

Appalachian Curator

Volume 2, Issue 2, Fall 2020



The *Appalachian Curator* is a publication of the
Special Collections Committee of the
Appalachian Studies Association

Volume 2, Issue 2, Fall 2020

The *Appalachian Curator* is a newsletter by and about special collections and archives that collect primary and secondary materials related to the Appalachian mountains. Our intended audience is scholars, students, researchers, archivists, librarians, and anyone else with an interest in resources that document Appalachia.

The *Appalachian Curator* is a publication of the Special Collections Committee of the Appalachian Studies Association. It is a free, online newsletter published triannually (Spring/Summer, Fall, and Winter) and hosted at the University of North Carolina at Asheville.

We welcome questions, comments, ideas for articles, news about Appalachian repositories, updates on new acquisitions, and anything related to Appalachian resources.

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Cover photo: Swinging bridge, The Little Pigeon River, Edgar Purdom (1900-1987), Hunter Library Special Collections, Western Carolina University

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Editor's Statement

Gene Hyde, University of North Carolina Asheville

Welcome to the Fall 2020 issue of the Appalachian Curator. We hope you're doing well as the season brings us shorter days and colder weather.

Despite the challenges the COVID has brought, we are glad to feature two articles that highlight the good work archivists, librarians, and scholars are doing in the region. Our featured collection is the Historic Frank Foster Memorial Library by the Urban Appalachian Community Coalition in Cincinnati. Moving from urban Appalachia to rural North Carolina, "Influence and Legacy: The Farmer's Federation in Madison County, NC," describes how the archives at Mars Hill University collaborated with the Appalachian Barn Alliance to create a virtual tour, exhibit, and Zoom presentation about the role of the Farmers' Federation in Western North Carolina.

When we published the last issue of Appalachian Curator in July, most Appalachian special collections were, in response to the COVID pandemic, closed or functioning at a reduced capacity. As we entered the fall months many collections began to open back up, often with reduced hours or limited access. We adapted to pandemic conditions, and in various ways, attempted to return to whatever semblance of "normal" we could muster. This issue's article "Working during COVID: Appalachian archives respond" includes reports from archival repositories and archivists on how they met the ongoing challenges of working during the pandemic, often with creativity and resilience. This issue of the Curator echoes the challenges of COVID in other ways. We had to temporarily suspend our publication of the updated Archives of Appalachia project due to funding, but we hope to be back on track by the next issue. You'll also notice far fewer new acquisitions than normal, reflecting how it's been difficult to acquire materials during the challenges of the pandemic.

Here's hoping you all stay warm and safe this winter. As always, feel free to send us your article ideas and new acquisitions for the Winter issue.

Have an idea? Please contact the editors – Gene Hyde (ghyde@unca.edu) or Liz Skene Harper (lizmarieharper@gmail.com).

Contents

- 2 Editor's Column
Gene Hyde, University of North Carolina Asheville
- 4 Influence and Legacy: The Farmers Federation in Madison County, NC
Ethan Mannon and Karen Paar, Mars Hill University
- 14 Featured Collection: Cincinnati's Urban Appalachian Community Coalition
Shannon Gillie, Jeff Dey, and Michael Maloney
- 17 Working during COVID: Appalachian archives respond
- 23 What's New in Appalachian Special Collections?

Influence and Legacy: The Farmers Federation in Madison County, NC

Ethan Mannon and Karen Paar, Mars Hill University

During the fall 2019 semester at [Mars Hill University](#), work began on a project made possible by a “Humanities Research for the Public Good” grant from the [Council of Independent Colleges](#). The project—“Influence and Legacy: The Farmers Federation in Madison County, North Carolina”—started with research in the James G.K. McClure, Jr. Collection housed in the [Southern Appalachian Archives](#) at Mars Hill University.

The McClure Collection includes many of the records, publications, and photographs that the Farmers Federation created during its decades of operation. The Federation began in 1920 with a cooperative business model intended to help farmers in the Fairview, North Carolina area purchase supplies and market crops in a way that brought them profit. The organization quickly expanded throughout western North Carolina and ultimately touched all aspects of farm life—not just the growing and selling of crops and livestock, but also education, religion, and alternative sources of income such as marketing forest products and selling handmade crafts.

The primary goal of the “Influence and Legacy” project was to make this archival material more visible and accessible by creating a virtual tour of a representative western North Carolina farm. The researchers were also hoping to answer a straightforward research question: what kinds of crops, crop varieties, and farming practices did the Farmers Federation encourage during the first half of the twentieth century? Entering into the project, the researchers hypothesized that the Federation encouraged farmers to adopt high-yielding varieties, and that the Federation’s influence decreased the diversity of field and garden crops in the region.

The Research Team and Their Work

The “Influence and Legacy” project involved a collaboration between the [Appalachian Barn Alliance](#) (ABA) and Mars Hill University. The Appalachian Barn Alliance is an organization based in Madison County, North Carolina that seeks to preserve the area’s rural heritage “through the documentation of the historical barn building traditions and the barns they represent.” The MHU research team was made up of three members: Michaela Lambert (a Business Administration major and English minor), Archivist Dr. Karen Paar, and Dr. Ethan Mannon (Associate Professor of English). They were joined by ABA members Mike Foster and Gail Meadows. Throughout the fall 2019 semester this team combed through the three largest categories of the McClure Collection. The Collection includes over 3,000 black and white photographs, several boxes of McClure’s personal papers, and hundreds of issues of the

Farmers Federation News—a monthly newsletter that included articles on farming and forestry practices, details about Federation events and activities, and advertisements.



(From Left) Michaela Lambert, Karen Paar, Ethan Mannon, and Gail Meadows conduct research in the reading room of the Ramsey Center for Appalachian Studies.

ABA member Taylor Barnhill consulted with the MHU team to help imagine and plan the virtual tour. He also showed Michaela and Ethan some of the farms in Madison County where buildings from the era of the Federation still stand.

Archivist Karen Paar finished arranging and describing the McClure Collection by rethinking its arrangement, then reworking a draft of a finding aid that had long been the best access point to the collection's materials. The [James G.K. McClure, Jr. Collection finding aid](#) is now shared on the Southern Appalachian Archives website as well as the Mars Hill University Library's [LibGuide for the Southern Appalachian Archives](#). Paar has also begun to share [digitized photographs from the McClure Collection](#) on the Southern Appalachian Archives website. Additional photographs from the McClure Collection will be added over time.

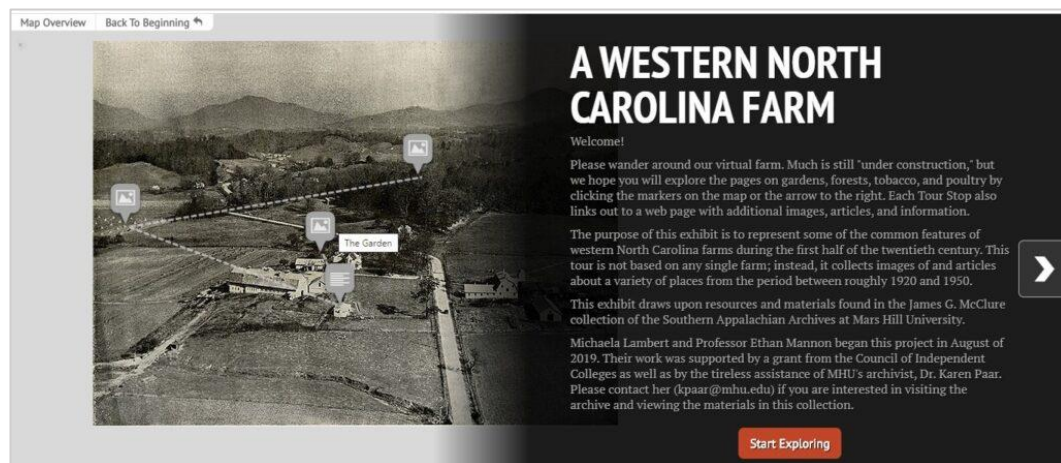
The Research Outcomes

The research conducted for the "Influence and Legacy" project yielded three outcomes: a virtual tour of a representative western North Carolina farm, a set of exhibit panels describing farm life and the Federation's work in western North Carolina, and a formal presentation on the team's research findings.

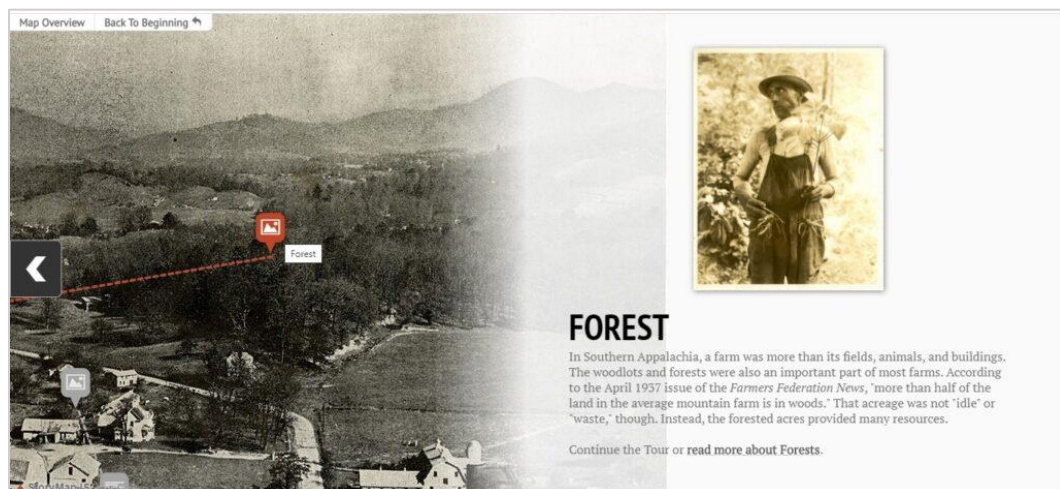
1) The Virtual Tour

The spring 2020 semester got off to a promising start for the research team. Dr. Mannon and Ms. Lambert continued their research in the archives and also began planning and developing the virtual tour. COVID-19 stalled their progress. MHU, like most other colleges and universities, closed the campus in March and moved all instruction online.

Despite this disruption, the MHU team managed to create a pared back version of the virtual tour. Using the “StoryMap” application provided free by [Northwestern University’s Knight Lab](#), they created a brief [farm tour](#) with four of the features one might expect to find on a typical western North Carolina farm between the years of 1920 and 1950: The Garden; A Farm’s Forests; Tobacco: Field, Barn, and Market; and a Chicken Coop.



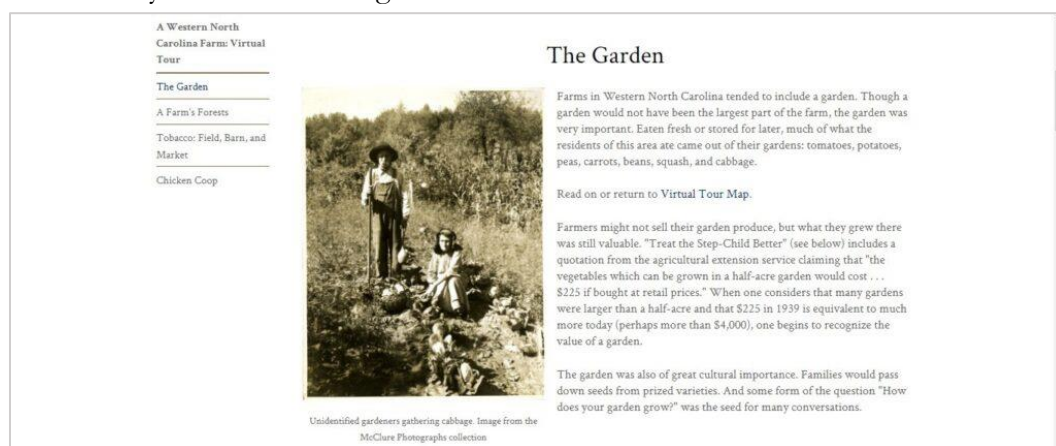
The Home page for the Virtual Tour. From here, users can navigate through each of the tour’s four “stops.”



The “Forest” stop on the Virtual Tour

The team selected these “tour stops” deliberately. Tobacco was a vital driver of western North Carolina’s agricultural economy during the first half of the twentieth century, and the Federation devoted a great deal of content in the *News* to the cultivation, curing, sorting, and sale of tobacco. However, farmers in the region (and throughout Southern Appalachia) also relied on their gardens and the forest for much of their own sustenance. Well aware of the needs and cultural practices of their readers, the *News* encouraged gardening as a cost-saving measure and emphasized forest management as a source of supplemental income. Finally, the Federation began a “100 Hens on Every Farm” campaign early in its history—underscoring the possibility for almost any farm in western North Carolina to generate some profit from poultry.

Each tour stop links to a more detailed page on MHU’s [Southern Appalachian Archives website](#). On these pages the research team was able to include far more of the content they uncovered through their research.



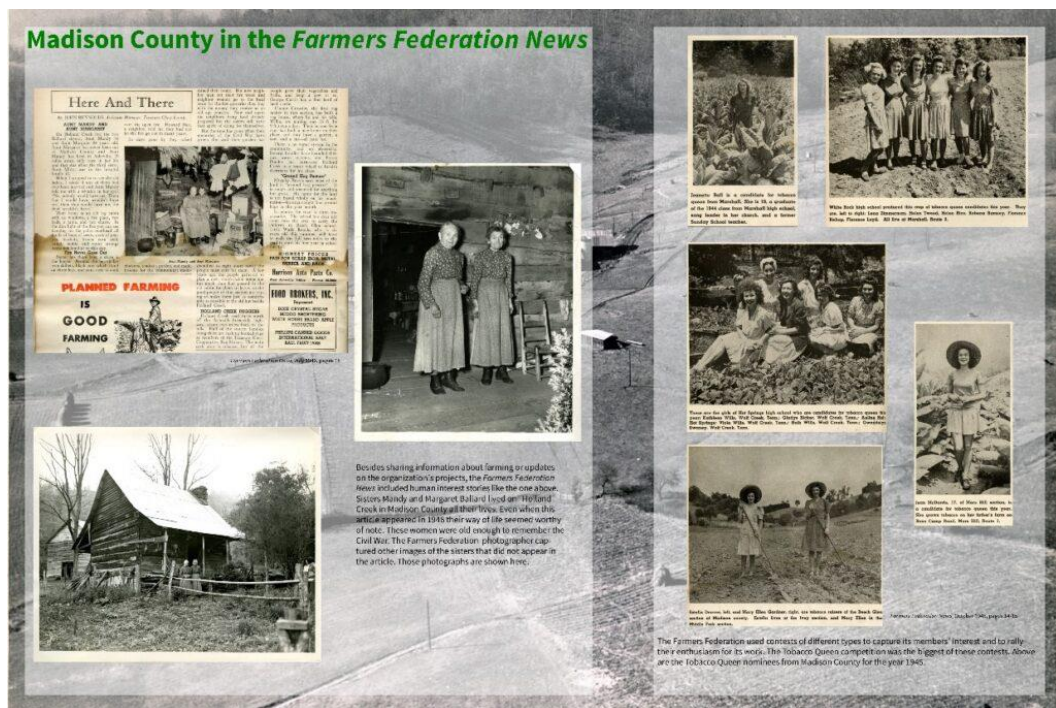
The top of the “Garden” page.



A second screenshot from “The Garden” page. This one displays some of the sketches of garden plants readers encountered in the *Farmers Federation News*.

2) Exhibit Panels

Madison County, North Carolina is a place without universal internet access. Part of the CIC's goal in promoting the "Humanities Research for the Public Good" program was to share widely the information gleaned from the archival collection under consideration. In writing our grant application, the team saw a role for a physical exhibit that complemented the work being done in the digital realm. We therefore adapted the content from the Virtual Farm Tour to fit onto printed panels. Several additional panels share Madison County-specific content from the *Farmers Federation News* and the McClure Photograph collection. We purchased easels for the ten panels in the exhibit, and both the Ramsey Center and the Appalachian Barn Alliance will at some point host the exhibit and loan it out to area institutions like libraries and schools



A museum panel detailing some of the Madison County, North Carolina material in the James G.K. McClure, Jr. collection.

3) Presentation

In November of 2020, the researchers presented their findings to an audience gathered on Zoom. Their presentation summarized the project and discussed how the Federation influenced the diversity of food plants in western North Carolina. As they explained, their hypothesis—that the Federation encouraged farmers to adopt high-yielding varieties, and that the Federation's influence decreased the diversity of field and garden crops in the region—was only partially correct.

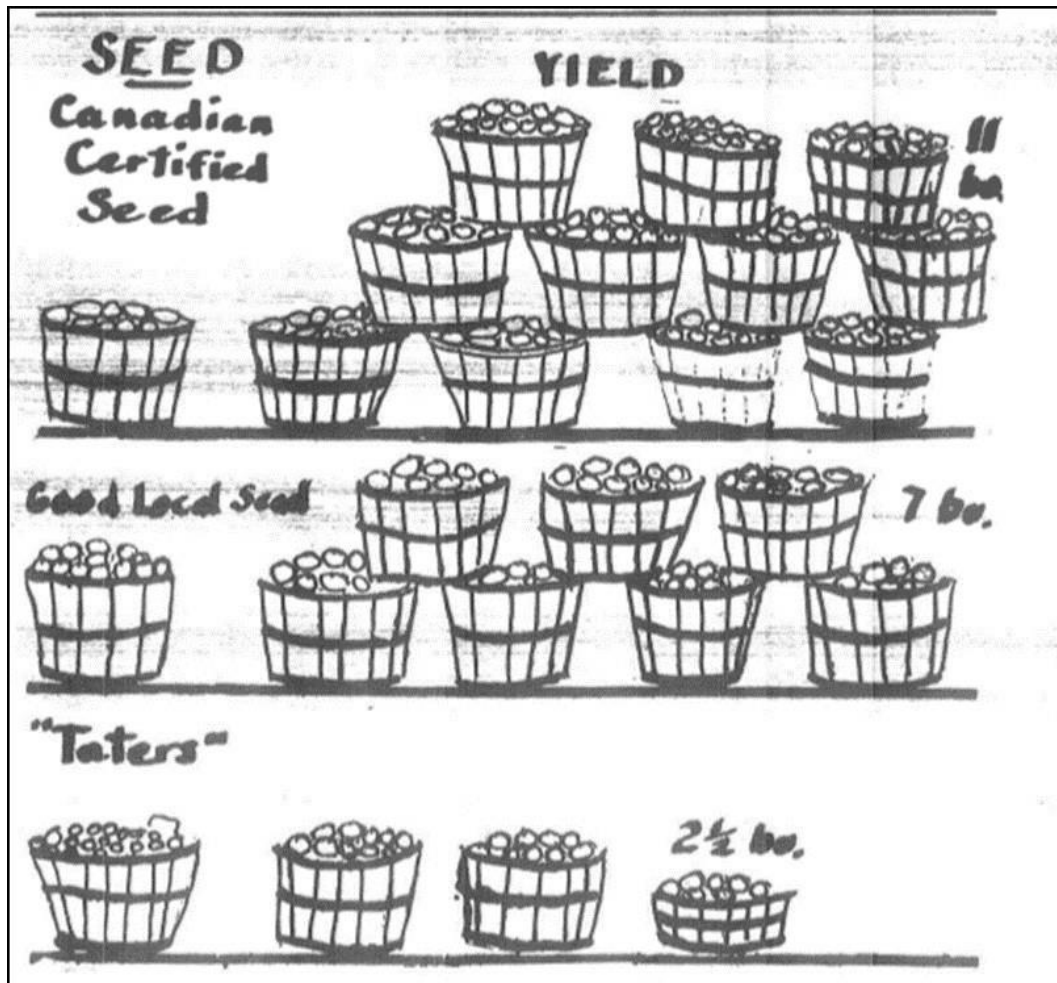
On the one hand, functioning as an effective cooperative required that those selling through the Federation grow the same varieties. Thus, the Federation encouraged

farmers to adopt particular plant and livestock varieties in order to produce a uniform product for market. For example, at various points during its existence, the Federation dictated that farmers grow “Porto Rico” sweet potatoes, “Irish Cobbler” potatoes, “Early Jersey Wakefield” cabbage, and “Marglobe” tomatoes. While this push toward standardization is understandable, it nevertheless required some sacrifices. In the case of the Marglobe tomato, the Federation celebrated the following “outstanding qualities” of the variety: it could “withstand long periods of wet and unfavorable weather,” was “resistant to Nail Head Rust and Fusarium Wilt,” and was a “good shipper” and a “good canner.” Noticeably absent from this list is any claim about the flavor or taste of the marglobe, suggesting that the Federation viewed this tomato more as a commodity than as food.

The Federation’s adoption and promulgation of the marglobe tomato provides a representative example of the organization’s focus on the economic welfare of the farmer. Gardeners and consumers are unlikely to relish a tomato bred for only vigor and shelf stability, but western North Carolina farmers needed a variety that would bear even in bad years and that produced fruit that could reach distant markets. Thus, the Federation favored the marglobe because they thought it the best candidate to help with their larger effort to improve the livelihood of the region’s farmers.

Part and parcel of the Federation’s economic focus was an effort to modernize farming and the farmer. As the research team read through years of issues of the *News*, they consistently encountered articles and advertisements that coached and cajoled the farmer to leave behind old ways and adopt the new—whether the new took the form of improved livestock and plant varieties, land management practices like contour plowing, or technology and machinery. An advertisement in the September 1922 issue of the *News* explained that adopting a Fordson tractor was “not a question of being able to afford a Fordson; it is a question of being able to continue farming on the old, too-costly basis” (p. 8). Similarly, an ad for fertilizer in the January 1937 issue of the *News* began “DO YOU FARM OR LIVE AS YOUR GRANDPA DID?” (p. 2).

Advertisements like these illustrate an ideology of “progress” that devalued the past. The *News* and the advertisements it ran tended to challenge and undermine local traditions, including the seed-saving traditions preserved by farmers in the region. In the calculus promoted by the Federation, yield, quantity, and production outweighed other considerations: flavor in the case of the marglobe tomato and, as the sketch below suggests, a local, community-oriented food system.



Sketch that appeared in the March 1933 issue of the Farmers Federation News.

On the other hand, the Federation recognized that the lives of its members involved more than producing food commodities for distant markets and that many of them were not ready to embrace modernity. In fact, the Federation understood that gardeners and seed savers in western North Carolina had, over time, developed heirloom varieties unique to the region and its micro-climates. The *News* celebrated and supported these traditions. For example, the December 1944 edition of the *News* included a photograph of an elderly woman and the impressive collection of candy roaster squash

she had grown.



Photograph and caption from the December 1944 issue of the Farmers Federation News.

Human interest stories like the one above make clear that the Federation's mission broadened beyond a singular focus on profit. In fact, those familiar with the Federation and McClure might remember The Lord's Acre program—a regional philanthropic effort that continues to make an impact in a somewhat different form in western North Carolina today.

The Farmers Federation's evolving stance on hybrid corn illustrates the way the organization prioritized the economic welfare of the western North Carolina farmer and, consequently, undermined older (and sometimes ancient) food production practices. Throughout the 1920s, the *News* stressed the importance of carefully selecting and saving seed corn from one year's crop to plant the following year. From example, an article from the November, 1920 issue of the *News* directed farmers to "select [your] own seeds and spend enough time to have something good" (p. 2). The June 1929 issue honored farmer James Monroe Jarvis for developing, over a period of thirty-five years, his Jarvis Golden Yellow prolific corn (see p. 9). The frequent seed-saving reminders and advice, as well as the awarding of honors to farmers who had developed open-pollinated

varieties, indicates that hybrid corn was not available in western North Carolina during the 1920s and much of the 1930s.

The first mention of hybrid corn found by the researchers was in an advertisement for Wood's Hybrid Early Yellow Dent corn that appeared in the March 1938 issue of the *News* (see p. 21). The ad described the variety as capable of increasing yields 15 to 30%. Interestingly, the *News* also published articles advising farmers against adopting hybrid varieties. In "Plan a Farm Program for 1939," a writer for the *News* labeled planting hybrid corns "a rather hazardous undertaking" due to the fact that "many of the hybrids are not adapted to our climate and soil" (January 1937, p. 3). By the middle of the next decade, the *News* had altered its stance: "now hybrids are being made that are suitable for Western North Carolina" (December 1945, p. 14). However, the *News* was not offering a whole-hearted endorsement of hybrid corns. The same article went on to warn farmers that "you cannot select your seed from hybrids for planting the following year," and an article from three months earlier had reiterated long-standing advice about selecting seed carefully from open-pollinated varieties: "leave some good two-eared stalks to mature for seed next year. Regardless of your variety, unless it is hybrid, you can increase your yield each year by field selections" (September 1937, p. 7).

The Federation's treatment of the choice between open-pollinated corn and hybrid corn establishes the organization's focus on western North Carolina farmers. Until hybrids were proven successful in the region, the Federation encouraged farmers to continue selecting seed from open-pollinated corn varieties. And even after proven hybrids were available, the Federation warned farmers that growing hybrid corn would require that they sacrifice some of their autonomy since the seed from hybrid corn will revert to the characteristics of one of the parent stocks.

Conclusion: Archives and Heirlooms

The "Influence and Legacy" project concluded that the Farmers Federation did much to multiply opportunities for farmers in western North Carolina. Their cooperative model enabled farmers to purchase supplies at bulk discounts and to sell their produce to distant markets. The *News* provided information about land and forest management practices from as far away as Germany. The Federation also built infrastructure that created new opportunities for farmers: a cannery in Henderson County as well as sweet potato curing barns, hatcheries, warehouses, and railroad sidings throughout the region.

However, the Federation also marched farmers down the path that has now, in the twenty-first century, deposited them in an agribusiness marketplace that is not kind to mountain farmers. Hybrid corn has given way to GMO; embracing economies of scale has birthed concentrated area feeding operations; and without the Federal price support program, tobacco has all but disappeared from small farms in western North Carolina.

Today, the issues of *The Farmers Federation News* exist as yellowing pages that can transport a reader back to farming's history in this region. The farms described in those pages practiced a diverse and mixed agriculture; rather than specializing in one product, the same farmer might sell eggs, tobacco, cattle, potatoes, apples, and timber during different seasons of the same year. The farms were also peppered with the buildings and other features that enabled farmers to meet many of their own needs: smokehouse, coop, bee-yard, orchard, springhouse and garden. These same kinds of buildings and features are currently re-appearing in backyard homesteads. Perhaps the documents housed in the Southern Appalachian Archives at MHU can contribute to the rethinking and reshaping of regional food systems that is happening now. Perhaps those articles and blueprints (some of which are included in the virtual tour) will be recognized as valuable knowledge from the past—as heirlooms. The researchers involved in “The Influence and Legacy” project certainly hope that is the case.

Karen Paar is the Director of Southern Appalachian Archives & University Archivist at Mars Hill University.

Ethan Mannon is Assistant Professor of English Interim Honors Program Director at Mars Hill University.

Featured Collection: Cincinnati's Urban Appalachian Community Coalition Revives Historic Foster Library for a New Generation of Urban Appalachian Scholars, Activists and Enthusiasts

Shannon Gillie, Jeff Dey, and Michael Maloney

“Urban Appalachians are not transplanted mountain people trying to live a mountain life in the City; they are a new community who have built a new life in the City. “– Jeff Dey

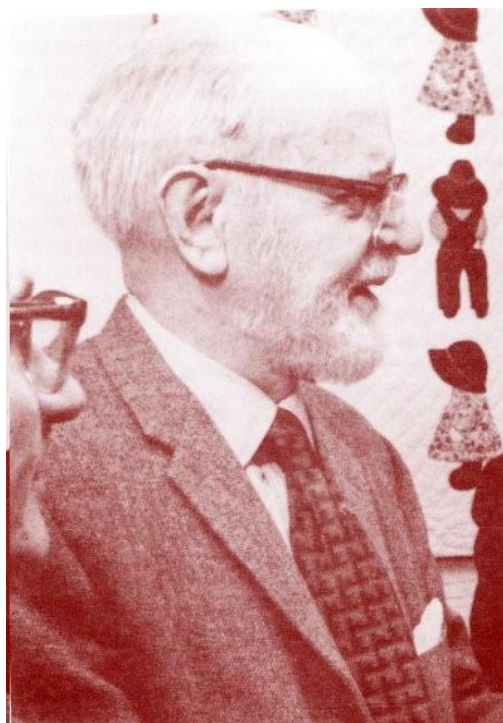
Tucked in a multipurpose room in a Cincinnati neighborhood building are six bookshelves. They are tall and nondescript, but they house an intriguing collection. Jesse Stuart novels are inches away from a printed version of the 1974 Neighborhood Development Plan for a series of Cincinnati neighborhoods. A shelf below that stores *Southern Exposure* magazines from the 70s and 80s. Appalachian children's books, black Appalachians, urban affairs, poetry, folklore, and Appalachian women are also nearby. And a few bookshelves over, a collection of foundational texts for understanding the Urban Appalachian experience are shelved in the Frank Foster Collection.



Library meeting room

The history of Urban Appalachians is rich and multifaceted. The purpose of the Frank Foster Memorial Library is to curate and store physical manifestations of that history. Many people don't realize the impact Appalachians had on the cities to which they moved over the last century, as the (often exploitative) economic supports that existed in the Appalachian region shrank. For Cincinnati, Appalachian migrants moved into neighborhoods like Over-the-Rhine and Lower Price Hill. By the hundreds of thousands, they came and settled in both inner city and suburban areas throughout Northern Kentucky and Southwestern Ohio. The best known of their settlements were "ports of entry" neighborhoods like Cincinnati's Over-the-Rhine and Dayton's Fifth and

Wayne. Smaller cities like Covington, Newport, Middletown, and Hamilton also became home to huge Appalachian concentrations.



Frank Foster

Once a community of Appalachians developed in Cincinnati, the need to understand their community and history emerged. What was the role of Appalachian people in the patchwork of groups populating the city? What were the needs of the community? How could they be helped? What could they offer the larger community? The library developed as a means for answering many of these questions. It continues to help document the ways Urban Appalachians are similar to many other underrepresented groups in urban contexts; they were included, for example, in the Human Rights Ordinance of 1992, along with race, color, sex, disability, religion, national or ethnic origin, age, HIV status, and marital status. The *Social*

Areas of Cincinnati report is published for each census decade since 1970, documenting demographic shifts and needs across the city. These reports are part of the library's contents

The Hutchins Library's Special Collections and Archives at Berea College also has a major collection of urban Appalachian material including the archives of the [Urban Appalachian Council](#) and the papers of [Philip Obermiller](#), Thomas Wagner and Michael Maloney.

The Urban Appalachian Community Coalition worked with a University of Cincinnati student intern this year to bring the library collection online. With the vast majority of materials now catalogued, students, scholars, youth, and anyone with an

interest in understanding Urban Appalachians has the opportunity to explore the digital library.

Shannon Gillie is a graduate student at the University of Cincinnati in the DAAP School of Planning. She is also an intern for the Urban Appalachian Community Coalition, working with the library as well as a community study of the Village of Elmwood Place (near Cincinnati).

Jeff Dey is part of the Urban Appalachian Community Coalition's Core Group in Cincinnati.

Michael Maloney is part of the Urban Appalachian Community Coalition's Core Group and was the founding director of the Urban Appalachian Council where the Frank Foster Library originated. He is a social demographer and Appalachian scholar.

Working during COVID: Appalachian archives respond

Appalachian Curator editors asked regional archivists how they responded to working during the COVID pandemic. We received ten responses from a range of collections that reflect the different types of archives we have in Southern Appalachia - large research universities, smaller public and private liberal arts colleges, and a public library. Several general themes are consistent in these responses - repositories closed, staff developed new workflows and tackled new projects, and many places have reopened with limited hours, limited access, and different workflows.

West Virginia University

Like so many other archival institutions, COVID-19 significantly impacted the West Virginia & Regional History Center (WVRHC) at West Virginia University Libraries. Beginning in March, in-person public operations ceased and the majority of staff began working from home. The transition to working physically away from our collections was not easy but it enabled WVRHC staff to re-prioritize and focus on data cleanup, research, professional development, and other functions that are easy to let go during the normal day to day operations. Our reference staff continued to accept questions from researchers, compiled them in a queue, and answered remotely those that could be. Acquisitions were severely limited, though a few contactless pickups did take place. Arrangement and description of collections transitioned to creating digital inventories and contents lists for those that were only held in analog form.

For two months during the summer, 40 percent of the Center staff were furloughed by WVU. They returned at the end of July. Beginning on August 10, WVRHC staff returned to working in the building in a limited capacity. Most are working a hybrid schedule, with a few remote only and a few onsite only. Half shifts have been instituted to reduce the number of people onsite at any given time. In-person researchers are limited to WVU faculty, staff, and students by appointment only. This is a major change from our normal operations as our patron base is at least 50 percent from the general public. Previously, the Center did not require appointments for use of materials but we have found that it has improved staff and patron experiences. We will consider adopting this method when we are open to the general public again. Reference staff continue to take in questions from non-affiliated patrons and have been working through the queue with the help of student workers and graduate assistants who are working onsite. Class instruction is all virtual. Archives and manuscripts processing, arrangement, and description has resumed but is balanced between what needs to be done onsite and what can be done from home.

Information about access to the WVRHC during COVID is in this [libguide](#).

Lori Hostuttler, Assistant Director, West Virginia & Regional History Center

Carson-Newman University

We at the Mildred L. Iddins Special Collections at Carson-Newman University are here and working our regular hours. While we are open to the campus community for walk-in inquiries, we are not open to the public. However, we continue to answer any and all reference questions that come in by phone, email and the library's website. One staff is small and made up of one full time person and one part time. Our part time person is splitting time working in the Special Collections and from home. Honestly, our workflow has been pretty much the same as before the pandemic and we feel blessed by God to continue doing what we enjoy doing!

Albert L. Lang, Special Collections Librarian & Archivist

North Carolina Collection at Pack Library, Asheville, NC

On March 19 the Buncombe County Public Library System, including the North Carolina Collection, closed due to Covid-19. No one was allowed in the buildings, but we were allowed to work from home assisting patrons with research and reference questions. The NC Room hosted several virtual classes including ones teaching our patrons and researchers on how to navigate different online resources while we were closed. Other library staff were deployed to assist at the nonemergency 911 call center and the ABCCM food pantries. On May 11 we were allowed back into our space, but the building remained closed to the public. During this time we were able to work on reorganizing several collections and catch up on some processing while also responding to inquiries through email and phone. This was all in addition to spending a few days a week assisting other branches with curbside library service. Word finally reached us that starting the week of July 6 we could begin welcoming patrons and researchers, by appointment only, back to the NC Collection. We were fully booked each week and enjoyed being able to interact with our patrons and researchers again. An exciting development that occurred during the closure was an opportunity to collaborate with Engaging Collections, an organization that partners under represented local artists with archives. They are working together to reimagine our space to make it more welcoming. Due to this project, the NC Collection will once again be closed to the public until around the first of the year, but we will still be available for phone and email questions. We are looking forward to re-opening our updated space and welcoming everyone back in the New Year.

Kathy Hill, NC Room, Pack Library, Asheville NC

Warren Wilson College

Warren Wilson College officially shut down when state and local "Stay Home-Stay Safe" orders were issued. In the days ahead of the shut-down, I gathered up journals, books, and some non-essential research and archival materials and brought them home. I turned the quarantine into a study & reading time, a time to catch up on all those articles in the *American Archivist* I'd been meaning to read but never seemed to have time for, to watch as many webinars courtesy of LYRASIS on digital preservation as I could stand. It was kind of like being back in school. For someone who is an introvert, I enjoyed my enforced time at home with my husband, dog and adult son, though we all worked steadily through the 4-month shutdown. I got some significant planning, writing, digitizing and study done. WWC began allowing people back on campus in mid-July. The college opened in August with a hybrid learning plan, and allowed about 80% of students to return to campus. As of this writing, it's the end of week 7, and we have no positive cases nor anyone in quarantine; that's due to everyone's adherence to the 3Ws. The Pew Learning Center/Ellison Library has reduced public hours, and we all take a 4.5 hour circulation shift to assist our student workers. I'm still working from home for about 40% of my hours, but feel reasonably safe to work alone in the college's archives.

Diana Sanderson, Warren Wilson College Archives, Asheville NC

West Virginia Folklife Center, Fairmont State University

The Frank and Jane Gabor West Virginia Folklife Center is on the campus of Fairmont State University. We were closed from March to August. The director, the projects director, and the work study students worked remotely. We came back the second week of August. Currently, we are holding face-to-face classes for our folklore and museum studies students in the Folklife Center, but we are closed to the public. The campus is closed to the public.

We are using this time to update our permanent exhibit. The work study students are creating 2-minute audio tracks to go with each of the 10 panels in our permanent exhibit.

We have offered the following online public events using WebEx.

- A workshop on oral history collection
- An evening of storytelling
- An online author series featuring three WV writers

We are working on an oral history project and interviewing informants by speaker phone. We are also providing some folklore content in our Facebook posts.

Francene Kirk, Ed.D., Interim Director, WV Folklife Center

Berea College

Berea College ceased in-person classes on March 13 and closed the student dormitories two days later. As of March 17, all campus employees who could work from home were asked to do so. At that time Special Collections and Archives staff closed the reading room and started working remotely, with occasional visits to the office for matters that needed to be handled on-site. As in-person classes resumed in August, Special Collections personnel returned to campus on a regular basis and two student assistants joined the team. New cleaning and safety protocols were established for the department, including making the reading room open by appointment only and quarantining all materials paged to the reading room for 36 hours after use. Fall campus guidelines mandate the wearing of masks and observance of social distancing. They also exclude off-campus visitors, including archives researchers. Library regulations have banned holding class sessions in the building, so our normal teaching engagements with students are on hold. However, a virtual workshop is in the planning. Remote consultations and a few college staff research visits are keeping Research Services Specialist Sharyn Mitchell busy. Collections Archivist Lori Myers-Steele has created a [COVID-19 archive](#) and worked on processing collections. Sound Archivist Harry Rice is completing a significant CLIR oral history digitization grant. New department head Tim Binkley has curated an [online exhibit on woman suffrage](#) and worked on collections housing and shelving issues. During this period of fewer in-person engagements, the team has also stepped up social media outreach. At present, one staff member continues to work remotely most of the time. The others rotate days out of the office to decrease the number of persons in our work space at the same time. We look forward to planning post-COVID-19 classes, events, exhibits, and research visits.

Timothy S. Binkley, Head of Special Collections and Archives, Berea College

East Tennessee State University

ETSU staff began working remotely on March 23, and the Archives staff transitioned all meetings, instruction sessions, and reference appointments online. Two staff members were able to access collections two afternoons each week, in order to scan materials for electronic delivery to patrons and to survey the collections and facilities. Staff returned to campus on a staggered schedule beginning July 1, and our reading room reopened to the public – by appointment only – beginning Monday August 10. Student workers and

graduate assistants returned beginning in late August. We have strict requirements for mask-wearing and social distancing, and we also quarantine all collections for 72 hours after their last use. For smaller requests (e.g., single folders or a limited number of photographs or A/V items) we continue to digitize and send electronically, so our in-person researchers remain limited. Since over 80% of ETSU's courses are online for this semester, our instruction sessions have also transitioned to online-only. To facilitate access to collections, we continue an aggressive digitization schedule, and we have also begun providing streaming access to a limited portion of our A/V holdings.

Jeremy A. Smith, PhD, Director of the Archives of Appalachia. East Tennessee State University

University of North Carolina Asheville

Special Collections at UNC Asheville shut our doors on March 16 when the university went exclusively to online instruction. We had two days in the office to prepare for working remotely and were not allowed back in the office until the last week of July, two weeks before UNC Asheville's Fall Semester began in mid-August. We established a daily routine in March where the staff (Gene Hyde and Ashley Whittle) meet each morning for a meeting via Google hangouts, and we keep a shared remote working log tracking our daily activities. As of August our reading room is open by appointment only with strict mask and social distancing guidelines, and access is limited to UNC Asheville students, faculty, and staff per university COVID regulations. These access regulations will continue through the Spring semester. We are rotating shifts in the office to meet with researchers and return to hands-on processing and digitization, and between our two staff members we are in the office 2-3 days each week, working remotely during the rest of the time. We are digitizing material to meet researcher requests but in limited amounts due to time and staffing. We have a number of community researchers waiting for us to open to the public but we have been given no indication as to when that might be. We're being as flexible as possible and making this work as best we can. Given all this, our overall numbers are better than we hoped - the Fall 2020 semester's reference stats were at 77% of Fall 2019.

Gene Hyde, Head of Special Collections, UNC Asheville

Appalachian State University

The Special Collections Research Center at Appalachian State University closed to researchers in mid-March, when the campus closed to students and non-essential personnel. The SCRC team worked on a variety of projects while at home over the summer, including finding aid clean-up, research and scholarship, website migration, and remote reference assistance. Campus employees were not allowed into campus buildings

without permission from the Chancellor, so some of our reference inquiries had to wait until we get could access the physical collections again. Eventually, folks began to return to the building, with permission, in order to get ready for the fall semester. We have circulating secondary source materials, so we established appointment hours for students, faculty, and staff to browse and check-out resources, though books can also be requested from the cataloged and mailed, should folks not feel safe coming into the library. We also established appointment research hours for the manuscripts, archives, and rare books. We recently increased the number of days and appointment hours for the circulating collection, based on feedback we received from students and faculty. The library remains closed to non-App State affiliates, so we're still providing quite a bit of research assistance to off-site researchers, but we can at least access the collections now. We'll see what the spring brings!

Kim Simms, Coordinator of Special Collections, Appalachian State University

Mars Hill University

The Southern Appalachian Archives and its parent organization, the Liston B. Ramsey Center for Appalachian Studies, closed with the rest of the Mars Hill campus in mid-March, 2020. In the months that followed, archivist Karen Paar received notice that the Ramsey Center and the Special Collections reading room were to move to another part of the library building. She returned to work early to prepare for that move. The Mars Hill University library and the Southern Appalachian Archives remained closed to most researchers until the students' return to campus in early September. From that time on, the archives has been open by appointment to members of the campus community. We observe CDC-recommended precautions and quarantine materials that are used by researchers. The main use of the archives and Special Collections books has been from our Hart-Melvin Archival Research Fellows. This faculty-student team got a late start because of the delayed return to campus, but they have diligently appeared in the archives for research two afternoons a week. We are handling other reference requests remotely.

Karen L. Paar, Ph.D., Director, Southern Appalachian Archives, Mars Hill University

What's New in Appalachian Special Collections?

Due to the COVID pandemic and the fact that many repositories are closed, we have fewer items in our New Acquisitions section this issue.

Berea College

The Phil Primack Photographs and Papers (1924-2000) is comprised of photographs, correspondence, and writings of journalist Phil Primack. The collection contains numerous photographs, most of them taken while Primack worked as a reporter for *The Mountain Eagle* in Whitesburg, KY. In addition to documenting coal mining, the life and work of coal miners, the Finley Mine disaster at Hurricane Creek (December 1970), and the Buffalo Creek disaster (February 1972), Primack's photographs document the landscapes, people, history and culture of Appalachia. You can view the collection finding guide at:

<https://berea.libraryhost.com/?p=collections/controlcard&id=724>. Digitized materials from the collection are linked through the finding guide or can be viewed as a group at: https://berea.access.preservica.com/uncategorized/SO_31f3d2bd-882b-4059-93bd-59fd05c5ad28/

The Moran Family Papers (1805-1953) contain photographs, extensive family correspondence, writings, documents, and other items of the Moran Family – early settlers in the Silver Creek, Madison County area between Berea and Richmond Kentucky. The collection also includes materials (such as land deeds and grants) of various families related to the Moran family and others from the Madison County area. You can view the collection finding guide at:

<https://berea.libraryhost.com/index.php?p=collections/controlcard&id=221>

University of Kentucky Libraries Special Collections Research Center

The University of Kentucky Libraries Special Collections Research Center has acquired the photographs of Malcolm Wilson. Malcolm Wilson of Blackey, Kentucky, is an Appalachian photographer who currently operates the Humans of Central Appalachia Facebook page. Wilson began the page in 2015 as a documentary project focusing on the people and culture of Central Appalachia. The photographic collection includes work prints, exhibit prints, slides, and digital photographs spanning Wilson's career as a professional photographer. <https://www.humansofcentralappalachia.org/>