water so the juveniles can grow in freshwater and estuarine nurseries before joining their species' adults in the Atlantic. "Fish stews are more than eastern North Carolina folk meals,"

W. Keats Sparrow writes in a 2003 *North Carolina Literary Review* article, "like their cousin pig pickin's, they are highly ritualized and symbolic social events. Prepared for a crowd of people—often family members and neighbors—who gather and enjoy one another's company while the cooking is underway and during and after the meals, fish stews are festive but informal..." (130). For NCLR and an adapted version of the article in 2006 for the *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, Sparrow reflects nostalgically, but he also provides a straightforward description of past stew practices:

> "Classic fish stews are cooked outdoors under the stars in cast-iron pots suspended from elevated logs or tripods. Typical sites are in backyards and by lean-tos on the sides of barns, but a gala event is sometimes celebrated away from home in a clearing near the edge of a woods or on a riverbank. Heat for cooking comes from a wood fire, although a late proxy is a portable gas burner" (130).

Writer and historian David Cecelski similarly describes a backyard stew at a family reunion fundraiser at Fort Barnwell, Craven County, in his entry "Washtub Fish Stew" for the NC Folklife Institute's food blog. He notes that "In the old days, that stew pot was often literally a tin wash tub. These days it's more likely a big cast iron kettle or an aluminum pot, but the river's people still call them 'wash tub fish stews.' You'll find them at church dinners, family reunions, and other community events, mostly in Lenoir, Pitt, Greene, and Wayne counties." At restaurants, the stew is rare. Pully's Barbecue, open from 1922 to 1962 in Kinston, NC, served it, and Ken's Grill near LaGrange still serves it on Fridays (Hall, Garner, "Ken's Grill"). In Albertson, however, the stew cooking is large-scale.

Building the Stew at Albertson

Fish stew is not just made—it's built. While the barbecue has to cook all night at the fire department, the stew preparation needs multiple time blocks of a few hours each. Most of the ingredients were pre-prepared for the pot—onions sliced, potatoes peeled and diced—so the work left on Saturday would not be like starting with fashioning bricks, but with laying them. By 8 a.m. on the day of the 2013 Fox Hunt, with the sunlight angling in the windows of the cookhouse behind the Ruritan building, stewmasters Braxton Grady and

Willie Rouse—known as Mr. Braxton and Mr. Willie to many people in the area—had their pots in place to start the stew. By pots, think cauldrons. The smaller pot holds 15 gallons; the larger one, 30.

Mr. Willie has cooked the fish stew for the Hunt since 1964. He readily tells that date, but he prefers not to think of the years between then and now in terms of age because "You don't feel old until you are old," and just saying "since 1964" doesn't make him think about age, just time. He used to make two pots, but now he has help from Mr. Braxton, and he says, "Braxton and I are equal partners." These two men in caps and red plaid shirts have a combined total of almost 80 years of experience making stew for the Fox Hunt.

In Albertson in the past, the Ruritan men making the stew outside gathered around a pot over a fire and held a windshield to keep

Willie Rouse with his stewpot, the onions in the bucket, and the potatoes in the bin. Saturday, February 16, 2013. Photo by Leanne E. Smith.

the fire from blowing out. They have since "gotten a little more advanced," Mr. Willie said. The years of fundraisers at Albertson have financially allowed and necessitated that the Ruritans change some elements of their methods to cook for larger crowds. The pot is the foundation of a fish stew. The pots aren't just any cookware sitting on a stove or over a fire. What hasn't changed about a good stew pot is that cast iron is the best. What has changed is that now, instead of a pot over a fire outside, one's stewpot is sometimes a personally improvised, mobile set-up. To heat and keep stew hot inside or outside in various temperatures, some construction is required: a platform, wheels, a burner, an insulator to protect the burner's flame from wind and help maintain stew temperature in cold weather, and the pot itself.

Mr. Braxton says he "used to use mama's washtub. Use it for clothes. Use it for cooking." Now he has a 15-gallon cast iron pot that sits in a cutoff oil barrel with wheels welded to the bottom. It's low enough to the ground that he can sit in a chair to watch and stir it. A few years ago, Mr. Willie's stewpot fell off the back of a truck and cracked, so he had to get a new one—new meaning different, because, like a seasoned skillet for fried chicken, used pots make better stew. "He was in a bind to find one," Mr. Braxton said of Willie, because good pots are hard to find, especially big well-seasoned cast iron pots. One cookhouse observer, Bill Martin, who joked that "It ought to be against the law not to like fish stew," said that he hates to see big old pots out in yards with flowers planted in them. They would have been used so much for cooking in their previous lives that they'd be well seasoned for stew-making now.

The new-old pot Mr. Willie found is a former lard-cooking vat from a meat processing plant near Goldsboro. Now the 30-gallon pot sits over a burner inside a former turkey feeder on a dolly. After washing the pots the night before and again in the morning to clean out the grease used to cure and store them, the two stewmasters connected their pots' burners to propane tanks at opposite ends of a long table where crates of eggs and boxes of salt and pepper waited. Other Ruritans, interested onlookers, and photographers or reporters from three newspapers drifted in and out of the cookhouse for the next couple of hours.

Some kind of grease is the first ingredient, and a common theme is pork. In the Craven County stew David Cecelski documented, it was fatback. Stewmaker Billy Parrot told researcher James Newman at a 1988 stew competition in Lenoir County that his Greene County stew mentor Jack Monroe used hog jowl (Baldwin 6). In Albertson, the cut is often bacon. Some people leave the bacon in the stew, while some remove it after the grease cooks out. That's Mr. Willie's way. Whether or not a cook keeps the meat, when the grease is hot, it's time to add the onions and potatoes. For the fall Stew Fest at Albertson, sometimes the season works to use potatoes and onions from local gardens, but for the Fox Hunt, they came from a grocery store. "These onions were so pretty," Mr. Willie said of the 2013 batch, "they weighed a pound apiece."

For a lunchtime event like the Fox Hunt, Mr. Braxton knows, "You have to have everything pretty much prepared because you don't have time that day." And that's what they do in Albertson. The night before the Hunt, a few people sat around for three or four hours peeling and rough-dicing 40 pounds of potatoes and slicing 25 pounds of onions into pieces about a half-inch wide and a couple of inches long. With that much done ahead of time, the wait for the stew to be ready to eat at lunchtime can be cut to between two and three hours.

From the containers where onion and potato pieces soaked in water overnight to keep them from turning dark, the stewmasters used a slotted scoop to dip and drain them and add them to the grease in layers. After the breakfast cooks washed their dishes, the water hose was free to run from the back of the Ruritan club into the window of the cookhouse so the stewmasters could add enough water to cover the layers of onions and potatoes. When the water gets hot, the raw onions and potatoes take about 30 minutes to cook. During the wait for the several gallons of water to boil and for the onions and potatoes to cook, the stewmasters added salt and pepper.

Up to this point, Mr. Willie's and Mr. Braxton's processes are similar, though the proportions may vary. "We use pretty much the same ingredients," Mr. Willie says, "The seasoning is the difference." Mr. Braxton's take is close: "It varies, but not a whole lot. Basically, they're the same thing. They've got the same ingredients in both of them, but one might have a little more seasoning than the other." But it's not that they have measurements that they keep secret. They just follow their different tastes. Though his mother didn't make fish stew, Mr. Braxton says, "I cook like my mama used to" because "I start tasting mine and get it to where I like it. I don't measure anything." He remembers that local resident Alvin Stroud, born in 1920, would "put a lot together. I kinda learned from him. And over the years, I've cooked a lot of fish stew. Practice is a whole lot."

Sisters (left to right) Bessie Mervin, Anne Herring, and Faye Davis making hushpuppies. Saturday, February 16, 2013. Photo by Leanne E. Smith.

Mr. Willie had some experience making stew at home before taking it up for the Ruritan Club since "Fish stew is pretty popular, especially with the older folk." For his big pot, he starts with a new box of salt so he knows how much he has to work with, and he adds "half a box to start with, and more later." Then he shakes multiple tablespoons of ground black pepper and red pepper flakes in swirls on top of the potato and onion mixture. It may look like a lot of pepper, but it's not as much as some people may add in a home stew. He says, "I can't cook real hot like a lot of people like fish stew. A lot of people like it seasoned real hot, but when you're cooking for the public, it's better to not over-season. It averages out because they can always add some pepper. You can always add, but you can't take it out."

How much tomato one adds to a stew is another matter of choice, as is the kind—tomato paste, diced tomatoes, diced tomatoes with green chilies, etc. But whatever it is, one should not drop the tomatoes straight into the stew, especially tomato paste because the blob would sink to the bottom, stick, and burn. Instead, one should use a separate container to mix the tomatoes with some hot broth from the pot, and then pour that slowly into the stew.

Just over an hour into the stew making process at the 2013 Hunt, the pot wasn't fully hot. But it's important to not rush the boil. If they turned the burners up and didn't let the layers take the time, the stew might stick, so it's better to wait—and socialize. Floating conversation covered college basketball teams scheduled to play later that day, gas prices and a possible minimum wage increase, trying to manage cholesterol and blood pressure without medication, whether the predicted snow may come even though the sun was still shining, and whatever else was on the minds of people meandering in and out of the cookhouse. During the wait, it was time to start making the hushpuppies on the other side of the cookhouse. Anne Herring, Bessie Mervin, and Faye Davis are three of six sisters, and they have been making hushpuppies for perhaps 30 years—but kind of like Mr. Willie, they don't want to count the years too closely.

The sisters started with two containers, each holding twenty-five pounds of hushpuppy mix—the Sweet Betsy brand from the Atkinson Milling Company in Selma, just under sixty miles from Albertson. Anne plunged her hands into the dry mix to start working it as Bessie poured water into it. Cold water is too unpleasant for hands in February, but the water can't be too hot because then the batter will be too sticky, so warm water works best. The third sister, Faye, watched the temperature rise on the oil vat, waiting for it to reach 360 degrees Fahrenheit. The batter is ready for the oil when it sticks together enough to drop from an upheld hand. "You don't want it to drop too loose," Anne said, "but you want it to drop."

They used to put batter in bags, cut one corner, and squeeze the batter into the oil, but to be able to produce the volume they needed for Hunt days, the Ruritans had to borrow a dispenser, so they eventually bought one about thirty years ago for a few hundred dollars. The return on that investment is being able to cook about a hundred hushpuppies evenly together at a time every few minutes, using the batter made from the total hundred pounds of dry hushpuppy mix in just a couple of hours' time, and making about three thousand hushpuppies for the Hunt day lunch. The contraption consists of an arm with a bowl on the end with a hole in the bowl for the batter to fall through. To use it well, one must start with the bowl over a corner of the vat, and then simultaneously move the arm in rows across the vat while rotating the handle on the bowl. It sounds like c-c-click or just c-click, depending on how fast one drops the hushpuppies, and one should "go pretty fast," Mr. Willie said. They cook all of the batter, “whether we need it or not,” the sisters said—but once the hushpuppies are made, someone will, no doubt, eat them.

Local resident Tim Coble helped make hushpuppies for the first time at the 2013 Hunt—but he was one of very few new faces in the cookhouse. Longtime observer-helper L.E. “Bud” Smith questioned, “Why are there no young people back here learning how to do this? Who’s going to carry this on?” Youth are involved in the Stewfest in November—including a Girl Scout troop making taco soup and members of other community organizations making variations of fish stew with shrimp and sausage—but it does appear to be true that the people who make the classic stews are older members of the community. In fact, though a few briefly helped crack the eggs at the 2013 Fox Hunt, no under-35 young locals and/or relatives of the Ruritan volunteers stayed in the cookhouse for the entire time to learn how to take up, and eventually take on, the process.

The last half-hour of stew preparation is for the fish and the eggs. So, the cookhouse got busier as the hushpuppy cooking continued across the room, the egg cracking commenced at the table between the stewpots, and Mr. Braxton and Mr. Willie started adding fish to their pots. Other people drifted in and out to get a hot hushpuppy or see how close the stew was to being ready. Someone even called Mr. Braxton on his cell phone to ask about the stew’s progress—not ready yet, but getting there.

Mr. Braxton caught most of the fish for the 2013 Fox Hunt. Needing a hundred pounds of fish for fifty gallons of stew is a good excuse to go fishing at a vacation house at Kerr Lake, about one hundred thirty-five miles north of Albertson up near the NC-Virginia border. Adding filleted fish to his stew, Mr. Braxton reflected on older members of the community, saying, “Used to, they’d go fish, take the entrails out, and throw the fish in there, bones and all.” The variation of using whole fish in the skin and on the bones is still common, depending on the cook. For the Craven County stew David Cecelski found, maker Ms. Sudie used whole rockfish, about which Cecelski wrote, “Most of the fish bones settle to the bottom of the pot, but you always end up with a few bones in your bowl. The idea is that you just go slow and eat around them.”

The boniness of a stew varies by the type of fish and the cooking method. “Rock and drum make the best…as far as I’m concerned,” Myrl Newman told researcher James Newman at the 1988 stew festival in Kinston, “You can use catfish…a lot of your regular fish, though, cook all to pieces. Rock and drum, it stays together. Shad is a good stew fish, but it's too boney. A lot of people put the fish in a sack and just hang it in the pot, 'cause when they get through, they throw the fish away and eat the stew" (Baldwin 5-6). In the past, a cook's preference for a particular flavor or texture might have been the strongest factor affecting the kind of fish he or she chose for a stew—that and the season. Making stews with rockfish (or striped bass) and shad (or herring) traditionally coincided with the fish's late winter to early spring migration from the Atlantic Ocean to rivers like the Roanoke, Tar-Pamlico, Neuse, Cape Fear, and their tributaries. If it was in season, the fish was there.

Whether real or imagined memories, Sparrow's description of stewmaking in a "clearing near the edge of a woods or on a riverbank" and Cecelski's mention of the "river's people" reference a time not completely replicable now. The spontaneity and convenience of setting up a stew pot by a river, catching a particular kind of fish right there, throwing them in a pot, and cooking a stew with river water isn't possible today with the same species it once was. Similar to the ways in which shrinking habitat has decreased hunting grounds for fox hunting, environmental factors have also affected the stew traditions in terms of fish accessibility. Overfishing, industrial pollution, climate change, and physical barriers to migration patterns, such as dams used to regulate flooding and generate hydroelectric power, have presented serious challenges to the sustainability of several species traditionally used for fish stew.

Anadromous fish like river herring and rockfish are easily affected by problems both in the ocean and upstream in rivers. Overfishing of adult populations in the ocean—either specifically for herring or when they become part of the by-catch along with other species the fishermen are really targeting—can affect the numbers of adults available to spawn. Physical barriers to fish arriving at their ancestral spawning grounds can affect the size of a new year's class, or generation. Pollution in rivers can affect the likelihood that juveniles would survive to start the migration and reproduction cycle over again.

From the 1960s to the 1980s, blue-green algae blooms in the Chowan River, fueled by pollution from milling in Virginia, contributed to the decline in nursery habitat for river herring (alewife and blueback herring). Meanwhile, international overharvesting affected the adult population offshore. Since the east coast population depressions of the mid-1970s, North Carolina's river herring haven't completely recovered. Regulations have increased the distance foreign fishing vessels must remain from shore to 200 miles, but populations are still so dangerously low that it has recently nearly been classified as an endangered species. While it is illegal to possess a North Carolina river herring, bluebacks are still healthy enough in South Carolina for NC restaurants to import them. With the previous Chowan River pollution problems remedied, the NC Wildlife Resources Commission has begun a program to raise blueback herring at the Edenton National Fish Hatchery to stock the Chowan. An earlier NCWRC project to stock American shad into the Roanoke River has helped that population rebound (Rulifson).

Alewife historically had a commercial-level population at Lake Mattamuskeet in Hyde County, notably at canals connected to the Albemarle and Pamlico sounds, where "Fishers used large long-handled dip nets placed in the water current, and schooling alewife migrating into the lake were captured. Alewife were so abundant that the bed of a pickup truck could be filled in several hours" (Rulifson "Status" 140, Godwin & Rulifson 3). But in the 1990s, the population collapsed (Rulifson). In addition to factors affecting other river herring nearby, farming runoff and, since Hyde County had the southernmost commercial population, rising water temperatures may have also affected the alewife at Mattamuskeet. After researchers identified a new-in-1989 water control flapgate design as a contributor to declining populations because they restricted fish migration into and out of the lake, the gates were redesigned. A decade later, studies showed improvement in migration ability (Godwin & Rulifson ii, iii). The question of restoring the alewife at Mattamuskeet, however, is still in progress (Rulifson).

Dr. Roger Rulifson, professor of fisheries and fish ecology in East Carolina University's Department of Biology and senior scientist at ECU's Institute for Coastal Science and Policy, has participated in several coalitions striving to rebuild populations of NC fisheries. He co-chaired the Roanoke River Water Flow Committee that helped negotiate water flow plans for dams that could increase survival for striped bass. Before 1950, the river had no human-engineered regulation for water flow, but the construction of several dams allowed for the creation of recreational reservoirs, hydroelectric power, and water flow management, which had adverse effects since "Of those striped bass populations exhibiting anadromy, the Roanoke-Albemarle stock is unusual in that the adults migrate more than 130 miles upstream beyond tidal influence to spawn" (Rulifson & Manooch 397). The RRWFC negotiated with the Army Corps of Engineers and the companies in question to create a water flow plan that more closely resembled natural seasonal timing, temperature, and depths along the Roanoke River—and after just one year, data showed rockfish populations had increased (Rulifson & Manooch 398, Rulifson).

Today, the NCWRC also stocks rockfish into Kerr Lake, one of the Roanoke River's reservoirs—and those are the fish that made their way into the fish stew at Albertson. The Ruritans caught the fish there for personal recreation, but their sourcing methods are also necessary because of environmental changes that have affected traditional fish stew species favorites. The stocks in reservoirs are more reliably accessible—especially when cooking a batch of stew as large as the one at Albertson. Even though some people in the past may have preferred other fish like herring for a particular flavor, the texture of rockfish is coarse, which makes it hold together well in a stew whether whole or filleted. Mr. Braxton feels that it's easier to fillet it first than to pick the bones out while eating it, and since "A lot of people don't like the bones," the fish is cleaned, filleted, and frozen in water in preparation for the Fox Hunt.

When the stewmasters are ready to add the fish to the pot, they alternate tossing chunks of ice out the window and scattering hand-

Willie Rouse (left) and Braxton Grady (right) transferring some stew from one pot to the other to make transportation easier. Saturday, February 16, 2013. Photo by Leanne E. Smith.

fuls of fish filets over the top of the broth. Adding fish doesn't mean stirring it into the stew. It just means putting pieces on top of the layers of onions and potatoes and pushing it under the surface of the broth to wait. In four minutes, the fish is cooked. Keeping the fish together is one of the primary factors in the don't-stir-the-stew practice. Mr. Willie likes his stew to be "pretty much done" before adding the fish, and then "I don't stir it once I put the fish in." Seeing Mr. Braxton pushing his stew's ingredients below the top of the broth and making it slosh slightly, observer Bill Martin joked, "You know it's a cardinal sin to stir fish stew," to which Mr. Braxton replied, "I'm just making sure it doesn't stick. It'd be a cardinal sin to let it stick."

Local son Rodney Sutton vividly remembers learning about the importance of not stirring a fish stew—or at least not stirring someone else's stew. He grew up in Outlaw's Bridge very close to Albertson, hasn't lived there since moving away at the end of the 1960s for college at East Carolina University, and now lives in Madison County, NC. For the 2013 Fox Hunt weekend, he visited his sister Linda, other family members nearby, and friends at the Outlaw's Bridge Universalist Church. Watching the stewmaking at the Albertson Fox Hunt reminded him of the local grocery and hangout across the road from the church, Marvin "Tick" Stroud's store, where Tick's

Braxton Grady with his stew, pushing onions, potatoes, and fish below the top of the broth. Saturday, February 16, 2013. Photo by Leanne E. Smith.

brother Alvin (the one Mr. Braxton used to watch) and other locals sometimes made fish stew. One day when Rodney was waiting for something at the store, stewmaker Jim Outlaw got distracted talking to someone. The very young Rodney did something a lot of people who see a big ladle next to an untended pot of soup or stew might: he picked up the ladle and stirred the stew. Outlaw was very "mad that I'd stirred his stew," Rodney said, "and I won't ever forget it."

In trying to figure out why the man was so mad just because he'd stirred the stew, he imagined a few possibilities for what the stirring could have caused. Maybe the fish pieces would have broken up, and any bones that had settled to the bottom would have been disturbed? Or maybe there was something else in the bottom of the pot, like fish heads for flavoring? Maybe the older people wanted to save them to eat themselves when the stew was almost gone? Or was it more extreme—that maybe if he had kept stirring, a lot of fish eyes would have floated to the top of the pot? Rodney asked Mr. Willie at the 2013 Hunt if it was possible that, back then, there might have been fish heads with the eyes still in them down in the bottom of the pot under all of the onions and potatoes. Mr. Willie's answer was that "A lot of the older people seem to have ideas we've sort of gotten away from. I never did do that." He added, "If you take the eyes out and clean them out like I have done sometimes, it's okay."

When the stew comes back to a boil after adding the fish, it's very nearly finished. Then it's time for the one ingredient that can't be completely prepared before the morning of the stewmaking—the eggs. Stacked by the crate, the eggs came from the local farm of Gregory and Susan Smith, or Granny Smith's farm as Sandra Rouse Dixon calls it. Sandra, Mr. Willie's daughter, was the primary egg cracker at the 2013 Fox Hunt. Over half an hour's time, she cracked them into a separate container to make sure no broken yolks or pieces of shell would go into the stew, which could happen if someone cracked eggs directly into the pot. Mr. Willie prefers a rectangular container instead of a round bowl, too, because he finds it easier to drop one egg at a time when the container has corners. About two hours from the start time, all the eggs were in the stews—about 120 in Mr. Braxton's and about 240 in Mr. Willie's.

The eggs cook quickly—and then it's tasting time. While Mr. Braxton said he tastes his as he goes, Mr. Willie waits: "I know approximately how much to put in to start with. Then I try to finish it off." He sometimes gets opinions from others waiting around. And the stewmasters taste each other's stews, too. Mr. Braxton's was slightly spicier than Mr. Willie's—but the broth isn't necessarily an indicator of the overall flavor. It can be spicy or salty, but along with the onions, potatoes, fish, and eggs, the whole stew is balanced. "I like to layer them in there," Mr. Willie said, "so when I go to dip, I get a piece of fish with each dip. I do the egg the same way." That makes a bowl with, as some servers call it, "some of everything."

At around 10:30 a.m., two and a half hours after starting, the stews were ready for their suspenseful journeys inside for serving. "All it needs now is eatin'," Mr. Braxton said. While the hushpuppy makers started working on the second fifty pounds of mix, the stewmasters dipped some stew from one pot to the other to balance them for the move. Getting the stew pots across two thresholds took two people to roll the pot; at least two to open doors and hold the water hose up off the sidewalk; and one to put a piece of plywood down over the cookhouse threshold, pick it up after the pot seesawed over it, and move it to the community building's threshold. "Most important thing: don't let it slosh back on you," Braxton said. The bubbling broth would badly burn anything it touches when the pot has just been disconnected from the propane. And there's a lot of pressure to succeed with the stew. Burning a few hushpuppies may not be a big problem, but spilling a pot of stew when it's taken so long to make and when so many people are waiting for it would be painful and extremely unfortunate.

Albertson locals who know the two stews may request either Mr. Willie's or Mr. Braxton's. Others who flock there for lunch without knowing any differences from other years are happy to have any at all. At the long tables inside the Community Building, lunchgoers passed around sleeves of Saltines and bags of Sunbeam white bread, the kind labeled "giant," and they talked about college basketball and whether it would or wouldn't snow later in the afternoon. All fifty gallons of stew at the 2013 Fox Hunt sold out almost completely before 1 p.m. When the stew gets low, it's easier to serve it into quart cups to be sold as takeout orders so the pots can be cleaned. To keep from rusting between stew cookings, the pots need to be washed and greased. The stewmasters lined their pots with lard, covered them, and loaded them to truck them home till the next stew time. By the end of the lunch rush, the morning breeze had grown into a colder wind, and the sun that had been streaming in the windows onto the bubbling stewpots was gone. The variegated gray clouds were, after all, gathering for the first snow in a couple of years—a recipe for a good evening to have a bowl of fish stew.

A fish stew serving with "some of everything"—fish, egg, potato, onion—and a cracker. Saturday, February 16, 2013. Photo by Leanne E. Smith.

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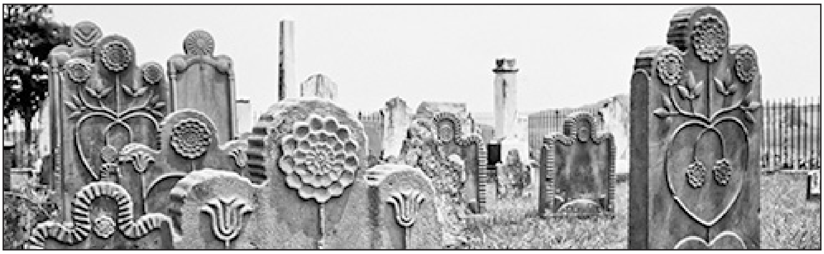

Daniel W. Patterson, *The True Image: Gravestone Art and the Culture of Scotch Irish Settlers in the Pennsylvania and Carolina Backcountry*

Review by William Creech

Cemeteries and their gravestones have been called a laboratory for archaeologists. Not only do they provide the traditional information, but the gravestones are documents in stone that help archaeologists understand aspects of a culture. Author Daniel W. Patterson demonstrates how this can be done with the Scotch Irish and Germans that settled in the Piedmont area of North and South Carolina during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Daniel W. Patterson is Professor Emeritus of English and Folklore at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Through the gravestones he has studied, the author has been able to learn about the character, experience, and role of Scotch Irish and German immigrants in the Carolinas, revealing the background, religion, and kinship from Mecklenburg County's northeast corner in North Carolina to the southwest corner of South Carolina. The gravestones give brief, discreet glimpses of the dead that can be linked to anecdotes and legends recorded early by local Presbyterians, helping the author focus on individuals taking roles in crises within the commu-

William Creech is a recent graduate of Western Carolina University.

Frame photo: Detail from Patterson's The True Image. *Courtesy of UNC Press.*

nity and is thus enabling him to help the reader see them and their long-vanished world.

The author has photographed over 200 pictures of gravestones in his book, *The True Image*, documenting a people that began in the Carolinas and moved to Tennessee, Georgia, Missouri, Indiana, Kansas, Texas, and beyond as western expansion opened our country—which shows a "multiplicity of social and religious currents sweeping through the country" and the lives of the individuals that helped make our country what it is today.

While the gravestone inscription typically gives a brief biography—recording a name, and birth and death dates, which is often all that individuals leave for the future to know about them—some stone carvers, like John Hegnauer, provide capsule biographies that attempt to tell us more. The inscriptions provide little information in the sense of the lives or personalities of the people they are about, but tease the reader with what the bereaved survivor felt. These inscriptions are the ones that encourage us to search for more, through the oral history families share about their loved ones. The carvers were often the ones to share the tales about the families they worked for.

One such inscription was on the headstone of William Spiears, buried in the Spiears Family Cemetery in Cabarrus County, North Carolina. His headstone reads (249),

Sacred to the Memory of
WILLIAM SPIEARS
who departed this life March 2nd 1803
Aged 72 Years
Great Noble Generous Good and Brave
Character he did fully claim
His deeds thou helped beyond the slave
And those unborn in praise proclaim.

The story behind the inscription involved Major James White, William White, and John White, three brothers, reared on Rocky River, and their cousin William White, Robert Carothers, their brother-in-laws, Benjamin Cockrane, James Ashmore, and Joshua Hadley. They resolved to destroy powder designed to be used against their countrymen, and bound themselves by solemn oath not to betray one another. To prevent detection, they blacked themselves and succeeded in deceiving even the father of the White brothers, whom they met returning from the mill and from whom they demanded horses. Coming upon the three wagons containing powder, flint, and blankets, whose drivers were encamped on what was then called Phifer's Hill, the heroic "Black Boys" unloaded the wagon's kegs, threw the powder and flint into a pile, tore the blankets in strips, made a train of powder a considerable distance from the pile, then fired a pistol shot into the train causing a terrific explosion. The Royal Governor immediately sent out a warrant for the arrest of the boys, but they were not able to find them due to people such as William Spiears and his wife.

Spiears lived on Reedy Creek where the Black Boys hid and for months provided provisions for the boys. When the boys needed provision they would make their way up the Spiears house and whistle. Spiears was a simple man, and his life would probably have gone unknown if it had not been for the role he took in protecting the Black Boys and thus making a stand in the Revolutionary War. This history would have probably been forgotten, if not for the inscription on his headstone that encouraged more research.

Such are the lost stories revived by the work done by Daniel W. Patterson with his study of headstones. His work is an excellent source of invaluable information for everyone from beginning genealogists to archaeologists who wants to learn about the American Scotch Irish and Germans that settled in our country beginning in Pennsylvania in the seventeenth century. Through the gravestones and the artists who created them in cemeteries across our country, stories are just waiting to reveal histories long forgotten.

Beverly Patterson and Sarah Bryan, *African American Music Trails of Eastern North Carolina*

Reviewed by Robert Hunt Ferguson

In 2003, the North Carolina Arts Council helped publish *Blue Ridge Music Trails*, a guidebook to the ongoing musical heritage of western North Carolina and southwestern Virginia. The publication won awards for its significant role in promoting heritage tourism in southern Appalachia. Ten years later, eastern North Carolina has its own guidebook that the NC Arts Council hopes will be similarly vital to the development of heritage tourism. *African American Music Trails of Eastern North Carolina* focuses on the vibrant traditions and present-day celebrations of African American music in eight eastern counties: Lenoir, Jones, Wayne, Greene, Wilson, Edgecombe, Nash, and Pitt.

Five chapters are organized around the major towns in the region. Each section focuses on the communities' musical history, local contributions to American music, and where current curious visitors will find live music. Welcome entries on general tourist sites and local eateries will help the interested traveler plan a worthwhile visit. Readers will find the diffuse musical interests of North Carolina's African American communities reflected in the pages of *African Ameri-*

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Frame photo: Detail from the cover of African American Music Trails of Eastern North Carolina. *Courtesy of the NC Arts Council.*

can Music Trails. Gospel in Goldsboro, funk in Kinston, along with jazz, soul, R & B, and blues get most of the attention here. Nearly every music fan will find something in this guidebook to justify a visit to one of the featured communities. The region's nascent hip-hop acts, however, garner only brief mention.

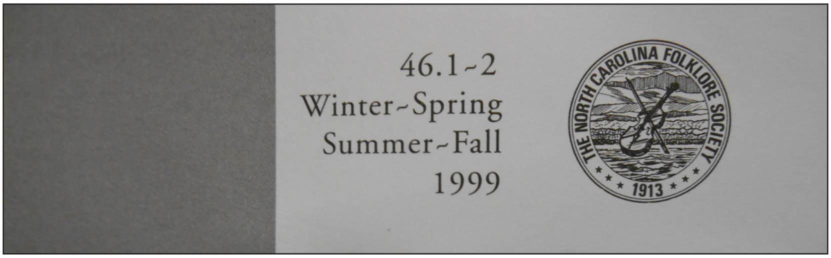
While the main purpose of *African American Music Trails* is to serve as a guidebook to black music in eastern North Carolina, there is value to be found in the editor's decision to convey the musical history of the region through oral histories. With help from the North Carolina Folklife Institute, researchers fanned out across the area to conduct surveys and interviews with black musicians. The results of that research make this guidebook a true gem. Snippets of interviews with local musicians—most of whom are revered in their communities—illuminate cultural practices that are all but lost to history. Longtime musician Bill Myers remembered the lively funeral parades called "turnouts" that accompanied deceased Greenville residents from the funeral to the cemetery. Princeville's Milton Bullock recalled the popular all-night dances they called the "June German." Bullock loved to hear his father reminisce about the night he saw Count Basie and Ella Fitzgerald perform at a June German in Rocky Mount. International jazz legend Maceo Parker fondly remembered seeing Ray Charles perform in a Kinston tobacco warehouse but expressed his confusion at the large rope down the middle of the venue separating the black audience from the white. First-hand accounts of these outdated cultural customs grace many of the pages in the guidebook and increase its readability and overall value.

On a more sober note, what *African American Music Trails* demonstrates—perhaps inadvertently, but unmistakably—is that the communities featured in the guidebook are not what they used to be. Towns like Wilson and Kinston were reliable destinations for the most important black musicians of the mid-twentieth century. From Count Basie to Cab Calloway and Marian Anderson to James Brown, African American performers not only played in local clubs, theaters, and tobacco warehouses, they patronized black businesses and struck up personal and professional relationships with many of eastern North Carolina's homegrown black musicians. It was a time and place when an aspiring, young musician could walk up to a performer as legendary as James Brown, the Godfather of Soul, and obtain a tryout with his band on a promise and a handshake (an arrangement that would help define the genre of funk). Now the region is rarely host to the nation's hottest touring acts. The changing nature of the music industry certainly holds most of the blame for this transformation. However, most of the towns in the guidebook once benefitted economically from the triumvirate of tobacco, railroads, and several military installations in the area. Most of that economic base is now gone. That makes the heritage tourism destinations featured in *African American Music Trails* all the more important for reasons beyond the preservation of culture.

That is not to say, however, that local music is a relic of history in these communities. On the contrary, the guidebook demonstrates that, as a Kinston musician aptly stated, current black music in eastern North Carolina is one of the "state's best kept secrets (ix)." The Monitors, formed in Wilson, have been making music for over fifty years and continue to perform for local and national audiences. Instead of the tobacco warehouses and private clubs, a visitor is now more likely to find eastern North Carolina's best African American performers singing God's praise at church, directing high school choirs or bands, and at any of the popular annual festivals. In recent years, local gospel choirs and high school band leaders have become the arbiters of community music and are responsible for educating the young to ensure that their rich musical legacies do not die out.

Further proof of eastern North Carolina's vibrant African American music is found in the accompanying Compact Disc. The CD features past and present performers, rare tracks, and reflects the variety of musical genres found in the region. Indeed, the CD often demonstrates eastern North Carolina's African American musical diversity better than the guidebook.

African American Music Trails is a welcome record of North Carolina's storied musical past and a declaration of hope that the African American communities in eastern North Carolina will continue to share their enduring musical gifts with appreciative audiences. Readers will likely wish that the North Carolina Arts Council will find the resources to treat the music of the Piedmont and the coast with as much care as they have now treated the mountains and the eastern counties.



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