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WKU Folk Studies Society

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DEDICATION

This newsletter is dedicated to Dr. Kenneth Clarke, Professor of Folk Studies, who is retiring at the end of this semester. Dr. Clarke, a native Kentuckian, came to the Department of English at Western in 1964 from the Southeastern campus of Indiana University. He was instrumental in reviving the long-standing tradition of a folklore curriculum at Western, a tradition which was instituted through the efforts of Dr. Gordon Wilson in the 1930s. Dr. D.K. Wilgus perpetuated the interests of folklore at Western until he left for UCLA in 1961. Dr. Clarke restored folklore to the curriculum following the two-year hiatus caused by Dr. Wilgus’ departure. Dr. Clarke added one folklore course per year to the curriculum, and continuing interest and growth of the folklore curriculum necessitated the establishment of a separate department and Master's Program in 1972. At that point Dr. Mary Clarke and Dr. Lynwood Montell joined the folklore staff. The Folk Studies Program continues to grow and maintains an integrity for which Dr. Clarke is in part responsible.

MICHAEL ALAN HAMBRIC
Friend, Colleague, Student
1947-1977

Mike was killed during a rain storm in a one-car automobile accident March 18, 1977. He graduated from Randolph-Macon College in 1969; he enrolled in the Folk Studies Master's Program in 1973, and was delivering his completed thesis to the typist when the accident occurred. Mike's many friends in the Folk Studies Program and the Graduate College at Western Kentucky University will miss him.

Dr. Clarke's contributions to the field of folklore do not stop with his contributions to Western Kentucky University and the Center for Intercultural and Folk Studies. Dr. Clarke has published numerous articles and books to which he modestly refers as "minor publications." His most sustaining, profitable, and widely distributed publication is Introducing Folklore which he co-authored with his wife, Mary. The Clarkes are somewhat embarrassed by the
continuing appeal of this book, as it is long since outdated. The book from which Dr. Clarke derives greatest pleasure and satisfaction is Uncle Bud Long. It is one of the most thorough studies of its kind both in terms of methodology and research. Dr. Clarke's most "recreational" endeavor was his recent Kentucky's Age of Wood which he co-authored with Ira Kohn, Curator of Exhibits at the Kentucky Museum.

Ken and Mary Clarke are moving to the coast of northern California following his retirement. Their files are bulging with plans which include building a solar-heated, wind-powered home, salmon fishing, and completing some long-neglected projects which involve field research in the West. Whatever the outcome, there will be no deadlines and pressures for any of the proposed projects.

Folk Studies students at Western will miss Dr. Clarke, his delightful sense of humor, and his ability to bolster the spirits of weary scholars. We know, however, that he leaves these hallowed halls for better places and a well-deserved retirement. Finis coronat opus, Dr. Clarke! We wish you the best.

STUDENT NEWS

Hank Willett is currently teaching folklore courses at Athens College and the University of Alabama at Huntsville in addition to his duties as coordinator of Folk Arts in the Decatur, Alabama city schools.

Gayle Waggoner is a finalist in the 1977 Fulbright competition. Her proposed project is a multi-disciplinary, folkloristic study of a hammock-weaver in Sao Luis, Maranhao, on the northern coast of Brazil. Waiting for final approval from the Brazilian government, Gayle is completing requirements for a Master's degree in Folk Studies.

We welcome John A. Porter to the graduate program in Folk Studies. John is a graduate of Davidson College in North Carolina and holds a degree in English. He began his graduate work in January.

FACULTY NEWS

Camilla Collins was nominated for a three year Member-at-large position on the Executive Board of the American Folklore Society. She is currently serving as an ad hoc member of the Annual Meeting Committee of AFS.

Cam has been requested to submit a short paper entitled "An Urban Folklore Course: Statement of Purpose and Method" to be published in the Pennsylvania Oral History Society publication.

Cam will speak on traditional crafts in Kentucky on April 14 at the Park City Women's Club meeting in Glasgow, Kentucky.

Dr. Lynwood Montell submitted a manuscript entitled From Carthage to Burnside: A Folkloristic Approach to Regional Studies to Indiana University Press at the beginning of this month. The book is to be included as a title in the new series on American Regional Folklore edited by Richard M. Dorson.
Dr. Robert Teske of Wayne State University has accepted the position of Associate Professor in Folk Studies in the Center for Intercultural and Folk Studies. Dr. Teske holds degrees from Harvard University and the University of Pennsylvania. He is currently Director of the Folklore Archive and a member of the English Department at Wayne State University. He comes to us with a background in literature and folklore and teaching experience in ethnic folklore, European folklore, mythology, folk epic, and oral-formulaic theory. Dr. Teske replaces the retiring Dr. Kenneth Clarke.

CONVENTIONS

The Kentucky Folklore Society will hold its annual meeting on April 15 in conjunction with the Kentucky Education Association in Louisville. Cam Collins will give a paper on occupational folklore in hosiery mills in North Carolina. Becky Morse, graduate student, will present a program of traditional Kentucky music.

OTHER NEWS

Comprehensive examinations for graduate students will be given April 13 from 9 A.M. to 1 P.M. Students desiring to take the examinations should register in the Center for Intercultural and Folk Studies office by April 5.

Sarah Gertrude Knott, founder of the National Folk Festival Association (now National Council for the Traditional Arts) and consultant for regional and state festivals recently donated her papers to the Western Kentucky University Folklore and Folklife Archives. In addition to correspondence with several noted folklorists and extensive personal writings, the acquisition contains program and correspondence files pertaining to the NFFA which date to its inception in 1936. The earlier files are especially significant as they contain valuable information on festival participants from various ethnic backgrounds. The Knott material is currently in the process of inventory and will be accessioned shortly. Western is grateful for this contribution; members of the Folk Studies Program are making plans to interview Miss Knott regarding her memories and impressions of early folklorists and other persons interested in folk festival activities.

Dr. Tate C. ("Piney") Page, Jr. has donated eighteen cassette tapes of personal interviews with long-time residents of the Southern Ozarks near Dover, Arkansas to the Western Kentucky University Folklore and Folklife Archives. Dr. Page, a native of Arkansas, has recorded the interviews within the past year following his retirement as Dean of the College of Education at Western. He intends to continue collecting material for deposit at Western. Dr. Page is in the process of organizing his photograph negatives which depict urban and rural Kentucky life during the 1930s for later donation to the Archives.

THIS NEWSLETTER

Comments, queries, and suggestions concerning this newsletter should be sent to Becky Morse or Sara Barker, Folk Studies Society Newsletter, Center for Intercultural and Folk Studies, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Kentucky 42101