

NEW YORK
**FOLK
LORE**
NEWSLETTER



Spring 1992
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From the Editor

After several years of editing the *New York Folklore Newsletter* by a process known only as "Voodoo Editing" whereby articles "trickle in" on or about the quarterly deadlines and features are solicited on timely topics of interest, the policy of de-regulation was forsaken in this issue in favor of a regulatory scheme. Lo and behold, a theme!

Inspired by a panel at the 1991 New York State Folk Arts Roundtable (a NYSCA Folk Arts/Cultural Resources Council of Syracuse sponsored conference) entitled "Across the Border" and featuring folklorists from Canada, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, two articles within highlight organizations and projects of merit bordering New York State. We also welcome Mary Kay Penn's article on the Institute for African-American Folk Culture, a new and important addition to the roster of New York State organizations dedicated to traditional arts. In these recessionary (pronounced de-PRESS-ion) times, we are inspired by the vision and resourcefulness of authors Mary Kay Penn, Carole Carpenter, and James Abrams and Kathy Kimiecik.

This issue introduces two new additions to the newsletter repertoire of departments. "Photographers & Folklore" begins a series of interviews with outstanding photographers in New York State who work closely with folklorists.

Also we were delighted to receive "The Easter Basket" from Maryann Ondovcsik. We invite all our readers to share your personal experiences, family and community traditions, in future issues of the newsletter.

We are sorry to lose the color that has brightened up this newsletter in 1991. It is a casualty of the cuts. If you'll bear with us through these gray times, we'll restore color as soon as we can.

Advocacy Time Again – NYSCA Faces New Cuts

It is time once again to begin visiting your state legislators, writing to them, sending letters to the editors of your local papers, and making phone calls to ensure that the legislature and the powers that be in your community are aware of the importance of state support for the arts, and especially folk arts. Here's the situation:

- ▼ The governor has proposed a 19% cut to NYSCA for programs, and severe cuts as well to the administrative budget. The program cuts to folk arts are somewhat less, but still grave.
- ▼ NYSCA has already had to cut staff, leaving the agency crippled in its ability to provide the necessary support and services to the field. Deeper cuts could have catastrophic effects.
- ▼ The legislators are again under enormous pressure to cut wherever they can. Only if they hear from us in large numbers will they be able to muster the political will to restore funding to the arts.

New York State is in the midst of a deep recession that is affecting nearly everyone, and the arts community can't expect special treatment. But we can expect fair treatment. In recent years, we haven't gotten it from the governor, but the legislature has consistently restored some of the funds cut in the governor's budget. They've helped us because we have made the case for the arts and asked for fairness insistently and clearly.

We must continue. Here's what you can do:

- ▼ *Write your legislators,*
- ▼ *Telephone their offices* at home or in Albany
- ▼ *Visit them* at their local offices. If you can, bring friends or family who care about the arts.

NEW YORK FOLK LORE NEWSLETTER

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During the first weekend of October, in the interlude between the departure of the summer crowd and the arrival of the "leaf peepers," the New York Folklore Society gathered for its annual conference at the Fern Cliff House in East Durham, the "Emerald Isle of the Catskills," to learn about and participate in "Tourism and the Ethnic Resort Experience," the conference's main theme.

The weekend began with a Friday evening reception at the Irish American Heritage Museum, highlighted by live entertainment with Irish musicians Mike McHale and Maura Tierney, an exhibit on Irish music and dance, and an unscheduled but riveting narrative on design symbolism by Irish quilter Mary Butler Shannon whose work was on display.

At the Saturday symposium, sponsored by the Museum and funded by the New York State Council on the Humanities, the keynote address was delivered by John Sears of the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute, who discussed the development of tourism in the 19th century. A panel of Catskill resort owners compared the present with resorts of a generation ago, noting that the chil-

dren of earlier guests are returning to the resorts in increasing numbers with their own families. Betsy Blackmar, Professor of History at Columbia, presented a "Social History of Catskill Resorts," while in a talk on "Native American Tourist Arts," Iroquois Indian Museum Director Christina Johannsen emphasized that far from being simply the victims of Manifest Destiny, Native Americans from an early period have used their entrepreneurial skills and modified their outward trappings—all those eastern Indians dressed like Sitting Bull—to victimize white tourists in their turn. Finally, City Lore executive director Steve Zeitlin shared his experiences and conversations with a number of Borscht Belt comedians, ending the symposium on a jovial note.

On Saturday night, many Society members travelled to the Crystal Brook Resort in nearby Round Top for a Schlachtfest and pig parade, featuring a pork dinner, the raffling of a porker to benefit the local fire department, and the parcelling out of said porker's remains by lot. Society director John Suter walked away with a toothsome but gory portion, which he kindly donated to our hosts, the

'Let's give the little hills a big hand'

*A Review of the NYFS
1991 Fall Conference*

Peter Voorheis

Dillons, at the Fern Cliff House.

Sunday morning's annual meeting, one of the best attended in recent memory, gave the Society's board a chance to receive lively input from members regarding the future direction of the organization and efforts to broaden our active membership beyond the present core of largely public sector folklorists. Dan Ward, just recovered from an unaccustomed overindulgence in pork products the previous evening, was re-elected president. Kate Koperski was re-elected vice president, and Peter Voorheis was elected secretary-treasurer, replacing Ellen McHale, who received an ovation for her service in that office.

Peter Voorheis is a highly regarded and widely feared annual meeting critic. We are grateful for his positive and unconflicted opinion of the 1991 meetings in East Durham.

ADVOCACY

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When you have their attention, tell them what NYSCA-funded programs have done for their communities, thank them for their support in the past, and ask them to actively support folk arts, and the arts in general, in this year's budget deliberations.

A year ago, the headline here was "Advocacy Alert." The governor had just proposed a shocking 56% cut in NYSCA funding, eventually reduced by the legislature to about 44%. This year, his proposed further cut is no longer shocking, but it is no less devastating. (It is very difficult to make much sense of these percentages; with all the changes in the state budget and different ways of reporting it, it's hard to know which figures are being compared, but it appears that the governor's added budget cuts this year would result in a 62% cut over a two-year period.) The damage is all too easy to see: many arts and historical organizations have closed their doors in 1991; others have cut staff and drastically curtailed their programs. And NYSCA itself is enduring cuts that threaten its ability to function, to administer the grant funds. If the governor's proposal is allowed to stand, it will get much worse this year.

So please act. If you don't know who your legislators are, call your local League of Women Voters. If you have questions—what to say, when to call, etc.—or you would like to help with the effort, please call us (607-273-9137). We'll be delighted to work with you.

LETTERS

"Originally," writes Steve Zeitlin in the Winter Newsletter, "the goal of public education may have been to convey the sense of a shared American history and culture." But in the neighborhoods like the one Steve Zeitlin visited, where 70 languages are spoken in the public schools, this goal seems to me more, rather than less, important.

Exposure to the cultural contributions and perspectives of different groups is surely a desirable part of all education. But teaching students about their own heritage is *not* "up to individual schools," in Mr. Zeitlin's phrase; it is primarily the responsibility of home, family, and community. Vesting this responsibility in schools is an invi-

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America's Industrial Heritage Project

James Abrams and Kathy Kimiecik, Folklife Division

The historical meaning of work is receiving unprecedented attention and concern within many post-industrial societies. Responding to the new international division of labor, various institutions in the First World are attempting to recover elements of work and social experience forged during the ascendancy and maturity of industrial capitalism. The decaying industrial regions of North America and Europe are finding new life as "heritage centers," transforming work sites into tourist sites.

The American Industrial Heritage Project region is currently undergoing metamorphosis from rustbelt to an information and tourist economy. Labels applied to characterize this change, such as "de-industrialization" and "post-industrialization" elide a painful process of transition that is experienced most profoundly by rank and file workers "left behind" in the global restructuring of the economy. Many members of displaced working communities in

southwestern Pennsylvania express a strong desire to actively participate in the clarification and composition of occupational and ethnic heritage.

The focus of the AIHP is on the coal, steel, and transportation industries which developed and operated in the area. The goal of AIHP's Folklife Division is to provide a people-oriented perspective of this heritage, examining such issues as the role of ethnicity in shaping the region and the impact of industrialization on rural life.

Staff members work with local organizations, workers, community members, and trained historians, anthropologists and folklorists to document, present, and interpret the folklife of the region. The Folklife Division coordinates cultural research, advises other organizations and community groups working with AIHP, and produces its own programs and publications. In addition, the division has developed a computer-based archive that is open to local individuals, community groups, and area schools.

AIHP's Folklife Division takes an integrated preservation/conservation approach to safeguard and interpret the region's industrial heritage, construed in material and cultural terms. Team members view historic preservation and cultural conservation as two dimensions of a single enterprise: preservation protects and records historically significant features of the built environment, whereas conservation seeks to discover meanings and values that local community members ascribe to these material resources and to their more intangible cultural traditions.

On another level, the Folklife Division's approach will assist community members, project staff, and the general public in locating themselves in history—economic, social, cultural—so that knowledge of the local and intricately intertwined global past can become a leverage point for personal and social empowerment in the present, and a resource with which to engage a region and world in transition.



Senior members of St. Stephen's Slovak Roman Catholic parish, Cambria City, PA, celebrating a public *vilia* (Christmas Eve dinner) and eating *pagach*, a potato filled pastry. Photo by James W. Harris

The linkage between preservation and conservation becomes more important not only in greatly facilitating interpretive efforts but in establishing cooperative research relationships with area residents who, after all, lived through the social, ethnic, and labor histories being interpreted by AIHP. More than simply providing an information gathering function, the Folklife Division works to nourish this relationship so that efforts at public and educational programming can benefit from community participation in project planning, development, and evaluation. In addition, a strong link to various regional labor and ethnic groups helps to ensure that AIHP respects and accounts for varying, and at times, conflicting points of view. In short, the Folklife Division realizes how vital this "partnership" concept is to the success of any research and interpretation program that strives to be sensitive to community needs, norms, and values.

The Folklife Division of the America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP) was developed by the Pennsylvania Heritage Affairs Commission in cooperation with the National Park Service and local cultural organizations. It is one of three teams of research specialists engaged in documenting and interpreting various aspects of the industrial heritage of the Allegheny Highlands; the other teams focus on historic sites and archaeology. The AIHP region encompasses nine counties in southwestern Pennsylvania and is supported by the National Park Service, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Heritage Preservation Commission (a federal entity), a consortium of state agencies, and several local community organizations. The project's Folklife Division is co-directed by James Abrams and Susan Kalcik. Co-author Kathy Kimiecik coordinates public programs for the Folklife Division. For more information on the project readers may contact: Folklife Division, America's Industrial Heritage Project, Allegheny Highlands Heritage Center, 319 Washington Street, Suite 370, Johnstown, PA 15901; (814) 539-2016.

For the past two years the Folklife Division has supervised a large amount of field research in the region. Cultural surveys have now been completed for each county and these have been augmented by a number of case studies and special projects including the documentation of women glass workers, African-American steel workers, the use of agricultural associations, rural vernacular architecture, Italian immigration to the region, the impact of plant shut-downs on communities, Mennonite farm families, railroad workers, local music, women hunters, agricultural preservation committees, and coal mining families.

In addition to general service work in which all folklife staff participate, there are a number of projects currently underway which will begin to incorporate and interpret the information in the AIHP folklife archive. These projects include writing a cultural conservation policy for use by all participants in AIHP; a coal and coke study; an oral history institute and newsletter; a guide to folklife resources; automating the



**Bar, Rod, and Wire Division,
Bethlehem Steel Lower Works,
Johnstown, PA.
Photo by James W. Harris**

archives and indexing the past two years' collected data; a photo exhibit for the local Roman Catholic Diocese's Quincentenary; a publi-

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The Easter Basket

A Melting Pot Tale from a Third Generation Immigrant Town

Maryann Ondovcsik

In the repertoire of "melting pot/only in America" tales, the majority surely concern food. That's not surprising. After all, one group may not accept another's religion or politics, but a tasty dish seems to transcend it all.

My own favorite tale is the story of the interethnic Easter baskets, and it happens to be absolutely true. I grew up in a small industrial town near Pittsburgh, largely populated by third generation descendants of immigrants brought in to work the steel mills.

Since much of that pre-World War I immigration was from southeastern Europe, my town is filled primarily with Slavs—Russians, Poles, Lithuanians, Czechs, Serbs, Ukrainians, etc.—plus a smattering of Greeks and Italians and a distinct minority of everything else.

It's a town of ethnic names where Ondovcsik (on-DOE-chick) is not at all out of the ordinary. And it's also a town of churches. During that turn-of-the-century immigration, each group and subgroup found it absolutely necessary to have a church of its own. God forbid that a Czech should go to the Polish church, much less a Ukrainian Catholic to the Ukrainian Orthodox.

But as the second and third generations grew up, married and moved to the "suburbs" there was frequently only one Catholic church. By third generation, there isn't much ethnicity left, so it normally doesn't matter.

Except for food! Food customs die hard, and even in my own 100 percent American/white bread upbringing, we maintained the Czech custom of The Easter Basket. Don't ask me why. In their effort to be totally American, my family dispensed with the Czech language, customs, music and traditions. The only Czech I know is what I learned in one semester at New York University. But every Holy Saturday, my mother still puts

together The Easter Basket—a wicker basket filled with traditional Easter foods that is taken to the church and blessed. These include ham, special rich egg bread called *pasch*, soft cheese called *hrudka*, the spicy sausage *kielbasa*, horse radish, butter, salt and decorated Easter eggs.

It's a custom that's still traditional in many Slavic parishes but certainly not in those modern, non-ethnic suburban parishes. However, a few years ago, parishioners there asked the new priest at what time he was blessing baskets.

Baskets? Young Father O'Reilly, fresh from the midwest, had never heard of such a thing. But after a number of demands, he finally called Father Kowalski for an explanation.

"Don't worry about it," the older man counseled. "Everyone who brings a basket will already know what he's doing. They'll bring in the baskets, uncover them, arrange them in a circle and light the candles. All you have to do is read this one prayer—I'll send it to you—and sprinkle a little holy water. It'll be fine."

It was. Except that the non-Slavic parishioners were left standing basketless in a lovely, candle-lit ceremony. Nobody likes to miss a good thing—especially when food is concerned—so the following year brought more and more baskets. And from various ethnic backgrounds.

None of the other groups had a history of "basket foods" for Easter, so they simply put together a hodge-podge of family ethnic favorites. Sometimes the holidays got a bit confused as when a Christmas stollen turned up in an Easter basket. German families came with a *bratwurst* and the even more traditional roast pork and dumplings—admittedly hard to transport by basket.

There were baskets of corned beef and cabbage, soda bread, drip-

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Maryann Ondovcsik, who lives in Brooklyn, is a business writer for trade magazines, but "occasionally I do things for 'fun'—as in this ethnic Easter baskets piece....I'm not 'into' folklore in any professional way but I have a strong personal interest in folklore and ethnicity....I guess there is a streak of the sociologist/anthropologist in me and I'm particularly fascinated with ethnic customs that remain several generations later."

The Easter Basket is reprinted with permission from *Catholic New York*.

Photographers & Folklore: Drew Harty, Treadwell, NY

Trained at RIT, Drew Harty has photographed objects, architecture and people for commercial ad campaigns, catalogues, and exhibits from New Foundland to the Carolinas. After full-time work as a professional commercial photographer, Harty became increasingly involved with museums and, consequently, folklorists. His photographs and more recent video work reveal an approach that is uniquely suited to the work of folklorists. The following is excerpted from an interview with the photographer.

I started working with museums almost by accident. The Delaware County Historical Association hired me to photograph for an exhibit catalog. I took the job not knowing there were opportunities for a photographer in the museum field, but I have specialized in that field since then.

When I worked in advertising there were fewer challenges: make a product look “zooty” and solve some art director’s problem. But, in the museum field, the challenges were greater, more engaging. The work was far more rewarding. It meant something to me. My photographs were used for documentary and educational purposes: they were used in exhibits, books, and became part of an archive—all more valuable uses.



(Cover) Bill Barnes, his son Tom and granddaughter on their farm in Treadwell. Started by Bill during World War II, it is one of four remaining working farms in the village.

My approach to work stems, in part, from my background in the commercial field. When you’re photographing products, you are working, basically, as a creative problem solver. The client wants you to make their product or ideas look interesting, and you figure out how to do it. In the museum field you’re dealing with a folklorist’s or informant’s ideas; you’re dealing with people and

process, with communicating a range of complex relationships, but you’re still a problem solver.

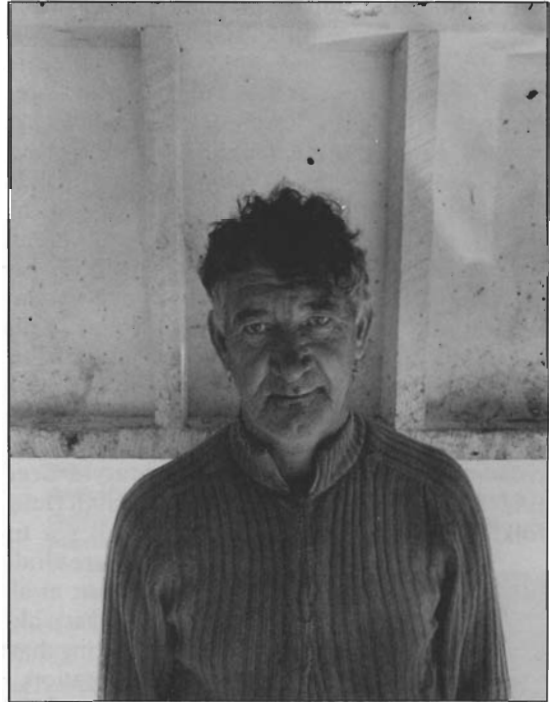
For example, for the DCHA exhibit “Quilted Together,” the folklorist wanted to illustrate a lot of different points about the dynamics of quilt groups. I knew photographs of just women quilting together would all look the same and not communicate the range of ideas presented by the folklorist. So, we had to work together to come up with a different approach to the subject, one that would result in a more diverse group of photographs.

I don’t think working together means I am compromising my creativity or photographic ideas. If I went out and photographed quilters on my own, I probably would have done it a little differently. But, collaborating with the folklorist allowed me to take a more informed and interesting approach to the subject matter. Publications and exhibits need good ideas up front, interesting design, and strong photographs—all these things working together. If one of these falls short, the overall piece won’t communicate well.

Working with folklorists has changed how I approach portraiture. The Newfoundland portraits were done long before I began working in the museum field and my approach was almost that of a tourist. On my latest project, the Treadwell portraits, my approach was more thematic and focused. The subjects were interviewed, and the portraits were juxtaposed with

an historic photograph and a narrative.

I like to do portraits because I enjoy the opportunity to learn about the subject. Everyone has something interesting to offer and through the portrait session, whether you’re actually interviewing them first or talking to them as you photograph, I can see something about the subject and communicate that through the



Fisherman, just finished cleaning the day’s catch. Newfoundland.

portrait. I don’t want to do photographs of people that are demeaning; I want to preserve a sense of dignity in that person. Some portraits are more about the photographer than the subject, but what is important to me is a clear sense of connection with the people in my portraits.

I have always been interested in film. In film there is a story line; a beginning, middle, and end—like an essay. There is nothing about film that compares to the impact of a single, strong still image, but in film, you explore more fully the message that a still image expresses.

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The Institute for African-American Folk Culture, Inc. has to be the first folk cultural center created out of a lack of advice! Certainly if anyone had told me how difficult it would be for a 26-year-old anthropology student to launch a national cultural center with a focus on research (an institute, if you will), dedicated to the analysis, presentation, and preservation of African-American folk culture, I would never have taken the first step. After putting some ideas down on paper, I began recruiting both people and money and began planning program. How does one present folk art and culture to a community that produced the likes of Michael Jackson and Prince? Who, in their right mind, would pay us to present a lecture performance series on "The Dozens," or hold a "Liar's Contest," or even conduct workshops on collecting oral histories? None of the other large institutions were providing programs like these, and I wondered if there wasn't a good reason why they weren't.

Whatever the reasons, they were obviously not good enough. The institute is now in its third year of operations and produces programs about a variety of folk forms and cultural issues. With five (unpaid) staff and a roster of fifty volunteers, the institute has continued to grow and expand its range of quality programs on African-American folk culture. Here's a sampling of our activities. In an effort to expose more people to our patron saint, Zora Neale Hurston, we sponsored a showing of the play "Spunk," a George C. Wolf production based on Zora's short story of southern black folklife. The play was followed by a discussion and a performance by local folk musicians.

We then sponsored a forum for African-American women on the culture of "tough economics." African-American women have historically had a highly developed cultural system for dealing with a lack of resources. But most of the thirty women in attendance had never seen the words "culture" and "economics" in the same sentence.

The Institute For African-American Folk Culture: Great Beginnings!

Mary Kay Penn

Participants left our seminar with a new understanding of this link.

The challenge of African-American verbal brilliance was irresistible, so we devised a two-part series on "The Dozens": humorous put-downs traded between two friends for the entertainment of an appreciative audience. Each generation of African-American youth (and adults) has come up with its own form of verbal dueling. We followed our favorite presentation format whereby investigative, scholarly information on an issue precedes a demonstration of how it looks in real life. Those who are familiar with the dozens know that the live demonstration part was a scary proposition. The New York State Council on the Arts took a chance and funded our idea—which gave us courage. A lecture was masterfully rendered by Dr. John Roberts of the University of Pennsylvania followed by an unrehearsed performance of the dozens by three local young adults. In a matter of minutes, the entire audience entered into the performance. In between the "Your mother is so fat's" and the "Your teeth are so yellow's," I engaged the speaker, the performers, and the audience in a discussion of the deeper implications of this folk form. What does this folk tradition mean to the African-American community and how has it changed over the decades? The requests have been flowing in from audience members who want to perform in the second part of the series!

The upcoming year is filled with program plans that would make a larger institution proud. A "Lying Contest" will kick off our year, followed by a lecture/performance on "Black English." Another lecture/performance on the

history of Hip Hop music is scheduled for the summer.

We are excited about beginning our teen program in October. This project is designed to teach teenagers how to collect oral histories and make folk videos. Luckily there is no one around to tell us that a cultural organization with a budget of under \$10,000 can't provide all these community programs!

The Institute couldn't exist at all without the hard work and great ideas of its unpaid staff: Angela Agard, MBA, chief fiscal officer; Marie-Alice Devieux, ethnomusicology student, director of music programs; and Roni Brown, publications/graphics manager. A more dedicated team never existed. Nor would the institute thrive without community support—those who send their checks and good wishes, and come out in the rain to attend programs.

The Institute for African-American Folk Culture certainly has a long way to go before our mission to change the way African-Americans view their culture is realized. Folklife and folkways are devalued in this society, even when they are our saving grace. At the Institute, we are building a new place for folk culture in the African-American community; a place where no one will be able to slight its invaluable worth.

For more information contact The Institute for African-American Folk Culture, 63 Hamilton Terrace, #30, Harlem, 10031; (212) 234-4197.

Mary Kay Penn is a founder and the executive director of the Institute for African-American Folk Culture.

Across the Border

Carole H. Carpenter

It was just a get-together—the director of the Black Creek Pioneer Village, the executive director of the Ontario Historical Society and I met for lunch—but much has come of that gathering of like minds and kindred spirits.

The idea for the First Ontario Folklore Conference emerged that day, and the immensely successful conference itself was held in March of 1987. It obviously addressed a timely need among those interested in Ontario's heritage, as well as a need for attention to intangibles. In response to a call from that initial gathering, the Ontario Folklife Centre/Centre Pour L'étude du Folklore Ontarien (OFC) was founded in May, 1987.

The Centre is located at York University in office space graciously provided by the University. The Centre consists of a multicultural studies center and an archive to support folklore studies—a research facility used by students, faculty, the public and foreign scholars; it is a presence as a trendsetter in intangible cultural heritage conservation. The OFC is the first provincial organization of its kind in Canada. Public folklore simply has not enjoyed the prominence north of the border that the field has had, at least until recent cut-backs, in American cultural programming.

The OFC was modelled after the very successful American Folklife Center and was established to preserve and present Ontario folklife in all its aspects in service to both public and scholarly communities. Student research here, as elsewhere, has been a primary component of the Ontario Folklore-Folklife Archive. The archive had its beginnings as my private collection and included all of the research for my dissertation about the role of folklore activities in Canadian culture throughout the nation's history. The collection has grown remarkably since "going public;" primarily as a result of several substantial projects but also through donations—books, tapes, records, documents, photographs. All very welcome and tax deductible, too!

The Centre produces a newsletter,

albeit irregularly, but more attention is now being paid to a publication program, and we anticipate the first volume of an *Ontario Folklife Series* to be available in 1992. It will be a collection and discussion of immigration narratives entitled, *Being Here: Stories of Settling in Ontario During the Past Century*. A second volume, *An Ontario Folklife Sampler*, drawn primarily from the Centre's archive, should follow soon after.

The OFC also supports the Ontario Folklife Lecture Series, sponsors traditional occasions and social celebrations, undertakes local projects at community request, offers workshops and lectures to community groups, assists government agencies in heritage management development (especially in light of Ontario's recent Heritage Act), and participates with heritage groups in joint programming (such as an Oral History and Literacy Initiative).

Our research projects to date have been numerous. The largest, the "Being Here" study, produced a collection of over 500 taped interviews representing a sampling of multicultural groups and geographic locations throughout the province. OFC's "Living Libraries" initiative was directed at encouraging senior citizens to recognize themselves as heritage resources. In addition, OFC assisted in training seniors to interview each other.

Another project consisted of a questionnaire study of proverb use among school children in metropolitan Toronto. And in response to a provincial Task Force of Racism and Policing, the OFC undertook a very revealing study on humor as an indicator of racism. The study resulted in a significant collection that has been consulted by scholars internationally.

In another study, supported by the Ontario Arts Council, OFC conducted the first-ever folk arts survey done in Canada, focussing on the Humber Valley in south-central Ontario. Most recently, the Centre has been directing its research to the study of children—a folk group that has been neglected in Canadian culture.

The Centre has welcomed many visitors, is used by many students, and aims to be fully accessible to the wider public. Anyone interested in our activities is invited to become a "Friend" (\$10 Canadian annually). OFC is located on the York University campus, 204 Win-

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City Lore Festival of Film and Video

CITY LORE's 6th Annual Festival of Film and Video is an all-day event co-sponsored by NYU's Program in Metropolitan Studies. The festival is a showcase for recently completed films and videotapes, with an emphasis on documentary works, created by independent filmmakers and videographers. Focusing primarily on films about American folk culture, the festival presents a forum for discussion of the social, cultural and **ethical issues** that emerge from documenting folk culture on film and video. Screenings are often paired with discussions which feature **filmmakers, scholars, and members of the community documented**.

This year, "Meals on Reels—Food as Culture" will explore foodways—what, where, when, and how we eat. The program will be held on Saturday, March 21st at NYU's Vanderbilt Hall (on MacDougal Street between 3rd and West 4th Streets) from 10 am to 10 pm. Admission is \$7.

The festival will feature Les Blank's homage to Cajun food and music, *YUM, YUM, YUM!* as well as his classic, *Garlic is as Good as 10 Mothers*. Other titles will include: *Something Nobody Else Has: The Story of Turtle Trapping in Louisiana* and *Part of Your Loving*, celebrating the work and life of Brooklyn baker Ben Togati. *Fast Food Women*, from Appalshop Films in Kentucky, looks at the labor issues in the fast food industry while the award-winning film, *H-2 Worker*, reveals the push-pull factors stimulating contract worker migration from Jamaica to Florida's sugar plantations. The festival will feature the world premiere of the new film, *M.F.K. Fisher*, a portrait of the pre-Julia child food critic, who wrote in the *New Yorker* for many years.

CITY LORE accepts submissions of American folkcultural film and video on an ongoing basis. The 1993 program will focus on "Rites of Passage." For more information call CITYLORE at (212) 529-1955.

TAUNY

TRADITIONAL ARTS IN
UPSTATE NEW YORK

Conference on Adirondack Folklife

During this centennial year of the Adirondack Park, many activities and words will be generated to celebrate the establishment of a great forest preserve and the abundance of wildlife and natural beauty within it. Coffee table books, museum exhibitions, and performances will abound about the High Peaks, the Great Camps, environmental issues, and threats to the Park itself.

Unlike so many other activities, a Conference on Adirondack Folklife, co-sponsored by Traditional Arts in Upstate New York, Inc. and the New York Historical Association, will concentrate on folk culture, the traditions of daily life for most residents of the Adirondack region. Presented as part of the NYCH 1992 Seminars on American Culture, the conference will be held in Cooperstown on July 5-8.

The conference will use historical photographs and film of traditional community activities to examine the Adirondacks as a regional folk culture, small camp architecture, traditional crafts, and foodways. Lectures will cover storytelling and musical ethnicity, tourism, and the impact of land development and regulations on local traditions.

The program will be chaired by Varick Chittenden, professor at SUNY Canton and director of TAUNY. Speakers will include Robert Bethke, University of Delaware; Karen Taussig-Lux and Faye McMahon, University of Pennsylvania; Todd DeGarmo, Crandall Library, Glens Falls; Peter C. Van Lent, St. Lawrence University; George Ward and Vaughn Ward, Lower Adirondack Regional Arts Council, Glens Falls. Bill Smith, celebrated storyteller, balladeer, and basketmaker, will open the conference with an evening of entertainment.

For more information write: New York Historical Association, Box 800, Cooperstown, NY 13326.

BROOKLYN ARTS COUNCIL

After a six month vacancy, the Brooklyn Arts Council (BACA) filled its staff folklorist position, hiring Jessica Payne to direct their Folk Arts Program. Ms. Payne will produce BACA's annual Folk Arts Series in collaboration with the Brooklyn Public Libraries. A program of musical performances and craft demonstrations, the 1992 series will include presentations of Mexican, Dominican, Haitian, and Native American traditions. The program is designed to address problematic themes in the Quincentenary by exploring the impact of European contact on the transformation and perpetuation of cultural traditions.

The series will take place in May with weekday presentations in local libraries and weekend performances at the main branch of the library system in Grand Army Plaza. The BACA Folk Arts Program will also coordinate the storytelling tent for the annual "Welcome Back to Brooklyn" festival on June 14th. For more information contact Jessica Payne at BACA, 200 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11238; (718) 783-3077.

POLISH COMMUNITY CENTER OF BUFFALO

The Polish Community Center of Buffalo has been awarded \$15,000 by the New York Council for the Humanities for a project on the history and culture of international and ethnic dance in Buffalo. Directed by folklorist Mia Boynton and administered by Annette Junczewicz, the project will bring together scholars, dance enthusiasts and the general public to discuss and participate in international and ethnic dance in the Polish Community Center's newly restored hall.

The project's intent is to treat specific issues in Buffalo's inter-ethnic dance and musical life through the examination of Polish, Macedonian, Serbian, Bulgarian, and international dance traditions. Dance workshops, musical performances, and panel discussions will be held on a series of consecutive Saturdays between September 26 and November 7 of 1992 to acquaint

the public with the issues associated with, and the beauty of Balkan and Slavic music and dance traditions. A final inter-ethnic dance party will wrap up the project's eight week run on November 7.

A major exhibit on the history of folk and ethnic dance will open at the Center's Mazur Gallery on September 18 through November 7. Curated by Mia Boynton and designed by David Cinquino, the exhibit interprets local dance traditions in a display of instruments, costumes, photographs, printed matter, and oral histories.

For more information contact Annette Junczewicz and Mia Boynton at (716) 893-7222.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The American Society of Geolinguistics invites scholars and government officials concerned with language and culture worldwide to address topics relevant to the advance of geolinguistic study and the prospects of the science in the future. Sponsored by the American Society of Geolinguistics in cooperation with the Academy of the Humanities and Sciences of the City University of New York, "An International Conference on Geolinguistics in the Nineties" will take place in October 1992 at the CUNY Graduate Center, 33 West 42 Street, New York, NY 10036.

Proceedings will be published. Papers should be of a length to permit reading in 15 minutes. Abstracts (300 words) of papers offered for presentation are due June 1, 1992. Abstracts or further inquiries may be directed to the editor of the society's journal, *Geolinguistics*: Prof. Jesse Levitt, 485 Brooklawn Ave., Fairfield, CT 06432.

The American Society of Geolinguistics was founded in 1965. Its aims are, in the words of the late Professor Mario Pei, "to gather and disseminate up-to-date knowledge concerning the world's present-day languages; their distribution and population use; their relative practical importance, usefulness and availability from the economic, political and cultural standpoints; their genetic, historical and geographical affiliations and relationships; and their identification and use in spoken and written form."



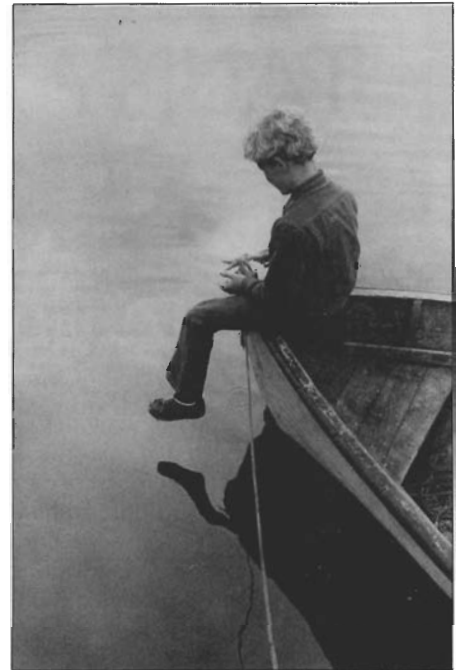
Andrea Haslett in one of her "special places" around Treadwell. Harty also photographed her grandmother as part of the project.

DREW HARTY

Continued from page 5

My strengths as a photographer and videographer come from two things. First, I am really oriented toward quality, and I view each job as a unique opportunity to do higher quality work. And, second, I think part of my responsibility, as a professional, is to help the folklorist or curator understand the best ways to use photography or videography within their project. Solutions are not always obvious and I want my clients to get more than they hoped for.

As a photographer or videographer, the most rewarding projects I can be involved in are when you have professionals that are interested in collaborating and learning from each other, who are committed to producing high quality programs.



Boy with a starfish. The piers and dories are used as a playground for children in this coastal town of Newfoundland.

LETTERS

Continued from page 3

tation to just that politicization of ethnicity, race, and religion that is evident in the New York State multicultural curriculum so celebrated by Mr. Zeitlin (and in other such manifestations)—characterized, e.g. by downplaying, ignoring, or falsifying negative material and by the imposition of a spurious equality regarding the contributions of different groups to aspects of our national and cultural life.

And, I should add, by spurious misattribution. Of course it's laughable that a college student thought the Andes borrowed Paul Simon's music, rather than the reverse. But such advocates of multiculturalism as Leonard Jeffries have, out of pathological bigotry rather than innocent ignorance, indulged in equally (or more) ludicrous falsifications (Africans created mathematics, etc.). Besides which, some non-American cultures probably *have* borrowed Paul Simon's original music (or that of other American folk and popular artists) and made it part of *their* music, just as we borrowed from others; such is the "plagiarism endemic to all culture," as Pete Seeger's father had it.

Of course we don't want our children alienated from (the positive parts

of) their birthright and heritage, as Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett puts it, but when public (government) schools make alleviating that alienation their special mission, the results will usually be mischievous or worse.

Robert L. Cohen, Brooklyn, NY

BORDER

Continued from page 8

ters College, 4700 Keele Street, North York, Ontario M3J 1P3; (416) 736-5158.

We welcome greater interchange with our New York colleagues. Maybe we could come up with some interesting north-south projects.... Call or come visit, eh?

Carole H. Carpenter is President of the Ontario Folklife Centre.

EASTER BASKET

Continued from page 5

ping pans of *mamicotti*, jars of *antepasta* and salamis galore. One confused but accommodating Jewish bride sent her Italian husband off with a basket of *challah*, noodle pudding, lasagna, and a *kaddish* candle. As they say, "Only in America."

INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE

Continued from page 5

cation series; photographic exhibit; an audio tape for a self-guided auto tour; a poster; a video documentary about African Americans; and an industrial skills and craft, and foodways component for the National Folk Festival (in Johnstown, PA).

Perhaps most important is the development of the cultural conservation plan because of the thorny issues related to the politics of culture. If "heritage" is a cultural construct that mediates cultural change, in areas like those covered by AIHP, does heritage become a defense mechanism by which to occlude anxieties caused by de-industrialization? The AIHP Folklife Division, its employees and associates, are part of a heritage industry involved in sorting out the problematics of late industrial capitalism. A comprehensive cultural conservation plan will investigate the "presentational norms" of a group in order to plan culturally appropriate interpretive programs. It will also clarify whose interests are being served by cultural heritage projects and involve the public in a dialogue about the meaning of the past.

ARCHIVES REPORT AVAILABLE

Folklore Archives and the Documentary Heritage of New York State, the final report from the New York Folklore Society's 1991 Folk Archives Project, is now available. The 54-page publication contains consultant Fred Stielow's report and recommendations, Bruce Buckley's excellent keynote address from the September Folk Archives Conference, and a summary of the conference proceedings.

Our plans to continue the project in 1992 are on hold while we wait to hear whether the Documentary Heritage Program will have a grants program at all this year and, if so, whether we have been awarded funds.

To obtain a copy of the report, send your request with a check for \$5.00 per copy to our office.



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The New York Folklore Society is dedicated to furthering cultural equity and crosscultural understanding through its programs serving the field of folklore and folklife in New York State. The Society seeks to nurture folklore and folklife by fostering and encouraging folk cultural expressions within communities where they originate and by sharing these expressions across cultural boundaries. ▼ The Society publishes the scholarly journal *New York Folklore* and the *New York Folklore Newsletter*. You will receive subscriptions to both as a benefit of membership. ▼ We provide technical assistance to organizations engaged in folk arts programming and produce conferences and other programs with statewide scope that address issues concerning folklife. ▼ We welcome your involvement and support. ▼ Thank you!

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**Salt for preserving fish, stored in a fishing stage on a pier in Newfoundland.
Photo by Drew Harty (see story page 6).**

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