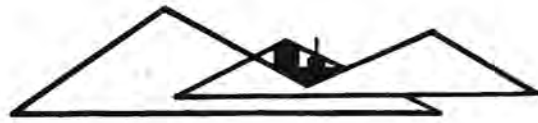


NEWS

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LETTER

APPALACHIAN CENTER
BEREA COLLEGE

Loyal Jones • Thomas Parrish, Co-Editors

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Workshop Back For Fifth Summer

Already taking shape are plans for the fifth annual Workshop in Appalachian Studies, to be conducted this summer (June 13-July 22) by Berea College, through the Appalachian Center, in association with the University of Kentucky. The workshop is designed for teachers and curriculum specialists; its purpose is to enable participants to acquire the knowledge, materials and techniques necessary to enable them to establish courses in Appalachian studies in their local schools.

The workshop will offer two courses (each participant is expected to take both of them), for which six hours of graduate credit will be given through the College of Education of the University of Kentucky. These are a) History and Culture of Appalachia and b) Literature and the Arts in Appalachia.

The workshop is an outgrowth of the general reexamination of the American experience that has characterized the 1970s. As the sponsors put it: "We now recognize that all groups—ethnic, racial, regional and religious—have contributed to the building of this country, and their cultures have greatly enriched our national life. The Appalachian Mountains have nurtured one of these cultural traditions, rich in fundamental values, in folk songs, hymns, folk tales, handicrafts and pioneer skills. In the mass media, however, Appalachian people have been portrayed primarily as people with problems. Of course we do have problems, but we also have many strengths. The media have not dealt adequately with these strengths, nor have local schools offered courses and materials that present the abilities of Appalachian people and their contributions to American culture. Therefore, many young persons learn only of the negative aspects of their culture and do not have an appreciation of its positive qualities."

A number of prominent Appalachian personalities are among the staff members and lecturers for the workshop. Those taking part include Loyal Jones, director of the Berea College Appalachian Center, who will serve as the workshop director; Richard B. Drake, professor of history and political science at Berea; writers Wilma Dykeman and James Stokely; Jim Wayne Miller, poet

and short story writer and professor of German at Western Kentucky University; Pat Wear, professor of education at Berea; Richard L. Warren, chairman of the department of social and philosophical studies in education, College of Education, University of Kentucky; Billy Edd Wheeler, musician, composer and playwright; David Walls, assistant professor, College of Social Professions, University of Kentucky; Mike Mullins, director of the Appalachian Learning Laboratory at Alice Lloyd College; John Ramsay, director of recreation extension at Berea; Harry M. Caudill, writer; Leonard Roberts, folklorist and director of the Appalachian Studies Center at Pikeville College; Cratis Williams, specialist in Appalachian speech, literature and folklore at Appalachian State University; Joan Moser, specialist in Appalachian music at the Newfound School (Asheville, N.C.).

In the course of the workshop each participant will develop a course or unit—with supporting resource ideas and materials—that can be instituted in the school in which he or she teaches.

Although the total cost to the sponsoring institutions is \$425 per workshop student, the actual charge to each participant is only \$175. The difference is covered by a scholarship arrangement. If you're interested in applying, write to the Berea College Appalachian Center, College Box 2336, Berea, Ky. 40404.

Appalachian Trends

Like all agencies and other entities, governmental and non, the Appalachian Regional Commission produces an annual report. But the document for 1975, just issued, is a bit special, because in March 1975 the commission completed its first decade, a milestone that the report observes by taking stock "of how far the unique Appalachian experiment has actually come in ten years—and what distance remains to be covered."

In general, the commission believes that Appalachia, characterized in 1965 as a "region apart," is now less apart. Some interesting trends are noted.

1) The region is no longer losing population every year. In the early 60s, the loss was about 122,000 annually; it dropped to 90,000 in the late 60s. But for the last five years (as of 1975) *immigration* amounting to almost 60,000 annually has been the rule.

2) Between 1960 and 1970 Appalachia saw a 41 percent drop in the number of people with incomes below the poverty level, whereas the national decline was only 30 percent.

3) In 1965-73 Appalachia gained more than a million industrial jobs. This rate of growth didn't quite match that of the country as a whole, but it was a highly significant development for the economy of the region.

4) Since 1965 per capita income in the region has risen both absolutely and relative to the national average, from \$2,180 in 1965 to \$4,110 in 1973—a rise of 89 percent. During this same period national per capita income was up 81 percent. Per capita income in Appalachia in 1973 was 81 percent of the national average.

5) Improvement has occurred in social areas. For instance, in 1960 only one-third of the region's adult population had completed high school; by 1970 the figure had become 44 percent. In health: the ratio of doctors to population rose from 92 per 100,000 to 100 from 1963 to 1971.

The commission does not take credit for all these developments, but it does believe that its influence has been of great importance. It also believes that Appalachia "still has a long road ahead before the gaps between it and the rest of the nation are closed." As just one instance, the improvement in the doctor ratio still leaves Appalachia with only two-thirds as many doctors per 100,000 people as the national average. And there is the truly major challenge, as the commission says, of learning "to use effectively the renewed importance of coal . . . both to fuel [the region's] economy and to diversify its industrial base—but, at the same time, to protect the Appalachian environment and to preserve the region's cultural heritage." A neat, neat trick indeed.

Spring Events

Constant readers of the CENTER NEWSLETTER will recall that in the Spring 1976 issue we gave a rave notice to *Appalachia Sounding*, the play by Romulus Linney funded by the Appalachian Regional Commission and produced by the Carolina Regional Theatre. Our critic forthrightly admitted his initial doubts about the validity of any interpretation of Appalachian culture emerging from Washington and Chapel Hill, and then went on to say that he was all wrong and the drama—words and music together—was great. Well, this spring (March 28-May 14) *Appalachia Sounding* is going to make a widely hoped-for second tour of the region, and if your community is lucky it might land a performance, if one isn't already arranged. But you'll have to hurry. Call Barbara Rowedder at 919/933-5854.

This spring will see the premiere of another Appalachian drama, a new play by performer-composer-playwright Billy Edd Wheeler. Called *Barbry and Willie*, it is, in the words of the author, "a mountain musical

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Prophet

Harry M. Caudill is famous as the author of Night Comes to the Cumberlands, the vivid, controversial book that did much to bring Appalachia to national attention in the early 1960s. Since then he has continued to write about the mountain region, his most recent book being The Watches of the Night (CENTER NEWSLETTER, Fall 1976). But his bread-and-butter career has always been the law. A few weeks ago, however, he announced his retirement from his law practice. The Louisville Courier-Journal responded in the following editorial. For the many who hate him and the multitude who love him, the news that Harry Caudill is planning to lay down his law books comes as a serious jolt. Who else can coal exploiters blame, or environmentalists hail, when things sometimes go right in Appalachia?

Still, the news is more than softened by the fact that this Whitesburg, Ky., crusader isn't really throwing in the cape and spear. At age 54, he's doing what many of the rest of us lack the courage or initiative to do. He's giving up the law, not to take life easy, but to concentrate on his second career. That's writing and lecturing, for the benefit of this generation and those that follow.

Actually, to those of us fortunate enough to have trudged the strip mine banks or pondered the future of Appalachia with Harry Caudill, his new endeavor should come as no surprise. He is one of those rare men who can be philosophical about the outrages of mountain strip mining and ingrained poverty, which he discusses in a vocabulary of appropriate moral indignation.

He has seen and written about the rape of his country: the eternal exploitation of Appalachia. Its minerals have been gouged out and sold, with little permanent benefit to the people who remain. Many of those who attained wealth there have moved away. The term "brain-drain" can appropriately be used.

Still, in the midst of much continuing despair, there are glimmerings of encouragement. The nation finally will get a federal strip mine bill in 1977, and it should be dedicated to such men as Harry Caudill and ex-Congressman Ken Hechler of West Virginia. If the remaining mountain beauty of Appalachia can be treated with

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Celebration

As you can see in the pictures on the facing page, many of Appalachia's greatest performers gathered in Berea during last October for the third annual Celebration of Traditional Music. The celebration, in fact, seems to have become an almost-instant tradition—and, as we said in the Fall 1976 CENTER NEWSLETTER, if you missed the big show (or even if you didn't), there's good news for you. The Appalachian Center now has available a record of highlights from the 1975 celebration. It's available by mail; the price is \$4.00 postpaid. Just write to the address on the outside of the NEWSLETTER.

CELEBRATION . . .

At right, John McCutcheon leads workshop class in the hammered dulcimer. All ages came, from young Doug Trantham (left, below) to Berzilla Wallin (middle), and all styles, from Sparky Rucker (right) to Betty Smith (bottom right). At bottom left is the popular Mountain Women's Cooperative String Band.



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inspired by the Barbara Allen ballad and by the Ballet Folklorica de Mexico." It is the feature production for the opening of the Kittredge Community Arts Center at Warren Wilson College; dates are April 29 and 30 and May 1. If you're interested, get in touch with Mrs. Rick Homan at the college's drama department, Swannanoa, N.C. 28778.

Buell Kazez 1900-1976

Buell Kazez, Baptist preacher, author of religious books, ballad singer of rare quality, banjo player and folk music authority, died last August 31. A member of Berea College's Traditional Music Committee, which plans the fall celebration of such music on campus, he was much admired by true lovers of folk music for his banjo playing and singing styles. He was born in Magoffin County, Ky., where he learned a great treasure of folk material, and he asked to be buried at the Mash Fork Baptist Church, where he had been ordained 59 years earlier. Mr. Kazez can be heard on Folkways FS 3810 *Buell Kazez Sings and Plays*.

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decency, it is time to focus our attention on saving its people. That is Mr. Caudill's path. . . .

His preachments will be controversial and unwelcome to those who thrive upon the status quo. But he is a prophet who cannot be exiled or silenced. If we could give him twin bequests, they would be that he have the patience to pursue his vision and that those who need his guidance most will heed his thoughtful counsel.

EYE on Publications

The Long Hunter: A New Life of Daniel Boone, by Lawrence Elliott (Reader's Digest Press/Crowell). There's been a great deal of Boone scholarship in the past few decades, says the author, but no important book about this most famous of old frontiersmen since 1939. Elliott goes about rectifying the situation in this detailed and readable account. We even learn that Boone detested—and therefore never wore—one particular kind of headgear: the coonskin cap.

West Virginia; A Bicentennial History, by John Alexander Williams (Norton/American Association for State and Local History). Another volume in the

Bicentennial series, the aim of which, in the words of the general editor, is to give a "summing up—interpretive, sensitive, thoughtful, individual, even personal—of what seems significant" in each state's history. It may not surprise you to learn that West Virginia is not in every respect "almost heaven" (as some non-West Virginian songwriters have declared it to be), but its history is of much more than parochial interest. After the dazzlingly corrupt administration of Gov. W.W. Barron in the early 1960s, says the author—a historian at West Virginia University—there was no way to go but up, and up the state went. Then came 1972 and Buffalo Creek, to which Gov. Arch Moore reacted by closing the flooded area to journalists because he objected to their "irresponsible reporting." Such attitudes, says Williams, "showed just how far West Virginia still had to go."

Everything in its Path, by Kai T. Erikson (Simon and Schuster). The Buffalo Creek disaster attracted lawyers as well as journalists, and the lawyers summoned a sociologist—Kai Erikson of Yale—who set out to assess the effect of the flood on the people of the valley. What he has produced, he says, is a study that is partly clinical, partly historical, partly sociological—a picture of collective trauma. By now some of the people have been compensated financially, "but they have not been compensated for the loss of their communal base."

The Long Tunnel: A Coal Miner's Journal, by Meade Arble (Atheneum). The author, we should say right away, is not a lifelong coal miner who suddenly decided to tell all; he is, instead, a graduate of Staunton Military Academy (where he was a classmate of John Dean III) and a nongraduate of Penn State and the University of Seville, where he was supposed to be a writer. In 1973 he returned to the Pennsylvania coal town where he grew up and, with a family to support, went into the mines. He spent almost a year underground—until his wife said she'd had it with the coal-mining scene. The book is pages from a diary of that mining year—and if you want to know what it's like to be a miner without going down there yourself, this is the book to read. Arble makes plenty of points about the industry, but he lets his story tell itself, which it does very effectively.

Pattern of a Man & Other Stories, by James Still (gnomon). A handsomely produced collection by the mountain region's master stylist. The stories, all of which have previously been published, appeared over a three-decade span.

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