

FOLK FROM “OFF” – THE ROLE OF OUTSIDERS IN THE PRESERVATION, CREATION, AND PERPETUATION OF TRADITIONAL CRAFT AND MUSIC IN STONE COUNTY, ARKANSAS

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Abstract

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Stone County, Arkansas has been under the lens of folklorists since 1959 when Alan Lomax visited the town of Timbo to record traditional folk musicians such as Almeda Riddle, Carlos “Bookmiller” Shannon, and others, some recordings of which were later released as an LP under the Southern Journeys collection. Examining the evidence to verify popular claims regarding the transmission of both craft and music in the area since then, this paper’s conclusions reveal moribund cultural practices, and the role of cultural interventionists, government anti-poverty programs, and young, idealistic back-to-the-landers in the re-creation and perpetuation of a folk heritage, in a culture not originally their own.



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I stand on the shoulders of those who have researched the Ozarks before me, including Vance Randolph, and Dr. Brooks Blevins. And, I am grateful to those early explorers, who came to Stone County in the 1960's, or before – during the time of open range, few paved roads, and no sewer systems, and who were able to capture a culture on the threshold of modernity. Special thanks to both Roshi Joan Halifax and H. Page Stephens, who took the time to answer my questions about the time they spent in Stone County. Extra-special thanks to Glenn Ohrlin, who graciously donated folk festival programs from Newport and other venues where he performed, for always telling his stories with the exact same information every time, and for being my friend.

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Most important perhaps, are the culture bearers of Stone County – those who came here in the late 60’s, 1970’s and early 1980’s, full of ideals and tenacity, bringing crafts and musical skills from places far away; the back-to-the-landers who fell in love with these clear streams and green wooded hills, building your cabins despite ticks, chiggers, copperheads, 100 degree summers and frozen-pipe winters. You have carried forward the traditions, which you co-created, and I am grateful, for without you, we never would have come this far. Special thanks to Judy Klinkhammer, who was gracious enough to share her “Bookmiller” Shannon banjo tablatures, from her time as his student.

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Preface

Coming of age in the early 1970's, I was romanced by the *Mother Earth News*, *Shelter*, *Living the Good Life*, *Foxfire*, and the *Last Whole Earth Catalogue* (whose driving instructions I followed when traveling from Germany to Nepal in a VW van in 1977). So, in 1986, at the age of 30 years, I moved, with my first husband and my 11 year-old son to 40 raw acres in the heart of the Arkansas Ozark Wilderness. A half-mile road had already been bulldozed to allow access to the small clearing on the mostly wooded tract. We brought with us two vehicles – a 1966 Ford pick-up truck and a 1976 VW van. We also had a 16-foot canvas tipi, which I had insisted upon sewing myself, a camp cook stove, some Smith and Hawken hand tools, a rototiller, a chainsaw, 5,000 firebrick salvaged from the old Falstaff Brewery in St. Louis, and \$6,000.00. We were going to homestead the land, build a cabin, grow our own food, build a wood burning pottery kiln, and become practicing craftspeople. And we did just that, although not as quickly or as easily as we first surmised.

The land was idyllic – 40 acres of woods, bluffs, caves, springs, and a waterfall – all overlooking a valley where almost nobody lived and only costing \$15,000.00. We were located 25 miles from our closest “big town” – Mountain View (population approx. 2700) – and 3 ½ miles down a dirt road, then ½ mile off that dirt road, from Fox, Arkansas. We immediately discovered the land was infested with ticks from the cattle that had been allowed to run free range over our property for years. There were also chiggers, copperheads galore, rattlesnakes, bobcats, feral pigs, coyotes, and a resident black bear who came through the yard every April at the full moon. The summers were brutal with 100-degree temperatures for weeks on end and no air conditioning. The winters could be prohibitive for travel with dangerous ice storms – one of which trapped me backcountry for 29 straight days. The soil, being on top of a mountain, and

having been used to grow cotton in the 1930's, was so exhausted that no amount of hauling in truckloads of manure could seem to bring it back to health. Still, we prevailed – building a cabin from native stone, wood, and recycled materials that still serves as a home today, raising big vegetable gardens and berry bushes- with the excess canned and frozen for winter, and practicing wood fired pottery and weaving, with some distinction.

In the mid-2000's, I divorced and left the land, segued from practicing craft to administering craft programming, moved to town, married a traditional musician, anthropologist, and woodworker, and went back to school, eventually working towards my master's degree in Cultural Sustainability from Goucher College, in Baltimore, Maryland. As I studied the concepts that promote cultural practices, I was struck with the understanding that the narrative surrounding the perpetuation of “traditional” craft and music in Stone County, Arkansas – an area that had been under the lens of folklorists since Alan Lomax arrived with Shirley Collins in 1959 to record local musicians – had been selective, in that only part of the story was being told. Nowhere has there been mention of the back-to-the-landers, who arrived in the late 1960's, 1970's, and early 1980's, and who have been the primary bearers of what is considered local traditional practices.

This paper, then, is a toast to those intrepid and creative souls, who have played the folk music, and practiced the crafts. Trading hegemony for autonomy, they have taken a quiet back seat in the rhetoric surrounding cultural perpetuation. Here, then, is their story.

Introduction

Stone County, Arkansas, located in the Ozarks of north-central Arkansas is a rural idyll - hilly and forested, with abundant wildlife including deer, turkey, fox, bobcat, and bear. The county is bounded on the Northeast by the White River, by which the earliest white settlers first arrived in the Arkansas Ozarks. On the north border sits the 131,000-acre Ozark National Forest, and on the south lies the Blue Mountain range of the Boston Mountains. Roads are, for the most part two-lane, or even rough dirt and rock; and tend to be curvy, switchback, and/or steep.

The county seat and largest town in Stone County is Mountain View, which is located in the center of the county. With a population of less than 3,000 people, the town boasts few manufacturing venues, relying on tourism for its primary income. Because of the area's rough, natural beauty, there are opportunities for outdoor activities such as hiking, biking, fishing, swimming, hunting and camping. Blanchard Springs Caverns, operated by the U.S. Forest Service conducts both wild and tame tours of the cave's underground grandeur. The Ozark Folk Center State Park is an historical theme park three miles north of downtown. The state's juried craft organization, the Arkansas Craft Guild, has its office and gallery on Main Street, with the Arkansas Craft School next door. A large, stone courthouse graces the center of town, and features impromptu music on the lawn in favorable weather. This activity has proven so popular that groups have spilled out to a small "Pickin' Park", to the porch of Aunt Minnie's Little Yellow House, and to the porch and grounds of Mountain View Music store; all places tourists gather to listen to the freely presented jam sessions. Mountain View is known for its traditional music and craft, and has dubbed itself "The Folk Music Capitol of the World." Local festivals include an annual Folk Festival in the spring, and "The Great Arkansas Beanfest and Outhouse Race" in the fall.

There are numerous small towns in the north-central Ozarks that have similar historic, cultural, and geographic backgrounds to Mountain View, yet they never became heritage tourism destinations. As a student of Cultural Sustainability, it seemed natural to attempt to discover the reasons why Stone County, and especially the town of Mountain View, would become known as a reservoir of cultural treasures in traditional music and craft. I will argue that outside influences, including cultural interventionists, federal government anti-poverty and community development funding, sympathetic politicians, a minor celebrity who had traveled extensively in the outside world, and a social group who would become known as back-to-the-landers, would be key to distinguishing Stone County, and particularly Mountain View, as a cultural destination.

The Methodology Section will explain the resources utilized in conducting the research. More specifically, the Literature Review will present the concepts and major topics from the key writings read in preparation for a thorough understanding of the dynamics in the preservation of Stone County's Ozark culture. The Narrative section will then document the historical events which have led to Mountain View being recognized as a repository of craft and music, beginning with the 1941 Stone County Folkways Festival, moving through Alan Lomax's visit in 1959 and through the local manifestations of the folk revival of the 1960's, gathering steam during the back-to-the-land movement of the 1970's, and on to the current day. The Conclusion will then examine the narrative, deconstructing the components, which produced and sustained the heritage, as it is known today in Stone County. Finally, the techniques for sustainability will be analyzed and weighed, in regards to effectiveness, with an eye towards models upon which to base future sustainability strategies.

Methodology

The methodology for this thesis used a multi-faceted approach. Textual research included the literature covered in the Literature Review, and other writings which covered topics such as the history of the Ozarks, particularly Stone County, Arkansas, the history of Appalachia, the history of craft and traditional mountain music, and literature written during, or later, about the folk revival and about the back-to-the-land movement. In addition, I consulted literature concerning the concepts of heritage, heritage tourism, and uses of the past in issues of hegemony, authenticity, and the invention of tradition.

Archival research included accessing primary accounts in newspapers and other regional publications concerning specific events essential to the story. Two letters written by Jimmy Driftwood to Alan Lomax and to Joan Halifax were obtained from the archives of the Alan Lomax Collection.

Government reports were utilized for economic data from the early 1960's, and for first-hand impressions from tourists in the 1970's. A thesis by Carolyn Woodell, about the influence of tourism on woodcarvers of the Ozarks, and H. Page Stephens's PhD dissertation from his fieldwork residencies in Stone County in the 1960's, shed light on concepts that were specific to northern Arkansas and whose data and conclusions I found helpful to my own research.

Audio recordings of music were listened to, and liner notes read and consulted.

Interviews were utilized from archival sources - the Lyon College "Creation and Development of the Arkansas Folk Festival and Ozark Folk Center Oral History Project," the Library of Congress's "Joan Halifax Collection," and the Association for Cultural Equity's recordings of Lomax and Collins's 1959 interviews and recordings of Stone County musicians.

In addition, I draw heavily from my own interviews with local tradition bearers. These interviews were recorded digitally, and later transcribed. Several of my interviewees allowed me to take photographs, and two – Dan Stewart and Judy Klinkhammer provided me with archival photos from their personal collections.

Literature Review

As the Ozarks are often grouped in popular mindset as an extension of Appalachia, both being Southern mountain cultures and which include similar music, dance, pioneer crafting, and ethnic heritage, it seemed necessary to examine the history and culture of the region to the east before delving into the literature of the Ozarks. Classic texts begin with *Our Southern Highlander: A Narrative of Adventure in the Southern Appalachians and a Study of Life among the Mountaineers*, written by Horace Kephart in 1913. Kephart was a librarian, who disillusioned with his life, and failing in his health, traveled to Asheville, North Carolina in 1904, eventually finding his way to the cabin at an abandoned copper mine near Hazel Creek, which would be his base of studies in the Great Smoky Mountains for three years. From there, he worked diligently to produce articles on camping and the great outdoors for publications such as *Field and Stream*, *Sports Afield*, *Forest and Stream*, *Outing Magazine*, and others, including his own book, *Camping and Woodcraft*. It was at this time that Kephart began the observations of his neighbors that would eventually make up *Our Southern Highlander*. He found his new neighbors – such as “the indomitable hunter, fiddle player, story-teller and moonshiner Quill Rose, already a legend [who] lived with his part-Indian wife, Aunt Vice”¹ to be fascinating, and worth documenting.

In 1907, Kephart, unsure that the picture of Appalachian culture that he was painting was true for the whole of Appalachia, traveled to Eastern Kentucky, Tennessee, and Northern Georgia. Working painstakingly from Federal census reports, he observed “the great multitude of little farmers living up on the branches and the steep hillsides” and found them to be “everywhere one people.”² Upon returning from his travels, Kephart settled in Bryson City, where he distilled *Our Southern Highlander* from his twenty-seven notebooks, with five hundred categories,

composed of personal observations, charts and tables, newspaper clippings, and snatches of dialogue complete with dialect words and expressions. When published in 1913, the book would be a best-seller, and one of the first descriptions of the inhabitants of the Appalachian Southern Mountain peoples, and their activities, including bear hunting, moon shining, the “blood feud,” and the role of women. Kephart would go on in activities that helped set in motion the movement to create the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, as well as helping to establish and plot trails for the Appalachian Trail.

Published eight years later, in 1921, *The Southern Highlander and his Homeland* was written by John C. Campbell for the Russell Sage Foundation. In 1908, the foundation awarded Campbell \$3,000.00 to study Appalachian population statistics, natural resources, education, and health and sanitation, which eventually stretched to more than ten years of research, travel, organizing, and writing. His work was cut short by his death in 1919, with *The Southern Highlander* being published posthumously. More a sociological study than the narrative-based *Our Southern Highlander*, the two volumes go hand in hand in presenting an overview of southern mountain life in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s, the time of the settlement schools and other intentional interventionist policies. The author makes suggestions for increased awareness and different strategies of fund raising to help Appalachian people rise above poverty, ignorance and disease. Campbell is probably best remembered by the folk school in Brasstown, North Carolina, which still bears his name. His widow, Olive Dame Campbell would go on to be a leader in Appalachian activities, including establishing the John C. Campbell Folk School, being active in the Southern Highlands Handicraft Guild, and song collecting near the Hindman Settlement School – both her own collection, and also inviting Cecil Sharp and Maud Karpeles to come and

collect, in 1916, 1917, and 1918 what would later become the basis for *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*, discussed later.

In 1983, David Whisnant produced a thorough critique of the prevailing romantic attitudes concerning Appalachia, including the politics behind the heritage traditions, and uncovered the invention of tradition that occurred as a result of the settlement schools and other interventionists. Entitled *All That is Native and Fine*, it clearly documents the role that outsiders played in creating a “native” tradition in crafts, in whitewashing Appalachian history; and of personal musical arbitrariness being a determining factor in selecting Morris Dancing, dulcimer playing, and old-time fiddle music as “authentic” to the region. Whisnant observes events and phenomena in Appalachia, which would also occur many years later in the Stone County, Arkansas Ozarks.

Acknowledging the emotional and self-defining aspects of heritage and tradition, Jane Becker nonetheless blasts the cultural inventions that Whisnant points out, in her 1998 book, *Selling Tradition: Appalachia and the Construction of an American Folk 1930 - 1940*. Dissecting the social, economic, and image-based marketing forces necessary to promote Southern Mountain crafts as symbols of a national consciousness and a link to our common past, Becker pulls no punches when she points out the economic exploitation, middle class sensibilities, and appropriation of culture which have served to sacralize the romanticized and invented traditions inherent in some traditional American craft practices, particularly those in the Appalachian regions she studied.

Although Appalachia had been targeted since the late 1800’s as an area in need of cultural, social, economic, and often religious intervention, the Ozark region, despite being impoverished,

was overlooked during the settlement school era, possibly due to the paucity of coal and other exploitable natural resources. However, culturally, the area would eventually attract folklorists, the most notable being “Mr. Ozark,” Vance Randolph. Randolph first visited the Ozarks as a child with his parents in 1899, and moved to Pineville, Missouri to begin collecting folk songs in 1919. Shuttling back and forth between the University of Kansas and Pineville while working on his PhD, Randolph would return to Pineville in 1924, inspired again to collect folksongs as a result of hearing Vachel Lindsay and meeting Carl Sandburg - his PhD never completed. From that point on, he would support himself primarily as a writer, with much of his serious writing devoted to the dialect, music, cultural practices, and folk tales of his beloved adopted Ozark region. Robert Cochran’s *Vance Randolph: An Ozark Life* gives a clear outline of the trajectory Randolph’s life was to take from that point on, as a documentarian of the Ozarks. His first articles on traditional Ozark life ways appeared in scholarly journals, first with dialect studies in 1926, followed by an article in the *Journal of American Folklore* on folk beliefs, published in early 1927. By 1931, he had published *The Ozarks: An American Survival of a Primitive Culture*, likely inspired by Campbell’s and Kephart’s books on Appalachia, and by 1932 had undertaken a covered wagon trip from Pineville, Missouri to Little Rock, Arkansas in order to learn what a trip like that would have been like in pioneer days. In 1933, he was an employee of MGM studios in Culver City, California, where he was hired as an “Ozarks expert,” writer and consultant to Hollywood. The situation ended badly, when television producer Harry Rapf, accusing Randolph’s script of being inauthentic was told that he could “stick it in a hole the Good Lord provided”³ before Randolph left the office and immediately entrained for home. Rejecting the phoniness of Hollywood, Randolph continued to write about the Ozarks for most of the rest of his life.

For Love and For Money: the Writings of Vance Randolph, also written by Robert Cochran, with Michael Luster in 1979, is an annotated bibliography of Randolph's complete writing career. Besides his many publications, Randolph would produce *Ozark Folklore: An Annotated Bibliography Volume I* in 1972, which contained "any considerable amount of information about Ozark folklore."⁴ In 1987, working with Gordon McCann, and with an introduction by W.K. McNeil, Randolph would produce *Ozark Folklore: An Annotated Bibliography Volume II*. This updated edition featured 1600 new entries, and would be, at age 80, Randolph's last published work other than *Pissing in the Snow and Other Ozark Folktales*, Randolph's only bestseller. The bawdy lore contained in *Pissing* had been collected since the 1920's, but had been deemed "unprintable" until Rayna Green offered help in finding a reputable publisher. The result is a collection of tales that should have been included in Randolph's previous collections, but because of perceived propriety, were not, the omission of which would serve to reinforce the "whitewashing" of Ozark history.

Harkening back to an even earlier time than Randolph's recollections, *Life in the Leatherwoods: An Ozark Boyhood Remembered*, written by John Quincy Wolf, is a first-hand recollection of the author, who grew up in the backwoods country just north of Stone County, Arkansas in the decades following the civil war. Originally published in 1974, the book was compiled of a series of reminiscences written by Wolf for his local newspaper, later compiled by his son, folklorist John Quincy Wolf, Jr. *Local historic re-enactors often cite Life in the Leatherwoods* as a source for credible information about the past. John Quincy Wolf, Jr., besides seeing the eventual publication of his father's memoirs, was a major player in Stone County's recognition as a source of authentic folklore practices. Wolf not only collected folk songs, but was present at the 1941 Stone County Folkways Festival, encouraged Jimmy Driftwood to pursue his career in

Nashville, encouraged Almeda Riddle and “Bookmiller” Shannon to become professional musicians, and was the contact for later folklorists such as Alan Lomax and Ralph Rinzler. It was upon hearing Quincy Wolf’s tapes that Alan Lomax reportedly commented that the White River region where Wolf was recording “shows wider variation in and bolder handling of traditional song than any other part of the country.”⁵

Reporting on her perceptions of the southern journey that she and Alan Lomax made in the fall of 1959, Shirley Collins’ memoirs of the Stone County visit are included in *America Over the Water*. Lomax had included Jimmy Driftwood in his ‘Folksong ‘59’ event at Carnegie Hall in April of 1959, and he and Collins had then encountered Driftwood again at the Berkeley Folk Festival in July of that year - where Driftwood had invited them to visit him in his Timbo, Arkansas home in rural Stone County. Collins presents her personal impressions of the countryside, the lifestyle and the musicians that Lomax recorded while in Stone County, including Jimmy’s father, Neal Morris, Oscar and Ollie Gilbert, and Almeda Riddle.

Arguably the most important study to date of the cultural history of the Arkansas Ozarks is Brooks Blevins’ *Hill Folks: A History of Arkansas Ozarkers and Their Image*. Published in 2002, Blevins’ survey of the area is penetrating, thorough scholarship. This is the book with which to start for any earnest student of Ozark history, particularly of the Stone County area of north-central Arkansas. Blevins not only documents the history of the area, but also discusses the stereotypical views of its residents, and their responses to intervention.

Following in the vein of the general history of southern mountain culture is the specific history of southern mountain folk music. As mentioned in previous reference to Olive Dame Campbell, she invited Cecil Sharp to come to the Hindman Settlement School to collect folk songs. The

result of that invitation was *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*, first published by Oxford University Press in 1932. The description professes “two hundred and seventy-four Songs and Ballads with nine hundred and sixty-eight Tunes, Including thirty-nine Tunes contributed by Olive Dame Campbell.”⁶ Sharp was primarily interested in simply documenting the songs that he found in the pristine mountain areas of North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Virginia - particularly the ballads that he could trace to British origin – before the onrush of civilization and industrialization affected the “simple, Arcadian life of the mountains.”⁷ For the ballads, in Volume I, variations of the songs are grouped together and the singers and dates are noted, as is the mode in which the tune is sung. Sharp would be specific in his choice of material to document, ignoring that which bore the influences of commercial recordings and popular culture.

Traveling from Appalachia to the Ozarks, many of the ballads recorded by Sharp were also to be found in the Ozark Mountains. The largest published record of Ozark musical material was collected by Vance Randolph. By the mid-1930’s Randolph’s collection was already impressive, but two events occurred which helped increase the holdings. The first was his appointment in 1936 as assistant state supervisor of the Federal Writer’s Project in Missouri, which paid him to collect Ozark folklore. The second event happened in 1941 when Alan Lomax, then head of the Archive of American Folk Song, hired Randolph as a fieldworker. Not only was he paid, but he was also able to use the Library of Congress recording equipment. Although Randolph recorded ballads, he also distinguished his collection by including songs not normally allowed in collections of folk music, such as popular tunes of the hillbilly music genre.

W. K. McNeil, resident folklorist at the Ozark Folk Center in Mountain View, Arkansas from 1976 until his death in 2005, binds the two mountain regions music together in a publication

entitled *Southern Mountain Folksongs: Folk songs from the Appalachians and the Ozarks*.

Various songs that are shared by the two regions are compared and contrasted. In addition, he points out traditional songs that are found in one area and not the other. Most notable to me was the analysis that Ozark songs, even when identical to the Appalachian version in other ways, were less likely to "have minors, or minor sounds."⁸ In addition, McNeil heavily documents the role commercialization in the form of popular recordings and sheet music publication played in the perpetuation of the songs.

Another mention of Vance Randolph should be made here, by including his collection of "unprintable" bawdy songs, *Roll Me in Your Arms*. Although Jimmy Driftwood would tell the world in 1964 "you will not hear vulgar words from the tongues of the Rackensack Folk,"⁹ vulgar words were quite common in the repertoire of Ozark musicians. The 180 different songs notated in this publication dispel the notion that Ozarkians were strictly god fearing, tee-totaling folk who worked hard and only sang gospel hymns and British ballads.

A final book that should be included here – although it is not about the indigenous folk music of Appalachia, which traveled west to the Ozarks with the settlers – is Glenn Ohrlin's *The Hell-Bound Train*. Ohrlin – a National Heritage Fellow – arrived in Mountain View in 1954. A true working cowboy originally from Minnesota, he had been rodeoing and working the range all over the west before buying his own ranch in Stone County. Active on the folk revival circuit, Ohrlin was approached by folklorist Archie Green in 1963 in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. Green encouraged Ohrlin to write a book about the cowboy music that he loved so well. This book is considered one of the seminal forces in the revival of cowboy culture in America. At 86, Glenn Ohrlin still drives to Elko, Nevada and to Cody, Wyoming to attend and perform at their yearly cowboy music and poetry events.

The history of craft since the Industrial Revolution is covered for the first time in the comprehensive and thorough *Makers: A History of American Studio Craft*. Although written by Janet Koplos and Bruce Metcalf, real kudos for publication should go to The Center for Craft, Creativity and Design, now in Asheville, North Carolina, and to Chuck Grench at the University of North Carolina Press. The book is a milestone in the documentation of the studio arts movement which began with William Morris' response to the Industrial Revolution, thoroughly documents crafts in the Southern Highlands - including the role of the settlement schools, extends the craft movement into the 1950's pointing out the influence of the G.I. Bill on producing university craft instructors, and the resultant effect they had on the back-to-the-landers. The book not only features leaders in the discipline, but also brings to light sociological influences, and the effect of fine art and design on the field of craft.

The Russell Sage Foundation not only sponsored John C. Campbell's treks through Appalachia, for the publication of *The Southern Highlander and His Homeland*, but they were also responsible for commissioning Allen H. Eaton to survey the history and effects of the Appalachian crafts revival, which began in 1893 at Berea College. In 1937's *Handicrafts of the Southern Highlands*, Eaton states over and over again that "by about 1890 much of the old work was rapidly disappearing"¹⁰ and "When the school was opened [Phi Beta Phi Settlement School in Gatlinburg, Tennessee in 1912] there had been no spinning in the region for thirty-five years."¹¹ Thus in Appalachia, a craft *revival* was taking place at the time the city of Mountain View was incorporated in 1890.¹² Additionally, Eaton concludes that "The revival of this work was brought about largely by schools, teachers, social workers and outside persons..."¹³ recognizing that the handicraft revival was not a grass-roots movement, perpetuated by the people, but rather a movement promoted by forces outside the original culture.

Literature on the craft revival is rather limited, but there has been much scholarship in the area of the folk music revival. Many who have surveyed the history date its genesis to the 1952 release of Harry Smith's *Anthology of American Folk Music*, originally on Folkways Records, and the subsequent follow-up by Mike Seeger, John Cohen, and Tom Paley, forming as 'The New Lost City Ramblers' in 1958.¹⁴ The re-release of the *Anthology* came about in 1997 when Folkways was acquired by Smithsonian Folkways Recordings. Besides being in CD rather than LP format, the re-release also included an extensive booklet of commentary from writers such as Greil Marcus, John Fahey, Peter Stampfel, Jon Pankake, Moses Asch, and Neil Rosenberg.

Other notable publications that discuss the folk revival include *Transforming Tradition* edited by Neil V. Rosenberg, *Romancing the Folk: Public Memory and American Roots Music* by Benjamin Filene, and *Sing It Pretty: A Memoir* by Bess Lomax Hawes. Hawes' recollections as a member of the Almanac Singers in the 1940's documents the nature of folk music from that era – primarily leftist social activism – and which was largely discarded during the era introduced by the *Anthology*, primarily due to the "Red Scare." Filene's documentation deals more specifically with the impact of folklorists, record company executives, producers, radio station programmers, and publicists on contemporary conceptions of what determines authentically traditional folk music. He particularly focuses on the role that both John and Alan Lomax played in changing public perceptions about folk music by including vernacular American music such as cowboy songs, and moving away from the racist ideals inherent in Anglo-Saxon balladry by introducing African-American music and musicians to the folk category.

Rosenberg's collection features essays relevant to this research by Robert Cantwell, Archie Green, Bruce Jackson, Ellen Stekert, Kenneth Goldstein, Richard Blaustein, and Rosenberg himself. Arkansas and Arkansans – including Glenn Ohrlin, Almeda Riddle, and Jimmy

Driftwood - figure prominently in several of the essays. Notions of authenticity, especially regarding revivals are discussed, which include the emergent nature of culture that happens as a result of revivals, the effect of revivalists on cultural practitioners, and the role of purity in what constitutes authenticity.

In the late 1960's through the 1970's, a series of social forces instigated what became known as the 'Back-to-the-Land' movement. Although there were several influences in popular media, a series of publications also helped spawn the movement. Most notable of these perhaps was Stewart Brand's *Whole Earth Catalogue*, the book that *The Guardian* would call "the book that changed the world,"¹⁵ and describes as "a how-to manual, a compendium, an encyclopedia, a literary review, an opinionated life-guide, and a collection of reader's recommendations and reviews of everything from computational physics to goat husbandry."¹⁶ The *Catalogue* provided "access to tools" for an alternative lifestyle. Topics included Eco-ethics, Water Use, Land Use, including Permaculture, Rural Land, Gardening, Good Tools, Owner-built homes, Preserving Food, Cooking, Nomadics, Communications, and a large section on Crafts¹⁷ - setting the stage for the knowledge necessary to buy land, move to the country, and set up a crafts business.

In January of 1970, John and Jane Shuttleworth premiered the *Mother Earth News* magazine. The monthly periodical featured interviews, and how-to instructions on the various aspects of homesteading. It became something of a bible for the back-to-the-landers, and even provided many with access to realtors who specialized in backcountry, inexpensive property.

Similar in oversized format to the *Whole Earth Catalogues* was *Shelter*, a book about dwellings from around the world, providing inspiration, instructions, and tips for those who would desire to build their own. Another seminal publication was *Living the Good Life* by Helen and Scott

Nearing, which chronicled the politically-radical couple's own experiences in moving back-to-the-land, building their own home, and providing almost all of the food they consumed on a vegetarian diet – gardening almost year round in Vermont. And *The Foxfire Book* romanticized “the old ways” and provided further instructions on rural living such as “hog dressing, log cabin building, mountain crafts and food, planting by the signs, snake lore, hunting tales, faith healing, moonshining, and other affairs of plain living.”¹⁸

There has been very little academic study on the back-to-the-land movement. A recent attempt to begin to analyze the movement - and project it into the future as a possible model of sustainability – is Jeffrey Jacob's *New Pioneers: The Back-to-the-Land Movement and the Search for a Sustainable Future*. Jacob uses questionnaire samplings from homesteaders, primarily in the northeast United States, to assemble an update on the status of the movement and its practitioners in current times.

Two other topics from the literature should be mentioned, as they help provide the theoretical background for analysis of the historical data. The first topic is tourism. Edward M. Bruner's *Cultures on Tour: Ethnographies of Travel* presents a nuanced view of tourist performances, tourist expectations, and tourism as emergent culture. And that the emergent nature of culture includes the construction of culture, the production of history, the invention of tradition, the marketing of heritage, and the modern preference for the hyper-real over the real. Bruner tackles notions of authenticity as well, focusing on the credible and the convincing, and admitting that the representation of authenticity is a struggle.

The second topic, heritage, is well covered in David Lowenthal's *Possessed by the Past: The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*. The author's analysis of the functional differences

between heritage and history lays the groundwork for further discussions on the invention of heritage, and the reasons for its invention including commoditization, hegemony, and to create social cohesion and a sense of self. He also concludes that in order to be a living force, the past must always be remade. Otherwise, a society faces “the slow atrophy of life stifled by useless shadows.”¹⁹

Notes

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2. Ibid. (xxxvii)
3. Cochran, Robert. *Vance Randolph, An Ozark Life*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985. (128)
4. Randolph, Vance. *Ozark Folklore: An Annotated Bibliography Volume I*. Columbia, Univ. of Missouri Press, 1972. Reprinted with permission from the Folklore Institute, Indiana University. From the Preface.
5. Wolf, John Quincy. “Folksingers and the Re-Creation of Folksong.” *Western Folklore*. Vol. 26. No. 2 (Apr 1967), pp. 101 – 111. (101)
6. Sharp, Cecil J. *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*. Edited by Maud Karpeles, with contributions from Olive Dame Campbell. London: Oxford University Press, 1932.
7. Ibid. (xxxvii)
8. McNeil, W.K. *Southern Mountain Folksongs: Folk Songs from the Appalachians and the Ozarks*. Little Rock: August House, 1993. (32)

9. Driftwood, Jimmie. "Folk Festival, Craft Fair – Mountain View Stages Both in April."
OCRC Collection, Arkansas History Commission. 1964.
10. Eaton, Allen H. *Handicrafts of the Southern Highlands*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1937. (59)
11. Ibid. (73)
12. "Stone County – Encyclopedia of Arkansas" *The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture*. <http://www.encyclopediaofArkansas.net/encyclopedia>.
13. Eaton, *Handicrafts*. (34).
14. Burt Feintuch, quoting Ray Allen and Norm Cohen in Rosenberg's *Transforming Tradition* (186). Also, Greil Marcus in the *Anthology* commentary insert.
15. Cadwalladr, Carole. "Stewart Brand's Whole Earth Catalogue, the book that changed the world." *The Guardian*, online. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2013/may/05/stewart-brand-whole-earth-catalogue/print>. May 4, 2013. Accessed May 6, 2013.
16. Ibid. (page 2 of 8)
17. Brand, Stewart, ed. *The Next Whole Earth Catalogue: Access to Tools*. New York: POINT/Random House, 1980. (1) *The Next Whole Earth Catalogue* was the updated edition of *the Last Whole Earth Catalogue*, published in 1971, which was the version that was so excessively influential in spawning several movements, including the back-to-the-land movement. Copies of the 1971 edition are difficult to find now, unless you happen to have a personal copy from the era.
18. Eliot Wiggington, ed. *The Foxfire Book*. New York: Anchor Books, 1972. (Front cover)
19. Lowenthal, 171.

Narrative

The 1941 Stone County Folkways Festival

The program promised, “The folk arts and folk crafts in which this region abounds will be the featured attractions of the day’s program” (Souvenir Program 1). The date was August 20, 1941; the location was Mitchell Cave near Blanchard Springs in the Ozark National Forest; the event was The Stone County Folkways Festival. A brush arbor had been built, and a stage erected. The event was sponsored by the Stone County Home Demonstration Club Council, an integral part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Office (Hill 1). Although Stone County’s ethnic heritage was advertised as being Indian, Italian, Spanish, "German-Holland," Irish and English, actual activities focused on Anglo centric activities such as “Country Gardens” where 4-H students represented themselves as lords and ladies of early England, old ballads of English, Scottish, and Irish origin, and English games, such as “Greensleeves,” which was mentioned in Shakespeare’s “Merrie Wives of Windsor” and “Looby-Lou,” mentioned in Robin Hood’s Sherwood Forest (Souvenir Program 2). Local-themed stories and songs were presented, elderly citizens were recognized, and then at noon, an old-fashioned barbeque was served, prepared by Mr. Clint Warren, who “learned the art from an old negro” (Souvenir Program 3). After the mid-day meal, the afternoon program featured Old-Time Contests, a Parade of Old Costumes, with a re-enactment of an Old Fashioned Wedding Ceremony, Old Day Musical Instruments, Good Old Mountain Music, a Pioneer Play Party, and Religious History of Stone County (Souvenir Program 4-5). The contests highlighted fiddlers, hog callers, cow callers, jig dancers, and shingle splitters. The musical instruments used included the predictable guitar, fiddle, and banjo, the archaic turkey quills and leafola, and perhaps unexpectedly, the box organ, a bass drum, and an Italian accordion (Souvenir Program 4-5). No mention was made of any crafts that were exhibited, except perhaps shingle splitting.

A local man, who had performed on the fiddle at the festival, when asked about crafts, simply remarked that he was a young man at the time, and was more interested in girls, but he did remember a lot of broadaxes, chopping axes, and cross-cut saws.¹

Blevins tells us that “The first Ozark festivals were inspired by Appalachian models” (Hill Folks 141), a practice of imitation that we will see again in the 1960’s. Bascom Lamar Lunsford originated the festival movement in 1928, when he initiated the Mountain Dance and Folk Festival in Asheville, North Carolina. Sarah Gertrude Knott, later to create the National Folk Festival, which premiered in St. Louis, organized the first Ozark Folk Festival in 1934 in Eureka Springs, Arkansas. In later weeks of the same year, smaller Ozark festivals were presented in the towns of Rolla, West Plains, and Aurora – all in Missouri. Following these initial four festivals, an all-Ozark festival was staged in Springfield, Missouri. The Great Depression, and the frustration of some who had been involved with these early Ozark festivals, (especially Vance Randolph) due to the “rampant hucksterism of the folk peddlers” (Hill Folks 141) dampened enthusiasm for Ozark festivals until the waning of the depression in 1941. In that year, the Searcy County Home Demonstration Club sponsored a folk festival near St. Joe, Arkansas. The Stone County Club soon followed suit on August 20. However, the Japanese attack of Pearl Harbor would put an end to further presentations of the Stone County event, and the idea was not rekindled for another two decades (The 1941 Mountain View Festival).

Several important players were present at the Stone County Folkways Festival, who would later enact a role in the formation of the emergent culture that would coalesce into what is now considered the traditional craft and music of Stone County. Mrs. Dorothy Ford and Mrs. Clarice Chitwood would be on hand to model old-fashioned dresses (Souvenir Program 4). They would both go on to become the first demonstrating weavers at the Ozark Folk Center when it opened

in 1973. Dr. John Quincy Wolf, Jr., who had begun collecting ballads in the area around Batesville, Arkansas (including Stone County) after WWI, would be in attendance to collect folksongs, take photographs of the event, and to pay attention to the local talent – including Jim Morris, of Timbo, Arkansas, who was listed in the program as playing “the leafola.” Morris, who later changed his name officially to Jimmy Driftwood, also played guitar during a jig dance by John Williams – a guitar that did not resemble a later model he used which was said to have been built by Jimmy’s grandfather “from an ox-yoke and a bedstead” (Howard), or “fence-rail, ox-yoke, and bed-steed” (Jimmie Driftwood, UCLA Program; Lucas 28). Wolf would later encourage a middle-aged Driftwood to pursue a professional career in Nashville, would send folklorists such as Alan Lomax to Driftwood for help in locating local folk singers (Hill Folk 249, 248), and would edit and publish *Life in the Leatherwoods*, his father’s memoirs of growing up in rural Stone County in the decades after the Civil War.

1950’s

In 1952, at the “height of the McCarthyist witch-hunt,” (Marcus 5) otherwise known as the “Red Scare,” Folkways Records of New York City issued *The Anthology of American Folk Music*, edited by Harry Smith. Although musicians from the 1940’s folk revival such as Pete Seeger, actors such as Eddie Albert and Will Geer, and folklorist Alan Lomax would all have been blacklisted (Lomax would flee to Britain for a decade), Harry Smith, eccentric and perhaps the most culturally subversive of them all, went unnoticed by the House Committee on Un-American Activities. However, he would not go unnoticed by those who would take the next step in the 1950’s folk revival, such as Mike Seeger, John Cohen, Dave Van Ronk, Bob Dylan, and others. The *Anthology* featured eighty-four performances from the 1920’s and 1930’s, the performers who, according to Cohen, “became like mystical gods to us” (Marcus 5). The album was a

mash-up of traditional ballads, Gospel songs, Blues, Sacred Harp, and Cajun tunes performed by some musicians never heard from again, and some who would be “rediscovered” and brought forth into the 60’s folk scene. Familiar names are the Carter Family, Frank Hutchison, Uncle Dave Macon, Dock Boggs, and bluesmen Mississippi John Hurt, Blind Lemon Jefferson, and Sleepy John Estes. Mountain Dance and Folk Festival founder, Bascom Lamar Lunsford would log in with two songs, including the mysterious *I Wish I was a Mole in the Ground*, a song that Lunsford sang to his mother, at her request, on her deathbed (Van Orman 12).

Opposing poles of interpretation sprouted from the influence of the *Anthology*. The Kingston Trio, a well-scrubbed collegiate group, made a pop hit of the traditional ballad, *Tom Dooley* in 1958, bringing folk music to the attention of the masses. Not long afterwards John Cohen, Mike Seeger, and Tom Paley would form another more serious trio – The New Lost City Ramblers. The band met with enthusiastic acclaim, as their “distinctive sound set them apart from other acts” because “no one else in the entire revival scene had attempted to re-create the string-band styles of the pre-World War II South, and no other urban band had used the fiddle as a defining instrument” (Malone 83). The Ramblers appeared at the 1959 Newport Folk Festival, along with Stone County musician Jimmy Driftwood, and with Alan Lomax, prior to his southern journey. By that time, Jimmy was playing his “grandpa guitar,” and Alan Lomax and his assistant Shirley Collins were shortly to visit and record Driftwood in Timbo, Arkansas. Decades later, Mike Seeger would teach and perform at the Ozark Folk Center in Mountain View, in 2002 and in 2006.

While the folk revival was in full swing in the more urban parts of America, Stone County, Arkansas, with its county seat of Mountain View was locked in an infrastructure time warp. There were very few miles of paved road. Ranching was still open-range, with cattle roaming

the wooded hills. Many folks in the backcountry areas still had no electricity, and even in town, there were no municipal sewage systems. Water came from “the seven wells” and often there wasn’t enough to last through a day (Van Orman Interviews – Glenn Ohrlin, Judy Klinkhammer, Judy Lovenstein; Collins 150, 151). In 1954, a working cowboy and rodeo rider, originally from Minnesota, Glenn Ohrlin, came looking to buy a ranch in Stone County, at the suggestion of a rodeo friend, Chip Morris, who had bought himself a ranch a few years before. Ohrlin discovered that he could afford 166 acres of pasture land, eventually built up a small herd of Angus, and hand-built his own native-stone home, where he still lives today (Ohrlin xv). Glenn Ohrlin would prove to be an important part of the Stone County and national folk music scenes, inspire a stream of back-to-the-landers to visit Mountain View, and would write the book that likely instigated the movement for working cowboy-culture, *The Hell-Bound Train: A Cowboy Songbook*.

Meanwhile, Jim Morris had been teaching in various small, rural schools in Arkansas. In 1955 and 1956, he would write two articles for *The Ozarks Mountaineer*. The first, entitled “The True – Not Synthetic – Ozarkian Folk Songs” was written by James C. Morris, but later in the article the author refers to himself as Jimmy Driftwood, and he is shown in a photo with his two sons, playing the “grandpa guitar.” In the article, Morris/Driftwood begins differentiating the ‘Folk Songs’ that “music publishers have capitalized on,” and the “true Folk Singer.” He would declare that “most folk singers live in isolated rural areas found in the Ozarks where the old English ballads have been preserved so well that there is little difference in the way they are sung now, and in England two centuries and more ago.” In the list of songs that folks gathered to play and sing at “the settler’s cabin,” Driftwood lists the traditional songs *Barbra Allen*, *Brennan on the Moor*, *A Friend to Robin Hood*, *Lord Bateman* - and *The Battle of New Orleans*, Driftwood’s

own song with which he would record in a few years. Whereas the melody itself was from an old fiddle tune, *The Eighth of January*, the lyrics were all Driftwood's creation – a technique he used in teaching history classes. (Morris, *The True* 6) In February of 1956, James C. Morris would again publish in the *Mountaineer* with the article "'Picking Bow' – A Unique Native Musical Instrument." In the article Morris/Driftwood would highlight Charley Everidge, an 82 year old man who played, and was teaching Driftwood to play the 'Picking Bow' - a shortened shooting bow, with a tin can handle, that when plucked against the mouth, sounds like a jews harp. Jimmy Driftwood would become known for his playing of this "unique native instrument." (Morris, *Picking Bow* 13)

In both articles, Driftwood refers to Stone County as "The Land of the Cross-Bow." An early tourism promoter from Chicago and Hollywood by the name of Harold Sherman dreamed up the concept. Sherman's grand plan for rural Stone County in 1954 entailed building an archery range and hunting resort known as 'Land of the Cross-Bow'. The planned resort would sport taverns of early England, bowling greens, signs constructed in the old English Medieval style, and the attendants would all be dressed in early English costumes. Potential guests were assured that the visitors would find here the last vestiges of pure Anglo-Saxon stock. In Sherman's dream, Stone County would be further promoted through a television show, *My Dog, Sheppy*. The pilot, which featured B-list Hollywood TV stars, and local talent, including Jimmy Driftwood, would be rejected by NBC. By 1959, "The Land of the Cross-Bow" and *My Dog Sheppy* were both gladly forgotten (Hill Folks 243).

In 1957, Driftwood had come to the attention of Chet Atkins, who along with Don Warden, was starting a music publishing business. Atkins was searching for Ozark talent and had heard about Driftwood through a mutual friend in Harrison, Arkansas, Hugh Ashley. Warden arranged for

Driftwood, and his wife Cleda to travel to Nashville during the next school vacation. Although Warden was unenthusiastic about Driftwood's repertoire at first, he did like *The Battle of New Orleans* enough to award the singer an album contract with RCA Victor. The album received fairly good reviews, but *The Battle of New Orleans* contained the words "hell" and "damn" and thus had a difficult time garnering any airplay. Nonetheless, Driftwood began to tour – appearing as a guest on The Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, the Ozark Jubilee in Springfield, Missouri, and the Louisiana Hayride in Shreveport. It was in Shreveport that Driftwood would meet country singer Johnny Horton, whose shortened and censored version of *The Battle* would hit the top of the charts by spring of 1959. Despite the song's popularity on both the country and the pop charts, Driftwood would, nonetheless be marketed as a "folk singer."

Riding his short tide of popularity and fame, Driftwood would be contacted by Alan Lomax upon Lomax's return from Great Britain. In a letter dated February 21, 1959, Driftwood confirmed that he would be happy to appear at a concert scheduled for April 3, 1959. He lays out his plans for the trip from Arkansas, with his son James, in "the old Chevvy." He promises to bring four guitars – his homemade one made long ago by his grandpa, one tuned to "Spanish Tunings," and one that looks like a banjo that he tunes low, in a minor key. Presumably the other guitar was for his son. Driftwood also promises to bring the "Pickin Bow." Then he volunteers himself for "any TV shows, or recording sessions, or anything else," and suggests that perhaps the "old songs in minor keys and gregorian chants might claim to be the great-granddaddies of the Blues" (Driftwood, Letter).

It is clear that Driftwood not only wanted to be a well-known star on the folk-song circuit, but a folklorist as well. In the article *The True – Not Synthetic – Ozarkian Folk Songs*, when he mentions that there is a stranger on the settler's porch who is "gatherin' up all the old songs,"

that the stranger could be “Vance Randolph, Otto Rayburn, Mary Celeste Parler, Irene Carlisle” - all venerable folklorists - or "Jimmy Driftwood of Timbo" (Morris).

The concert for which Driftwood would travel to New York in April was entitled *Folksong '59*, and was presented at Carnegie Hall. The star-studded, multi-genre show featured Jimmy Driftwood, Memphis Slim, the Stoney Mountain Boys, Muddy Waters, the Selah Jubilee Singers and the Drexel Singers, Pete Seeger and Mike Seeger, and The Cadillacs (Stone 2). Jimmy Driftwood would again meet up with Lomax at the Berkeley Folk Festival, and The Newport Folk Festival, all in the summer months before Lomax and Collins traveled to Timbo, Arkansas (Collins 49, 57) to record Driftwood, and the Stone County musicians he and John Quincy Wolf, Jr. would continue to promote.

The recording trip south, of which the Arkansas leg of the journey is well represented, is accessible through recordings on the *Cultural Equity* website. Not only are the tunes available, but the conversation between the tunes is also accessible. Some of the conversations are amusing and interesting; others – like a conversation between Alan Lomax and Almeda Riddle reinforce Rosenberg’s observation that “specialists...like Almeda Riddle, are prompted through contact with revivalists to develop and articulate their sense of what is right and good into a personal theory of authenticity” (Rosenberg, 197). Riddle seems to be fishing for the answers that would please a folklorist when she answers Lomax about how she learned to sing her traditional ballads and other tunes. (Interview Almeda Riddle). Collins writes fondly of her trip to Timbo, and the folks she met while there, despite peppering her descriptions of Aunt Ollie Gilbert with humorous anecdotes, particularly those concerning the primitive toilet facilities she encountered.

In November 1959, a month after Alan Lomax recorded rural Stone County musicians, the Arkansas Cooperative Extension Office established the Area Rural Development, to address the economic needs of impoverished counties in north-central Arkansas. In 1961, Leo Rainey arrived as the new director, precisely at the time that the Extension office had decided that a greater emphasis would be placed upon crafts and tourism for development in the region. Rainey, not an Ozark native himself, “was actually quite cognizant of the fact that that the Ozarks of legend existed only in legend, but he also realized that he had a responsibility to take whatever steps were necessary to pull the eastern Ozarks out of economic quicksand” (Hill Folks 245).

1960's

Thus, in 1962, The Stone County Development Council was formed in order to advance socio-economic activities within Stone County. Five committees were formed – Agriculture and Forestry, New Foods, Health and Welfare, and Tourism and Recreation, with a Crafts Subcommittee. Serving on this Crafts Sub-committee, we find Mrs. Dorothy Ford, who we first saw modeling old-timey clothing at the 1941 Folkways Festival. We also find four members of the Jim Warren family, Edwin and Evelyn Luther, And Joan(ne) Webb – all of whom we will hear more about later. On the Tourist and Recreation Committee, we find Jimmy Driftwood (Stone Co. Dev. Council, OCRC)

Working from the 1960 census, the Council had discovered that the “per capita income for Stone County in 1960 was \$420.00 compared to \$1,338 for Arkansas and \$2,242.00 for the entire United States” (Stone Co. Dev. Council 4). Local industry relied almost entirely on wood and its products – the Ozark Woodworking factory (which had burned to the ground in 1960 because of inadequate water supply for fire protection), a tie mill, a stave mill, and a heading mill. Of the

1,100 miles of roads in the county, only 64 miles were paved. Although the population of the county was 6,294 people, only 2,000 enjoyed electricity and only 875 had phones. (Stone Co. Dev. Council 5 – 7).

A plan was called for in order to increase the welfare of the Stone County inhabitants by attracting more tourists to the area. It was agreed by members of the council that “this development will be accomplished by utilizing the local people, their culture, their history, their arts and crafts, their native music, and recreation provided by the nearby lakes and streams” (Stone Co. Dev. Council 21). Central to the plan was the organization of the Ozark Foothills Handicraft Guild, and the Arkansas Folk Festival. To improve the visitor’s experience, the Council also sponsored a Tourist Training School. Classes were taught by the State department of Vocational Education, and specialized in various groups such as teens, who were manning information booths, adults who would be dealing with the public, and for waitresses (Plans progressing OCRC, Tourist and Recreation Committee OCRC). According to Blevins, “the course offered instruction in Ozark history and legend, fishing and hunting, and provided information concerning tourists’ needs and expectations (Hill Folks 246).

The Ozarks Foothills Handicraft Guild was modeled directly after the Southern Highlands Handicraft Guild, an institution “chartered in 1930 by representatives from nine “producing centers including Frances Goodrich from Allenstand and Lucy Morgan from Penland Weavers and Potters” (Koplos 149) – all primarily arising from the Appalachian social mission movement of the late 1800’s – early 1900’s.

In September 1961, Rainey, three other Extension Service employees and thirty-six community leaders from north-central Arkansas traveled to the fall Craft Fair of the Southern Highlands

Handicraft Guild in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. Returning home, the group was inspired to create a similar organization. By spring and summer of 1962, they sponsored five craft fairs in seven north-central Arkansas counties in order to search out and locate the indigenous craftspeople of the region. “To their dismay, Rainey and his fellow sub-committee members found a severe shortage of native crafters in the Ozarks” (Hill Folks 246). However, based on their observations from the Gatlinburg trip on what constituted mountain crafts, fifty-five craftspeople, mostly, but not all, native Ozarkians, were chosen to present their work at a region-wide fair in Batesville, Arkansas in August. By November of that year, the core group of fifty-five craftspeople incorporated the Ozark Foothills Handicraft Guild, with seventeen of the charter members being from Stone County – including the aforementioned Edwin and Evelyn Luther, Dorothy Ford, and Joan(ne) Webb. Jim Warren – who along with his family transplanted to Mountain View from Texas, became Guild’s first president. The organization was formed as a craft cooperative rather than a non-profit, which would later hamper its ability to acquire outside funding.

Work had already begun to plan a craft fair for April of 1963. Again, the main thrust of the craft fairs, and the Guild, was to funnel more money into these impoverished areas. In order to enhance the craft fair experience, it was suggested that the addition of local musical entertainment would be helpful, turning a simple craft fair into a folk festival. Stone County Extension Service agent, Lloyd Westbrook was tasked with trying to convince Jimmy Driftwood to organize the music for the festival. After several attempts, Westbrook finally convinced Driftwood to attend a planning meeting where approximately thirty community leaders had gathered. After they explained their plans, Driftwood agreed to help. Although town leaders had hoped that Driftwood might convince a few of his buddies from the Grand Ole Opry to perform

at the upcoming Arkansas Folk Festival, the Nashville star had other ideas (Blevins, Interview with Lloyd Westbrook 5).

Understanding Driftwood's motivations for choosing to highlight what he described as the "timber cutters, farmers, housewives, and all plain people of the hills" (Blevins, Sounds, 1), rather than recruiting his Nashville friends, is difficult to know from this perspective in time. However, some things may be surmised. As stated earlier, Driftwood had known folklorist John Quincy Wolf, Jr. since their meeting in 1941 at the original Stone County Folkways Festival. Even in 1955, Driftwood expressed interest in being a folklorist himself (Morris, *The True...*). Wolf would send inquiring folklorists to see Driftwood through the years, including Alan Lomax, who had contacted Driftwood upon his return from Britain. Driftwood would travel to New York City in 1959 to perform at Lomax's *Folksong '59*. He likely would have become aware of the urban folk revival flowering on the East Coast at that time. In a 1963 promotional piece for the upcoming Folk Festival, Driftwood would declare about his chosen performers, "These people didn't learn to sing folk music in Greenwich Village" (Mountain View Makes a Bid, OCRC) –making a pitch for authenticity. He had become aware of folklorists, and what some folklorists valued at the time. As Blevins tells us in *Hill Folks*:

In succeeding years Jimmy Driftwood became something of a "professional hillbilly" and an unofficial Ozark spokesman. Wolf directed folklorists to Timbo, where they would meet Driftwood and through him locate sources of folk songs. But underneath the facade of the country teacher-farmer-troubadour with the squatting black hat, and in later years the black-rimmed glasses, was a shrewd, college-educated man whose world was not circumscribed by the Boston Mountains. Driftwood's experiences with folklorists and other visitors to the region taught him their images of the Ozarks and revealed to him the hills' most sought-after commodity, its dying folk culture. Consequently, by the late 1950's Driftwood was a conscious Ozarker (248).

Driftwood joined forces with Dr. G. Lloyd Hollister, a local physician whose wife Martha was from Leola, Arkansas, and a folk singer, to gather local musicians together on Friday night's in Hollister's office to practice. As word spread regarding the weekly Friday-night practice-sessions, more musicians began showing up until they outgrew the doctor's small office, and moved into the courthouse. These "hootenannies" attracted observers as well, and soon became a popular destination for Friday night entertainment in Mountain View. By the spring of 1963, Driftwood had groomed his group of musicians, which he dubbed the Rackensackers, to be ready to present what he considered to be the authentic folk music of his region. First president of the Rackensack Folklore Society, fiddler Glenn Morrison (who was more interested in girls rather than crafts in 1941) described the evolution of the Society in this way: "We knew that many folks had an old dusty guitar or fiddle under the bed or in the loft, and that they'd probably welcome a chance to dust them off and tune them up again" (Preserving, OCRC).

Driftwood not only gathered and groomed the musicians, and performed and provided commentary for the 1st Arkansas Folk Festival, but he was also very involved in promotional activities prior to the event. Lloyd Westbrook reported that there was absolutely no money to spend on advertising, so they used ingenuity – and Driftwood's name – instead. The plan was to have a press conference at Blanchard Springs (site of the 1941 festival). Driftwood would provide musicians, and Jim Warren would round up the craftspeople to demonstrate to the press what could be expected during the premier Arkansas Folk Festival. Locals were enlisted to help provide a meal to all who came. Bill Rosa (Blanchard Springs manager), Driftwood, Jim Warren, and Westbrook traveled by car to Little Rock to visit the newspapers and television stations there. All in all, they managed to attract press representatives from Missouri, Tennessee

and Arkansas to come to the press conference. Jerry Rush, Staff Writer for the Arkansas Democrat reported that “the entertainment offered by the Driftwood crew was not the type performed by today’s television folk singer.” He also wrote that Driftwood said “this type of music-making is the genuine article learned and handed down by pioneer ancestors of the Ozarks – the kind of music outsiders expect to hear from hill folk” (Rush, OCRC). Inviting newsmen to a Friday night Musical in the courthouse, Driftwood would perform for them with the Stone County Sextet, a group of teen-age female vocalists, to acclaim (Press Conference, OCRC).

Besides official coverage by the press, Driftwood and Rainey would each write articles, promoting the event. Regarding the music that would be presented at the event, Driftwood would write:

This part of the Arkansas Ozarks is one of the richest seedbeds of British Ballads in America. And we are just as wealthy in American folksongs. This is where Alan Lomax recorded Neal Morris, Ollie Gilbert, Almeda Riddle, Absie Morrison and Bookmiller Shannon in an album of songs and tunes that doctors of folklore recommend as the greatest album for teaching how folksinging ought to be done.

In the same article, Driftwood would announce “We have...more fiddlers and folksingers per family than any place in the world” (Mountain View’s April Folk Festival, OCRC). Rainey, in discussing the history of the Guild, would insist “Many of these early [craft] skills have been passed down from generation to generation. Handicrafts are a major part of the cultural life of the Ozark Mountains.” (Rainey, OCRC). Neither of these last statements was true at the time, but Driftwood and Rainey were too busy inventing heritage to pay homage to factual information.

Nonetheless, the promotional scheme was a tremendous success. Despite only 3 hotels in this town of 983 people, estimates on total attendance ranged from 10,000 to 12,000. The Associated

Press reported “2,500 persons crowded into Mountain View High School’s fieldstone gymnasium last night” (2,500 Whistle, Stomp, Sing, OCRC), while a reporter for the Memphis Press Scimitar, Edwin Howard quoted Jimmy Driftwood as estimating 3,000 people for the Friday night show, and 3,800 for Saturday night (OCRC). Howard also quoted Driftwood as saying, “And there was a bunch came from the University of Chicago that never dreamed what folk music really was until they came down here, tho they have their own folklore society up there” (Howard, OCRC). John Quincy Wolf, Jr., who was quoted as saying that Mountain View “could become the outstanding folklore center in the South, and perhaps in the nation, if the Festival sponsors hold closely to the true oldtime flavor,” (Deane, Folk Songs Preserve, OCRC) taped the concerts, which were released as an album entitled “Sounds of the Ozark Folk,” in 2005, through the Lyon College Regional Studies Center. Despite the fact that the original highlight of the festival was to be the Ozark Foothills Handicrafts Guild, the organization ended up taking a back seat to the prominence of the music. The Arkansas Folk Festival continues to this day, and celebrated a fifty-year anniversary in 2013.

City planners got right back to work, making plans for the 1964 festival, but the Handicrafts Guild had its own set of problems. As Owen Rein reported in his interview with the author, “There really wasn’t a whole lot of traditional crafts around here. Several old-timers have told me that.” (Van Orman, Interview with Owen Rein). Indeed, although there were isolated instances of craft practice, the activity was primarily moribund. There is historical evidence of three brothers – the Rorie brothers, from Big Flat, Arkansas who were all blind. They learned broom making at the Arkansas School for the Blind in Little Rock. They had a broom factory, and even raised their own broomcorn. A man by the name of Henry Cooper, whose legs became paralyzed at the age of two years old, managed to be a productive member of society. He made

chairs, baskets, and brooms, and played the fiddle. In spite of his disability, he and his wife raised 11 children.² But these few instances associated with disabled individuals, are not evidence of a craft tradition. An interview with quilt maker Lois Dodson in 1995 revealed that in her childhood she had learned to make quilts, because it was “a necessity. You quilted because you needed the covers to keep warm...” (Dodson, OCRC). But then, even she stopped making them when she no longer needed to – until the opportunity presented itself for her to make quilts for tourists in the 1970’s. And she added that young women were no longer learning to make quilts. Occasionally, you would hear tales of a person who needed a basket to gather eggs that would throw one together, or of a wife’s grandfather who knew how to make white oak baskets (Van Orman, Interview R.C. Schroeder). This grandfather, though, would turn out to be an example of the solution that the Cooperative Extension Service, the Stone County Development Council, and the Ozark Foothills Handicraft guild would come up with to solve the problem of no real craft tradition. They would teach the practice, using the pitch that participants could earn “income that would compare favorably with factory wages” (Newly-Trained Basket makers, OCRC). Ellis Roper, the grandfather of R.C. Schroeder’s wife, Jane, would turn out to be one of nine men enrolled in a white-oak basket making course in 1964 (Nine Stone Countians, OCRC). Ernie Deane, staff writer for the Arkansas Gazette would report on basket makers Mrs. Lee Jackson, and her son, Parvin, who were demonstrating at the Mountain View craft fair. He related “Six months ago, basket making was something new to these folks but they were making a diligent effort to learn the craft” (Deane, Basket Making, OCRC). Leo Rainey described hiring Henry Young, a broom maker from Ohio who learned to make brooms at Berea College, to teach a class in broom making in the early 1970’s. Father and son, Jim and Billy Ford would learn their trade from this class, and later demonstrate the craft at the Ozark Folk Center for a couple

of decades (Blevins, Interview with Leo Rainey 15). Other crafts taught by the government organizations and the Guild included novelty arts, woodworking, weaving, making of apple head dolls, clay work, block printing, and tissue flower making. Most classes were taught by charter members of the Ozark Foothills Handicraft Guild - such as Dorothy Ford, Joanne Webb, and Eppes Mabry (Training in crafts, OCRC). In other words, the craft tradition of the area was largely taught under the sponsorship of government economic policies, rather than being passed down within the family.

Glenn Ohrlin was one of the performers at the inaugural Arkansas Folk Festival in Mountain View. Ohrlin would perform a flamenco guitar piece on Friday night and “The Hell-Bound Train” on Saturday night. In September of the same year, while performing at the Ozark folk Festival in Eureka Springs, Ohrlin would meet folklorist Archie Green, who had come to the event at the invitation of Jimmy Driftwood. Green was at first put off by Ohrlin’s performance of Woody Guthrie’s “Hard Traveling.” But later, in an informal session, Green was swept away by Ohrlin’s rendition of “The Hell-Bound Train.” Green describes his response in the Foreword of the book Ohrlin would later write, at Green’s urging:

“I became the troubled cowboy. I was scorched by sulphur, I was awakened from my dream, I returned to life. Folklorists as scholars are strongly drawn to obscure or unusual ballads; but the appeal of “The Hell-Bound Train” was much stronger than intellectual curiosity, for, in effect, Glenn had pulled me back to the childhood ambience of Mix and McClintock.” (Ohrlin xii)

Green, then faculty advisor for the University of Illinois Campus Folksong Club, invited Glenn Ohrlin to perform at the University of Illinois in December. Green reported that Ohrlin “held a student audience spellbound not only with songs but with flamenco music, salty tales, and wry anecdotes” (Ohrlin xiii). University of Illinois student H. Page Stephens, a member of the

folksong club, would meet Ohrlin there, and would later live in Mountain View to do research through National Science Foundation grant for his PhD dissertation on Stone County. Stephens would provide an etic perspective on the tradition inventing that was occurring in the 1960's, as the town became exposed to the outside world – a world with stereotypical Ozark expectations - and attempted to define itself. In the summer of 1964, the University of Illinois Folksong Club would produce Glenn Ohrlin's first LP, "The Hell-Bound Train," and in 1973 the University of Illinois Press would publish the book that Green encouraged Glenn to pen also entitled *The Hell-Bound Train*.

As Ohrlin became known on the folksong circuit, he traveled extensively to campuses and folk festivals. At Beloit College, he would meet Judy Klemmedson, a young "folknik" from southern Wisconsin, who had become interested in the mountain dulcimer by listening to folk music shows on public radio. During his folk circuit appearances, Ohrlin followed suit with Driftwood in inviting everyone to come to Mountain View for the next annual Arkansas Folk Festival – in this case the 2nd annual, 1964 event. After the show, when Judy and her first husband approached Ohrlin to ask about the festival, he invited the young couple to come and stay in his barn, giving them his phone number. In April, Judy would call to see if they could still stay in Glenn's barn, but it was already full. However, he made arrangements for them to stay at his neighbor Hub Willis' root cellar, and so the couple left Wisconsin in a snow storm, driving miles of gravel roads through open range to arrive at the top of Dodd Mountain, where they would stay during the three-day festival (Van Orman, Judy Klinkhammer interview). As we will see later, this incident would trigger a stream of visitors and new Stone County residents from northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin, who would become essential in the sustaining of local traditions.

Publicity hype continued for the 1964 Folk Festival. In an article entitled “Folk Festival, Craft Fair – Mountain View stages both in April” written by “Your Friend, Jimmie Driftwood,” it would be stated that “What we have is a real hillbilly folk festival put on by real country people.” In reinforcing the stereotypical vision of pure-stock Anglo-Saxon mountain people, propagated by many of the reformers of the Appalachian craft and music revival, our friend would also share that

Someone has said that the trees planted by Ozark people have their roots in Merrie England and their tops in the Scottish Highlands, and that Anglo-Saxon rivers ripple in their speech. One thing is sure, though they may butcher the modern King’s English, they enrich it with expressions from the Elizabethan tongue, and you will not hear vulgar words from the tongues of the Rackensack folk.

(OCRC)

Judy and Gene Klemmedson would arrive from Wisconsin and Judy’s impressions of the local people, particularly musicians such as Bookmiller Shannon – of whom she would become a direct disciple - caused her to pack up her dulcimer and her children, purchase a beautiful, old farm for \$35.00 an acre, and introduce the mountain dulcimer to Mountain View. The young couple would be the first to build dulcimers in Stone County, hiring Milford and Richard Morrison - kin to Absie Morrison who was recorded by Lomax in 1959; son and grandson of Fate Morrison, who would one day tutor Brad Leftwich in his fiddling techniques – to build dulcimers with them. And once, when visiting Jimmy Driftwood, Judy would point to an old dulcimer he had hanging on his wall. When he discovered that Judy knew how to play the dulcimer, he immediately sat it in her lap, hummed her a fiddle tune until she could play it for him, and announced that she – a self described young hippie girl in short skirts from “off” - would join the performers at the weekly musicals in the courthouse (Van Orman interview, Judy

Klinkhammer). From that point in time, the dulcimer would become a “traditional” instrument of Stone County (Anderson 26, OCRC), despite the fact that there is no evidence it had been played before in the county, ever.

Judy was not the only person to be impressed with the quality of musicians who were performing at the 2nd annual Arkansas Folk Festival. Ralph Rinzler, Talent and Folklore Coordinator for the Newport Festival would be on hand, scouting and recruiting talent for his July event (Deane, Folk Festival Draws, OCRC). Performing at the festival, which was held July 23 – 26, 1964 were Jimmy Driftwood, Ollie Gilbert, Glenn Ohrlin, and Almeda Riddle. They would share the stage that year with luminaries such as Joan Baez, Johnny Cash, The Clancy Brothers, Judy Collins, Bob Dylan, Son House, Mississippi John Hurt; Koerner, Ray, and Glover; Alan Lomax, and Peter, Paul and Mary. In addition, Dr. John Quincy Wolf would contribute articles to the program on “Sacred Harp Singing” and on “Quills and Whooping Songs” (Williams, Newport Folk Festival Program).

In 1967, several years after inviting Stone county musicians to the 1964 Newport Folk Festival, Ralph Rinzler was hired to develop the program for the inaugural Smithsonian Folklife Festival, held July 1- 4 in Washington D.C. Featuring both craft and music, Rinzler was obviously drawing from his experience at Newport. Thus, Glenn Ohrlin would be there, as would Almeda Riddle, who Filene reports, “the stage belonged to” (Romancing 176).

In describing the 2nd annual Arkansas Folk Festival, the Arkansas Democrat would report that “The second annual festival drew visitors from 10 states. The visitors ranged from bearded beatniks that slept rolled in blankets to doctors of philosophy from the University of Illinois

Folklore Center” (Faubus Greets Voters, OCRC). The influence of academics, and of “beatniks” in Mountain View was about to gain momentum.

At the 1965 festival, a young grad student by the name of H. Page Stephens would come to stay with Glenn Ohrlin. Stephens and Ohrlin had met at the University of Illinois, during Ohrlin’s concerts, and his recording sessions for *The Hell-Bound Train* LP. Stephens would return, first during the summer of 1967, with his residency funded by the Department of Anthropology of the University of Illinois, and again during the winter-spring of 1968 – 1969, with funding through an NSF Grant for the study of poverty. His observations culminated in his PhD dissertation, *Stone County: A Study in Social Process*, completed in 1973. More important, perhaps, was a later article, published in *Mid-America Folklore*, at the urging of Dr. W.K. McNeil, in 1982, entitled “The Case of the Missing Folk Music: A Study of Aspects of Musical Life in Stone County, Arkansas from 1890-1980. Much of the information in the article was taken from the dissertation, except that he zeroed in on the newly launched “traditions” that were emergent in Stone County during the time periods that he lived there. He mentions the many folklorists who visited the county during this time, and in the process of collecting their materials, taught “the locals their own norms for performance and style” (65). He discusses the rift that occurred in the musical community amongst the factions, as Jimmy Driftwood laid down rules about which instruments and music could be performed in order to live up to the folklorist’s expectations, and which could not. Rosenberg clearly describes Driftwood’s behavior when he says, “There may be a tendency toward romantic purism, in which revivalists will not countenance certain types of repertoire, style, performer, or performance context; not being “pure,” they cannot be “authentic”” (197).

Other groups besides the Rackensackers were formed, such as the Mountain View Folklore Society, who ironically, allowed electric instruments and more modern music to be played, electing Glenn Ohrlin as their first president. They began holding their own musicals in the courthouse on Saturday nights, and in 1970, set up a rival festival that featured Mother Maybelle Carter. All of this struggle for control would spill over into the Ozark Folk Center when it would open in 1973. Regarding craft, Stephens observed, “The craft shops...manufacture and sell items never or rarely seen in Stone County before the folk revival. These items, however, are of the type associated by outsiders with “hill culture” and a general notion of the way things once were in the county”(68). Finally, he would conclude:

Thus the walls of these shops are lined with copies of “grandfather’s guitar,” mouth bows, and dulcimers, although the first two items were probably unique to one or two performers and the latter is by and large a folk revival importation from the Appalachian regions further east. With little knowledge of their own heritage, the young have now associated such adopted artifacts with their own enlarged version of the way things were for their great-grandparents, and as older people die off there will be no direct authorities to consult. The fiction will solidify (68).

As we proceed further, we will see that this has come to pass.

Circling back around to one of our original interventionists, Alan Lomax, we will recall that he returned to the United States after a decade in Britain. Filene explains that Lomax returned “with a new determination to systematize his ideas about folk music. He announced in 1961 a new approach to classifying world song styles. They dubbed the approach “cantometrics”” (Romancing 174). Lomax deemed his approach anthropological, and indeed the program was supported through Columbia University’s Anthropology Department. For reasons unclear, Lomax sent Joan Halifax, a young anthropologist he had met at Newport Folk Festival in 1964, and who was working for him on the Cantometrics Project, to collect materials again from Stone

County (Harvey, Halifax Interview, LOC). Halifax had met Jimmy Driftwood through Lomax, and in 1967, she had been invited to stay at Jimmy and Cleda's home in Timbo, using that as her home base for her collecting adventures. The Driftwood's younger son, Bing, acted as her assistant, carrying the tape recording machine for her. She recorded both stories and music, and the interviews are on file in the Alan Lomax Collection at the Library of Congress.

Joan Halifax would be the last of the interventionists, who, by selectively choosing particular interviewees and performers for recording purposes, would determine the exact nature of the folklore heritage of Stone County, Arkansas, before two major events annealed the final form this folklore invention would take before solidifying – that of a town caught in time, the “folk music capital of the world.”

1970's

Chickens and goats, cottage crafts, organic gardening, home canning and preserving, wood heating, natural foods, natural fibers, natural childbirth – though inflation undercut most of these experiments, or sent them along commercial routes into exurbia to occupy the weekends of the rich – were the late contributions to American life by young adults for whom folk music had become, in Raymond Williams' phrase, “the site of resistance to the centralization of power.

(Cantwell, in Rosenberg 57)

The Arkansas Folk Festival in Mountain View had grown to unimagined levels of success by the early 1970's. The 1972 festival estimated anywhere from 75,000 to 140,000 attendees, most, according to the April 20 edition of the Stone County Leader being “under 30, long-haired, and probably the stereotyped “hippie”” with police reporting a “hard-core hippy element.” As the town only contained three motels at the time, accommodations during the wet weekend ranged from staying in local homes, or camping in the nearby Ozark National Forest. Obviously attracted to the festival by the “authentic mountain music and demonstrations of broom-making,

carving, spinning, and other native crafts,” word was out among the counterculture that the festival was a spring must-do (Ivy, OCRC).

Panicked locals, unsure of how to respond, began to crack down almost immediately. Arrests, especially for possession of drugs were made, and in August of that year, the Mountain View Folklore Society banned longhair performers from its Saturday night musicals, “because long-haired musicians could give the group a bad image (Mountain View Folklore Society Bars Longhairs, OCRC).

However, word was indeed out, not just about the festival, but also about Stone County in general. Young idealists, searching for a better life than the urban or suburban one in which they found themselves were yearning for a more bucolic lifestyle. And Stone County had the perfect combination of qualities to support such a lifestyle – unspoiled and grandiose natural beauty, ridiculously inexpensive land, no building codes outside of city limits, low taxes, a temperate climate, and an old-timey folk culture.

Popular culture in the early 1970's reflected this yearning that would eventually become a social movement. Demographers labeled it the urban-to-rural migration turn-around (Jacob 20), but it was popularly known as the back-to-the-land movement. In 1970, publication began for *The Mother Earth News*, a monthly magazine which featured how-to articles, reports from those who already were engaged in the back-to-the-land lifestyle, interviews with leading thinkers in the movement such as Ed Abbey and Wendell Berry, and perhaps most importantly, a classified ads section where realtors - many located in the Ozarks - would advertise plots of land and old farms for sale. The magazine provided a link between backcountry folks in the pre-internet days, and act as a “wish-book” for those who hadn’t yet figured out how to make the break.

In 1971, the *Last Whole Earth Catalogue* was published, becoming the source for alternative lifestyles of all sorts, but heavily weighted towards a self-sufficient country lifestyle featuring organic home-grown foods, sustainable agricultural systems, home-built homes, craft as a means of vocation, as well as many more essentials of a free-thinking way of life. *The Catalogue*, the brainchild of Stewart Brand, has been described as “the internet before the internet...the book of the future...a web in newsprint” (Markoff in Cadwalladr 3). It provided access to tools – physical and knowledge-based – that made it seem not only possible, but probable that one could move back-country, build a home, raise all or most of your own food, and do craft for a living for the little bit of cash that one might need for taxes or other nuisances of life.

Another book that was formative for those who were considering the back-to-the-land lifestyle was Eliot Wiggington’s magnificent educational experiment cum community ethnography, *The Foxfire Book*. This was not the handbook for the future, but a message from the past.

Grandparents and neighbors of Rabun Gap High School shared stories and directions on how to do “other affairs of plain-living” such as hog dressing, log cabin building, mountain crafts and foods, planting by the signs, snake lore, hunting tales, faith healing, moonshining” (Wiggington, *The Foxfire Book*, cover), and more. Later editions discussed how to build a wooden wheel, weaving and spinning, midwives and granny women, and how to build banjos and dulcimers. At least one Stone County back-to-the-lander, Owen Rein, learned his main craft practice – chair making - from *The Foxfire Book* (Van Orman, interviews, Rein).

Popular culture in the form of television shows also reflected the back-to-the-land trend. In 1972, *The Waltons* premiered, bringing Will Geer to the screen after decades out of work due to being an early victim of the Hollywood blacklist (Hawes, 63). The show promoted country living as the basis of an honorable and fulfilling family-centered life. Musically, *Will the Circle*

be Unbroken was released featuring The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band performing with Doc Watson, Mother Maybelle Carter and other old-time music stars, singing traditional tunes and country songs by A.P. Carter, Hank Williams, Earl Scruggs, and more.

In 1973, Lloyd Kahn's *Shelter* was published. Printed in an oversized format like the *Whole Earth Catalogue*, it presented an archival painting of a Mongolian yurt on the cover. The inside was filled with examples of human shelters from all cultures and all times. The emphasis was on the fact that people have been building their own homes for thousands of years – and there was no reason why you could not build one, too.

All of these influences coalesced, composing a lifestyle ideal that seemed a perfect match for the hills and hollers of rural Stone County, Arkansas. The area even had the stamp of approval from the Smithsonian, as Arkansas had been chosen as the featured state for the 1970 Folklife Festival. Jimmy Driftwood, would of course, be on hand, remarking that “You can learn more here in an afternoon than in a semester at college” (Kurin 12). Along for the ride with Driftwood would be Bookmiller Shannon and Almeda Riddle, Ollie Gilbert, the Simmons Family, Percy Copeland and his wife, Ida, and Judy and Gene Klemmedson. Judy describes the experience as being her “most proudest moment” (Van Orman, interview, Klinkhammer). The times in Washington were turbulent that summer. Judy Klinkhammer reported that members of ‘Stephen’s Farm’ – a group of counter-culturists from San Francisco, who started a celebrated commune in Tennessee, were in the audience, wrapped in American flags. On the 4th of July, “Honor America Day” featuring Bob Hope and the Reverend Bill Graham was being celebrated on the grounds of the Lincoln Memorial. It was described as follows:

Too good an opportunity to pass up, thousands of Yippies and Hippies gathered at the Washington Monument, smoking copious amounts of marijuana, and then marched on the stage, with Yippie!

And Viet Cong/NLF/NVA flags flying. When cops blocked them in the aisles, they waded through the Reflecting Pool, some people stripping down for a skinny dip. Tear gas grenades flew through the air, affecting protesters and “pro-Americans” both. The event degenerated into chaos as arrests were made, fistfight broke out and gas wafted through the night. (A Brief History)

Musicians were caught in a tear gas raid, and Smithsonian officials threatened to cancel the evening show because of the tensions. According to Judy, Driftwood begged for them to let the Arkansas crew play just one song, and if things didn’t calm down, they would all go home. So they “played a lightnin’ fast fiddle tune... Bunker Hill and...medley’d into something else...You could see the Washington Monument and people started dancing around it...We did our whole concert” (Van Orman, interview, Klinkhammer).

In 1974, John Quincy Wolf, Jr. would publish his father’s memoirs, *Life in the Leatherwoods*, about Wolf, Sr.’s experiences growing up as a boy in the northern part of Stone County during the decades after the Civil War. The book allied the Stone County of the past, and tied it in a startling way to the Stone County of the present. But the publication of this book would not be the main force that would “project the present back, the past forward” (Lowenthal xi). That honor would go to a much larger project, one that had been in the making since the first folk festival in 1963 – the Ozark Folk Center.

On November 16, 2012, as I sat in the lobby of the Ozark Folk Center Restaurant, a digital picture frame is flashing nostalgic-looking scenes from the park’s craft grounds, featuring the exhibiting craftspeople dressed in old-timey garb, and the happy tourists who have come to see them. As the power-point presentation makes its way back to the opening slide, I see the following words: “The Ozark Folk Center – where tomorrow is always yesterday.”

Exultant after the success of the first Arkansas Folk Festival in 1963, Leo Rainey, Lloyd Westbrook, and Stone County community leaders met to discuss what could be done to

accommodate future crowds. They decided they needed a building – a large music auditorium – and an area for the crafts as well. The group contacted John Opitz, newly appointed regional director of the Area Redevelopment Administration, a federal agency created by Congress to aid rural areas in obtaining grant monies for industrial development, public facilities, technical assistance, and training programs. Opitz had already expressed his interest in helping the town build a folk cultural center. His strategy for obtaining funding tied the building of a music auditorium to a water and sewage system project for the town. Opitz suggested the first course of action was for Lloyd Westbrook's office to develop an Overall Economic Development Program (OEDP) for Stone County, and then submit the document along with a grant request for 2.9 million dollars. Again, Driftwood was called to help champion the cause, and in October of 1963, he and more than a dozen Stone County residents traveled to Washington D.C. to rally for the funding, but to no avail. In response to repeated denials for funding, an Ozark Folk Cultural Commission was formed in May 1965, with educational and economic crusader, Dr. Bessie Moore chosen as chair. However, even with Dr. Moore's influence, the project continued to be rejected by Washington. In 1967, retiring governor Orval Faubus funneled \$25,000.00 in state funds to help bolster the failing commission. Ultimately, it was House Representative Wilbur D. Mills, then chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, who finally convinced members of the Economic Development Administration (successor to the Area Redevelopment Administration) to approve funding for the project. In September 1968, \$3 million dollars were set aside for the building of the Ozark Folk Center, along with a water and sewer system for Mountain View. At long last, a plan was underway for preserving what was being touted as the Ozark folk culture of Stone County (Hill Folks, 252, Interview with Lloyd Westbrook 8). Advanced Project Corporation of New York was awarded the contract to build and operate the

new center. However, as Blevins explains,

The center's leaders soon discovered...that the traditional crafts and music to be preserved had not been bequeathed to recent generations of Stone Countians. Ozarkers would have to be taught the skills and activities that visitors...assumed they already possessed. Consequently, in November 1969, the State Department of Vocational Education agreed to establish a branch of Searcy's Foothills-Vocational-Technical School at the Ozark Folk Center for the purpose of instructing local young people in the forgotten music and crafts of their heritage.

(Hill Folks 253-254)

When the original investors went bankrupt in 1972, operation of the center was assumed by the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, who immediately scrapped the idea for an educational center and opted to convert the center to an open-air museum that charged admission.

When the Ozark Folk Center finally opened its doors in 1973, they had contracted with the Ozark Foothills Handicraft Guild to provide non-salaried manning of the Folk Center's craft cabins. Likewise, the music programs were conducted by Jimmy Driftwood's Rackensack Folklore Society.

The center immediately was criticized "for allegedly compromising the authenticity of the mountain culture it celebrate[d]" (Folk Center Head, OCRC). However, as first director W. David Newbern explained, "an artificial environment is necessary for preservation." He contended that the music had already been taken from front porches and put on a stage during the courthouse musicals, and that putting it in a 1,043 seat auditorium merely moved the show to "where it can be showcased well" (Folk Center Head, OCRC). However, a radio advertisement for the May 5 opening of the Center, began with the following description:

Here is a report on an ageless tradition in crafts and music...But the real story here began in these Ozark Mountains over 200 years

ago – when gathered outside – the hill families would play 15th century religious music and 17th century folk music – as they still do today. This way of life is an Anglo Saxon tradition that never faded in a county isolated from the nation and even within its own state. Many Mountain View residents find an interest from outsiders amusing – since they are just being themselves...With this woman – weaving is not a hobby – it is the avenue necessary for making everything from potholders to clothing.

(Ozark Folk Center to Open, OCRC)

The author of this fabricated fantasy of both past and 1970 era culture in Stone County is not noted, but the rhetoric sounds similar enough to the descriptions of the area written through the years by Jimmy Driftwood, that one cannot help but assume he had a hand in the composition of this script.

For its first several years of operation, the Ozark Folk Center would be racked with internal strife and political bickering – particularly in the realm of the music programming. In 1974, Dr. Bessie Moore founded the Committee of 100, a support and funding group of women, with representatives from all seventy-five Arkansas counties and with twenty-five at-large members, ostensibly formed to help promote peace at the center. By 1975, Governor David Pryor fired both Jimmy Driftwood from his position as Music Director, and ex-Mayor Tommy Simmons from his post as the 2nd General Manager of the park. The state would, from that point on, remove all local influence from the upper echelons of park management.

In 1976, with Driftwood gone, the center hired professional folklorist and musicologist W.K. McNeil as a researcher and consultant. He served with distinction until his death in 2005, amassing a large archive for the park. Sadly, after his death, the folklorist position was never again filled; the archive was dismantled and shuttled off to the Arkansas History Commission, where it has sat in boxes for over seven years. Only in February of 2014 was access to the rich cultural wealth and collective memory of Mountain View been made available to the public

again – but on a very limited basis.

Many of the original Ozark Folk Center craftspeople and musicians were local Stone Countians, who had at least some link with the area's history. But in 1978, the Committee of 100 instituted an apprenticeship program at the center, in order to pass the "traditions" on. An interesting dynamic can be seen in the record of these apprenticeships. In the late 70's and early 80's, most of the mentors were local people – some who, like Jim and Bill Ford had learned their craft through the Extension Office's craft classes in the 1960's, or some of who were charter members of the Ozark Foothills Handicraft Guild. However, many of the apprentices were people "from off,"³ some who, like Jerry Lovenstein were back-to-the-landers. Curiously, there is little evidence that the local's children or grandchildren had any interest in learning the craft and music skills. Conceivably, they wanted to get out of Stone County and do something which would provide them with a real living. By the 1980's, we continue to see that pattern, with some of the previous apprentices like Joan Wiede, and some of the craftspeople who brought their trade to Stone County with them, like David Dahlstedt, becoming mentors. By the 1990's, there is almost no evidence of the old-timers teaching any longer. Many of the mentors are back-to-the-landers, while an interesting number of apprentices are retirees "from off" – a new demographic in the area.⁴ By the year 2000, most of the mentors and the apprentices are retirees "from off" (Apprentice/Master Survey, OCRC).

These figures speak eloquently of the transition of heritage bearers. In the 1960's, economic development plans revived a tradition that had not existed since the pre-Civil War era, if ever. Locals were taught crafts in the hopes of improving their personal economies, and the Craft Guild served as a marketing device for them. In the 1970's, the Ozark Folk Center offered another option in craft employment opportunities. Some of the locals who learned their craft

from the Cooperative Extension craft classes could demonstrate to tourists, and sell to them as well. Gradually, through the later 70's and 80's they were joined by the young, idealistic back-to-the-landers, who mostly brought their crafts with them from colleges to the north or the east. By the 90's, the back-to-the-landers were teaching what they knew to the new Stone County demographic – retired people who amused themselves by dressing up like pioneers and doing a bit of craft to supplement their social security. By the 2000's, many of those back-to-the-landers were proficient enough in their craft that they had moved on to better markets, traveling to craft and art shows, or developing wholesale accounts. What remained at the Folk Center were a large number of retired people from Texas or Mississippi, demonstrating to an audience of retired people from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Texas, and Mississippi.

What is worrisome about these figures is the age demographic that currently carries the burden of the tradition. The back-to-the-landers range in age now from fifty to seventy years, the age span for the retirees is even older. There are few twenty-year old people desiring to learn craft. The music is faring a bit better, as a Music Roots program has been instituted in the public school, for students in the 4th to 8th grades, since 1998. But how this will translate as the students come of age remains to be seen.

1980's

In the 1980's, the last of the back-to-the-landers came trickling in. By and large, they seemed to have a clearer plan than those who came in the early 1970's. For example, Owen Rein came to Stone County in 1980 with his wife and young family. Owen knew he would make chairs for his craft, forming the green wood with hand tools and cutting the hickory bark strips for weaving the chair seats by hand – skills he brought from his time back east. He and his wife, Barbara, both worked with Ozark Folk Center basket maker Wayman Evans.⁵ Owen had an absolutely clear

idea of a business plan and the reason for it. He had already built a cabin in Massachusetts, and was experienced in building, as well as furniture making when he built his lovely hand-made small home in East Richwoods community near Mountain View. Owen's reason's for moving to the area were well thought out and logical, a direct response to the economic and political dynamics of the beginnings of the Reagan era.

But as societal mores changed from earthy, back-country dreams to a time of unmitigated excesses in consumerism, the back-to-the-land movement went quietly underground for a while. Realtors made the transition from advertising to a "hippie" demographic to a retired demographic. Meanwhile, the back-to-the-landers who had stuck it out – despite armies of ticks, chiggers, copperheads and rattlers, exhausted soil, and unfriendly weather for gardening, were quietly raising their families, working their raised beds, expanding their hand-built homes and carrying the craft and music traditions – whether learned or brought - forward into the future.

Twice in the 1980's, Stone County tradition bearers would be honored by the National Endowment of the Arts Heritage Fellowship Awards. The first, in 1983 went to ballad singer, Almeda Riddle. Although from neighboring Cleburne, rather than Stone County, Riddle was included in the 1959 Alan Lomax recordings from the area, was part of the Jimmy Driftwood folk entourage, and often performed in Stone County at the Folk Festivals or at the Ozark Folk Center. Riddle was a perfect candidate for the award as she sang in the authentic "feathering" style common to Ozark singing, and knew a great many of the old ballads. She was also a talented performer, and her warm personality endeared her to audiences from the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington, D.C., to the 1979 National Folk Festival in Vienna, Virginia, the 1980 Frontier Folklife Festival in St. Louis, and the 1964 Newport Folk Festival (Kurin, Smithsonian 53, 41st National (unpaginated), Frontier 14, 1964 Newport 39).

In 1985, Glenn Ohrlin also received the prestigious award. In contrast to Almeda Riddle, he was not interviewed by Lomax in 1959, and is not a native Ozarkian - in fact he is originally from Minnesota. Although friendly with Jimmy Driftwood in their early years of folk festival touring, a rift developed when Ohrlin caught the attention of Archie Green, and was awarded a Newport Folk foundation grant in 1968 to complete his cowboy songbook, *The Hell-Bound Train* (Ohrlin xvi). The rift widened further when Ohrlin signed on to lead the rival musicians group, The Mountain View Folklore Society, especially when they sponsored Saturday night musicals in the courthouse and a competing Folk Festival in 1970. Nonetheless, as Green correctly intuited, Glenn Ohrlin is the real McCoy. Riding rodeo – mostly bareback broncs since 1943, and working ranches in Nevada, Arizona, Montana, Wyoming and California (Ohrlin xiv), Glenn is probably the person most responsible for the renaissance of working cowboy culture as expressed at events such as the Elko, Nevada National Cowboy Poetry Gathering – where Glenn continues to perform every year. Perhaps Glenn Ohrlin’s recognition as the National Heritage Fellow from Arkansas was the perfect transition to understanding that the Almeda Riddles were no longer the heritage bearers in Stone County; that instead, those locals had now been displaced by folks “from off” who were the new tradition bearers. Interestingly, many of the back-to-the-landers who Glenn was, at least indirectly responsible for attracting to Stone County, stand today as some of the most stalwart heritage tenders. Judy (Klemmedson) Klinkhammer not only introduced the dulcimer to Stone County, she also became the direct disciple of Bookmiller Shannon banjo technique. Dave Smith learned to play the guitar by attending the musicals at Lonnie Lee’s house in Fox, continues to play tunes he first heard in the early 1970’s by The Simmons Family – centered around mayor and second Ozark Folk Center general manager,

Tommy Simmons, and was inspired to play fiddle because of Fate Morrison, from the well-known Morrison family of fiddlers (Absie Morrison and Glenn Morrison's kin).

1990's – Present

...going to the Ozark Mountains is like visiting your grandmother, provided your grandmother was an old-fashioned, pie-baking, herb-growing pioneer who used homemade brooms and poured ice cream from a dented churn.

(Andrei Codrescu in *Travel Holiday*, quoted in Hill Folks 271)

Since the 1990's, when the incoming demographic changed from back-to-the-landers to retirees, the cultural landscape of Mountain View has largely stagnated. Folk Festivals are rather calm affairs now, with attendance down from 140,000 in the mid-1970's, to a yearly average of 20,000 – 30,000 in most recent years. Music still occurs on the Courthouse Square, but the pre-1941 strictures that Jimmy Driftwood placed upon the Rackensackers are long gone. Instead, one may hear a variety of mostly retired folks who have learned to play guitar, mandolin, banjo, dobro, or bass in their golden years, often playing current or classic country and western hits, or bluegrass. The Ozark Folk Center carries the distinction of continuing the pre-1941 rule - at least most of the time. Back-to-the-landers and other musicians "from off" like Dave Smith and Mary Gillihan carry the bulk of those performances. There are still cabin crafts such as lye soap making, corn shuck doll making, and quilting that are demonstrated at the Folk Center, but recently there has also been pottery, glass bead lampworking, and painting copper with a torch – none of which was ever practiced in Stone County, and almost all of the practitioners of those crafts came from Missouri or Washington State or Illinois. As Brooks Blevins tells us,

...artificial qualities were inherent to the project. John Gould Fletcher was correct: The revival had come too late to avoid the hint of insincerity. The era in which the handicraft skills and

music represented...were prevalent in the region had long passed, forcing a re-creation of a past to be preserved.

(Hill Folks 258)

Dr. Blevins would serve a three-month position as Director of Oral History at the Ozark Folk Center in 1993, under Dr. W.K. McNeil. The tourist phenomenon that he observed was so out of sync with the projected image, that in 2002, he would write *Hill Folks: A History of Arkansas Ozarkers and Their Image*. Described by Vance Randolph biographer, Robert Cochran as: “Easily the best comprehensive history of the Ozarks yet accomplished” (Hill Folks, back cover), Blevins’ book has raised the ire of more than one Ozark Folk Center/Mountain View Chamber of Commerce supporter – simply for trying to revise and rewrite a credible and accurate history. After all, “Lack of hard evidence seldom distresses the public at large, who are mostly credulous, undemanding, accustomed to heritage mystique, and often laud the distortions, omissions, and fabrications central to heritage reconstruction” (Lowenthal 249). But, as Robert Cochran famously stated, “Under the granny gowns and overalls, these smiling old-timers with their dulcimers and spinning wheels were as sharp and as savage as any loan shark or real estate hustler. Tourist dollars are big business in the Ozarks, and serious fighting takes place in their pursuit” (Cochran 200). Those who hold money, influence, and prestige are generally unhappy when someone tries to interject history on the invented heritage from which they prosper. None of the craftspeople or musicians – primarily back-to-the-landers, and the people upon whom the whole fantasyland relies – has any appreciable wealth or power. Thus as Blevins concludes, “as we shall see, this preservation has generally been accomplished by non-Ozarkers, which may force a reevaluation or remolding of the debate over authenticity and commodification” (Hill Folks 302). My intent in this paper has been to reevaluate the role of those hardy souls, who came to the Ozarks, fell in love with its rough, pristine beauty and the freedoms it allowed. They

bent their backs in labor, turning ruined soil into productive soil, building their artful homes, practicing the weaving, broom making, candle making, metal work, pottery, basketry, and furniture making that they either brought with them from the homes of their youth, or learned when they arrived; and practicing hours on end to learn the old tunes that sounded so fine to their ears when they first arrived as young hippies during the early Folk Festivals. As tradition is a process, it is time that these heritage bearers “from off” are recognized for the role that they have played in building the heritage of Stone County, Arkansas.

Conclusion

“Who controls the past, controls the future; who controls the present controls the past.”

(George Orwell, *1984*, in Lowenthal, 90)

In assessing the data gathered for the narrative, which describes a single case study in cultural sustainability, we find several factors which contributed to the perpetuation of the craft and music practices in Stone County Arkansas, which have been referred to as “traditional.”

It is conceivable that Stone County, Arkansas would have never become known as the “Folk Music Capital of the World” were it not for two seminal folklorists – John Quincy Wolf, Jr. and Alan Lomax. Wolf - present at the original 1941 Folkways Festival, was the first to realize that there were some actual heritage treasures in Stone County. His interest in collecting folk music led him to record the indigenous folk music, including that music which was presented at the festival, and then to promote the musicians from whom he had collected. At the top of his list was Jimmy Driftwood, son of Neal Morris – who was known locally as a singer of folk songs and ballads. Wolf would encourage Driftwood to go to Nashville and try his hand at professional music making. Wolf would also promote both Almeda Riddle and Bookmiller

Shannon. In addition, his publication of his father's memoirs, *Life in the Leatherwoods*, helped cement the idea of Stone County as a repository of traditional folklife.

Wolf would refer other folklorists who were interested in the Ozarks and traditional music to Jimmy Driftwood, who would then take them around and introduce them to his musician friends. It was likely Wolf who connected Alan Lomax with Jimmy Driftwood in 1959, and it absolutely was Wolf who connected Lomax with Almeda Riddle. It was most likely Lomax's presence in Stone County that ensured the interest of future folklorists. His recordings of Stone County musicians, released as part of the "Southern Journeys" LP set, first by Atlantic in 1960, and then by Prestige in 1962, put Stone County, Arkansas on the folklorist's map. It also undoubtedly helped launch the career of Almeda Riddle, who along with Jimmy Driftwood and Glenn Ohrlin would become ambassadors for Stone County as they traveled the folk festival circuit.

This networking by traveling troubadours from Stone County was also essential. It ensured that a niche demographic – "folkniks" – would hear about Mountain View, its "authentic" folk music, and its upcoming folk festivals. This would bring not only academic folklorists and their students to Mountain View's early folk festivals, but also the young fans of folk music who would later form the base for the back-to-the-land movement. And it was these back-to-the-landers who would bring their candle-making, pottery, weaving, and woodworking from northern and eastern university art departments, thus supporting both a craft guild, and a folk arts center that likely would not have survived, at least as far as craft was concerned simply by local participation.

Vital, too, was government policy, intervention, and funding. First was the Stone County Home Demonstration Club Council, an integral part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's

Cooperative Extension Office, which organized the first Stone County Folkways Festival in 1941, bringing Stone County musicians to the attention of John Quincy Wolf, Jr. Then in 1959, the Arkansas Cooperative Extension Office established the Area Rural Development, hiring Leo Rainey to come up with a plan to solve the economic woes of north-central Arkansas. His solution – a craft guild modeled on Appalachian progenitors, would instigate a craft-revival in the early 1960's. The decision to lend economic support to his fledgling band of craftspeople by sponsoring a yearly craft fair in Mountain View, initiated an event, now well over fifty years old that brought more folklorists and academics, as well as the back-to-the-landers to the little town. Next, John Opitz, head of the Area Redevelopment Administration, requested an Overall Economic Development assessment from the Cooperative Extension Office. This document was submitted to the federal ARA to solicit funds for a folk arts center, coupled with a water and sewage system for Mountain View. When the project continuously ran up against brick walls, Governor Faubus granted \$25,000.00 to continue the campaign. Finally, as a result of both governmental policies and political favor, Representative Wilbur D. Mills utilized his considerable clout as chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee to secure over \$3 million dollars for the Folk Center project from the federal Economic Development Administration.

Due to the fact that Stone County's traditional music did have some basis as an unbroken verbal transmission through to the 1970's, it might have survived in its present form had it not been for the back-to-the-land movement, but it is clear that the crafts would not have fared so well. Based on an absent or moribund tradition, the local craftspeople that were either discovered or educated in the 1960's eventually gave up the practice - usually as they found other jobs, or simply retired. Neither their children nor their grandchildren were interested in learning those skills. They were

much more interested in skills which would give them an occupation which paid a normal amount of money, and perhaps even benefits – which a career in crafts usually does not. After all, when you practice a 19th century occupation, you are going to be paid 19th century wages, despite living with 20th or 21st century expenses. Many who aspired to live the back-to-the-land lifestyle found ways to make do with very little money. Buying only what you could pay for with cash – including your land or your house, raising much of your own food, nursing aging vehicles down the road, and doing without made it possible for this unusual demographic to be able to afford to make crafts for a living. It required ingenuity, commitment, and perseverance. Without the back-to-the-landers influx of fresh university art-school energy into the realm of the Craft Guild and the Folk Center, tourists and other customers would have simply lost interest.

Thus then, besides the producers, you need the consumers. Both of the government-funded and created entities – The Ozark Folk Center and the Ozark Foothills Handicraft Guild (now Arkansas Craft Guild) provide sales opportunities to help support a craft industry in Mountain View. The Guild, who once had five retail shops which purchased handcrafted items outright at wholesale prices, and provided three craft fair opportunities each year, now has one sole retail shop which sells articles on consignment only, and one official show for its members. The Ozark Folk Center, which used to pay competitive wages to their demonstrating interpretive craftspeople, reduced their pay to below the minimum wage in 2008. The craftspeople are allowed to sell to tourists, but if they do, they must pay a percentage of their sales back to the Center. With sagging tourist numbers, both in town and at the Center, the future of crafts in Stone County is in question.

Education and mentoring/apprenticing have been important components in the crafts revival as well as its perpetuation. Some apprenticeships still occur at the Folk Center. The Arkansas Craft

School was formed in 2007 out of a planning meeting of the Arkansas Craft Guild, which recognized a need to replace the aging back-to-the-lander generation who currently uphold the organization. In 2010, in partnership with Ozarka College, a degree program was successfully initiated which combined business practices, art training, and craft practices. In its inaugural and only year, four students completed the program. Out of the four, two are currently employed at the Ozark Folk Center as professional craftspeople. That same year, a new President arrived at the College, and immediately removed the degree program from the course list, as it was too unprofitable. In addition to the now-cancelled degree program, the Craft School offers over fifty classes a year in craft techniques and business practices tailored for the entrepreneurial craftsman. Despite a marked effort to appeal to younger practitioners, by and large the students are retirees looking for a diversion or a second career after their “real job” was completed. It appears that the future of craft in Stone County will be its recreational value rather than its value as a career. What that will do to the tourism economy in Mountain View is not clear.

It is provocative to consider what would have been the fate of cultural tradition perpetuation in Mountain View, had there not been a model in Appalachia – also an invented tradition - to copy. It is rather preposterous, if you think about it, that people really believe that the craftspeople they have been seeing at Folk Festivals since the 1960’s are practicing the same pioneer crafts that have been handed down from father to son since the area was settled – but they do. After, all, that is what they have been told, by everyone from Leo Rainey to Jimmy Driftwood, the Chamber of Commerce, and at times, by the Ozark Folk Center. Yet, if you check your history accurately enough, you will understand that by the time the Settlement Schools in Appalachia found the need to conduct a craft and music revival in the late 1890’s and early 1900’s, Mountain

View was just incorporating as a town. Its location on the White River allowed steamboats to deliver necessary goods, and even luxury items, from manufacturers along the Mississippi River. Not long after, the railroad would arrive, and even some remote areas such as Aarlborg were reached by rail. Because of this, there was very little real need for handcrafts in Stone County after the period represented in *Life in the Leatherwoods* – and certainly not in the 1960's. Although many areas in the United States maintain craft traditions despite modernity, their practice is often the leisure pursuits of the elite, or a connection with one's foreign homeland – of which Stone County possessed neither.

However, heritage strikes deep in the hearts of most people. As Lowenthal explains, "Legends of origin and endurance, of victory or calamity, project the present back, the past forward; they align us with forbears whose virtues we share and whose vices we shun. We are apt to call such communion history, but it is actually heritage" (xi). But heritage also allows us to whitewash a history such as Stone County's, remaking it in our own image. Similar to the description of New Salem in Bruner,

New Salem does not have any interpreters representing the frontier toughs called Clary's Grove Boys, or the carousing, gambling, cockfighting hard drinkers who were part of 1830's pioneer life in New Salem. The roughnecks have been left out of history...a concession to middle-class sensibilities. (156)

The established heritage in Stone County also ignores the bawdy songs and stories, and what Oscar Gilbert described as "the hell-raising and rip-snorting inhabitants...all the intrigues, scandals, and killings" (Collins 149).

The prevarications that Jimmy Driftwood concocted about his home county endeared the area to many people, despite their hyperbole. People long for that place of purity, untainted by

technology, where there has been “an ageless tradition in crafts and music” (Ozark Folk Center to Open, OCRC) where we have the greatest, the best, or the most real. Heritage tourists come to Mountain View and the Ozark Folk Center for many of the same reasons they visit New Salem:

...because of the many craft making displays at the site including presentations of blacksmithing, weaving, shoe making, and the production of candles and quilts. For these visitors, New Salem evokes earlier times before industrial production, when life was simpler, when craftspeople produced by hand what was consumed. These tourists see themselves returning to a cherished past of pioneers, making a journey not in space, but in time.

(Bruner 11)

Perhaps it is sometimes necessary to construct a heritage in order to perpetuate a tradition.

I will add a final note on the components, which were vital to Stone County’s reputation as a heritage site, where the age-old traditions are preserved and perpetuated. In this case, we see a single individual – one with an oversized ego and ambition, who was involved almost every step of the way - Jimmy Driftwood. An exceedingly complex character, no decent biography has been written which conveys all sides of Driftwood’s personality. What has been written tends to resemble hagiography rather than biography.⁶ Indeed, one of the curious aspects of Driftwood was that outsiders who were acquainted with him tended to insist that he was absolutely wonderful. Joan Halifax considered him “a very wonderful person, inspiring, kind, funny, helpful...his music was great and his influence in the region extraordinary.”⁷ British folksinger Shirley Collins, who met Driftwood on her journeys with Alan Lomax in 1959, describes him in this way:

Jimmy Driftwood from the Ozarks, a former teacher with an impeccable background of traditional song, coming from both a region and a family where singing was still an essential part of everyday life. Alan thought he was as important a song writer as Woody Guthrie, although not politically driven...His voice had a

soft rasp to it, a wide Arkansas Accent, and the readiest laugh. He was friendly and funny and I loved both him and his music.

(Collins 50)

Others were not so sure. H. Page Stephens, who spent considerable time at Jimmy's house when he was conducting research for his PhD dissertation declared, "I don't know what was wrong with Jimmy, I really don't." He allowed that outside of the community, Jimmy was considered to be good, but within his own community, he had many enemies.⁸ Judy Klinkhammer who also spent a lot of time with Driftwood, traveling in many of the tours he organized, echoed Stephens' assessment: "And -- people talked *horrible* about Jimmy Driftwood. You know, local people, 'oh, he thinks he's so hot' yadda yadda. And there was a real clandestine sort of disapproval of who Driftwood was" (Van Orman, Judy Klinkhammer interview). Others have not been so kind. W.K. McNeil often spoke contemptuously of him. Glenn Ohrlin described that Jimmy "kinda dropped the hammer on me a long time ago" out of jealousy regarding a grant Glenn received from the Newport Foundation to finish his book (Van Orman, Glenn Ohrlin interview). James "Rusty" Frazer, publisher and editor of *The Stone County Leader*, describes Driftwood as "shrewd and malicious." He also debunks the myth of Driftwood's "grandpa guitar." Fraser relates that he visited Walter Moody at his home when he was 95 years old, to interview him. (Moody died several years ago at the age of 101 years old.) While going into the house to look at Moody's arrowhead collection in the back bedroom, they came upon a guitar that resembled Jimmy Driftwood's famous "grandpa guitar." When Fraser asked about it, he was told the following story: The guitar was made in the back of Moody's Garage before it became Best Drug Store. Moody claimed that he "got the idea from an autoharp with a guitar neck on it. So, I made this thing out of plywood, and I showed it to Jim Driftwood, and he said, "Why, if I had a guitar like this, I could make a hit off of it."'" So he gave it to Driftwood, and the myth of the

grandpa guitar was born. According to Moody, he made a total of seventeen of those guitars, all out of plywood, just like Jimmy's.⁹

Saint or scoundrel, Driftwood's presence seems unmovable from the Stone County heritage phenomenon. He played guitar and 'leafola' at the 1941 Stone County Folkways Festival, where he met John Quincy Wolf. His celebrity status added media credibility to the Folk Festival concerts - formed out of his own response to the Folk Revival on the East Coast and in popular music. His promotional language, although shaped from hyperbole and Appalachian stereotypical nonsense, nonetheless formed the core of what people still believe about the history of Stone County craft and music. He wooed eminent folklorists, academics, and Arkansas politicians. He was awarded an honorary Doctor of American Folklore Degree in 1959 by Peabody College, and was a member of the American Folklore Society. He was a member of the Arkansas Arts Council, served on the Arkansas Parks, Recreation and Travel Commission, and was appointed by President Richard Nixon to serve on the board of advisors for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (Streeter 60 – 62). Charlatan or public servant, it is doubtful that Mountain View would be the same today had it not been for Jimmy Driftwood. Perhaps Judy Klinkhammer stated it best when she said, "The thing that floated his boat was pulling things off that hadn't been done" (Van Orman, Judy Klinkhammer interview).

So, here we have the components that went into the invention of a heritage tradition in Stone County, Arkansas – government intervention and funding, the interest of prominent politicians, folklorist intervention, the creation of marketing opportunities, modeling after an already successfully invented tradition, educational programming, networking opportunities, a fortuitous social movement, and the patronage of a minor celebrity.

It is helpful to know how a particular culture was perpetuated, so that cultural interventionists

can be aware of what techniques might be effective in the work of sustaining cultural expressions. However, I am not sure this is a model that should be followed. Perhaps it worked fifty years ago, but not today. As Lowenthal tells us, “We still steal, forge, and invent most of our heritage. But we are no longer confident it is right to do so. That the legacies we cherish, whether inherited or recreated, are so pliable and corruptible seems to us sacrilegious. We yearn instead for fixed verities” (xiii).

Analyzing these components, several of them prove very useful. Networking, easier than ever before, will likely remain relevant to causes. Government intervention and funding, when possible, are still helpful. The sad part of this is that federal funding for the arts and humanities has been on the ropes for several years now – since the Gingrich revolution - as a conservative government in the legislature continuously attempts to slash funding to the NEA and the NEH. As Graves suggests in *Cultural Democracy*, “a ten-fold increase in government arts expenditures would be an appropriate and affordable long-term investment. The creation of a new Endowment for Community Culture should be considered” (Graves, 212). Graves’ gripe is not only the paucity of government funding, but the artistic disciplines those few dollars support – primarily Eurocentric fine arts (Graves 135).

Barring federal funding, there are corporate foundations that support the arts, but they often have their pet organizations, or even channel money back into their own endeavors, as we saw with Wal-Mart’s Walton Family Foundation donating an \$800 million endowment fund, followed by a \$20 million grant to Wal-Mart heiress Alice Walton’s Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art project (Philanthropy May 6, 2011; August 1, 2011). There are a few new large grant sources that have come available in the last couple of years similar to the grant funding that was used to fuel the formation of the Craft Guild, the Arkansas Folk Festival and the Ozark Folk

Center – most notably ArtPlace and the NEA’s Our Town – which require arts organizations to partner with local governments in order to improve their communities. And in Arkansas, there is GIF funding, which requires an act of city or county legislature to show support for a community project. These last options make the desire for sympathetic legislators a real need.

Besides funneling funding from the top to support the sustainability of culture, another way to provide financial support for artists and other culture bearers is to provide markets for them and for their products. However, this technique for cultural sustenance is a double-edged sword. On one hand, artists need money to live, and if they must work a “day job,” very little artistic work can be produced. As in my own example, I would have never been able to demonstrate the craft of weaving to thousands of people, mentor dozens of apprentices and students, or create hand-woven items, had there been no money involved in the process. However, I also recognize the pitfalls of market- determined artwork. Commoditizing artwork and folk practices immediately places them in the context of performance or presentation. Approval from folklorists, curators, or even the fickle buying public will often sway which designs or practices are reproduced or continued. Then the question arises, “Who determines how a culture is to be represented to an audience, and where do the money trails lead?”(Graves 102). In the Mountain View example, the answer to this question was certain folklorists who came to Stone County, a *passé* country and western star who tried to bully fellow local musicians into submitting to a singular musical model, a government-funded state park, and a marketing co-op, also government initiated, determined how the culture was to be represented. The error here was in attempts to be too “pure.” As a result, local support was dissolved and culture stagnated. A better model, perhaps, would have been to embrace the many manifestations of culture that were current at that time, instead of consciously excluding expressions that did not fit the Anglo-Saxon, Elizabethan

tongued arts of the rural southern folk.

The technique of modeling after a successfully invented tradition, will only repeat the mistakes inherent in invented heritage traditions – an often misrepresented and whitewashed past.

However, the facts are often more interesting than the myth. In our case study, there was multi-ethnicity, interchange of culture through the riverboats which brought the world to Stone County's shores, bawdy stories and song; and a freshening of the cultural mix in the 1970's by the hippie back-to-the-landers who locals so disdained - but you will never hear about any of it. Instead, the created tourist culture in Stone County, which mimicked a successful model from Appalachia, reduced "the participants to acting out hollow stereotypical re-creations of their community's activities" (Graves 100). One can only assume that the ruse continues, not only because of the wishes of heritage tourists who seem to like their culture predictable, but also because of power, wealth, and status. Local business owners, real estate brokers, and tourism professionals have profited from the perpetuation of a myth, rather than the perpetuation of living traditions.

In addition, one cannot rely on the happenstance of a social movement which supports cultural heritage. Back-to-the-land movements have appeared in the historical record periodically. Nonetheless, to this date, none had quite the impact of the 1970's movement, because of the numbers who engaged in it, and how universally it was successfully conveyed through the media.

As we have seen, the patronage of a celebrity may end up being a mixed blessing. However, the reading of the narrative begs an interesting question. What would Mountain View be today, had not an attempt been made to construct a heritage – one based on unsupportable tenets and based on Anglo-centrism? There would be no Ozark Folk Center and no Arkansas Craft Guild, no

outrageous claims of being the “Folk Music Capital of the World.” The upside is that those organizations to some degree took on a life of their own. Whereas the Ozark folk Center remains a historical theme park stuck in time, perplexed as to why the old formulas are no longer working to bring multitudes of tourists to their doorsteps, the Craft Guild and the Courthouse Square have made their own way. Once the Craft Guild began funneling back-to-the-landers into the organization, and gave up the encouragement to Guild members to dress in old-timey garb at festivals and fairs, the organization could move into the contemporary craft scene, and truly flowered for a short while. The Courthouse Square, once home to Jimmy Driftwood’s carefully policed Rackensack Society, now showcases a more unself-conscious cultural expression as residents of Mountain View show up to play whatever they like – primarily bluegrass and country music, despite the continued claims of being the planetary center of folk music. Instead, a new type of policing occurs – not by a single, charismatic, and wealthy individual, but by the players themselves, who actively frown on any instruments besides the banjo, guitar, bass, and fiddle. A bagpipe might be okay, but woe to anyone who should attempt to play a concertina, an oud, or a hurdy-gurdy.

There are successful models of sustainability that could again be looked at in order to bring the town of Mountain View to more contemporary viability. Asheville, North Carolina is one such model. Establishing itself as a heritage destination at the turn of the last century when Bascom Lamar Lunsford initiated the Mountain Dance and Folk Festival during the Rhododendron Festival in 1928, Asheville has continuously reinvented itself in order to stay vital. Now, one can not only hear traditional mountain music and bluegrass, but world music, electronica, and classical music as well. The contemporary and traditional crafts that one can purchase at the Southern Highlands shop at the entrance to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, or in

Asheville at the numerous high-class galleries, are often considered to be some of the best in the nation. Key to the town's success has been an embracing of diversity, and a refusal to be tied to models that no longer work.

Fortunately, in Mountain View, there are various grassroots upstarts sprung up recently, who are utilizing healthy practices for cultural sustenance. The Arkansas Craft School has been committed to infusing the Mountain View area with contemporary craft expressions and introducing diverse cultural programming, such as Tuvan throat singing to the community. The Ozark Dulcimer Gathering, a rogue off-shoot from Ozark Folk Center programming, charges no admission, relies on volunteer teachers, and solicits donations from the community for its silent auction, which raises money for three Mountain View charities, last year raising over \$5,000.00. Welcoming alternative communities, operating outside of the established hegemony, local sourcing their funding, embracing foreign cultural expressions, and employing engaged volunteers, these groups offer hope that Stone County will manage to renew its cultural practices in a fresh, invigorating, and vital way.

Endnotes

1. From an email conversation with Martin Darrell, March 20, 2014, regarding Glenn Morrison, who is from Fox, Arkansas.
2. Information on the Rorie brothers and Henry Cooper provided by Dan Stewart, past-president of the Stone County Historical Society.
3. “From off” is Stone County terminology used to describe people who were not born and raised in Stone County.
4. An interesting expression of the end of the back-to-the-land movement, and the beginning of the retirement boom in Stone County, was the name of a local real estate company through whom I purchased my 40-acre homestead. Originally, their business name was “High Country.” In the 1990’s they changed their name to “Silver Creek.”
5. Wayman Evans moved to Floral, Arkansas as a young man from Georgia to practice farming. Upon his retirement, he was “discovered” by Ruth Stout, a member of the Committee of 100. Wayman remembered making white oak baskets with his father when he was a boy. He came from an actual basket-making tradition; but in Georgia, not in Arkansas. Ms. Stout convinced Wayman to come to the Folk Center, make his family’s baskets, and teach others to do the same. Thus the “traditional” white oak basket making as practiced at the Ozark Folk Center, and transmitted to back-to-the-landers like Owen and his wife Barbara Rein was indigenous to Georgia rather than Arkansas. Wayman’s techniques for making white oak baskets, unlike those taught by the Cooperative Extension classes in the 1960’s, produces an exceptionally strong basket. Wayman Evans would stand on the rim of his baskets to demonstrate their strength.
6. See Richard Kent Streeter’s *The Jimmy Driftwood Primer: A Biography* and “The Jimmy Driftwood Story” in Samm Woolley’s *A Pickin’ and a Grinnin’ on the Courthouse Square*.
7. From an email interview by Terri Van Orman with “Roshi” Joan Halifax July 22, 2013.
8. From a phone interview by Terri Van Orman with H. Page Stephens November 20, 2013.
9. Phone conversation with “Rusty” Fraser, August 26, 2013. The topic was the origin of Mountain View’s claim to being ‘The Folk Music Capital of the World,’ when Rusty energetically volunteered this piece of information.

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The Alan Lomax Archives, with thanks to Robert Baron for conveying copies of letters from Jimmie Driftwood to Alan Lomax and to Joan Halifax.