

Are You a Potential Community Scholar? Do You Know One?

The Alabama Community Scholars Institute (ACSI) will take place June 20-28, 2008, on the campus of the University of South Alabama in Mobile. It is a training program for people who want to research, document and present various aspects of Alabama's traditional culture—the music, food, crafts, stories, celebrations, work traditions, etc., of their own communities.



Community Scholars at Jerry Brown's Pottery in Hamilton, July 2006 (Photo by Marty King)

It is funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Alabama State Council on the Arts.

Throughout the intensive eight-day program participants study all aspects of doing fieldwork: recognizing traditions, conducting field surveys, interviewing and recording, photographing and videotaping tradition bearers, and logging and transcribing interviews. Students, ages eighteen to eighty plus, come with a project concerning their own local culture in mind and learn how to make that project a success. To gain hands-on experience during the Institute, participants will research Mobile's Mardi Gras and interview people involved in that traditional event.

Several ACSI graduates have done fine work with local projects. For instance, Shirley Baxter ('06) recently served as the organizer of the American Folklife Center's Story Corps project in Tuskegee, helping to arrange 60 interviews that will be archived at the Library of Congress. Linda Vice ('04) was

named Tourism Employee of 2007 for her work in cultural tourism in the Black Belt. Susan Thomas ('04) did fieldwork on the legend of John Henry for our program in Leeds last September. Diane Gerard ('04), history professor at the Alabama School of Math and Science, has been widely recognized for the exciting oral history projects her students have done. Others have written articles for *Tributaries*, have been active on the AFA Board of Directors and have helped AFA staff booths at festivals across the state.

ACSI tuition, dorm rooms and meals are free to the 25 applicants who are selected for the program. There is a \$50 materials fee and students pay for their own transportation to the USA campus and two or three off-campus meals. The application deadline is April 1, but it is best to apply as soon as possible. If you know of individuals who would benefit from this training, encourage them to apply.

For complete details about the Alabama Community Scholars Institute and how to apply, visit www.alabamafolklife.org or call Joyce Cauthen, 205-822-0505.

ALABAMA FOLKLIFE ASSOCIATION BOARD, 2007-08



The AFA is served by an excellent Board of Directors for 2007-08. Seated, L to R: Wanda Johnson, Mobile; Betsy Panhorst, Auburn, and Fannie Smith (Ex-officio), Prattville. Standing: Russell Gulley, Secretary, Fort Payne; Kevin Nutt, VP, Montgomery; Joyce Cauthen, Executive Director, Birmingham; Jim Hall, President, Tuscaloosa, and William Jarnigan, Florence. (Photo by Anne Kimzey) Holding the banjo is our treasurer, Duncan Blair, Birmingham, who missed the picture session.

Upcoming Folk Festivals

- April 19: Sucarnochee Folklife Festival on the town square in Livingston (8 a.m. to 7 p.m.) Art demonstrations, including pottery, metal works, quilting and more. Live music, storytelling, Walking Ghost tour, a cornbread cook-off, and a Sucarnochee 5K run. For more information call 205-652-3752.
- May 30-31: Willie King's Freedom Creek Festival 2008 in the community of Old Memphis, near Aliceville featuring veteran bluesmen Sam Lay, Jerry Portnoy and, of course, Willie King, along with a host of regional blues artists. For more information please visit www.willie-king.com.
- Aug 26-27, Black Belt Folk Roots Festival on Old Courthouse Square in Eutaw featuring handmade quilts, baskets and crafts with blues on Sat. and gospel on Sun. Downhome cooking, soul food, fish, homemade ice cream. Children's tent with dancing, drumming, storytelling, face painting. Sat., 11 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sun., 2-7 p.m. Call 205-372-0525. for more info.
- September 12-20: Boom Days Festival in Fort Payne highlighting the cultural and historical heritage of Fort Payne, culminating with the Boom Days Heritage Celebration on the 20th which features musical acts and display and sales of fine arts and folk crafts. Visit www.DiscoverLookoutMountain.com or call 256-845-1524.

Bullfrog Jumped Programs Bring Songs Full Circle

The AFA was able to take children's folksongs recorded by Byron Arnold in 1947 back to the communities where he found them.

During the months of October 2007 and January 2008, Wanda Johnson and Joyce Cauthen put on assembly programs at Weeden Elementary in Florence, Cloverdale (with Waterloo) Elementary School in Lauderdale County, A.C. Moore Elementary in Atmore, Grove Hill Elementary, and Mary B. Austin Elementary in Mobile, as well as a program for home-schooled children at the West Regional Branch of the Mobile Public Library. These programs were funded by proceeds from sales of the "Support the Arts" car tag.

Sixty years earlier singers across the state had shared old folksongs they loved

with Professor Arnold and many of their songs were included on *Bullfrog Jumped: Children's Folksongs from the Byron Arnold Collection*, produced by the AFA in 2006. Johnson and Cauthen were thrilled to be able to bring the long-forgotten songs home. Johnson, a professional storyteller, told about Arnold's reasons for recording the songs, showed how he used a cumbersome disc-cutting machine to make the records, and described the women who sang on them. Cauthen, who produced the CD, taught the children to sing the songs and play the games. In Atmore they were happy to be joined by Mrs. Mozella Longmire who recorded a number of singing games for Arnold when she was 17 years old. Still a fine singer, she had students (including one of her great grandchildren) up and singing

"Little Sally Walker" and "Shoo-Rye."

Audiences sang and laughed and squealed at the games like "The Old Gray Cat" where a sleeping cat wakes up and catches the little mice (kindergartners) who are creeping by and "Miss Jenny O. Jones" who turns into a scary ghost when the children approach her. The two performers presented copies of *Bullfrog Jumped* to the school media centers and told them about the teacher's guide to the CD at www.alabamafolklife.org. The students can also go to that website to see a photo from their school and listen to themselves sing one of the songs.

Children at Weeden Elementary School enjoyed "The Old Gray Cat" which was recorded in their hometown of Florence in 1947. (Photo by William Jarnigan)



Folklife Exhibit Graces Alabama Artists' Gallery

Carry On: Celebrating Twenty Years of the Alabama Folk Arts Apprenticeship Program was displayed at the State Arts Council in Montgomery from December through the end of February. It will be at Heritage Hall in Talladega through mid-May and then will travel to the Tennessee Valley Art Center in Tusculumbia and the Coleman Center in York. It is definitely worth seeing.

The exhibition features fifty vivid portraits of traditional artists taken by Birmingham photographer Mark Gooch. Examples of the artists' work are also showcased—everything from quilts, to white oak baskets, to pottery, to willow furniture. Anne Kimzey served as project director.

Gooch says that this was a dream project, other than the fact that visiting fifty artists across the state meant that he couldn't stay with each one as long as he wanted. He considers them remarkable people and these feelings show clearly in the photos he took.

Folk arts are defined as those artistic traditions that are rooted in a community and are often handed down through generations. In 1984 the Alabama State Council on the Arts, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, established the Alabama Folk Arts Apprenticeship Program in an effort to preserve these cherished artistic traditions within the state. Since then, more than 100 master folk artists



have received teaching grants to assist in passing on their skills in traditional music, dance and craft genres to a new generation of students. This exhibition represents a few of the many outstanding artists who have carried on their traditions through the Alabama Folk Arts Apprenticeship Program.

The exhibit was made possible with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, Alabama State Council on the Arts, and the Alabama Bureau of Tourism and Travel.



ABOVE, the portrait of the late Cast King by photographer Mark Gooch was one of fifty in ASCA's celebration of its apprenticeship program. LEFT, pottery and other objects made by Alabama's traditional craftsmen were featured in the exhibit. (Photo by Barbara Reid).

AFA Appreciates Its Members

The following people and organizations joined or renewed their membership in the AFA since our last newsletter. We thank them profusely!

AUBURN: Betsy Panhorst, John Hardin

BIRMINGHAM: Duncan Blair, *Sustaining*; Stan Mackin, Leah R. Atkins, Donna Matthews, Patricia & Ken Martin, Ethel Owen, W. F. Lane, Sherry Loper, Charlotte Bramer, Wayne Bagwell, Dianne & Dick Tindol, Brad Armstrong, Janet Bronstein

FORT PAYNE: Hank Willett, *Patron*; Robert Hume, Jr.; Alecia Vaughn

MONTGOMERY: Joey Brackner, *Patron*; Mr./Mrs. James Loeb, *Patron*; Frances Frizzell; Karren Pell

TUSCALOOSA: Michael Picone, Sarah Riches, Kyle Williams, Stacy Morgan

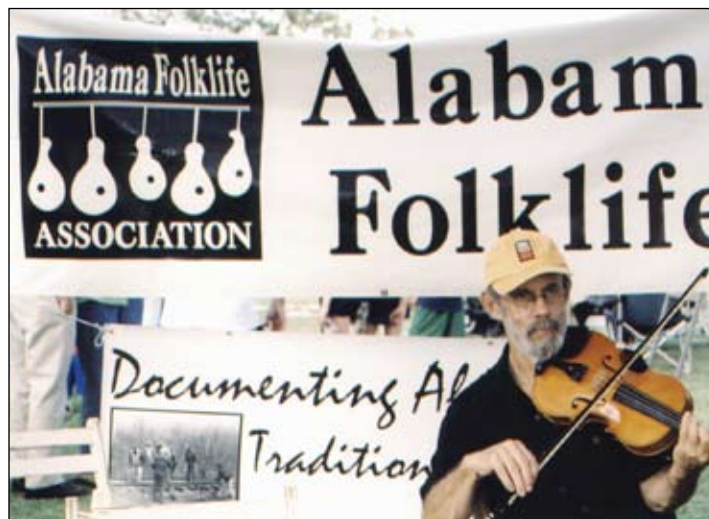
OTHER: Betty Kimbrell, Mt. Olive; Charles Hart, Gadsden; Keitha Hudson, Blountsville; John Jinright, Troy; William Allen, Decatur; Lowndes Butler, Anniston; E. Cameron Hickman, Valdosta, Ga.; Michael Laus, Portland, Ore.; Loretta Burns, Tuskegee; Floyd McGowin, Chapman; Barbara Goodson, Cookeville, Tenn.; Charlie Smith, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Richard Holland, Livingston, *Patron*; Charles & Cenda Price, Austin, Texas, *Patron*; David Bagwell, Point Clear; John Bagwell, Sandpoint, Idaho; Peggy Jones, Bessemer; Steven Dark, Gulf Shores; Ingrid Wood, Raleigh, N.C.; Elizabeth Pipkin, Midway, Ga.; June Beverly, Melrose, Fla.; Deborah Boykin, Prattville; Steve Overby, Scottsboro; Linda & Stanley Rodimon, Lanett, *Patron*; Ashley & Joni Carr, Tallasse; Mark Lindsay, Chelsea; A. Wayne DeLoach, Marbury; Richard Huckaby, Prattville; Margaret Wrinkle, Irondale, *Patron*; Jean McMillan, Talladega, Virginia & George LeMaistre, Montrose; *Patron*; Stephen Smith, Rainsville; Sandie Scott, Smyrna, Tenn.

CORPORATE SPONSORS: City of Fort Payne; Burr & Forman LLP, Birmingham; New College, University of Alabama; NewSouth Books.

We Thank Our Volunteers

We truly appreciate the efforts of AFA members who staffed the AFA booth at various events in 2007–08. At Boom Days in Fort Payne, Hank Willett, Bill Martin, and Jim Cauthen helped with set-up and sales. Volunteers at Kentuck were Janice McDaniels, Karren Pell, Deborah Casey, Randy Arnold, Amy Leopard, and Tatum Preston. Susan Thomas set up and attended an AFA table at the annual meeting of the Alabama Museum Association in Mobile.

Working in the booth is a great way to meet folks who are interested in folk culture and an opportunity for Community Scholars to catch up with each other. If you would like to suggest an event that would be appropriate for the AFA booth or would like to help at one of the festivals listed above, call Joyce Cauthen at 205-822-0505.



Jim Cauthen fiddles while tending the AFA booth at Boom Days in Fort Payne. (Photo by Joni Carr)

THE ALABAMA FOLKLIFE ASSOCIATION is a non-profit statewide organization whose purpose is to promote the appreciation of Alabama folklife through activities including festivals, conferences, fieldwork, videos, audio recordings and publications. Your membership supports these activities. In return you receive our journal *Tributaries*. To join, send the adjacent form, with check payable to the AFA, to Jackie Ely, Membership Coordinator, Alabama Center for Traditional Culture, 410 North Hull Street, Montgomery, AL 36104.

Name _____

Address _____

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Phone _____ E-mail _____

My check is enclosed for:

\$15 Student \$35 Individual

\$100 Patron \$200 Sustaining \$500 Corporate

Send c/o Alabama Center for Traditional Culture, 410 North Hull Street, Montgomery, AL 36104 • www.alabamafolklife.org

Shape Notes Singing Set for Montgomery July 17

The 20th Annual Capitol City Shape-Note Singing will be held this year at Old Alabama Town in the Loeb Reception Center, 310 Columbus Avenue, on Thursday, July 17th beginning at 10:00 a.m. The annual singing, sponsored by the Alabama Center for Traditional Culture and Old Alabama Town, brings together singers and listeners from all over Alabama and is open to the public.

Alabama has a rich and long-lasting tradition of shape-note singing, a unique form of a cappella harmony characterized by the singing of the names of the notes (fa-sol-la) as well as the lyrics. The singers follow a format largely unchanged in over 150 years, seating themselves in a square according to voice part and taking turns coming to the center of the square to lead songs. Though the songbooks date from the first half of the nineteenth

century, many of the hymns and tunes are hundreds of years older.

Old Alabama Town is a collection of

more than thirty restored nineteenth century buildings within four blocks of the state Capitol, and interprets central Alabama's architecture, history and lifestyle.

For more information contact Jackie Ely, 334-242-4076, x234; jackie.ely@arts.alabama.gov



Still To Come . . . *Tributaries* Volume 10

The editors of *Tributaries*, Joey Brackner and Anne Kimzey, announce that Volume 10, a special issue devoted to language in Alabama, is in final production. This issue, which was scheduled to be finished in 2007, will be significantly larger than previous volumes.

This special issue is in collaboration with guest editor Dr. Thomas Nunnally, associate professor of English at Auburn University.

Tom has the gift of making this complex subject understandable to the non-linguist. He has enthusiastically guided his colleague contributors in developing a wide-ranging collection of articles. We have enjoyed working with Tom to present the work of Alabama-oriented linguists to a new readership.

Look for volume 10 in April. Meanwhile, volume 11 is being assembled now and will be published later in 2008.



c/o Alabama Center
for Traditional Culture
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www.alabamafolklife.org

THE AFA NEWSLETTER is edited by Joyce Cauthen, with design and production by Randall Williams. It is published when there is enough news to make it worthwhile. Please mail announcements of events, publications or other items of interest to AFA members to Joyce Cauthen, 2169 Shadybrook Lane, Birmingham, AL 35226, or email joycecauthen@bellsouth.net, or call (205) 822-0505. The AFA is supported in part by the Alabama State Council on the Arts.