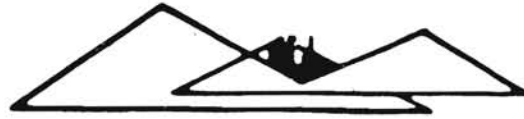


NEWS

LETTER



APPALACHIAN CENTER
BEREA COLLEGE

Loyal Jones • Thomas Parrish, Co-Editors

Vol. 15 No. 3

Summer 1986

Looking Forward

October 10-12: Annual fall fair, Kentucky Guild of Artists and Craftsmen, Indian Fort Theater, Berea, Ky. 40403

October 17-19: Annual fall fair, Southern Highland Handicraft Guild, Asheville Civic Center, Asheville, N.C. The guild's address is P.O. Box 9545, Asheville, N.C. 28815.

October 28-29: "The Engineer as Manager," a seminar for technical managers who are responsible for the supervision of engineers, scientists and support personnel; Sheraton Springdale hotel, Cincinnati, Ohio. Contact the Registrar, Battelle Seminars and Studies Program, 4000 N.E. 41st St., Seattle, Wash. 98105; telephone 1-800-426-6762.

October 30-31: First annual conference on Appalachia ("on the land and economy"), University of Kentucky. Information from Ronald D Eller, Appalachian Center, 641 S. Limestone, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Ky. 40506.

October 30-November 2: Berea College Celebration of Traditional Music (*see following story*).

November 1-December 31: "The Quilts of Tennessee," a new touring exhibition, makes a lengthy first stop at the American Museum of Science and Energy, Oak Ridge, Tenn. Information about this project is available from Bets Ramsey, Box 4146, Chattanooga, Tenn. 37405, and Merikay Waldvogel, 1501 Whitower Road, Knoxville, Tenn. 37919.

November 2-4: Convocation on Appalachian town and country mission perspectives, Hebron Lutheran Church, Yellow Spring, W.Va., in cooperation with the Commission on Religion in Appalachia, the Town and Country Church Institute and the Virginia Synod, LCA. Contact Rev. Phillip C. Huber, P.O. Box 87, Wardensville, W.Va. 26851. Participants will be lodged in the unnervingly named Capon Springs Hotel.

Old-Time and Classic

Old enough now to be properly considered a regional classic, the Berea College Celebration of Traditional Music returns October 30-November 2 for its 13th annual run. Through the years since 1974 the Celebration has remained devoted to the aim enunciated at the



Hindman Settlement School Collection,
Berea College Southern Appalachian Archives

CROSSING THE CREEK . . . see page 3

beginning by Appalachian Center Director Loyal Jones—to "feature . . . old-time traditional music." Nothing wrong with bluegrass and other newer forms, Jones said, "but we feel that the old styles traditional to the mountains are not heard so much any more, and we want to encourage them." During the past 12 years these "old styles" have become increasingly prominent sounds in the region, thanks in good part to the Celebration's programs and instrumental workshops. It's time now for more.

The proceedings will get under way on Thursday, October 30 with a 3:00 p.m. lecture-concert by Bill C. Malone, author and professor of history at Tulane, and Bobbie Malone; in the evening there's a street dance led by John M. Ramsay. The big, old-time, multi-performer sessions will be held on Friday and Saturday evenings at 7:30. These aural banquets will be followed at 10:00 (or whenever) by square dancing, with music by Lewis and Donna Lamb and the Earl Barnes Family.

The daylight hours on Saturday will be devoted to instrumental workshops and concerts, and at 2:00 the

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OLD-TIME *from page 1*

Malones will lead a symposium: "Bluegrass: Is it Traditional?" Bill Malone is the author of *Country Music, USA* and *Southern Music: American Music*.

And if you aren't exhausted from dancing the night away, you can participate in a concert of hymns, led by Betty Smith, on Sunday morning at 9:00.

The Celebration will of course present its usual stellar array of established favorites, together with performers invited to appear on the local stage for the first time. Besides those mentioned, the participants will include Sparky Rucker, Homer Ledford, Jenny Wilson and Roger Bryant, Doug Wallin and Jack Wallin, Roger Cooper and Robin Kessinger, Charlie Osborne and Tommy Bledsoe, Cordell Kemp, and Bob and Bill Prater.

If you need any further information, contact the Appalachian Center at the address on page 4 of the NEWSLETTER. The telephone number is (606) 986-9341, extension 513.

Appalachian Advantages?

Since the early 1980s, according to the Appalachian Regional Commission, development in the region has followed a two-tier course. Most of Appalachian Georgia and the Carolinas has prospered, while large parts of central and northern Appalachia—heavily dependent on manufacturing and mining—have lagged behind.

Moribund or not, the ARC goes right on producing workshops, conferences and other events just as in the good old days before the Reaganites declared it to be a terminal case. Currently a group of some 200 business and community leaders from all over Appalachia, north and south, are taking part in a workshop devoted to examining the current state of the region's economy and to reevaluating the methods of development that have been favored up till now.

Plusses for the region, the commission notes, are the facts that during recent years Appalachia overall has developed a more diversified economy than it had in the past and that a strong base for further development—in the form of modern highways, schools and other such facilities and institutions—is now firmly in place.

Participants in the workshop are taking a look at the newest developments in such areas as capital opportunities and sources for starting and expanding businesses, strategies for developing markets for emerging and growth industries, and technological innovation.

As ARC Federal Co-Chairman Winifred Pizzano sums it up: "Appalachia is in the forefront of education reform and technology innovation in mature industries." That isn't exactly beguiling English prose, but perhaps those words contain a hopeful truth. The point of the workshop, Pizzano says, is to "help turn those advantages into economic growth."

Meanwhile, the board of the HEAD Corp. (Human/Economic Appalachian Development) is taking a somewhat different approach to Appalachian economics. Behind the visible facts of economic life, they say, lies a

puzzling realm calling for interpretation and analysis. Why, with all the great natural resources of Appalachia, is the region so impoverished? Why, with all the concentrated effort over the last 25 years, has there been so little progress? What will it take to change things? What are some realistic goals to strive for? The board has appointed a committee to come with a plan for finding some answers. They might start with Ms. Pizzano.

Passings

Francis Pledger Hulme

Francis Pledger Hulme, a widely known North Carolina man of letters, died in Asheville in May at the age of 76. A teacher in the State University of New York system as well as at various colleges in North Carolina, he had continued in his retirement to teach and to educate, with readings from his own poetry and lectures about North Carolina writers. One of his books of poems was a nominee for the Berea College Weatherford Award.

Hulme was a popular teacher, but not because he was easy. One former student recalls that "his standards were high, his nonsense tolerance low" and that he especially disapproved of Appalachian stereotypes. If a student came from a poor high school, that simply meant that he had a lot of catching up to do—though Hulme was always ready to help. His advice tended to be terse: "Any idiot can learn to spell," he told a student. "Buy a dictionary." Far from being put off by the suggestion, the student not only improved his spelling but went on to ask Hulme to serve as godfather to his daughter. Frank Hulme, says his former student, "showed us human nature at its best."

Mabel Kiser

Mabel Kiser, a pioneer antipoverty worker in Letcher County, Ky., and a local newspaper columnist, died in August at the age of 74. In the 1960s she worked on projects with staff members of the Council of the Southern Mountains, most notably as director from 1964 to 1972 of the Millstone Sewing Center. As a correspondent for the Whitesburg *Mountain Eagle* for 25 years, she was known across a wide area.

EYE on Publications

Eastern Kentucky: A Pictorial History, by Stuart Sprague (The Donning Co., Norfolk, Va. 23502). Pictures! If you like 'em (and rare are those who don't), you'll love this big collection, gathered by the author from all sorts of archives and collections. Courthouses, cabins, schools, old and new downtowns, inns, mills—all sorts of works of man in the hills are featured here. Actually, Sprague follows the Appalachian Regional Commission's delineation; this political Appalachia is of course larger than the real one, but the difference is not really important here. The earliest photos date from the 1880s—a homestead on Yellow Creek, the William

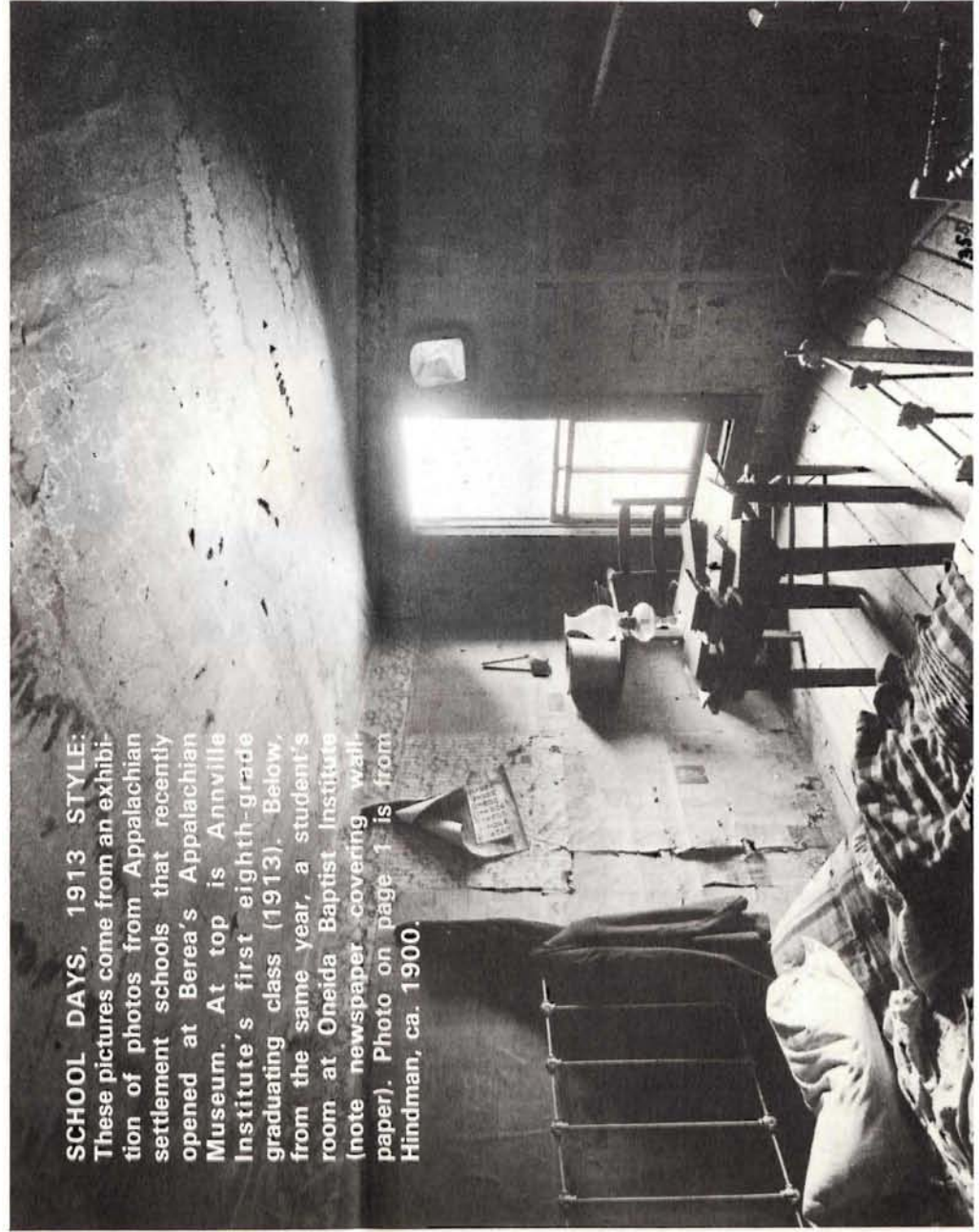
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Annville Institute, Jackson County Ministries Collection,
Berea College Southern Appalachian Archives



New Show Presents Frescoes from the Past

SCHOOL DAYS, 1913 STYLE:
These pictures come from an exhibition of photos from Appalachian settlement schools that recently opened at Berea's Appalachian Museum. At top is Annville Institute's first eighth-grade graduating class (1913). Below, from the same year, a student's room at Oneida Baptist Institute (note newspaper covering wall-paper). Photo on page 1 is from Hindman, ca. 1900.



Oneida Baptist Institute Collection, Berea College Southern Appalachian Archives
Courtesy of University of Louisville Photographic Archives,
Claude C. Matlack Collection

EYE from page 2

Whitley house, the first known picture of the town of Louisa—and the pictorial story unfolds through growth and decline, war and depression, up until the opening of the Somerset airport and the hacking of a man-made canyon through the mountain at Pikeville. In a special epigraph, James Still speaks of Appalachia as a “somewhat mythical region with no known boundaries” (in that case, the ARC’s Appalachia is perhaps as good as anybody else’s), but, says Still, “I trust to be understood for imagining the heart of it to be in the hills of Eastern Kentucky.”

A Kentucky Album: Farm Security Administration Photographs, 1935-1943, edited by Beverly W. Brannan and David Horvath (University Press of Kentucky). More photos, these from “a national self-examination,” as Jim Wayne Miller calls it in the foreword, which took place during the 1930s. The FSA photographic project is of course famous, having associated with it such names as Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange and Ben Shahn. The pictures here are by a number of photographers, but most of them are the work of Marion Post Wolcott; they (and more) appeared in an exhibition, called “Things As They Were,” that hung at the University of Louisville in 1984. The FSA, the brainchild of Rexford Tugwell, was a true New Deal agency, its aim being to help those too poor to be assisted by the New Deal’s major legislative programs; the photos were made under the direction of the FSA historical section. In their own day these pictures were propaganda, a visual documentary in the New Deal spirit. Now they make up an album of a time very far from ours, snapshots as different in spirit as the ‘30s are from the ‘80s.

The Wolfpen Poems, by James Still (Berea College Press; distributed by Appalachian Center, C.P.O. Box 2336, Berea, Ky. 40404). This book is one of the truly remarkable bargains of the year—the collected poems of the uncrowned Appalachian laureate for only

\$10.95 (plus \$1.00 for mailing). As the indefatigable Jim Wayne Miller says in the introduction, “At a time when it was fashionable, indeed almost obligatory, for poetry about southern Appalachia to be either a witless romanticizing of mountains and mountain people, or proletarian verse, Still took a different approach.” He “declines to participate in the either/or literature, ambitious to do no more—and no less—than to show people in their place and tell how it was with these people at a particular time.” Sophisticated and highly educated, unlike his subjects, Still in his style blends folk speech with more refined elements; and as a thoroughly self-aware literary artist, he not only listens and mimics, he invents. His poetry and his prose are of a piece; those who know the fiction and not the poems will find a rich reward here.

Reshaping the Image of Appalachia, edited by Loyal Jones (Berea College Appalachian Center, C.P.O. Box 2336, Berea, Ky. 40404). Since 1979, Berea’s Appalachian Center has conducted a fellowship program in Appalachian studies, financed by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The subject matter is limitless: researchers have received grants to dig into subjects ranging from Primitive Baptists and radio musicians to class consciousness in Wales and Appalachia and poverty warriors who stayed on to fight after the war was over. In May 1984 a number of the papers produced by these scholars were presented at a conference in Berea, and they appear now in book form (available from the publisher for \$7.50, plus \$1.00 for postage). The title, which comes from one of the papers, was chosen, says the editor, because all these essays, as well as the work of dozens of writers across the region, are directly concerned with this reshaping task. “Persistent scholarship and thoughtful writing” can perhaps begin to remove the layers of misinformation that have built up about Appalachia, a region he calls “so varied one can find something to support whatever image or stereotype is lodged in one’s head.”

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