

# Appalachian Curator

Volume 3, Issue 1, Spring/Summer 2021



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

## Volume 3, Issue 1, Spring/Summer 2021

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

# Editor's Column

*Gene Hyde, University of North Carolina Asheville*

Welcome to the new issue of *Appalachian Curator* – we're now into Volume 3! Thanks to all of you who have contributed to and read the newsletter over our first six issues. We look forward to hearing ideas about articles or features so don't hesitate to get in touch if you have something that you think would fit in these virtual pages.

Two feature stories highlight this issue. The first is an interview with Trevor McKenzie, the recently appointed Director of the Center for Appalachian Studies at Appalachian State. Trevor discusses his background as an archivist in the W. L. Eury Collection at ASU and how that prepared him for his new position. Our second article features Christopher Miller discussing the Appalachian Studies Artifacts Teaching Collection at Berea College, a fascinating collection with a unique pedagogical focus.

We're pleased to publish the Kentucky installment of the revised and updated 2020-21 Archives in Appalachia Survey in this issue. This marks the second installment of this ongoing update of the 1985 survey. An overview of this project was published in the Spring/Summer 2020 issue of the *Curator* alongside the Georgia installment of the project. North Carolina is the next state scheduled for an update in this project, so look for that in an upcoming issue.

I'll wrap this up with a farewell and an introduction. We bid farewell to Derek Whisnant, who was instrumental in doing the research for the Georgia and Kentucky installments of the Archives in Appalachia Survey. Derek graduated from UNC Asheville last May and plans on going to graduate school and pursuing a career as an archivist. We're also delighted to introduce Ashley Whittle who has joined the editorial board of *Appalachian Curator*. Ashley works in Special Collections at UNC Asheville and brings a love of archival work and a strong background in Appalachian Studies to the editorial board. Welcome, Ashley!

Thanks for reading and sharing your archival stories. Our next issue is due in the spring, with a deadline of March 1, 2022.

Possible story ideas include:

- community archiving projects
- digitization projects
- histories and profiles of archival repositories
- profiles of archivists and donors

- descriptions of collections
- articles on the craft and practice of archival work
- lists of new acquisitions
- upcoming workshops or training opportunities
- upcoming or current exhibits and events
- news about grants or collaborations
- or anything else related to Appalachian archives

Have an idea? Please contact the editors – Gene Hyde ([ghyde@unca.edu](mailto:ghyde@unca.edu)) or Liz Harper ([harpere@wcu.edu](mailto:harpere@wcu.edu)).

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# Featured Collection: The Appalachian Studies Artifacts Teaching Collection – Loyal Jones Appalachian Center, Berea College

*Christopher A. Miller*

In recent years, the role of artifact collections in colleges and universities has been evolving. It is not that museums, galleries, or artifact collections are new on campuses. Nor is it new for students to occasionally encounter cultural artifacts. For a long time, a visit to a campus museum, a tour of some exhibits, and talk from a curator were a low-key break from the classroom. However, artifacts in the classroom are becoming more serious business. This change has been fueled by increasing scholarly respect for material culture sources, artifact

pedagogies that move beyond connoisseurship, and the growing role of curation skills in the digital economy. Some college and university collections have been rebranded and their curators have been re-cast as curator-teachers.

Berea College's Appalachian Studies Artifacts Teaching

Collection (ASATC), based in the Loyal Jones Appalachian Center, is an interesting case study of such evolution. Since 2000, this Appalachian artifact collection has been under redevelopment as teaching collection.



The Loyal Jones Appalachian Center's artifacts collection is a teaching collection. Structured in-class artifact encounters are job #1.

## Berea College Three Appalachian Collections

Berea's artifact teaching collection stands alongside its better-known Southern Appalachian Archives (SAA) and Weatherford-Hammond Mountain Collection (WHMC) both based in Hutchins Library Special Collections & Archives. The SAA

consists primarily of 2D and digital archival materials. The WHMC consists of published materials. The ASATC consists of 3D artifacts and is based in the Appalachian Center. These three complementary Appalachian collections have grown up as siblings at Berea.

At Berea College, deliberate Appalachian artifact collecting began in the mid-1890s. Berea's President William G. Frost (1854–1938) and faculty doing extension work began to collect “relics from the mountains” to serve as proof-texts for their conceptions of Appalachians as “our contemporary ancestors” and Appalachia as “the land of saddle bags.” Indeed, a handful of artifacts now held in the ASATC appear in photographic illustrations accompanying Frost's writings about the region. Over time, Appalachian artifacts accumulated in the library's Curio Collection or languished in various academic departments' closets.

In 1962, the nearly 2,000 object Edna Lynn Simms Mountaineer Museum Collection was gifted to Berea College. Around 1915, E.L. Simms began visiting the Gatlinburg, Tennessee, area, hiking, building relationships with local families, and collecting artifacts of mountain life. In 1931, Simms opened the privately owned Mountaineer Museum near the entrance to the National Park. The museum was a Gatlinburg tourist attraction for 24 years. After Simms' death in 1961, on advice from Allen Eaton, Simms' children offered the museum collection to Berea College. After some deliberation, the college accepted.

The gift of the E.L. Simms collection prompted Berea College to gather its 3D Appalachian artifact holdings into a singular Appalachian Museum Collection. Berea hired a professional director/curator who, supported by undergraduate student workers, catalogued the collection according to museum standards, organized storage areas, and curated the initial set of exhibits. The Appalachian Museum opened to the public in 1970. The museum quickly grew into an active force collecting and interpreting Appalachian material culture. Its collections supported the watershed craft exhibition “Islands in the Land” (Pasadena Art Institute, 1972); the book, *Kentucky's Age of Wood* (1976); the book, *A Catalogue of Pre-Revival Appalachian Dulcimers* (1983); the national travelling exhibition, “Ribs, Rods, and Splits: Appalachian Oak Basketry” (1988-1993); and “Gallery V (for Virtual)” first online museum experience in Kentucky (1994-1998)<sup>i</sup>. Initially, the collection focused on the mountain cabin experience. However, as Appalachian studies evolved, the Appalachian Museum followed, focusing on Appalachian folklife. It added nearly 2,000 regional folklife artifacts to the collection. The largest portion documented regional crafts and music.

During the 1990s, as has happened with many outward-facing university museums, the Appalachian Museum entered a tumultuous period. Around 1992, the



college administration charged the museum to focus on collecting and interpreting 3D artifacts from Berea College's history. The museum did so for several years, adding 500 Berea College history artifacts. Then, in 1997, Berea College's strategic planning process recommended closure Appalachian Museum and the future of its artifact collections became uncertain. The Appalachian Museum closed to the public in May 1998.

### Becoming an Artifacts Teaching Collection

In 1999, the Appalachian Museum's artifact collection was transferred to Berea's revitalized Appalachian Center accompanied by a mandate to redevelop the collections and associated programming for curricular service. In early 2000, I became the teaching curator of this rebranded Appalachian Studies Artifacts Teaching Collection and have since led the redevelopment. The transformation to a teaching collection has involved several coordinated initiatives. First, course integration is our priority. We offer a in-class artifact encounters in a variety of modes. Each academic year we do about twenty in-

course sessions involving about 200-300 undergraduate students (Berea enrolls 1,500) and 400-500 artifacts. In addition to Appalachian Studies and General Studies courses, classes regularly using the collections include ART113 Appalachian Weaving, ANR334 Appalachian Plants & People, ART325 Fibers 3, HLT 210 Health in Appalachia, and TAD213 Appalachian Crafts.



The exhibition, "When I Was Twenty" in the Appalachian Center gallery engages historical imagination to try to connect artifacts to the contemporary student experience.

While the Appalachian Center is not a museum, exhibitions remain a part of its program and are open to the public on a more limited schedule.<sup>ii</sup> However, in keeping with our mission, exhibitions are developed to support student learning about the region and course meetings in the gallery are common.



A teaching collection also requires different infrastructure. An oversize, flexible, well-lit classroom adjacent to artifact storage makes hosting in-class artifact encounters easy. The curator sets up in advance, students arrive at class time, and the curator cleans up after. This model is attractive to faculty and even feasible for short sessions. While artifact handling is typically involved, every session begins with a lesson about preservation and proper handling.

Every curricular use of each artifact is recorded, much like library circulation records. Even artifact storage has been optimized for a teaching collection using an open concept to make student and faculty “shopping” for artifacts practical and efficient.



A class at work.

While in-person artifact encounters receive priority, virtual exhibits and online catalogue access are also part of the program and increased in importance during the pandemic. However, designation as a teaching collection leads us to favor modes of digital access that contextualize the artifact. Our current offerings are [on our website](#), in [Hutchins Library's LibGuides System](#), and in our new, still-emerging-from-its-cocoon LJAC [DigitalAccess system](#) (implemented in CollectiveAccess).

Our teaching focus also requires our collection development to be aimed towards making the ASATC into a better teaching collection. Its name begins with “Appalachian Studies” for a reason. The teaching themes and research interests of Appalachian Studies guide our acquisitions. For example, since 2000, we have built facets of the collection to support teaching about Appalachian identity and stereotypes, the social construction of places, Appalachian in the global economy, regional economic development, and global mountain living comparisons.

Finally, because of the Berea College’ required work-learning program, known as the Labor Program. The ASATC’s role as a learning laboratory for student curators not

peripheral. Each academic year two undergraduate students interested in curation-related careers commit to working with the collection 10 hours per week for the entire year and each summer several students work half-to-full-time in internships. Many of these students have gone



on to related graduate programs and careers as curators, librarians, or archivists.

After twenty years as a teaching collection, it is fair to make some assessments of the ASATC model. Use of the collection in public education significantly diminished.<sup>iii</sup> However, the number of students encountering the collection increased four times and the amount of time each student spends thoughtfully engaged with Appalachian material culture had increased ten-fold. The number and variety of artifacts utilized has also increased at least ten-fold. As a dedicated teaching curator, I consider the model for collections use in an academic environment to be a success.

*Christopher A. Miller is Associate Director and Curator, Loyal Jones Appalachian Center; College Curator, Berea College*

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<sup>i</sup> Gallery V (for Virtual) was the first museum website in Kentucky to include virtual exhibits, not just marketing information. It remained available on the web until about 2016 at <http://www.berea.edu/gallery/>. It can still be seen at the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine at <http://web.archive.org/web/20020615091535/http://www.berea.edu/GalleryV/>

<sup>ii</sup> The Covid-19 pandemic has eliminated public visits to exhibits since March 2020. However, typically the exhibits were free and open to the public from 8am-5pm on weekdays, except on college holidays.

<sup>iii</sup> The Appalachian Museum served about 15,000 public visitors per year during its years of operation.

## Interview with Trevor McKenzie, Director of the Center for Appalachian Studies at Appalachian State University

**Gene Hyde:** Thanks for talking with me Trevor. I'd like to discuss your current position and your older position and how being the archivist influences your current job. But, first, could you tell me about your current position?

**Trevor McKenzie:** I'm the Director for the Center for Appalachian Studies, which is focused on providing programming and research support for people interested in Appalachian Studies here at ASU. It's been restructured from a previous position that also oversaw the academics, or the degree granting portion of Appalachian Studies, and so this role is sort of a new position. In a way it's an old position, of course, that goes back all the way to Pat Beaver the first director, but then it's also a new position in that mainly this is a more of a community outreach focused position and a programming and events development position with research support for the program in Appalachian Studies, which we have here the master's degree program.

**GH:** And for people who may not be familiar with the Center, can you give a brief history of the Center and the academic programs associated with it?

**TM:** The Center for Appalachian Studies was founded in 1978 by Dr. Cratis Williams, who was the father of Appalachian Studies and was, by extension, the organizer of the Center for Appalachian Studies here. Cratis hand-picked a Duke University doctoral student he was working with, Dr. Pat Beaver, to be the first director. It's one of the oldest centers for this study around, and it's really a thrill to be part of that long legacy extending back to Pat Beaver and Cratis Williams. And Williams also did



Trevor McKenzie, Appalachian archivist and Director of the Center for Appalachian Studies, Appalachian State University. (Photo by Megan Sheppard Photography)

the legwork to found the W. L. Eury Appalachian Collection, which I was fortunate to work with for almost nine years. To be part of that sort of powerhouse history is a real honor.

**GH:** Can you tell me about how you got started working in the archives and how that experience helped you as an Appalachian Studies scholar?

**TM:** I graduated with a Master's degree in Appalachian Studies, and at the time I was graduating what remained of what had been the Appalachian Cultural Museum, which had been located on campus here, was in the process of being dispersed to locations across mostly the southeast. Which was really sad, as I had come to Appalachian State with an interest in both the Eury Collection and the Cultural Museum.

I had been a public history student in my undergrad years at Appalachian and had made connections with Dr. Neva Specht, who was overseeing this dispersal process that she been tasked with. She hired me to work on this project. Instead of "American Pickers" we were sort of like "American Givers." We had a white van and we'd drive all over the South. People would be like "are you sure you want to give this away?" and we'd say "yeah, sorry, we know it will be in good hands with you." We worked with the archives transferring records from the museum, and I got my feet with the archives that way. About the time that that position ended, there was a position open for an NHRPC grant that would fund processing of a decade-long backlog of collections, if not more, in the W. L. Eury Appalachian Collection, and so I jumped at the chance to be able to work with those materials. I applied for the job and was hired in the fall of 2012.

**GH:** I know that that was a pretty massive effort. What was it like working with all those collections? What did you do? Did you physically process collections, create finding aids, or what? I know you wrote the "Backlog Blog" documenting what you did.

**TM:** I was in charge of all those things. I came up with the "Backlog Blog" because we were supposed to have a blog to keep up with the grant's progress, so I dreamed up that name. As we went through the collections the blog kept those at the NHPRC who were monitoring the grant up to date, but also let the wider Appalachian community know what we were up to.

My hands were on the materials, I was really the point person and processor for the grant. When it came time to put these finding aids online for the processed materials that was part of my job. The entire scope of the project fell under what I was hired to do. There was some help from Anita Elliot, who was the other processor, and she did some of the smaller collections, but I processed most of the massive backlog. We created 456

new finding aids and processed a total of 1917 linear feet, which was 707 linear feet more than the total outlined in the initial grant proposal, so we outdid ourselves on processing.

It was everyday hands-on processing for two years, but I wouldn't trade that time for the world just to be in that collection and to see the wealth some of these materials. Some even dated back to Cratis Williams himself and some of his mentors like Dr. W. Amos Abrams. Some of the things that were reprocessed were, to my interest, foundational ballad collections that were part of this grant as well. I. G. Greer's collection, Dr. Abrams's collection that informed so much of the seven-volume Frank C. Brown Collection of North Carolina Folklore. Every day was getting to play with this treasure trove, this forgotten cave of unprocessed materials. And knowing some of the personalities behind our regional studies and some of the history of this region was thrilling.

**GH:** What happened after the grant ended?

**TM:** In 2014 I was fortunate that Fred Hay, Librarian of the Appalachian Collection, and Norma Riddle, who was University Archivist at the time, took a proposal to then Dean of the Libraries Joyce Ogborn to hire me. Basically, Anita Elliott, who had worked on some of the smaller collections on the grant, was set to retire. She had been with the university since she had graduated from high school in Ashe County sometime back in the late 1960s. She had one more year left and they were going to be short of a processing person, so they came up with a proposal to allow me to overlap with her for a year, with the promise that I would be the person to carry on processing in that position. So it was a great deal that they brokered there to keep me on, and I can't thank Fred, Norma, and Joyce enough to let the proposal go through. It was agreed that I would stay on in that position and be a processor focused on Appalachian collection materials.

**GH:** And you kept that job up until 2021 when you took this job, correct?

**TM:** Yes, and I really feel like I got to know that collection. I think the only other person who probably knew the collection in that deep of a way was Dean Williams. I always thought of Dean as the brain of the Appalachian collection. I relied on him due to his knowledge of the institutional history of the collection, as well as his wealth of knowledge about the content. I think Fred Hay would agree with me. Dean was someone that I leaned on and someone that I admired is a friend and an Appalachian scholar. Dean retired in 2019 right prior to the pandemic. After Dean left we were lucky

to hire Ross Cooper who had worked in the Watauga regional library and had similar skills in genealogy and a knowledge of local history

All this is to say that the time I was able to spend deep in the W.L. Eury Collection was invaluable for someone interested in history of the region. It was really a dream job.

**GH:** How do you think that knowledge of archival material and processes in Appalachia helps inform what you're doing now.

**TM:** To brag on the collection: this is one of Dr Fred Hay's lines that he usually uses "it's the oldest and largest collection of materials on the Appalachian region in the world." To be able to work with a collection with that scope exposed me to a lot of facets of understanding this region that streamline perfectly into this job as Director. There are things in the collection on environmental issues in the region, the Appalachian lands survey about land ownership in Appalachia, and all the things that the Center's been involved with in its history.

There are Helen Lewis's papers which were so much a part of our connection with Wales. The exchange between the Welsh coal fields and Appalachian being sort of a safe haven to filter miners between the coalfields in eastern Kentucky and Southwestern Virginia coalfields and having them collaborate with miners in the coalfields of South Wales, and having Appalachia sort of being that safe space between those two places to facilitate this dialogue between two areas that were, at that time in the 70s when that exchange was set up, when the coalfields in both of those regions were really embattled. So to be able to facilitate that exchange and that dialogue between these two similar regions of the world, and to see the Center's involvement in that thanks to Pat Beaver, underlined for me this deep connection that we have both within the region and abroad, a legacy that is meant to be carried on with the connections that this Center should continue to make and continue to foster as we have in our past.

That's just one very small example, and I use that because I was fortunate in 2016 to travel to Wales and represent Appalachian archives. At one point I was sitting at John Gaventa's supper table, and it seemed to me that all these major collections I've processed were all talking to each other in front of me because the people who had created them were all sitting together. It was sort of an awkward dinner over wine, and it's sort of surreal. Helen Lewis is talking to John Gaventa and it's like "folder number three is coming up to talk with folder 18 from box 70," and they're having this conversation. And Richard Greatrex is at the head of the table, and he's Helen Lewis' cinematographer for this, the person shooting the footage of these Welch coal strikes and



these in eastern Kentucky. And you have these three collections talking! Pat Beaver was there, so it's like all of this institutional memory was just swimming across the table. I don't know if it was a mildly psychedelic moment where the folders were coming out to greet each other, and the conversation was like living finding aids!

It really underlined for me the importance of the work we do as archivists because these are real people, and it helped me confirm that I had done an okay job in structuring these collections and getting the personalities of these people and how they organize their thoughts. It was like having the metadata hinged on each comment and having these small snippets of the abstract reconfirmed, or that I got the historical note right. Okay, cool! And to make it even more meta, John Gaventa turns around and says there some things I might need to restrict that were not restricted!

The talk was about how dangerous that work is as well, as it was dangerous to be asking "who owns Appalachia?" It was dangerous to record coal strikes on each side of the Atlantic, I think, at one point they even had to smuggle some of that footage out in the hubcaps of tires.

So I realized what had been given by these people to create these collections and how precious these materials were — something that is smuggled away from basically a war zone in the hubcap of a car, because somebody would confiscate and destroy it. And now it's living here in our archives.

**GH:** Tell me about teaching the bibliography course that is required for the MA in Appalachian Studies at ASU. All of us who went through the program took it. Fred Hay taught it for years, and Mike Wise taught it when I was there. What's your approach to it and how do the archives fit in?

**TM:** That course is meant to throw Appalachian master's students into the deep end of what the concept of this region has been, and that leans heavily on archival materials, as well as materials in the closed and open stacks of the Appalachian collection, all of which I consider rare books. The way I've structured the course draws inspiration from Dr. Hays's approach to the course, and involves acquainting students with how the region has been conceptualized, how this area Appalachia has been thought of as an entity. And in order to do that, we have to read a lot of very old and very problematic texts.

We consider surveys of the Appalachian region. Some of them are real surveys, some of them are more literary works, more travel writing. I had the students start with reading William Byrd's *The History of the Dividing Line Betwixt Virginia and North Carolina*. His conceptualization is "once you hit the mountains the people are different," or "the

mountains are different once you hit the North Carolina line.” There are the beginnings of this “othering” of Appalachia, which makes it convenient to scapegoat the region, a point that comes out from reading all these surveys. We progress from William Byrd up through James Wickes Taylor’s *Alleghania*, and Washington Irving’s treatise that America should be called Appalachia or Allegheny because it’s a more native name, and then we kind of get into the problems of with taking native names that’s not exactly representative of the people who are there. We continue the history up to Weller’s *Yesterday’s People* and then several centuries of history of laying out these surveys and the idea, “where is this place?” and “who are these people?” That’s the heavy front end of the course that requires reading two books a week. Sometimes it’s more entertaining, like reading Horace Kephart, and other times it’s very dry, like the 1935 USDA Agricultural Survey which has a map of the average age of mules in the region, which I find personally interesting but may not be of interest to everyone.

The purpose of the course, at least on that front end, is to throw them in the deep end and have them be disoriented, “Whoa! I thought Appalachia was here” and “I thought it was this, but somebody this far back says it’s this.” So it’s kind of being thrown into the waters in the first part of the class, and then there’s this life preserver angle in the second part of the course where we invite Appalachian scholars to speak, people that are involved in Appalachian Studies. Then I’m also expanding that to bring in people actively involved in regional organizations and nonprofits, places like Watauga Riverkeeper. That’s the more comfortable part of the course where there’s less reading but there are people involved in the region. I have them read an article or several articles or a part of the book or watch a film from whoever is visiting and ask them to have questions based on that.

It really is a class that I think a lot of people find dry and I think a lot of people would back away from teaching, but for my background it’s one of the most exciting courses that I can teach because it engages students deeply with sort of key texts on the Appalachian region and with the oldest and largest Appalachian collection, which is right there right around the corner.

**GH:** Thanks, Trevor. That’s all my questions. Is anything you want to add?

**TM:** I would like to say that the weight of this position, being Director of the Center, is not lost on me. I’ve been fortunate to have people reach out and support me just in this early stage – Pat Beaver and her husband Bob White, and I mean the list is endless. Dr. Hay has been supportive. I feel like there are communities in the Appalachian region and then there’s the Appalachian Studies community and to have felt so supported in such a

short time has meant a lot to me. This is very much a different type of position than working in the archives, and in order to pull this off I can't do it alone. It's everyone who's come before me who's been willing to share so much about what went into making this Center a meaningful part of the Appalachian region and of Appalachian Studies and of this school, and so I just can't say enough of how much it has meant to me to have people reach out and be supportive.

# Archives in Appalachia 2020-21 Survey: Kentucky

*Derek Whisnant and Gene Hyde*

## Introduction:

The 2020-21 survey was administered through a combination of online research and contacting repositories via email and phone. The survey was done in two sections. The first section used the original 1985 survey to ask the following:

- Is the repository still open ?
- If so, have there been any administrative changes (name change, merged with another repository, etc.) ?
- Is there a website or email contact?

Once repositories were identified, Derek sent them this email query:

*We are working to update and expand on a 1985 survey, Archives In Appalachia: A Directory (Appalachian Consortium Press). The original survey was intended to serve as a tool for research in and about the Southern Appalachian region. The updated version will serve the same purpose and be published in the Appalachian Curator newsletter*

*For the 2020-21 updated version, we are reaching out to organizations such as yours that were either not in operation in 1985 or were not included in the original survey.*

*The information we hope to include:*

- *Does your organization currently have archival materials that pertain to Southern Appalachia?*
- *Are these materials accessible to the public?*
- *What types of materials are included in these holdings?*
  - *Ex: manuscripts, photographs, genealogical records, audio/video, artifacts, etc*
- *What historical period is represented in the materials that relate to Southern Appalachia?*
- *What geographical areas do the materials cover?*
- *What general subjects do the materials cover?*
  - *Ex: family life, local history, military history, agriculture, genealogy, political history, etc.*
- *Approximately how large are the holdings related to Southern Appalachia?*

The second section of the survey involved locating collections not originally listed in the survey 35 years ago. Derek searched for the same kinds of collections (colleges and universities, public libraries, historical societies, etc.) identified in the 1985 survey, limiting his search to the Kentucky counties originally covered in the 1985 survey, then extending beyond those counties to locate more Appalachian content in other repositories.



Kentucky counties included in 1985 Archives in Appalachia survey

### A work in progress and the next steps...

This is very much a work in progress, and we need your help in identifying and contacting any additional Kentucky repositories with Appalachian content that we missed. Not surprisingly, we did not receive responses from some repositories which were likely closed due to COVID, and we are hoping to hear from them soon.

Please contact Gene Hyde ([ghyde@unca.edu](mailto:ghyde@unca.edu)) if you have any information about repositories we might have missed.

The next state we'll survey is North Carolina, again based on the order in the original 1985 survey.

- 
- Appalshop Films, Inc.
    - Contact information:
      - URL: Appalshop
      - Address: 91 Madison Avenue, Whitesburg, Kentucky 41858
      - Phone: 606-633-0108
      - Email: [archive@appalshop.org](mailto:archive@appalshop.org)
      - Accessibility: public, appointment necessary
      - Hours: Monday-Friday, 9am-6pm
    - Staff:
      - Our People
    - Holdings:
      - This repository has extensive audio/visual, photograph, oral history, music, and document holdings pertaining to Eastern Kentucky and the Appalachian region from 1900-date. The holdings include materials on the institution's history, family and community life, labor, religion, politics, radio, film, and music production, and newspapers.
      - More information available online:
        - Archive
        - Collections

- 
- Berea College Special Collections
    - Contact info:
      - URL: All Guides – Library Homepage
      - Address: Hutchins Library, Berea, Kentucky 40404
      - Phone: 859-985-3262
      - Email: [myerssteel@berea.edu](mailto:myerssteel@berea.edu) (collections archivist)
    - Accessibility: public, by appointment
      - Hours: contact for appointment
    - Staff: Faculty and Staff Directory
    - Holdings
      - This repository has oral history, publication, organizational record, photograph, and audio/visual holdings pertaining to Berea College and the Southern Appalachian region from the 1800s-date. The holdings include materials on racial history, organizational



histories, religion, music, family and community life, and influential persons.

- About Special Collections & Archives: Archival Collections
  - Special Collections and Archives Catalog
- 

- The Bluegrass Heritage Museum
    - Contact information:
      - URL: The Bluegrass Heritage Museum
      - Address: 217 South Main Street, Winchester, Kentucky 40391
      - Phone: 859-745-1358
      - Email: bgheritage@bellsouth.net
    - Accessibility: public, admission fee
      - Hours: Monday-Saturday, 12pm-4pm
    - Staff:
      - Sandy Stults: Museum Director
    - Holdings:
      - This repository has artifact, photograph, oral history, and document holdings pertaining to Winchester, Clark County, and the Bluegrass region of Kentucky from the 1800s to date. The holdings include materials on local history, agriculture, music, military history, African American history, and industry.
- 

- Boyd County Public Library – Ashland Branch
  - Contact information:
    - URL: Boyd County Public Library
    - Address: 1740 Central Avenue, Ashland, Kentucky 41101
    - Phone:
      - Circulation: 606-329-0090
      - Administration: 606-329-0518
    - Email: genealogy@thebookplace.org
  - Accessibility: public
    - Hours: Monday-Thursday, 9am-8pm; Friday-Saturday, 9am-5pm; Sunday, 1pm-5pm
  - Staff:
  - Holdings:

- This repository has manuscript, photograph, genealogy record, and newspaper holdings pertaining to the Appalachian region with a focus on Boyd County. The holdings include materials on family histories and genealogy, military history, community life, and immigration.
  - About Our Collection
- 

- Breathitt County Museum
    - Contact information
      - URL: [breathittmuseum.com](http://breathittmuseum.com)
      - Address: 329 Broadway Street, Jackson, KY 41339
      - Phone: 606-666-4159
      - Email: [breathittmuseum@bellsouth.net](mailto:breathittmuseum@bellsouth.net)
    - Accessibility: yes, with supervision
      - Hours:
    - Staff:
      - Janie Griffith, Director
    - Holdings:
      - This repository has manuscript, photograph, newspaper, book, audio/video, and artifact holdings pertaining to Eastern Kentucky from 1839-2020. These holdings include materials on all diverse subject areas, including education, genealogy, politics, military, agriculture, community life, and business history.
- 

- Clark County Public Library
  - Contact information:
    - URL: [Clark County Public Library](http://Clark County Public Library)
    - Address: 370 South Burns Avenue, Winchester, Kentucky 40391
    - Phone: 859-744-5661
    - Email: [andy.clarkbooks@gmail.com](mailto:andy.clarkbooks@gmail.com) (Senior Reference Librarian)
  - Accessibility:
    - Hours:
  - Staff: Library Info
  - Holdings:
    - This repository has artifact, photograph, manuscript, record, newspaper, oral history, and book holdings pertaining to Clark

County Kentucky and the surrounding region from pre-1800 to date. The holdings include materials on local history, local government, family and community life, church history, and genealogy.

- Local History & Genealogy

- 
- Cumberland Gap National Historical Park
    - Contact information:
      - URL: Cumberland Gap National Historical Park
      - Address: 91 Bartlett Park Road, Middlesboro, Kentucky 40965
      - Phone: 606-248-2817
      - Email: Contact Us
    - Accessibility: public
      - Hours: open daily from 9am-4pm
    - Holdings:
      - This repository has extensive manuscript, newspaper, photograph, oral history, and administrative record holdings pertaining to the history of Cumberland Gap National Historical Park.
      - Research

- 
- Eastern Kentucky University – Special Collections and Archives
    - Contact information:
      - URL: Special Collections & Archives
      - Address: 521 Lancaster Avenue, Library 127, Richmond, Kentucky 40475
      - Phone: 859-622-1792
      - Email: archives.library@eku.edu
    - Accessibility:
      - Hours: archives currently closed as of September 9, 2020
    - Staff:
      - Staff directory
    - Holdings:
      - This repository has manuscript, organizational record, photograph, publication, and oral history holdings pertaining to Eastern Kentucky University and the Appalachian region from the

1800s-date. The collecting themes for the repository can be found here: Collections

- About Us

- 
- Floyd County Public Library (main branch)
    - Contact information
      - URL: Floyd County History Collection
      - Address: 161 N. Arnold Avenue, Prestonsburg, Kentucky 41653
      - Phone: 606-886-2981
      - Email: fclib.asp@gmail.com (adult services)
    - Accessibility: public
      - Hours:
        - Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 8:30am-5pm
        - Tuesday, Thursday: 8:30am-6:30pm
        - Saturday: 8:30-1pm
    - Staff: About Us
    - Holdings:
      - This repository has photograph, document, oral history, newspaper, and genealogical record holdings pertaining to Floyd County, Kentucky.

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- Greenup County Public Library (main branch)
    - Contact info:
      - URL: Greenup County Public Libraries: Home Page
      - Address: 508 Main Street, Greenup, Kentucky 41144
      - Phone: 606-473-6514
      - Email: greenuplibrary@zoominternet.net
    - Accessibility: public
      - Hours: Monday & Thursday, 9am-8pm; Tuesday, Wednesday, & Friday, 9am-5pm; Saturday, 9am-2pm
    - Staff:
    - Holdings
      - This repository has genealogy, census data, court record, family history, and newspaper holdings pertaining to the history of Kentucky with a focus on Greenup County from 1800-date.
      - Welcome To Our Genealogy Room

- 
- Harlan County Public Library
    - Active: yes, now Bryan W. Whitfield Jr. Public Library
    - Contact info:
      - URL: Harlan County Public Libraries
      - Address: 107 N. 3rd Street, Harlan, Kentucky 40831
      - Phone: 606-573-5220
      - Email: harlanlibrary@gmail.com
    - Accessibility: public
      - Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday: 9am-5pm; Tuesday, Thursday: 9am-8pm
    - Staff: <http://harlancountylibraries.org/generalinfo2.html>
    - Holdings
      - This repository has genealogical record and newspaper holdings pertaining to Harlan County from 1910 to present.
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- Henderson Settlement Mission
    - Active: yes
    - Contact info:
      - URL: Henderson Settlement
      - Address: 16773 Highway 190, Frakes, Kentucky 40940
      - Phone: 606-337-3613
      - Email: [info@hsumc.org](mailto:info@hsumc.org)
    - Accessibility:
      - Hours: Please call for hours.
    - Staff: <https://www.hendersonsettlement.com/meet-the-staff.html>
    - Holdings:
      - This repository has manuscript, oral history, audio/visual material, and photograph holdings primarily documenting Henderson Settlement and the Frakes area. These holdings include materials on education, family and community life, local history, and religious and church history.
- 

- Hunt-Morgan House and Alexander T. Hunt Civil War Museum
  - Contact info:

- URL: Hunt-Morgan House
- Address: 201 N. Mill Street, Lexington, Kentucky
- Phone: 859-253-0362
- Email: info@bluegrasstrust.org
- Accessibility: public, admission fee and advance registration necessary
  - Hours: open from March through mid-December
    - Wednesday-Friday, Sunday, 1pm-4pm; Saturday, 10am-3pm
- Holdings:
  - This repository has artifact, memorabilia, and document holdings pertaining to Lexington, Kentucky from 1800-date. The holdings include materials on family and community life, business and industry, and the Civil War.
  - History

- 
- Jackson County Public Library
    - Contact information:
      - URL: Jackson County Public Library
      - Address: 338 North Main Street, McKee, Kentucky 40447
      - Phone: 606-287-8113
      - Email: robert.blanshard@jcplib.org (reference librarian)
    - 
    - Accessibility:
      - Hours:
        - Monday, Thursday: 8:30am – 6pm
        - Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday: 8:30am-5pm
        - Saturday: 10am-2pm
    - Staff:
      - Library Staff
    - Holdings
      - This repository has microfilm, census, genealogical record, newspaper and photograph holdings pertaining to Jackson County, Kentucky and the surrounding region.
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- Jenkins Public Library
    - Active: yes
    - Contact info:
      - URL: Jenkins Public Library
      - Address: 9543 Highway 805, Jenkins, Kentucky 41537
      - Phone: 606-832-4101
      - Email: jenkinslibrary21@gmail.com
    - Accessibility: public
      - Hours: Monday, 9am-7pm; Tuesday-Friday, 9am-5pm; Saturday, 9am-4pm
    - Staff: Staff
    - Holdings: Over 3,000 volumes of genealogy reference materials.
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- Johnson County Public Library
    - Contact info:
      - URL: Johnson County Public Library
      - Address: 444 Main Street, Paintsville, Kentucky 41240
      - Phone: 606-789-4355
      - Email: johnsonlibrary@bellsouth.net
    - Accessibility: public
      - Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 9:30am-5pm; Tuesday, Thursday, 9:30am-8pm; Saturday, 9am-2pm
    - Staff:
      - Karen Daniel: Director
    - Holdings:
      - This repository has extensive genealogy, photograph, newspaper, and census record holdings pertaining to the Appalachian region from the late 1700s-date with a focus on Johnson County Kentucky. The holdings include materials on the Civil War, family and community life, and property ownership.
      - Patricia Patton Kentucky Room
- 

- Laurel County Library
  - Active: yes
  - Contact info:
    - URL: Laurel County Public Library

- Address: 120 College Park Drive, London, Kentucky 40741
  - Phone: 606-864-5759
  - Email: lisa@laurellibrary.org
  - Accessibility: public
    - Hours: Monday-Friday, 10am-5pm
  - Staff: Department heads
  - Holdings:
    - This repository has manuscript, oral history, genealogical record, audio/visual, and photograph holdings pertaining to the Southern Appalachian region from before 1800 to date. The holdings have a focus on local history in particular.
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- Lexington Public Library
    - Contact info:
      - URL: Lexington Public Library
      - Address: 140 E. Main Street, Lexington, Kentucky 40507
      - Phone: 859-231-5500
      - Email:
    - Accessibility: public, appointment required
      - Hours:
    - Staff: Library Contacts
    - Holdings:
      - This repository has book, newspaper, document, census, and photograph holdings pertaining to Kentucky with a focus on Fayette County.
      - Genealogy & Local History
- 

- Middlesboro-Bell County Public Library
  - Active: yes
  - Contact info:
    - URL: Bell County Public Library
    - Address: 126 S. 20th Street, Middlesboro, Kentucky 40965
    - Phone: 606-248-4812
    - Email: director@bellcpl.org
  - Accessibility: public

- Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, 9am-6pm; Saturday, 10am-4pm
- Staff: Staff
- Holdings:
  - This repository has manuscript, oral history, genealogical record, and photograph holdings pertaining to Appalachia from 1866-date. The holdings include materials on local history, genealogy, and business and industry.

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- Owsley County Historical Society
    - Active: yes
    - Contact info:
      - URL: Owsley County Historical Society
      - Address: Farm Bureau Building, Booneville, Kentucky 41314
      - Phone: 606-593-6755
      - Email: ochs2002@prtcnet.org
    - Accessibility: by appointment
      - Office hours: Thursday, Friday, 11am-3pm
    - Staff: Contact us

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- Pine Mt. Settlement School
    - 
    - Active: yes
    - Contact info:
      - URL: Pine Mountain Settlement School
      - Address: 36 Highway 510, Bledsoe, Kentucky 40810
      - Phone: 606-558-3571
      - Email: info@pinemountainsettlementschool.com
    - Accessibility: public
      - Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30am-4:30pm
    - Info online: ARCHIVE Pine Mountain Settlement School Collections
    - Holdings: This repository has extensive photograph, correspondence, records, audio/visual, artifact, and book holdings

pertaining to the Pine Mountain Settlement School from 1913 to present.

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- Pineville-Bell County Public Library
    - Active: Yes – Pineville Branch of Bell Co PL
    - Contact info:
      - URL: Bell County Public Library District
      - Address: 214 Walnut Street, Pineville, Kentucky 40977
      - Phone: 606-337-3422
      - Email: [pineville@bellcpl.org](mailto:pineville@bellcpl.org)
    - Accessibility: public
      - Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, 9am-6pm; Saturday, 10am-4pm
- 

- Rockcastle County Public Library
    - Active: yes
    - Contact info:
      - URL: Rockcastle County Public Library |
      - Address: 60 Ford Drive Mount Vernon, Kentucky 40456
      - Phone: 606-256-2388
      - Email: [pam@rockcastlelibrary.org](mailto:pam@rockcastlelibrary.org)
    - Accessibility: public
      - Hours: Monday-Friday, 9:30am-4:30pm
    - Holdings:
      - This repository has newspaper, genealogical record, and family history holdings pertaining to Rockcastle County, Kentucky from 1842 to present.
      - <http://signal.rockcastlelibrary.org/>
      - <http://rockcastlelibrary.org/learning-research/>
- 

- Three Forks Historical Center
  - Contact information:
    - URL: Home

- Address: 500 Kentucky Hwy 11 North, Beattyville, Kentucky 41311
  - Phone:
    - 606-464-2888
    - 606-464-5038
  - Accessibility: public
    - Hours:
      - Monday-Friday, 10am-2pm
      - Saturdays by appointment
  - Holdings:
    - This repository has artifact and photograph holdings pertaining to Beattyville, Kentucky and the surrounding region. The holdings include materials on business and industry, indigenous groups, local history, and military history.
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- Transylvania University Library – Special Collections and Archives
    - Contact info:
      - URL: Special Collections & Archives
      - Address: 300 N Broadway, Lexington, Kentucky 40508
      - Phone: 859-233-8225
      - Email: bjgooch@transy.edu
    - Accessibility: public, appointment only
      - Hours: Monday-Friday, 1pm-4:30pm
    - Staff:
      - BJ Gooch: Special Collections Librarian
    - Holdings:
      - This repository has rare book, institutional record, manuscript, photograph, newspaper, and correspondence holdings pertaining to Transylvania University and the surrounding region from the 1600s-date.
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- University of Kentucky Special Collections Research Center
  - Contact info:
    - URL: Special Collections Research Center
    - Address: Margaret I. King Library, Lexington, Kentucky 40506
    - Phone: 859-257-1742

- Email: Contact Us
  - Accessibility: public, appointment only
  - Staff: Directory of Faculty and Staff
  - Holdings:
    - This repository has book, journal, photograph, audio/visual, manuscript, institutional record, and genealogy holdings pertaining to the University of Kentucky and the surrounding region. The holdings include materials on state and local politics, business and industry, family and community life, regional activism, music, and literature.
    - Significant collections include:
      - Archives University of Kentucky Libraries
      - Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History
      - Bert T. Combs Collection
- 

- University of Pikeville – Frank M. Allara Library Special Collections and Archives
    - Contact info:
      - URL: UPIKE Allara Library Special Collections
      - Address: 147 Sycamore Street, Pikeville, Kentucky 41501
      - Phone: 606-218-5625
      - Email: elishataylor@upike.edu
    - Accessibility:
      - Hours:
    - Staff:
      - Edna Fugate: Archivist
    - Holdings:
      - This repository has manuscript, correspondence, photograph, artifact, and audio/visual holdings pertaining to the history of the University of Pikeville and the surrounding region.
      - Archive Catalog
- 

- Whitley County Public Library
  - Contact information:
    - URL: Whitley County Public Library | Home
    - Address: 285 South Third Street, Williamsburg, Kentucky 40769
    - Phone: 606-549-0818



- Email:
  - Accessibility: public
    - Hours:
      - Monday, Thursday: 9am-8pm
      - Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday: 9am-6pm
      - Saturday: 9am-2pm
  - Holdings
    - This repository has photograph, oral history, genealogical record, newspaper, and book holdings pertaining to Whitley County, Kentucky from the 1800s to date.
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- Wolfe County Public Library
  - Contact information:
    - URL: Wolfe County Public Library – Campton, Kentucky
    - Address: 164 Kentucky Highway 15, North Campton, Kentucky 41301
    - Phone: 606-668-6571
    - Email: wolib@mrtc.com
  - Accessibility: public
    - Hours:
      - Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 9am-4:30pm
      - Tuesday, Thursday, 9am-6pm
      - Saturday, 9am-1pm
  - Staff:
    - Staff
  - Holdings:
    - This repository has government record, genealogical record, newspaper, and school yearbook holdings pertaining to Wolfe County and the surrounding region from the 1800s – date.

## New collections in regional repositories

### **W. L. Eury Collection, Appalachian State University**

**MerleFest Archives (AC-1279):** The W. L. Eury Appalachian Collection received the MerleFest Archives (AC-1279) in June. MerleFest is an annual music festival held on the grounds of Wilkes Community College. It began in 1988 in memory of Merle Watson, son of musician and songwriter Doc Watson. The collection includes audio and video recordings of performances, photographs, and ephemera.

### **Berea College**

**Additions to the Lincoln Institute Collection:** The collection recently received a gift from Western Kentucky University of six large format photographs of the cornerstone laying ceremony for Berea Hall in 1911. Although Berea College president William G. Frost features prominently in the photos, these are not images of Berea College. Instead, they are photos taken on the grounds of Lincoln Institute, an all-black boarding high school in Simpsonville, Kentucky that operated from 1912 to 1966. The school was created by the trustees of Berea College after the Kentucky State Legislature passed the Day Law in 1904, putting an end to the racially-integrated education at Berea that had existed since the end of the Civil War. The Lincoln Institute offered vocational education, standard high school classes, and some post-secondary coursework. The students produced the school's food on the campus's 444 acres. Since its 1966 closing, the Lincoln campus has housed gifted and talented programs, the Whitney Young, Jr. Job Corps Center, and the Whitney Young Birthplace and Museum (a National Historic Landmark).

### **Eastern Kentucky University**

**Ralph White Papers** – This small collection consists of a single issue of *Mountain Life & Work* and several photographs of schools in the Appalachian Region taken in the 1950s. These photographs are mostly of one-room schools and were taken in Jackson County, KY, Greene and Hancock Counties, Tennessee and Russell County, Virginia. Several photos were deliberately unidentified including one photograph with an integrated class. Several photos also show parents building playgrounds and painting the school.

## University of Tennessee

**Arrowmont School of Arts & Crafts Archive.** Located in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, Arrowmont is the oldest craft school in the state. Arrowmont began as settlement school founded by the Pi Beta Phi women's fraternity in Gatlinburg in 1912.

**1923 Graduate's Photo and Memory Album of Lane College in Jackson Tennessee.** Founded in 1882, Lane College is one of the earliest black-founded and run HBCUs. The album belonged to Lessie Belle Spann and includes detailed records of her senior year, including photos, hand-written commentary and pen and ink embellishments.

**Archive of American Artist Marion Greenwood.** Greenwood served as artist in residence at UT in 1954–55 and was commissioned to paint a mural in the Carolyn P. Brown Memorial University Center. She participated in the WPA Federal Art Project in 1936–39 and during World War II, was one of only two women appointed as an artist war-correspondent. She also painted a mural for the Post Office in Crossville, Tennessee. The archive contains 470 letters, over 100 pieces of artwork, and numerous photographs.

## Western Carolina University

**Alan & Stephen Sellars Collection:** Photographs of the construction of the Champion Fibre Co. mill in Canton, NC, many of which have appeared in the Carroll C. Jones book, *Thomson's Pulp Mill: Building the Champion Fibre Company at Canton, North Carolina, 1905-1908*.

**Roland C. Osborne & Kezia Stradley Osborne Civil War Letters, Add. #1:** An addition to our original collection of related Osborne Civil War letters, these letters poignantly describe home life during the early years of the Civil War in Haywood County, NC.

**Kelly Bennett Collection:** This large collection of slides and negatives were taken by "Doc" Kelly Bennett (1890-1974). Bennett was a prominent pharmacist in Swain County, NC. Owner of the Bryson City Drug Company, Bennett served as alderman and mayor of Bryson City, on the Swain County Board of Education, as well as several terms as NC State Senator and NC State Representative. He participated in numerous other initiatives and organizations. Known as the "Apostle of the Smokies," Bennett was an instrumental figure in the movement to create the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. He was also an avid photographer, skillfully documenting a wide variety of people, places, and events in Swain County and the surrounding area. Many of these photos

appear to be of Swain County people and places, and appear to chiefly date from the first half of the twentieth century.

**Kelly Bennett Collection, Add. #1:** Joining the aforementioned Kelly Bennett Collection, this collection of negatives and prints taken by “Doc” Kelly Bennett (1890-1974) supplements our collection of historic photography of Swain County, NC, and the surrounding area.

**McFee-Misemer Civil War Letters:** This collection of Civil War letters were written by members of the McFee family of Buncombe County, NC, and the Misemer family of eastern Tennessee. Included in this collection is a letter written by Solomon F. Bogart describing the explosion of the USS Sultana on the Mississippi River in 1865, a disaster which killed most of the vessel’s 2,400 passengers. Bogart was among the survivors of the disaster.