

FIELD NOTES MASTER FILE (by date)
SOUTH GEORGIA FOLKLIFE PROJECT 1996-2005
LAURIE SOMMERS, PROJECT DIRECTOR AND PRIMARY FIELDWORKER
(other fieldworkers indicated in subheadings of particular entry; if no indication,
then fieldworker is Laurie Sommers)

FIELD NOTES, SOUTH GEORGIA FOLKLIFE SURVEY
DR. LAURIE SOMMERS, FIELDWORKER, 1996-97

Field Notes, Hahira Honeybee Festival, Hahira, GA
Oct. 5, 1996

Drove up to the Honeybee Festival and arrived around 10:30. Purpose was to focus on arts and crafts show and see if there was anything of interest in the realm of traditional arts. One thing that surprised me was the lack of local honey at the festival. There were really only three booths of interest in this regard:

- 1) a woman from Griffin, GA had quite a large selection of honey
- 2) The Hahira Fruit and Vegetable Center had a selection of what appeared to be old canned goods and honey, mostly from companies elsewhere in the south (honey was from FL, for example) and a few old jars of put-up pear preserves which Bernice Craft (proprietress of Hahira) had made. She didn't seem very forthcoming about anything, local contacts, etc., and the man behind the counter said she was too old, used to do things, and didn't do them any more.
- 3) A booth by the GA. Beekeepers Assoc., with the national Honey Queen next to him (she is from Lancaster Co. PA this year and travels the circuit). There were flyers on beekeeping, several put out by Dadant, the parent co. in Illinois of which Hahira has a local branch office. Honey recipes, but no honey.

Other items of interest:

Frank's Jellies, Relish, and Hot Sauce, staffed by Franklin Harrell and his wife of Nashville. Frank Harrell, originally of Cairo, GA, makes jellies, relishes, and preserves, including a number from wild fruits and berries, back behind their house, using techniques he learned from his mother. Among the offerings: mayhaw, elderberry, blackberry, candied figs, strawberry. He said wild plum was popular but the fruit had all been lost in the freeze this past year. Got a card and will go visit. He is making up new batches all the time with frozen juice and fruit.

Quilts: the Withlacoochee Quilters had a raffle quilt. I have a contact their already through Ann Smith at Trinity Presbyterian. They meet monthly. A black couple had a number of items for sale, including a few quilts. Evidently I can contact the maker through the man's sister at the Five Points Flea Market in Valdosta. Sister: Catherine Stewart. Quilter's name is something like Mrs. Mauna Webb.

Auctioneers: Introduced myself to Tom Swilley of Heritage Auction Services in Hahira. He is doing an antiques and collectibles auction tonight as part of the Festival. Said he does about three a month; check Valdosta Daily Times on Fridays for notices.

Auctioneers are increasingly specialized. He knows most of them around here, he says. Got his card and said I would call. Also of interest, his mentor Donald Patton of Zenith Auction in Lakeland. Latter does more farm equipt. and farm auctions. He didn't know the auctioneers for the livestock/horses in Quitman. Did say the tobacco auctioneers are specialized and come from out of state (NC).

Stopped in at the Hahira Tobacco Sales Warehouse, full of tobacco sheets waiting to be shipped and bought. Chatted briefly with Melvin Parker, evidently a retired Head? of company, originally from NC, in business over 40 years. He was polite but didn't seem to have much use for me. Wouldn't let me take his picture with tobacco, and said if I was interested in history of company to talk not to him but to Jimmy Miley, current president. I commented on use of Mexican migrant labor. This is a seasonal business, lasting about 3 months. Parker said it was hard to get local help any more; they work through a local crew leader who gets help for them and works with other local farmers with migrant labor for fruits and vegetables as well. I then introduced myself to Jimmy Miley, who had been on phone and then had exchanged a few words in Spanish with one of the workers. He was more friendly, and open to my coming to sale Monday and/or Wed. am. about 9, recording and taking pictures. He is working with an auctioneer from TN and a ticket marker raised on a tobacco farm in Nashville now living in Savannah: Robin Muschamp. I also noticed on the wall tear-off adds for a company in Adel that remodels Tobacco barns. Melvin Parker told me the number of farms has greatly reduced and size of acreage has grown. Now there are 100-125 farms in S. GA/N. FL.

October 7 and 8, 1996

Tobacco Sale at Hahira Tobacco Warehouse, Hahira, and Planter's Warehouse, Nashville

Jimmy Miley
Hahira Tobacco Sales, Inc.
PO Box 483
Hahira, GA 31632
warehouse-912-794-2450
h-912-794-2069

Robert E. Deatherage
Box 704 North Davis St.
Nashville, GA 31639
(Planter's Warehouse)

Jimmy Parker III
Tobacco Auctioneer
Rt. 4, Box 2685
Nashville, GA 31639

h-912-686-7153
shed-912-686-2532

LE Watson
Planters Warehouse
Rt1, Box 3520
Nashville, GA 31639
w-912-686-7586

Arrived at the Hahira Warehouse about 8:30, only to discover that the buyers and auctioneer (Rick Murphy from TN.) were at the Valdosta Warehouse first! So I waited around until all arrived at Hahira. The same group of buyers go to sales in Hahira, Valdosta, and Nashville. The warehouse is large, neat, and clean, with a strong pungent smell of tobacco. The tobacco was piled on burlap sheets and placed in rows throughout the warehouse. I photographed a placard in the wall which illustrated the proper way to tie sheets of tobacco. In the center of the warehouse was a small office from which Jimmy Miley ran operations (also a suite of business offices to the side of the warehouse with a door facing the street and parking lot). Near the small operations office was a conveyor belt of sorts for downloading tobacco from trucks. Sales are taking place all week in the area, Monday through Thursday (no sales on Friday). This is near the end of the sales season, which will finish up by the middle to end of October and began in July.

I arranged to meet with Jimmy Miley and show him the consent form, which proved useful. Board Chairman Melvin Parker in particular was concerned about the presence of a tape recorder and camera in the face of all the anti-tobacco efforts going on, but Miley understood the project and signed, making a copy for himself. Miley has been raised in the tobacco industry and even added a touch of authenticity by accidentally putting a cigarette burn hole on the consent form with his hand-rolled cigarette. Miley also introduced me to the buyers when they arrived and explained my interest in the history and culture of the area.

A team of graders arrived ahead of the buyers, 3 men and one woman, who work for the government and use 10 different criteria to grade the tobacco. It is then priced according to grade. Graders are assigned to a particular market; I spoke with the woman, who was from Kentucky.

When the buyers, auctioneer and ticket marker arrived (they had all been working the Valdosta sale), I followed them down the rows recording the sale and taking photos. It was later explained to me that this was an extraordinary year, since the hurricanes had destroyed much of the tobacco crop. Hence all tobacco, regardless of grade, was selling for \$1.92 per pound. The usual bidding of the auction thus didn't take place. The warehouseman (Jimmy Miley) led the sale, walking at the front of the row of buyers. The buyers used a system of hand signals to cue the sheets they wanted for purchase. Evidently, in an unusual year such as this, the warehouseman and the auctioneer figure out what percentage of the tobacco they want to go to each buyer, based on previous amounts bought in this particular market. A given buyer may represent more than one company, and selects a particular grade for purchase based on the market he his buying

for (oversees, domestic, etc.). The auctioneer and ticket marker were on the opposite side of the row. Periodically Miley would give the buyers an opportunity to review the sheets purchased, talk with their supervisors, etc. Rick Murphy, the auctioneer, works in the local market but is from Tennessee. I noticed that many folks involved in tobacco were from the heart of tobacco country such as Kentucky, NC, Tennessee, etc. I understood from Jimmy Miley that there are local auctioneers. He referred me to the ticket marker, Robin Muschamp, who comes from a tobacco farm family near Nashville and now lives in Savannah. She told me to come to the sale the next day in Nashville at her family warehouse, Planter's, which would be run by her brother, LE Watson, and auctioned by one of the partners, Jimmy Parker, originally from NC, who now lives in Nashville.

The sale broke for lunch. I got information on how to get to Planters the next day. Also chatted with a third generation tobacco farmer, Fred Wetherington, of Valdosta, who sells through the Hahira warehouse. I gather the Wetheringtons use some older methods of hand harvesting not common anymore. Might be interesting to follow up if I get more into all aspects of the business as a culture or lifeway in the region.

The next morning, after calling ahead for permission, I drove up to Planters in Nashville. It had stormed overnight (tropical storm Opal) and there was some question of whether the sale would go. It was a dark rainy day, not great for photos, but the sale went on. I first went to the old warehouse in town, but was told the sale was in the new warehouse about a mile away. It was the same set of buyers as yesterday, and they had gotten used to my being around. The auctioneer, Jimmy Parker, had a much slower "cant" to his auctioning than did Rick Murphy the day before, so I could understand his speech: "92" (for \$1.92 a pound, the set price for all tobacco) and the name of the company buying the particular sheet. The sale both days went fast, with the line of buyers walking at a steady pace up and down the rows. Planters is a family business in part: LE Watson Jr. is the warehouseman; his father LE Sr. has some health problems but still comes to the warehouse every day, I'm told (I didn't meet him however); Robin Muschamp, another daughter, is the ticket marker; a third daughter works in the office. The family also farms. Jimmy Parker, the auctioneer, is a partner, as is Robert E. Deatherage, who was backing the sale this particular day. When I asked about good people to talk with who had grown up in the tobacco business, "Robert Earl" was the man they mentioned. He is a smooth, charming man perhaps in his early 60s, from North Carolina, who has much experience in the business. Like many in the business, he travels back and forth between various markets in which he has an interest. He took me under his wing and answered some questions during a break in the sale, which I have on the tape. He told me that Georgia tobacco (flue-cured tobacco) is in high demand. He said it has a high sugar content. He described how the sale worked, some of the nicknames for different players and aspects of the sale, and introduced me to folks, including the #2 man from RJ Reynolds who happened to be at the sale that day. I noticed migrant labor at Planters also; they were working for the contractor responsible for tagging the sheets of tobacco for the different companies, and loading them onto trucks. The migrants were driving trucks and working forklifts. Women, primarily, were working as taggers. Deatherage told me they were mostly local, hired by the contractor, a man named Corsett (sp?) from Enigma, GA.

I stayed through completion of the sale at this warehouse. The buyers were then going to Perkins, a competitor in Nashville. Deatherage said that due to the single price, the sale was moving fast. I believe he said they sold 150,000 pounds an hour rather than the usual 90,000.

Jan. 16, 1997, Magnolia Room, University Center, VSU, Martin Luther King, JR. Commemorative Program, 7-8:30 p.m.

VSU Mass Choir, directed by AC Braswell

Arrived at 6:30 p.m. to set up recording equipment and rendezvous with AC Braswell, director of the VSU Mass Choir. The choir reorganized two years ago, according to their advisor, Jim Black; previously they were known as the VSU Gospel Choir. Director AC Braswell and I never connected beforehand as planned; he arrived late and left before the program is over. He is a Valdosta native and should be a good contact for religious music in the African American community. He conducted and sang solos during the program.

My focus for the fieldwork was the Mass Choir, a group I first heard on the first weekend in December at the Old Fashioned Carol Sing at First Methodist, where a chamber ensemble version sang two selections. At the King commemoration they sang three selections (see accompanying DAT recording and program from the event).

The choir stretched almost the width of the room, standing one-deep behind the raised dais with the speakers podium from which all speakers addressed the predominantly black crowd of around 200. They were miked, but from where I was seated in the front of the room the mikes were less effective than the live sound itself. AC Braswell and the soloists stood on the dais.

As the sound recording indicates, this performance did not feature the high energy Pentecostal style of gospel, but rather a slower style which focused on soloists backed up by the choir's powerful harmonies. I was seated in the front row, and between photography and monitoring the DAT I didn't really focus on performer/audience interaction but in general the atmosphere was comparatively laid back, again compared to other gospel performances of my experience. Accompaniment was provided by Russell Jackson on organ, Cedric Johnson on synthesizer, and Eric Brown on drums. The choir, as with most of the African American members of the audience, was dressed formally.

I recorded the entire event in order to place the choir in context. The most audience response came during Monica Williams' dramatic recitation of the Maya Angelou poem, *I Will Rise*. The audience clapped, and offered verbal interjections during her rendition (see tape). Her performance illustrated more of the "black aesthetic" characteristics than any other element of the program.

Music opened and closed the program, first with a 4-part trumpet fanfare by 4 students of Ken Kirk's (VSU Music Dept.), and then unaccompanied congregational singing of *Lift Every Voice and Sing*. The closing "hymn" was the now traditional *We Shall Overcome*, the first verse sung twice (no words in program) with impromptu organ accompaniment.

Notice that the program uses the words “congregation,” emphasizing the church service atmosphere of the event, which included a musical prelude, gospel music, prayer, a talk/sermon by Rev. Daniel Simmons, and a spoken benediction. This traditional religious format for a King event, despite the university setting and sponsorship.

DR. Simmons remarks were directed particularly at VSU students. Students carried out the program for the most part, under the direction of Jerry Hardee of the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs and Multicultural Affairs. Joan Bailey, wife of the VSU President, and VP for Academic Affairs Lloyd Benjamin were in the audience. Benjamin made a few brief remarks. VSU students were recording the event for rebroadcast on VSU TV. The Valdosta Daily Times covered the event and had a front page article the next day. Several other photographers were present.

The Choir was entirely African American. The exception is the Advisor, Jim Black, Director of Auxiliary Services, who also ran the sound boards and read some lyrics about King during the choir’s final selection, I Believe I Can Fly (current hit on radio?)

Jan. 18, 1997

Hoboken Elementary School, Sacred Harp Sing

Arrived about 6:40 and introduced myself to a man who turned out to be Clarke Lee, one of the brothers who coordinates the Hoboken sing. I set up the tape recorder on the raised stage of the school auditorium at the suggestion of David Lee, the other brother. At the back of the room were the hymnbooks (BF White Sacred Harp, revised Cooper ed., 1992), copies of last year’s minutes, flyer on the schedule for sings in Micanopy, FL and Gainesville, FL, and a double-sided photocopy about sacred harp, used for visitors and newcomers (see attached materials).

The sing lasted about two hours with a break in the middle. During the break (about 15 minutes) some women had brought refreshments, but I was busy networking so am not sure what this entailed. The singers arranged themselves in the “hollow square” format described in the hand-out. There were about 70 in attendance, a bit smaller than usual I’m told. Many of the experienced singers were part of the extended Lee family. There were other long-time Swamper names represented as well, such as Carter and Crews (this latter information courtesy of John Crowley). David Lee and the other experienced singers sat in the inner circle, many beating the meter with their hand. Clarke Lee circled the room helping newcomers. David greeted everyone, welcomed visitors and gave a brief overview of sacred harp. He led the first song. The song leader stands in middle, calling out the number from the hymnbook (designating top or bottom if two hymns are printed on a single page). David Lee gave the pitches and indicated anything tricky about rhythm or repeats for all songs. A song leader was designated by the (secretary?), Amy Lee. She always listed the next leader, and the following one, presumably so they could prepare and have their selection ready. Amy recorded the songs sung and the song leaders for the minutes. Song leaders usually beat time with their hand while singing. Some continued the old tradition of “walking time.” All ages participated and led songs. The evening ended with a prayer by Clarke Lee.

Starting with the next meeting, David Lee will hold a singing school before the actual sing, beginning at 6 p.m. Susie Jacobs of the Hoboken School told me she is keeping a scrapbook of the sing.

Regulars told me there were maybe 10 or so folks there who aren't regulars. David Lee knowledgeable about history. Said that until last couple of years would sing in the old style with only one song leader for the evening who "walked time." Says times are changing, and that got monotonous for people. He thought the tradition would die out (I believe he told me that he was 5th generation sacred harp in his family). So he modernized by allowing children, and rest of adults to lead songs, each one by a different leader, to add variety, and dispensed with walking time for much of sing. They will host the GA/FL/Alabama convention next Oct. Just had an all-day sing in December which David has on video and audio.

Hilliard, in N. Florida, will have a sing tomorrow, I believe, where they do it the old way, all walking time, etc. Tollie Lee goes--may lead. I need to confirm this.

While there met Tollie Lee and his wife Ramona. Tollie is the deacon of the more liberal of the Crawfordite Primitive Baptist Churches in the area. They will meet on the 3rd Sunday of the month in Sardis, GA; hopefully there will be a house sacred harp sing in the afternoon. This group of Primitive Baptists use the Lloyd's Hymnal and retain traditional forms of lining out in their services. If my tape recorder is inconspicuous, Tollie Lee told me I could record.

On the way back, chatted with John Crowley, native of Hahira, and in VSU History Dept. Mentioned several leads of interest.

Regional foodways:

swamp cabbage (heart of palmetto)
gallberry honey (from flower of gallberry plant)
mayhaw jelly

Brooks Co. ham, highly pickled, as he said, i.e. very salty. Johnson meats on Greenville Hwy. south of Quitman. Brooks Co. ham distinctive in this region.

Cane syrup, used to be a big thing among local farmers. Mentioned family north of Nashville that sell it; also someone in Lake Park. Need to follow up.

Mentioned that US and World Report is doing something with maps of US. SE GA is one of the highest concentrations of English and Irish (Ulster) in country.

Until last 40 or 50 years, area economy was based on cattle grazing in wiregrass. Ecosystem depended on yearly burning. Advent of fencing began to change all that.

Jan. 22, 1997

Withlacoochee Quilt Guild, monthly meeting

7 PM, So. GA Regional Library, Valdosta

Attended Withlacoochee Quilter's Guild monthly meeting with my friend Ann Smith (a member) from 7 to 9:30. The meeting is held in a meeting room of the Lowndes Public Library. Meetings are listed in the Valdosta Daily Times. There were around 35 in attendance Monday, including visitors. All were women.

The guild has a membership directory, officers, a board, and an active group of quilters of various ages, including life-long residents of Valdosta and military transplants. The meeting includes reports of the group's activities and then an informal show and tell by the membership. During the guild meeting, members share information about sources of patterns, patterns, workshops. I attended the meeting in hopes of meeting or securing leads to traditional quilters. In this I was successful. After explaining my project and passing around a notepad for people to sign, I came up with 8 names. One, Hazel Rentz, is a self-taught quilter from Lake Park who was one of the Olympic quilters. The Hahira Methodist Church has a quilt group.

One of the projects of the guild (and other quilt groups in the area) is to make or otherwise gather quilts for the new Methodist Girls Home being built on the Lakeland Hwy. The goal is to have a quilt for every girl.

The guild also has a quilt show at LVAC every other year. This year the show will be July 14 through Aug. 11. Darthula Henderson is coordinating.

One of the women who signed my list, Sara Rivers (#6 Oconee Pl., Valdosta, 242-7782) is now 78. She was raised by her grandmother up near Cordele, GA. Her grandmother was a quilter. Rivers learned to quilt by watching her grandmother and the quilting bees she held. Sara Rivers describes the "primitive beginnings" of quilting, having watched her grandmother hand-card the cotton for batting. All of her grandmother's quilts were strip quilts.

I passed around a list for traditional quilters:

Darthula M. Henderson, 2712 Dasher Johnson Rd., 244-7782

Sara Rivers, #6 Oconee Pl., Valdosta, 242-7782

Nauda Humphrey, 945 Lakeside Dr., 242-1696 (evenings)

Janet Douglas, 3324 (3912) Bemiss Rd., 242-1127

Pauline B. Davies, 247-0042, from Valdosta, finished first quilt at age 8, now 81

Floye Luke, leave message at W. Gordon School (she's a teacher), all pieced and quilted by hand

Louell Jackson, 1831 Lloyd Jackson Rd, Valdosta, 31601, 244-1514

Hazel Rentz, Lake Park (self-taught, Olympic quilter)

Grace Bible Church, Hahira Methodist Church have quilt groups

January 25, 1997

Louell Jackson, quilter

**1831 Lloyd Jackson Rd, Valdosta, 31601,
244-1514**

Paid a visit to the home of Louell Jackson, recommended by various quilters in the Withlacoochee Quilters Guild. She had not attended the meeting this past Monday, but I contacted her by phone and arranged to see her. She had kept a quilt on the frame just for my visit.

I did a recorded interview with Mrs. Jackson and took pictures of three quilts she had on hand. She was raised in rural Echols County and both her mother and grandmother quilted. She recalls attending quilting bees as a girl. Patterns she recalls as favorites from that period were the Shoe Fly and the Log Cabin. She herself did no quilting or any handwork except sewing clothes for her own children. Mrs. Jackson is left-handed, and her mother couldn't figure out how to teach her to crochet, for example. Jackson did mention making "blankets" out of cloth and cotton batting loosely stitched together for her family, but not quilts as she does them today. She began quilting about 1981 not long after her husband died. It has given her much pride and satisfaction after working on the farm all her life and raising a family to make something creative and to be paid for it. Jackson built up a word of mouth business selling quilts out of her home and at craft shows in St. Simons, and quilting for other people. She says she is slowing down some, but she is still quilting.

Her favorite pattern is the double wedding ring. She taught herself to through books, although she likes the old fashioned patterns. Her color taste emphasizes blues. Two quilts she had in her home which I photographed had a grid of one-inch square quilting in the blocks. She liked the look of these quilts.

It was interesting to see her frame--a old-fashioned hanging frame which she reconstructed from memory all these years later based on how her mother and grandmother had done it.

In the course of the interview I also talked with Mrs. Jackson about her life on the farm, her kitchen garden, favorite ways of preparing turtle, doves, and quail, etc. She gave me some homemade figs and mayhaw jelly. She gets her mayhaw berries from a woman on the road to Hahira (Elvina Griffin). She told me that in May the paper lists people selling berries and juice. Last year the late freeze killed the crop.

Mt. Zion Music Hall

Mt. Zion Church Rd. off Rocky Ford

Valdosta

c/0 DC and Mildred Watkins
4434 Rocky Ford Rd.
Valdosta, GA 31601
912-242-2169

In the evening I left to attend and record at the Mt. Zion Music Hall on Mt. Zion Road just off Rocky Ford Rd. about 6 miles south of Hwy. 84. The hall is a small one-story frame building on one of the farms owned by DC and Mildred Watkins. The Watkins got the idea for the Music Hall after visiting Bronson, MO. They decided, rather than travel all that way, why not start a music hall of their own?

The hall has been in operation for the past 5-6 years (I heard varying dates from people). I was told it is the only place that the audience of mostly senior citizens can come in a friendly, smoke and alcohol-free environment to enjoy old-fashioned music. From about 7 until midnight or so, folks gather from around the region (on this particular night from Albany, Thomasville, Moultrie, Madison, FL, Valdosta, Quitman) to play on the open mike stage. The hall holds about 85--seats were obtained from an old school auditorium. I was told that on some nights people are spilling out the doors. A discreet glass jar with a hand-written note "donations accepted" is the only charge. The Watkins provide soft drinks, coffee, and sweet tea. The hall features a raised stage with a sound system, backed by an American flag and a wooden plaque that says "Mt. Zion Music Hall." The hall walls are decorated with old farm equipment, hand saws, etc. There is a space heater in the front by the stage. On the porch outside there is a cooker to BBQ a pig.

A middle room beyond the hall has walls covered with colored snapshots of people who have played at the hall. DC Watkins was taking more pictures on this particular night. Prominently featured on one wall are large photos of DC's first and current wife. Folks gather in this room, and the back room, both which have long tables in the middle, to visit or to jam. Groups which are going to appear on stage practice in the back rooms. The back room also has the drinks, and on this particular night, a birthday cake presented to Maxine Shiver who keeps a record of the names, addresses, and phone numbers of musicians who have played there. The other "staff member" so to speak is Micky Bamburg who coordinates who is on stage when, and for how long. Generally folks play for 30 minute sets, she told me, unless there are too many folks who want to play, and then the sets are shortened. I was told the crowd on this particular night, both in terms of audience and musicians, was average. The hall was about 2/3 full. Seven groups of musicians played, but in general it was different configurations of the same pool of players: heavy on guitars, with one banjo, one mandolin, one dobro, and one fiddle. There was one all instrumental set near the end of the evening featuring waltzes and fiddle standards by fiddler Herman Wimberly from Moultrie. Otherwise, the musical offerings leaned heavily toward vocal and instrumental selections of country gospel, older country, and some bluegrass. About 11 or so, Mary Flinchun of Thomasville showed up. She had a more professional country voice and sang more current country such as Achy Breaky Heart and rockabilly such as Jailhouse Rock. There were several singalongs during the evening. The most audience requests came for the fiddler, Herman Wimberly.

I recorded most of the evening (tape ran out at one point), photographed, and tried to get artist data sheets on most musicians. JC Wiggins of Naylor, a guitar player, evidently used to be a square dance caller. I picked this up when he was shouting out a few calls during one of the fiddle breakdowns. He said he hadn't called for 15-20 years, didn't know of any square dances currently going on. He reminisced with one other person about how they used to get the floors shaking at house parties.

The Mt. Zion Music Hall meets every Sat. night at 7 p.m. The Watkins son, Jimmy, plays guitar but was not present tonight because he was attending a Sons of Confederate Veterans function. Evidently neither of the senior Watkins are musicians.

February 6, 1997

Pat Sirmans (Voices of Harmony)

212 E. Martin Luther King

Valdosta, GA 31602

249-8513

age 46

housewife, cares for children (relatives) in home

Had lunch at O'Neal's Country Buffet with Beth Higgs and Joe Rivers to discuss leads in the African American community for the project. Rivers has been one of Beth's main community contacts for her GHC-funded history of Southside Valdosta businesses. He is very willing to help, has lots of contacts, asked me for a list of the kind of things I am interested in (which I wrote today and put in the mail), and also took me after lunch to meet Pat Baker Sirmans, daughter of a long-time family friend and member of the Voices of Harmony, a 4-member women's gospel group in Valdosta.

The Voices of Harmony are composed of the following members:

Pat Sirmans, soprano

Chanel Baker, 1st soprano (sister to Pat)

Willie Pearl Philips, 2nd alto (founder, Voices of Harmony)

Wanda Collins Folsom, 1st alto (original member of VOH)

The group is the result of a merger between two groups, the Voices of Harmony (in existence 23 years), and the Gospel Wonders (Pat was a founding member. 1972). VOH was more choral in style; the Gospel Wonders more quartet-based. The groups merged in 1977 after each had lost membership due to folks moving away, etc. VOH was originally 7 members with one male. Gospel Wonders had 6 members, one male. Both groups were Valdosta-based. Sirmans is a native of Valdosta. The groups traveled together some to out-of-town performances before their merger.

The Gospel Wonders originated in 1972 in Pat's mother's living room. A neighbor, Sarah Johnson Carter, suggested that they form a neighborhood group. Johnson played piano and used to get together with the Baker girls to sing. Pat and her sister Jacqueline

(now living in Texas) sang together. Pat had been singing since age 3. Sarah, still a songwriter although now living out of town, originated the neighborhood-based membership, all from Valdosta's South Side. They sang in church settings, for benefit programs, anniversaries, etc.

The VOH was organized by Willie Pearl Philips through churches. On the group's first anniversary they invited the Gospel Wonders to sing with them. Only Jackie and Pat were able to represent the Wonders at that event. Shortly afterward, the two groups decided to merge. The VOH have had as many as six members. They perform some original material (non copyrighted as yet; Pat is the lyricist) and covers of other songs. Some of the current material that they do is sent to them by relatives from up North. They often are the first to sing a current hit in town. Currently, they perform at weddings, benefits, and churches. Performances range from 4x/week to 4x/month. They travel most frequently throughout S. GA and N. FL but occasionally to N. GA and as far as the Carolinas. They've no recordings of their music, although they were in an Albany studio once, but nothing came out of the session.

New repertoire comes from tapes and CDs, and occasionally from the radio. They will always strive to do their own version, however, not a straight cover. Pat had brief training in voice, but credits most of her vocal skills to her HS choir director, Jay Herman Revels, choir director of Pineville HS on Lake Park Rd (now an elementary school). Revels formally had the gospel choir at VSU. While in HS Pat took part in the Governors Honors Program in music on the VSU campus. Wanda Collins also has had some voice training.

They sing a capella or with sound tracks. AC Braswell has played keyboard with them for a long time, and still plays occasionally. He started playing at Braswell Temple, founded by his grandfather, before his toes could touch the pedals.

The Baker sisters come from a musical family. Father James "JT" Baker sang for years with the Suwanee Quintet, a gospel group. Mother Roselle sang with another local group, the Cavalettes. There was a family group, the Baker Sisters, which still gets together when Jackie is in town. The parents sang with the girls informally at family reunions and other family gatherings. One brother does not sing.

The group is currently trying to raise money to buy equipment. They are planning a concert for this coming April.

February 15, 1997: David and Clarke Lee, sacred harp

David Lee

Rt. 1, Box 40

Hoboken, GA 31542

h-912-458-2493

w- 912-458-2853 or 284-9900

FAX 912-458-3024

Clarke Lee

Rt. 1 Box 317-0
Hoboken, GA 31542
h-912-458-2268

Traveled to the home of David Lee, Hoboken, GA where I spoke with David and his cousin Clarke Lee about sacred harp in the region. I recorded an interview with them in David's living room. Occasionally, Clarke's wife Julie and David's wife (Kathy) sat down on the couch behind me and made a few comments in response to the conversation. I had met the Lees at the sacred harp sing in Hoboken last month, where David was the song leader, assisted by Clarke. David is the designated talker of the two, and is very articulate, but Clarke chimes in when he has something to add. I had originally thought the two were brothers, but in fact are some sort of distant cousins (raised near one another and acting like brothers), with their kinship relationship strengthened by marriage. All the long-standing families around the swamp seem related in some way, but the complexity of family ties is baffling to me at least.

The Lees are very open and very articulate about their tradition. Both men are in their early 40s. They have spearheaded an attempt to revitalize a dying sacred harp tradition which has been a part of David's family, at least, for 5 generations. The sacred harp of the region is closely tied to the Primitive Baptist faith, especially the conservative Crawfordite branch of Primitive Baptists. Both men have been thrown out of the High Bluff church, into which they both became members at age 17, because of their recent sacred harp activities and attempts to revitalize the tradition over the past two years. As the Lees describe it the tradition was dying: there were few sings and those that occurred were not enjoyable--people came because they thought they should, not because they wanted to. This was in sharp contrast to much of the two men's life experiences, where sacred harp and the hymn sings of the PB church were a way of life. Different families had sings in their homes, and families in fact each had their own style of singing. Singing occurred in community halls, at weddings, funerals. Like other Crawfordite PBs, David Lee said that he doesn't listen to radio (sacrilegious) and bought a TV only recently to view videos made of the sacred harp sings (hasn't yet hooked it up). Other kinds of singing was considered blasphemous. The factionalism among the different PB groups (described in John Crowley's dissertation, FSU, History, 1996, *The Primitive Baptists of South Georgia and Florida*) helped caused the decline of sacred harp. Different people don't speak with one another, etc. By the late 1980s and early 90s things were getting pretty bad, and Clarke Lee--the current song leader--was so disgusted he didn't want to continue.

That is when David Lee decided to try to revitalize the tradition and he got Clarke interested in working with him. They were so isolated that until the last couple years they didn't know about all the other sacred harp groups in the country. They have since been to Tallahassee, Atlanta, all over Alabama, Chicago, etc. attending sings. David started the sings in the Hoboken school in fall of 1995 using a new model, adapted from other sings he had visited, of having different song leaders for each song, allowing women and children to participate, and not requiring that people walk time.

If I understand this correctly (as explained to me first by John Crowley and then by the Lees themselves), the most conservative Primitive Baptists don't believe in prayer in front of non PBs (and perhaps not even in front of members of other associations of PBs) and because sacred harp sings fairly universally end with prayer, Clarke and David's participation in sings around the state, region, and nation caused their ouster from High Bluff. I don't believe they are currently a member of any church, although David attended services at the Sardis Church (Folkston, GA), led by his cousin Tollie Lee, on Feb. 16, and both Clarke and David attended the hymn sing after church. Tollie is more flexible in his views and is attending the sings in Hoboken.

Despite the tensions with the home church, the fledgling sings have been successful so far. David Lee has succeeded in getting his children interested in sacred harp, and although Clarke's children are young, they too are being mentored. The efforts of the two are beginning to lure back many folks who used to sing but who had quit. Still the majority of singers are from the Hoboken-swamp vicinity. In December 1996 the all-day sing attracted a number of singers from elsewhere. In the video and audio tapes David loaned me of this, the style of singing was different from the "Hoboken style" (faster, higher, no ornaments). The Lees have become more self-conscious of their own style since they have discovered and heard other singers. They can hear the difference and others comment on it. Basically, the Hoboken style is heavily influenced from PB hymn styles: it is slower, lower pitched and more ornamented than other sacred harp singers. David doesn't want to lose the Hoboken sound, and he understands that by opening up, this may happen. Already the different family styles appear to be lost, and Hoboken's sings are a blend of the area styles. But he is philosophical about change: better a changed sacred harp than no sacred harp. He says that this is "a living tradition" (sounding remarkably like a folklorist!) and that traditions change. He wants the tradition to be around for his children.

They do have recordings from area sings dating to the 1970s, so there are recordings of the sings prior to this change in the fall of 1995. David is recording the sings with a good stereo audio recorder, and also some video now. Of the two, he is the one most actively playing the role of community scholar, keeping records and deliberately making recordings for posterity. I played them the DAT recording I made at the Jan. sing, and we were all very pleased with the sound quality. I played back a couple of examples of songs to ask about particular points of style. They have become quite aware of their style--and talked about the ornaments, the relationship to singing in the meeting house, etc.

My impression is that the two--and others I am meeting--are very interested to do what they can to preserve and encourage their distinctive traditions and that sharing with a folklorist and having tapes for deposit at VSU and copies for them is of considerable interest. I told David Lee about the Francis Harper recordings at the Library of Congress, and said they might include some sacred material. He was very interested: I said I would write to try to get a copy of the tape indices and would share my findings with him. In a very real sense, being thrown out of the church has freed him to do some things to study and encourage his own traditions which would not have been open to him by staying in the church.

I was not able to attend the sing in the evening, but I understand David started a singing school (one last year as well according to the minutes) and that he will continue this for the next few months. His Uncle Silas Lee (Tollie Lee's father) was a singing school leader for many years--(Silas died June, 1997). The sing leaders are always male: in the interview David and Clarke describe the informal weeding out process of the more promising singers to identify sing leaders of the next generation, and how Clarke become the song leader.

terminology I noticed:

leading song

keying or pitching song

walking time

marking time

notebook (a hymnal with tunes printed as opposed to the Primitive Hymns book by Lloyd which has only words and the meter indicated)

February 16, 1997, Sardis Primitive Baptist Service and hymn sing

Tollie Lee

Rt. 1, Box 362

Callahan, FL 32011

h-904-845-2624

At the suggestion and introduction of John Crowley last month at the Hoboken sing, I met Elder Tollie Lee and arranged to attend his service at Sardis Primitive Baptist Church outside Folkston. The service was to be followed by a hymn sing out of the Lloyd hymnal, Primitive Hymns, organized at the request of Kelly Day, an agronomist from Purdue University and a former German Baptist who is visiting old-order, "slow singing" groups around the country in a personal quest to preserve and encourage the old, traditional style of hymn singing. Day had wanted to record the local singing of the Sardis PBs, and so I was able to take advantage of the same sing.

I called Tollie Lee ahead of time and OK'd with him that I could record everything so long as the microphone was discreet. I did not take any pictures during the service, but did during the hymn sing. Lee is minister of three PB churches in the area: Piney Grove outside Waycross, Sardis, and his home church of Nathalene near Hilliard, FL, Nassau Co.

I arrived about 9:15 (service at 10), second only to Deacon Derek Hendrickson, a man I would guess to be in his late 30s early 40s who recognized me from the Hoboken sing, and from Tollie's mentioning that I would be coming. Per John Crowley's dissertation, PB meeting houses are usually secluded in the countryside and from a distance look like barns. This church was a simple frame structure, built of native GA yellow pine, with no finishing on the inside (ceiling or walls). Everything was pine: floors and simple bench-like pews. There were three doors: one on each side and one (main entrance) in the middle of the front. Outside there was really no formal lane, but rather a leaf-covered

track and a cemetery. The church was set back from the road and not readily visible from the road (unlike the cemetery). Opposite the main entrance, against the opposite wall, was a simple wood pulpit: original to the first church, I'm told, which was founded in 1819. It still has a bullet hole in it from the Indian wars: the story told by Johnny Lee (father to David Lee) is that some of the settlers thought Indians were hiding in the church and shot inside to flush them out. In front of the pulpit was a simple wood table or stand with a white metal bucket and dipper--I presume for foot washing although that didn't occur at the service I attended. Separate rows of pews for men (on left) and women (on right) faced each other, with pews for visitors, non-members, mixed couples, facing the pulpit, backs to the main entrance. On the men's side were holes in the floor for spitting tobacco. Per Crowley, all this is typical of PB architecture and lay-out. The present building reportedly dates to the 1920s (check). When I was later driven by the Nathalene Church, from the exterior it appeared very similar, although the windows were covered with wooden shutters.

Behind the church was a separate bathroom facility, with electricity--something the main sanctuary lacked as is common to Crawfordite PB churches according to Crowley's diss. Fortunately, I had been warned to bring a blanket, since there had been frost overnight.

Cars began to arrive between 9:30 to 9:45. One of the first to arrive were Tollie Lee and David Lee. Folks greeted one another outside (where the sun made things warmer) and I was introduced to various people. David's parents, Delorese and Johnny Lee, and his Aunt Mary (great aunt) were among those I met, as well as Derek's wife, Deleine (sp?) and some of her family. There were about 40 people attending the service.

I had been told by John Crowley that Tollie Lee's style of lining out hymns and delivering sermons was increasingly rare--a retention of an old traditional PB style. I sat in the second row of the visitor's pews, and put the DAT recorder and mike in my woven back on the floor: the mike was in its floor stand. I put it there to be less conspicuous. As Derek explained to me, We have nothing to hide, but you might not get what you came for if people are too aware of the microphone.

I recorded the entire service with Tollie's permission. It lasted about an hour and 15 minutes, and included singing, prayer, and a sermon--the latter the centerpiece and taking up the majority of time. It included two lined hymns--an opening and closing one. Tollie lined out, and then a song leader began the hymn. In all this singing--and in the hymn singing which followed, male voices predominated. The addition of alto singing is comparatively new, and women's voices are generally not as strong and penetrating as men's. This male-dominated singing is certainly unusual in Protestant denominations of my experience, where women dominate the choirs and a good male singer--esp. a tenor--is always in great demand. Delorese Lee has a good, slightly nasal, treble voice but she can't compete with all the strong male voices.

Tollie Lee delivers his message in the traditional, divinely inspired trance-style traditional to Primitive Baptists. There didn't appear to be an obvious trigger or inducement to trance. After the opening lined hymn and prayer (most of the congregation on its knees and Tollie delivering in a heightened speech, song-like style), he started walking back and

forth in the pulpit, a distance of no more than 5 or 6 feet. While he was pacing, several people arrived late, and footsteps on wooden plank floors reverberate quite loudly. I wondered whether or not this distracted him. He held a folded white handkerchief in his hand, which I soon realized was used to dab the spittle forming in his mouth while in trance and delivering his sermon.

I don't know whether or not this is a true trance: he didn't appear to have a lot of the physical, bodily cues I associate with trance such as uncontrollable body movement and distinctive facial expressions. His eyes did strike me as quite intense during the height of his sermon. As with his prayer, he began speaking in his normal voice, which I found quite soft and at times difficult to hear. As he got into his sermon, his voice became strong and suddenly shifted into a kind of rising and falling cant. Tollie has a fine singing voice and so his "sung" sermons are pleasing simply from a musical point of view. Once the trance-like period begins he moves into use of the caught breathe "huh" use of non-lexical sounds which one also hears in other chanted sermon traditions, both black and white. It seemed to me that the highest, drawn out pitches might be reserved for key moments in his text, but I'd have to listen to the tape and to other sermons to test this out. There was no direct reading of scripture in the service but the sermon referred to various biblical texts. He used hand gestures to illustrate his words, but never left his pulpit or really used much body movement, other than perhaps leading out toward the congregation. All of a sudden, and it seemed to me without any warning or cue, Tollie returned to his normal speaking voice and the sermon ended not long after.

The closing hymn was Turtle Dove, which is mentioned in the Okefenokee Album on a caption to a picture by Francis Harper, the naturalist who collected in the Swamp. The Chesser family is singing Turtle Dove out of a four-note book (sacred harp). I got an eerie sense of cultural continuity with the selection of that hymn. Tollie told me later he had just chosen it by random: he opened the hymnal and that happened to be the text.

I noticed that various women had brought blankets which they tucked over their laps and legs to keep out the chill. It wasn't as clear to me at the meeting house as it was later at the Hendrickson home how plainly dressed many of the women were. Several older women had a kind of turban headpiece covering their head. A few others wore hats of some kind. Amy Lee, daughter to Tollie, had told me on the phone that she wore make-up, which seemed something of an anomaly, as did her dangling earrings. Amy also said she was not a member of the church. ON a hunch I wore just small posts. There were a half dozen women at the Hendrickson house who wore hair in buns (presumably long), no make-up and no earrings. There did seem to be dresses of various colors, etc., however, and not plain clothes like the Amish and Mennonite, although I gather this tradition is part of the history of the church.

After church, people greeted one another, and then those that stayed for the sing began pulling food out of their cars and having a potluck. Generally, family groups tended to stay together. Those who didn't bring food were invited to join someone who did. Deleine Hendrickson asked me to join them. She had a tablecloth over the hood of the car and produced both hot and cold food: sandwich makings, potato salad, various cakes, cookies, brownies, lima beans, cauliflower and carrots, bread, fresh sliced cantaloupe,

iced tea and cola, some sort of meat. We gathered around the car and ate on Styrofoam plates.

It must have been 12:30 or 1 when about 25 singers re-gathered inside the church for a hymn sing. By this time Clarke Lee had joined the group (he did not attend church) and he served as song leader. Clarke, David, and Tollie were the key figures. David and Tollie faced the rest, seated on one side of the visitor/non-member pews, with Clarke Lee in the front row. Kelly Day had a small tape recorder placed on a pew, and I had my recorder more visible, on a pew (so placed higher) and also took some pictures without flash. I recorded the first hymn seated between Kelly Day and Delorese Lee, but Day's voice was strong and I didn't want him to dominate the recording, esp. since he is not from this church. Different people called out a number from the Lloyd's hymnal (Benjamin Lloyd, Primitive Hymns). there are two versions of the hymnal: one with 705 texts and one with 700. The group used the 700 version: the one loaned to me by John Crowley is a 705 from his home church, Union near Hahira. Some of the later numbers don't correspond in the two.

It was easy to hear the similarities and interrelationships between sacred harp and the meeting house hymns. Not all the hymns are slow, and some are more ornamented than others. Some sound decidedly more up tempo with more standard triad harmonization; others usually the most slow and highly ornamented, use open intervals (4ths, 5ths, octaves) and have a modal sound. Johnny Lee told me the slowest one they do is #101. Some people seemed to have the words memorized. The tunes used are those from sacred harp notebooks which singers have learned in singing schools, by memory, at sings. Johnny Lee told me that other than the meter, people select a tune that to them seems to fit their mood or the feel/mood of the hymn text. Singing at the meeting house (which Tollie Lee told me would only last a little while) lasted at least until 2:30, when it moved to the home of Derek and Deleine Hendrickson in Hilliard, FL. I followed Johnny and Delorese Lee. Like his son David, Johnny Lee is very personable, articulate, knowledgeable about the tradition, interested in my project and my impressions. Once we relocated to the Hendricksons, a mobile home in the country, I sat next to him in the living room during most of the sing.

The move reduced the number of singers somewhat: when they began again around 3:50 p.m. there were 14. People drifted in and out, but by 6:20 there were some 20 to 25 men, women and children. At the Hendricksons, Kelly Day had a boom box with a separate mike (held much of the time by Delorese Lee because he wanted to pick up the treble line), a camcorder, and a small tape recorder going. He would sometimes prompt them for a specific tune, ask them if they recognized a certain tune, or ask them if they knew another older tune for a particular text. My tape recorder was just part of the general atmosphere of documentation, and folks really didn't seem to mind. The singing took place in the living room, with one older couple seated off to the side at the dining room table. It was not a large room, and some extra chairs were brought in, and some people stood. Often, Johnny Lee would open the BF White *Sacred Harp* (Cooper rev.) to the tune which they were singing to a particular text. He had what seemed to me a remarkable command of the notebook and the hymnal, finding the hymn number by hearing the text being sung, or recognizing the tune and opening up to the page in White

without even needing the index. He is 61, I believe David told me, and has remarkable energy. David said people often mistake them for brothers. They sang for 3 1/2 hours without stopping once they got to the house. I asked Johnny if his voice got tired. A number of the men drank coffee, and this helped the throats. Johnny said he can't sing tenor that long, but he can last a long time on bass. He said that the voices don't tire because if you are singing close by other singers the other voices "pull you." He said I'll know what he means when I go to more sings and stand in the center of the square. Certainly, the vocal stamina seemed remarkable to me: all "untrained voices" and singers who don't read music, just 4-shape notebooks, yet they can sing for hours and have a great sense of pitch and harmony, plus an incredible memory for tunes and text. I left at 8 p.m. but they may have sung on! Tollie Lee particularly struck me: he had led the morning service, lining hymns and chanting his prayers and sermon, and then had been singing for most of the afternoon and early evening. Yet he seemed tireless and commented at one point how much he was enjoying this; how they should do this every Sunday afternoon.

In fact, Johnny Lee told me that this kind of sing was a rarity. they used to do it all the time but now do so seldom. It was really Kelly Day, who I gather Johnny had met at one of the out of state sings--perhaps Chicago?-- and his request to record a hymn sing, that had prompted it. Kelly Day said that Sardis is unique as a hymn singing community: that except for a few Old Regular Baptists north of Louisville, this sort of singing is not done any more.

About 7:15 there was a break for supper. At this point I was almost faint from hunger. Women had been preparing food since shortly after we arrived. Deleine's sister was in the kitchen alone for sometime (I saw her making biscuits at one point) while Deleine herself did quite a bit of singing. Deleine and Ramona (Tollie Lee's wife) then joined, and several other woman as well. It was remarkable to me that they whipped up a dinner for over 25 people somewhat unannounced. The hymn sing was originally to be at another woman's house, but she was ill. Deleine said she didn't know whether Kelly Day would want to stay at the meeting house or go to a home, so she didn't know for sure that folks were coming over until that afternoon. I took pictures of the women preparing food, which I suspect they found somewhat odd but no one said anything. I was a guest--and when we finally sat down to dinner it had to be in shifts. The table sat 8 or 10, and the head spots were reserved for Kelly Day and me--I was the only woman! But I was a guest, so I sat, after some questioning as to when the women would eat.

The meal consisted of iced tea (sweetened), and various dishes to pass: sausage, beef (pot roast), gravy, white rice, black eyed peas, waldorf salad, macaroni and cheese, cauliflower and carrots, fried okra (it had been frozen), biscuits and cornbread. Some of the cornbread had peppers and onions in it, some was plain. A variety of desserts (some left from lunch) were on the side board. Deleine seemed to think nothing of having a dinner of this size, and commented that her sister had come over to help. The women who helped I would guess were all members of the Sardis church: some did not offer to help, so there must have been some rationale there.

I left at 7:45 p.m. immediately after dinner, so I don't know if they sang more and for how long: I needed to be home by 10.

March 26, 1997; May 13, 1997

Bob Bennett

2111 Hillcrest Drive

Valdosta, GA 31602

242-7321

First met Mr. Bennett in the parking lot at Winn Dixie where he works part-time as a bagger. He is retired from the US Civil Service Commission, and since the 1950s has been a southwestern style square dance caller. Although his father was a traditional fiddler and Bennett grew up going to trad. dances, he doesn't participate in that style. His upbringing, however, left him with a good ear and a sense of rhythm. He is of particular interest as the former owner of Thunderbird Records, formerly in Moultrie, which recorded square dance records. He has these records at home, so I didn't see them at our interview (took place at College of the Arts, VSU). He also has written a number of his own calls. He can be heard in action at JC Shack Tues. from 7-9:30. His wife Vivian leads the Thunderbird Cloggers, which meet at JC Shack Mondays 7-9:30.

On May 13 I visited the Beaux and Belles Square Dance Club at their weekly Tuesday night dance in the Jaycee Shack facility on the east side of Valdosta. I arrived about 7:30--the dance was scheduled from 8 to 9:30. Mr. Bennett was already there and set up with his Hilton Sound System (a customized system for square dance callers). The system has a feature which allows the caller to automatically reset the record needle to a particular point in the song. Bennett has this feature turned off, however, preferring to reset manually so that he can more closely follow the needs of the dancers and stop for a workshop/walkthru if need be.

I recorded the calling directly off his system, which is mono rather than stereo. This particular evening there were enough dancers for two squares. Bennett reported that the peak is 4 squares, but that occurs rarely. Most of the dancers appeared to be in their 50s or older, with the exception of two couples probably in their 40s or younger. Bennett's wife Vivian, who teaches and leads the Thunderbird Cloggers (Monday nights at JC Shack) leads line dancing in between the "tips" called by Bennett. A tip consists of a hoedown (with hash or pattern calling) and a singing call. After each tip, they take a break. Jaycee Shack is a modest 1 story building, with a linoleum floor, kitchen, AC, and folding chairs around the edge of the room. The Valdosta Ballroom Dance Club also uses the facility (Wed. nights).

Mr. Bennett has two portable carrying cases for an assortment of 45s--one for hoedowns one for singing calls. Each record comes with a call sheet with a set format of suggested calls. Bennett, however, usually improvises calls in rhythm based on his read of the dancers on the floor. In this more formalized form of square dance, with a set group of figures for each level of dancers, there is a fixed repertoire of figures from which to improvise. For singing calls, he can improvise all but the chorus or key melodic phrase at the end of a verse, which needs to be sung at the appropriate place in the music. At my

request, Bennett did three of the singing calls he has recorded on Thunderbird Records, including "Load the Wagon", the first record he ever cut, recorded by Thunderbird in 1969. Music was provided by the "Thunderbirds" out of Columbia, SC. The music for a square dance record is recorded separately and must conform to a particular number of measures (48 or 64? see interview). The tape of the music session is then forwarded to the studio where the caller adds his or her call.

The formality of what Bennett calls "southwestern style" square dance (one can hear basically the same calls anywhere in the world for a particular level) makes it more of a popular rather than a traditional art form. Many of the callers are traveling professionals. However, the presence of a studio in S. Georgia (Moultrie) made it of interest to me for this project. Bennett is unaware of traditional callers in the region (those whose style is more locally or regionally based, who learn through oral tradition and perform with live bands and thus are much less structured); indeed, he went into southwestern style because of the drinking associated with traditional dances. He gave me a copy of the April 1997 issue of American Square Dance Magazine, which illustrates some of the features of this thriving subculture across the country, including adds from many record companies.

The evening ended around 10 p.m.

April 11, 1997

Frank's Jellies, Relish, and Hot Sauce

Franklin Harrell

210 N. McKinley

Nashville, GA 31639

912-686-2694

Spent 3/12 hours with Frank Harrell in his food preparation area as he made the juice for mayhaw jelly. Some people water down their juice (this is evidently the case with the fellow who produces Swamp Treasures, sold at the State Farmers Market in Thomasville, for example), so Harrell does his to be sure of a quality product. There are different varieties of mayhaw. He buys from a woman in Adel and then goes to Tifton near ABAC to gather another variety which is very red and adds color to the juice for a good color jelly.

Harrell has his own cottage industry operated in a small, agriculture dept. approved building behind his home. It contains gas stove (he prefers gas for ease of temperature adjustment), sink, fridge and two freezers for frozen juice and fruit, storage for his products. He grows his own figs, and has several mayhaw trees. Also grows peppers for his relishes and hot sauces. Much of his fresh produce comes free from his son's farm or on the barter system. He sells out of his home and at various craft fairs, festivals, and shows around the area.

This is a tradition learned from his mother, growing up in Amsterdam, GA near the Florida state line. He has adapted some (uses sure-jell for example and does some of his own jam and preserve combinations) but his figs, for example, he does just as his mother

did, and the “200 year old recipe” for corn cob jelly comes from her, although he uses a different variety of corn cob.

Harrell is a retired Major in the air force, holds a MA in Ed. Administration from VSU, father of 5 children, retired school principal. He is an excellent talker, especially about rural life of his boyhood and foodways. I recorded some family background and history, and then let the tape run as he extracted juice from the frozen mayhaws.

April 12, 1997

**St. Lukes Primitive Baptist Church
Force St., Valdosta**

See association minutes from 1995

****next October (1997) association will meet at Mt. Mary Church in Leary, GA. This would be an excellent opportunity to record music with a large group if I can secure permission to record.**

Elder Ervin Peterson
1508 Colquitt Ave
Albany, GA 31701
912-883-4318

Deacon Kenneth L. Sirmans
729 E. Brookwood Dr.
Valdosta, GA 31601
241-1417

Deacon Eddie C. Thomas
1003 West St.
Valdosta, GA 31601
242-3721

Visited the Saturday service at St. Luke’s Primitive Baptist, member of the Union Primitive Baptist Association and the only member of a “colored association” in Valdosta. Had visited the church last month (they meet the Saturday before the second Sunday for their business meeting preceded by a service, and then services on the second Sunday, both meetings at noon). We erroneously came at 2:00, but had a chance to meet the pastor, Elder Ervin Peterson, who commutes in from Albany, and Deacon Kenneth Sirmans of Valdosta. I explained the project and arranged to record at the next month’s service. In the interim there was some concern about recording raised by the Moderator, Elder Wonzie L. Gardner (of Albany) but further discussions changed his mind and I was allowed to record. As Elder Peterson said in the service, “There isn’t anything wrong with praying and singing.”

The church is a simple, cement block structure, painted white, located in the predominantly black east-side of Valdosta off Troup Street. Evidently they built this church out of blocks around the old wood one, which was torn out “bone by bone.”

There wasn't room on the lot to build anything larger, according to Elder Peterson. He has been serving the church about 5 years, following the death of the previous pastor, of Valdosta, whose widow is still a member. The church has 6 members. Unlike the Crawfordite churches near the Okefenokee, this one had electricity, a raised altar area, and less severe pews. Women members wore make-up.

Clerk Betty Hopper was taking minutes and dealing with paperwork before, during, and after the service. Kenny Sirmans sister (also a member, married with different last name) periodically showed her which line of the hymn they were singing.

Elder Peterson was uncharacteristically late, and the service didn't begin until 5 or 10 past 12:00. Five members were present. Deacon Sirmans began the devotional section while Elder Peterson sat in the back of the "altar" area. The order of service follows:

Hymn #2 (Lloyd's Hymnal, 705 version), lead by Deacon Kenneth Sirmans

Prayer, Deacon Eddie Thomas

Hymn #364, led by Elder Peterson

Scripture reading, Romans 12 selections by Elder Peterson

Sermon, Elder Peterson

Hymn 161, led by Elder Peterson

1 p.m. Business meeting began (I recorded the segment of the business meeting where Elder Peterson referred to my project and their approval for my being there and recording the service

closing hymn, #703, led by Elder Peterson

Service ended about 1:50 p.m.

Several observations:

The lined hymns were so slow and ornamented that I couldn't understand the text most of the time. Texture was heterophonic, and sound was dominated by male voices (3 males, 2 females singing). They told me the singing would be better on Sunday when they had more voices. Sat. meeting is just for members; on Sunday non-member family members and guests attend. Still, I was struck by the powerful sound produced by just 5 voices.

Both prayer and sermon elicited some call and response type interjections from the men of the congregation, which should be audible on the tape. This is in contrast to the white Crawfordite congregation, for example.

Peterson's sermon was also sung/chanted. Rather than an intake of breath punctuating his lines of text (Tollie Lee), Peterson used a recurring "Ahhhh" in each line of text. As he warmed up to his topic, he began a rhythmic slapping of the pulpit, and clapping of hands. He appeared to direct his comments to the men in particular, who were offering

interjections in response to his text (drawn from the Romans text.) His sermon ended quite abruptly and he appeared to come out of the trace state and return to normal spoken voice equally suddenly.

During the comments section of the business meeting Deacon Thomas had some very sweet words about God's call for us to love one another and not separate the races, directed at the two visitors, myself and John Crowley. They also offered Crowley, as a fellow Primitive Baptist, opportunity to make comments during the business meeting.

Afterwards I asked Elder Peterson about his day job. He has been a plumber for over 20 years. He serves several PB churches, and would like to work full-time visiting parishioners and attending to the church, but the pay is not sufficient. This meeting produced \$25 for the pastor, barely enough for gas money.

May 4, 1997

**South Valdosta Church of God Homecoming and Sing
122 Pendleton Avenue
Valdosta, GA 36101**

**Rev. Alfred Sizemore
2508 Deborah Dr.
Valdosta, GA 31602**

**Kirk Thompson (The Thompsons)
3012 PX Ranch Rd.
Cottondale, FL 32431**

Almost weekly the *Valdosta Daily Times* has announcements about a church homecoming somewhere in the area. I had not yet been to one but felt that an event like this would be important to include in the initial survey. The Voices of Harmony and the Johnson Two (African American gospel groups included in the survey) appear at homecomings where they are one of several groups that sing 2-3 songs each. I had not yet been able to attend one of theirs, however, and it did not seem likely before the end of the grant period. The Western Sizzlin' on Ashley periodically has signs on the marquis advertising a Sunday gospel sing, but again, the timing had not worked out. So when I saw the announcement in the VDT for the homecoming and sing at S. Valdosta Church of God, for a Sunday I would be in town, I decided to pursue it. I was told that groups from the church would sing in the morning service, which would be followed by a dinner on the grounds. In the afternoon, the Thompsons would give a "sing." I received erroneous information that the Thompsons were from Thomasville, but after I arranged to attend the event I discovered that they were from N. Florida (Jackson Co.) south of Bainbridge and north of Panama City.

I talked with several members before arriving on Sunday morning: Sandra Hannah, Evelyn Seymour, and Pastor Sizemore. I was given permission to record the service by Sizemore. I also called Kirk Thompson and arranged to record their singing in the afternoon.

South Valdosta Church of God is one of several churches in the area which are part of the Pentecostal Church of God denomination (among them Azalea City, Forest Street, N. Valdosta, etc.). Thus, this is not an independent church. The homecoming was celebrating the church's 27th anniversary. Pastor Al Sizemore and his wife Doris are relatively new to the community, in their second year here after serving in such varied places as Alaska, Belgium and Germany. They are natives of the Carolinas. Both are musical--Pastor Al plays organ in church and is 15 credits away from a degree in music merchandising. Doris plays piano in church and has a teaching degree with a minor in music.

The church is a modest, one-story structure but deceptively large inside, with a good-sized kitchen, a social hall, offices and classrooms, and a sanctuary that must seat several hundred. The sanctuary is carpeted in thick rose-colored carpeting, with fixed pews on either side of a central aisle. The pulpit is at the front of the raised chancel at the front of the church. As one faces the pulpit, the choir loft extends almost the width of the church, with a grand piano and drum-set on the left and organ on the right. During the service three guitarists also played: Dewey Fountain, Rudolph Thornton, and Evangelist James Bass. Rick Griner was on drums. The sanctuary has a cross and doves at the front of the church behind the choir loft. Significantly for the Pentecostal style of worship, there was a computer generated paper sign fixed to the wall behind the choir loft which said "This is a House of Praise not a House of Rest" referring to the active, spirit-filled form of worship, with its speaking in tongues and trance as worshippers are filled with the Holy Spirit.

The congregation on this morning numbered about 75, somewhat more than usual according to Sizemore (50-75 is more typical). Most were Caucasian; I saw one black family. Sandra Hannah, a native of the Atlanta region, told me that she thought 75% of the congregation were native Valdostans.

When I arrived about 10:30 there was already some activity in the kitchen. I went into the sanctuary to set up in the back as Sunday school was taking place. One of the former pastors was leading the Sunday school. Sunday school ends at 10:50. Shortly after that, the Sizemores, with Rick Griner on drum-set, began to play a prelude. After the introduction and prayer, the choir--until then seated in the pews--came up to the front and filled the choir loft as the instrumentalists played music to "Victory Today is Mine." The choir consisted of 25 singers, 4 men/boys and the rest women. One woman brought her children up with her. This denomination specializes in the camp meeting-style of hymn or spiritual song--high energy, upbeat. The choir sings in unison, using the Church of God hymnal or one of several songbooks put out by the denomination, such as *Powerful Praise Songs for the Singing Church*. Many choir members appeared to know the songs by heart. Belinda Litesy led the choir--several women sang solos. Four songs were sung in all (see tape index). The instrumental offertory (Nearer My God to Thee) was followed by a special music ministry duet by Cindy Crews and Dewonne Fountain. The guest pastor, Wayne Depew of Tennessee, had preached here before. He had been described to me as "not a long-winded preacher" and although he got worked up several times and appeared to begin to go into a more rhythmic cant-like altered state, he spoke

several times about the delicious meal awaiting everyone and kept his remarks fairly timely. An instrumental medley, beginning with “He is Lord” accompanied the altar call at the end of the service.

During the service at various points members of the congregation stood, shouted Hallelujah, and were filled with the spirit. This happened also in the afternoon during the Thompsons’ performance, especially when Jane Thompson herself became very emotional during her singing and began to speak in tongues.

The “dinner on the grounds” was in fact a monumental potluck put on inside the social hall. I photographed the three kitchen coordinators, Diane Hannah, Dewonne Fountain, and Tammie Astin. Diane Hannah was the main coordinator, I’m told. Each woman of the church brought 5-6 dishes (per family) and several desserts. If Diane Hannah thought they were missing something, she would call a particular member known for that item and ask her to bring it as well. The banquet tables stretched the length of the social hall, with an additional table at the end, forming an “L,” for the desserts. Sandra Hannah answered several questions for me and toured the table with me identifying various dishes, since I told her as a northerner “to me a pea is a pea and a bean is a bean.” Obviously, I needed coaching! Sandra (sister-in-law to Diane Hannah) said that they have dinner on the grounds for Homecoming, July 4, and Labor Day. Occasionally, during the summer months they may have a spontaneous potluck as well. For Easter, Christmas, and Thanksgiving, they organizing church dinners at a private home.

Below is an inventory of the kinds of dishes served, which seemed to me to represent some of the core foodways of the region:

- speckled butter beans
- green beans
- lima beans
- butter peas,
- collard greens
- pole beans
- sweet potato soufflé
- squash casserole
- macaroni and cheese
- English peas salad (egg, onion, mayo)
- dumplings
- potato salad
- chicken pot pie
- creamed corn (white and yellow each)
- fried chicken
- cabbage
- fried corn bread
- rice (white and yellow each)
- BBQ chicken
- country fried steak
- ham

meatballs
 pot roast
 dressing
 broccoli noodle casserole
 cheese potatoes
 spaghetti casserole
 deviled egg
 pear salad
 corn on the cob
 pound cake
 sweet potato soufflé
 pineapple upside-down cake
 7-layer salad (in a large glass trifle dish)
 fruit cake
 lemon meringue pie
 lemon pie
 banana pudding
 jelly roll
 pumpkin delight (with whipped cream and cream cheese)
 strawberry pie (in season)
 strawberry jubilee (vanilla pudding, yellow cake mix, pineapple)
 coconut custard pie
 red velvet cake

Drinks, including water, sweet and unsweet tea, were on a separate table. Tables and chairs were set up throughout the social hall. I was asked to join the Sizemores and the Depews at their table. Everyone wanted to make sure I had something to eat. I bought a copy of the cookbook, *Cooking Treasures of South Georgia*, in hopes that it would have some of the kinds of recipes featured at the dinner.

My culinary guide, Sandra Hannah, native of Atlanta, has lived in Valdosta for 22 years.

The sing began at 2 p.m. The Thompsons arrived during church, were fed early, and had been setting up during the dinner. I touched based and introduced myself to Kirk, their manager, giving him a letter of introduction and a consent form.

About 1:55 Doris Sizemore began playing a prelude. The Thompsons were introduced and sang about two hours with a break during which several SV Church of God members sang vocal solos. The Thompsons are at the core a family band. Patriarch Bob Thompson and his wife were from Moultrie, GA. They resettled in Grand Ridge, FL where their sons were raised. Two of the sons, Kirk and Tim, form the heart of the present group, along with Tim's wife Jane (also native of Moultrie) on treble vocals. Father Bob turned his life over to God and age 26. He got his sons interested in guitar; Mrs. Thompson(didn't get her name) taught them harmony. Although self-taught they are wonderful, gifted musicians. Tim is a songwriter, along with vocals, guitar, and banjo. He said, "I never had any formal training, just what the Lord Gave us. But he

gave me a calling.” The group did not perform any of Tim’s work, however. The Thompsons are members of the Church of God and continue their music ministry throughout s. Georgia, N. Florida, and S. Alabama. Their personnel are as follows:

Kirk Thompson, base guitar, baritone vocals, manager
 Tim Thompson, lead guitar banjo, tenor vocals (guitar since age 5, banjo since age 8)
 Dirk Shores, drum-set (with band 17 years)
 Gary Golden, keyboards (with band since Jan.)
 Jane Thompson, treble vocals
 Bob Thompson, baritone vocals
 Shirley Thompson (Kirk’s wife), sound

The group has great vocal harmonies although they are not a quartet. They specialize in original compositions (they have just released their latest single to radio stations across the country, Ashes to Ashes, by former group member Steve White), traditional gospel hymns, and bluegrass gospel, and contemporary Christian. They have several cassettes out; I purchased one for the project.

This “sing” was thus more of a concert, rather than various musicians performing a few songs, along with a headliner or host, as is often the case. Doris Sizemore gave me a press release on the Thompsons which I have along with the project materials.

May 15, 1997

Lonnie and Mary Johnson, The Johnson Two
5169 Rocky Ford Rd.
Valdosta, GA 31601
912-244-9886 (H)

Drove to the Johnson’s home in the company of Joe Rivers Sr., who had referenced me to the Johnson Two when I expressed interest in local African American gospel. Rivers had worked with Lonnie’s brother and had known the Johnsons for 30 years. The Johnson home is beautifully kept up, with stone fencing around the property which Lonnie has done himself. Mary has sewn the curtains and Lonnie, an amateur woodworker, made the dining room table, shelving, an entertainment center, end tables, etc. The home was decorated with strong colors. As I entered I was greeted with a delicious smell. It turns out the Mary Johnson, who retired as a baker at VSU after 30 years on April 1 of this year, makes wedding cakes on the side. The cake pans were cooling. She bakes on Thursday, does the frosting on Friday, and assembles, delivers on Saturday. Not long ago she made a 7-foot cake for one wedding, for which she showed pictures. It took three carloads to get all the cake to the reception site. I suspect Mary is a fine traditional cook. Her late mother, Mary Brown Hill, who passed away last Oct. at 86, was known for selling peanuts, sweet potato pie, and red velvet cake at the Nation’s Bank downtown. Mary is also a gifted seamstress and sews the gospel attire which in which she and Lonnie perform. I photographed the gown she wore at a recent church homecoming appearance in Sasser.

I had asked the Johnson's for a tape, since I had yet to coordinate a schedule where I could hear them sing in person. They had made a tape of four songs they did at a recent church homecoming in Sasser (April, St. Luke's Freewill Baptist). We listened to that before the interview began, and Mr. Rivers especially enjoyed the music. They also gave me one of four 45s they made in the 1970s. The 45s feature original compositions. They hope to make a recording again soon, after Mr. Johnson retires from Sears. When they retire they plan to be more actively on the road. Still, they are frequent performers at church anniversaries and as guests on concerts elsewhere, in addition to giving their own concert. Over the years they have performed less frequently in Valdosta, and their travels have taken them as far north as Toledo, OH, and as far south as Miami. They have been together 27 years. Although Lonnie came from a musical family, Mary did not. Both view their musical talents as a gift from God. They sound like more than two people when they perform. Lonnie plays electric guitar (self-taught) or piano. Many people liken their sound to the Consolers, a Miami-based duo who were mentors to the Johnsons and with whom they performed.

They are active members of the First Oak Road Missionary Baptist Church and natives of Lowndes County. They invited me to their homecoming, the 2nd Sunday in October (held at Silver Run Baptist Church), and to 2nd Sundays when the Senior Choir sings. Lonnie plays piano in church. Missionary Baptists typically have lined and congregational hymns.

The Johnsons are a good source of contacts for area musicians. Mary has a book with names and phone numbers of various groups. In Valdosta they mentioned the following:

Brown Brothers (quartet), mngr. Ernest Jenkins, 244-79116

Gospel Commanders, Wayne Roberts

Sharper Singers, mother 2 daughters, and daughter-in-law; Lilly Sharper, 244-9582 (H)

Sister Lee and the Gospel Inspirators, William P. White, 242-5709

J. Mathis Singers, William Jones

May 17, 1997

Linda Paulk, cane grinding

Pudding Creek Cane Syrup

PO Box 4580 Rte 2

Willacoochee, GA 31650

912-534-5310 (H)

Frank Harrell, the jelly and relish man of Nashville, referred me to Linda Paulk, whose syrup he sells when he goes to fairs and festivals. I called up Mrs. Paulk and made arrangements to visit her at her home. Over the phone she expressed interest in the history and tradition of cane making. She was a gracious interview, but I got the feeling perhaps a little impatient underneath with my lack of knowledge--I really hadn't had time to prep for this one. We spent about 2 1/2 hours, including a visit to the syrup house, an interview at her dining room table, and a visit to the cane field via her father-in-law's

house. Ines Paulk, her father-in-law, 86, would be a good interview in his own right about the history of cane making. He taught her the process and the art, and still has the remains of the old "sweep" used to grind cane with a mule in his side yard. The syrup house has since fallen down and is in ruins. There are also interesting barns on the property (for tobacco, both old and new styles) and a grape arbor. Linda told me he would be a good oral history interview on the turpentine industry in the area.

I noticed driving through Willacoochee that there is a peanut company (Morris??) and also a Spanish-language Protestant church. The Paulk farm (which raises cotton, peanuts, wheat, and produce on 2000 acres--a family farm) uses migrant labor. They have one man and his wife who live on a trailer on their property for about 9 months out of the year. In the winter they go back to Mexico. Migrant labor has been used for about 20 years, according to Linda. Her crew of about 6 for the syrup making is all migrant labor. The Paulks speak only a little Spanish, but they get by with sign language, she says. It would be interesting to interview the man and his wife at some point. Linda has also started a new business raising ferns. The greenhouses were up as I drove past.

Warren and Linda Paulks' home is about 1 and 1/2 miles off Hwy. 135 just north of Willacoochee. There is a fading sign at the dirt road where you turn off which says Pudding Creek Cane Syrup, named for the creek that runs at the edge of their property. The one-lane road is quite sandy initially, running along the edge of a field. At the T in the road there is a green road sign next to a utility pole which says "Paulk Rd." and a hand-made sign with an arrow labeled "syrup."

Linda Paulk is apparently unusual in that she is a woman making syrup, traditionally a man's role. She uses a new variety of cane bred especially for syrup making. We drove out to the fields--they plant 12-14 acres of cane a year. Harvest is in the fall, November and December, after the first frost. It is particularly associated with Thanksgiving time. She has had her business about 15 years. All the marketing is word of mouth.

Cane grinding equipment is no longer available commercially so one has to get a hand-me-down from an antique dealer, pawn shop, auction, etc. Linda's is electric, where the old-style way which she remembers from her youth was a mule and sweep providing the power. As a child her Grandfather Lott in Coffee County ground cane. She remembers the men and boys doing the cane grinding and the women preparing food and bottling. The children played and ate the candy of hardened syrup.

The key to making syrup is in the field, Ines Paulk told her. The other aspect to the skill is in skimming the impurities. Usually the man whose cane was being ground would supervise the skimming. Also the length of boiling time affects the color and taste of the cane. Each farmer was proud of his own syrup and believed it to be superior. Cane syrup was on the table as the primary sweetener. Now she works long hours during the season. She originally learned cane making as something to pass on to her son, who really isn't involved or interested. She also didn't want to see the tradition die.

She has several newspaper articles done on her, and a magazine article. I didn't get photocopies at this point.

She gave me the names of two other producers: Luther and Raymond Roland in Nashville, and Edward Day in Broxton (Coffee County). She confirmed that there is someone in Lake Park but didn't know the name.

Since Linda's own parents were not involved in cane grinding, she doesn't appear to have inherited recipes and use of cane through the maternal line, nor from her mother-in-law. Her uses of cane in dishes such as baked beans and pecan pie are her own. She has heard of syrup cake but has never made it.

This is the first year she hasn't had a kitchen garden--she says her back has gotten too bad, but the farm still has produce that they use for their own use.

May 17, Hoboken Sacred Harp Sing Hoboken, GA

My second trip to the Hoboken sing, where I was greeted warmly by David and Clarke Lee, David's parents, Mr. Hickox (whose son is a band major at VSU). Also saw Tollie and Ramona Lee, and was introduced to Silas Lee, Tollie's father, who was the song leader for many years and is now ill with prostate cancer. He hadn't been to a sing in some time, and many people were coming to speak with him, or to lead songs that he requested.

Lee Bradley from VSU was there, along with Moses Turner, who he brought as a guest. John Crowley was also there, and pointed out that there were 4 VSU faculty present. The crowd of about 70-75 singers included about 95% area natives, according to David, and he was delighted with the turnout and the fact that some people came who had come in years. I brought him and Tollie copies of the Library of Congress index of the Francis Harper recordings from the 1940s.

This time I placed my tape recorder between the tenors and altos facing the basses, as David suggested. I had the limiter on for the first half only. Kept a log of the songs and song leaders, and took both color and black and white photos. Amy Lee was again calling out song leaders and keeping records for the minutes. David again served as song leader, while Clarke circulated making sure people had books and were situated. Then he sat in with the trebles. Song leader choice again reflected young and old, guests and regulars. I noticed that some of the teenage girls sat in singing for the first half, but after break were out in the hall gossiping, etc. I never got out to the hallway where the drinks were at break, but rather talked to folks, esp. Rodney Carter, who is interested in the DAT recordings, and his parents. His mother is Tollie Lee's sister. Tollie has a sister-in-law, Bessie Lee, who works at Waycross College and VSU in the College of Ed. There is such a nice feel at these events, and once more I was taken with David Lee's sophisticated grasp of the dynamics of tradition and what he and Clarke are trying to do with the sings.

May 27, 1997 notes on sacred harp

Talked today by phone with Tollie Lee to get his parents' address:

Silas and Elvira Lee
Rte 2, Box 273
Waycross, GA 31501
912-283-2590

Silas Lee was the song leader who taught David and Clarke. Elvira Lee's grandfather and great-grandfather (check) were song leaders as well. In the process of chatting with Tollie the following information was obtained:

The weekend of services at Tollie's home church (Nathalene) they have a sacred harp sing the Saturday night before the first Sunday. These are small groups, which perform more in the old way, walking time. There is a building they have for the sing. I must plan to go before too long.

After my conversation with David and Clarke about not knowing secular songs and not listening to the radio, I think I had a mistaken impression about the degree of isolation from secular traditions. Certainly Francis Harper's recordings from the 1940s have dance tunes and ballads, so clearly there has long been influence and performance of secular traditions. Tollie said that David was probably raised in a more sheltered environment than he. His father, Silas, did not become involved with the church until his 40s. As a boy, Tollie went to picture shows and they listened to a little radio. He played harmonica for talent shows. His mother showed him how to blow Mary Had a Little Lamb and he took it from there. He recalls his father teaching him "One-Eyed Gopher" (he sang a few lines over the phone), version of which is on Harper's LC recordings. Tollie can also "holler." As a boy he went to Claude Hicox's barber shop in Hoboken. Claude, now deceased, was evidently a great old-time fiddler who played waltzes and for square dances. Currently, Tollie doesn't know any fiddlers, but he mentioned Whitmer Crews of Hoboken, a bluegrass guitar player who is "better than Chet Atkins." Crews has a bluegrass park/camp on his property which is used for a big gathering the second Sat. night in Sept. according to Tollie.

He mentioned that he read over the LC materials that I gave him already, and spoke about banding together to get the money to have a copy made. I said I would contact LC about cost. As Tollie said, the whole thing is probably no longer than two hours. "How long can a holler take?" Miss Edna (Roxie) Chesser, listed on the Harper recordings, is still living in St. George, GA, now in her 80s. She would be a contact to see if anyone locally has copies of the tapes. I said I would also contact Del Presley at Georgia Southern.

June 7, 1997, Voices of Harmony concert
New Jerusalem Holiness Church
701 Paine Avenue
Valdosta, GA 31601
293-0939

Attended the concert of Voices of Harmony this evening after initially making contact with Pat Sirmans, one of the four members, through Joe Rivers earlier this year. Rather than recording them at one of the various engagements (weddings, homecomings, other programs) I decided to wait until the concert to get a longer recording. This concert was postponed several times and moved at the last minute to the location at New Jerusalem. There were some organizational problems and illness which I think affected the size of the crowd and the performance. My husband came with me and we arrived at 6:30 to set up. Pat Sirmans was the only one there, along with her daughter Shebeyla Shepard. She had no key and the door was locked. The concert was to start at 7:00. Eventually Gail, one of the members of the New Jerusalem choir that was also singing on the program, showed up with a key. The building was unlocked a little before 7; the audience showed up around 7:30 to 7:45. There were problems with the sound system, and the program finally got underway about 8 p.m. One of the invited guests, Children of the King, a male 4-piece quartet from Quitman, got lost and didn't show up until 9:30. The program was extended to accommodate three selections by this group and ended around 10 p.m.

Pat told me that they had had 5 rehearsals for the concert and the entire membership from each participating group was never present for any one rehearsal. In addition, Voices of Harmony lead singer Wanda had laryngitis and didn't attend. Eric Tooley had a sore throat. A keyboard player who was to accompany never showed up. Most of the performances were thus a capella with a drummer, or with a sound track.

We sat in the second row with the mike set up at the edge of the center aisle about 5 feet or less from the singers. They were using mikes but I'm not sure this affected the recording given the placement of my equipment. At times the soloist sounds muffled as he or she passed my mike and went further down the aisle. The air conditioning was on producing a constant background hum audible on the tape.

Members of various groups participated in the program:

Frank Nelson, drummer

Voices of Harmony with special guest Minister Eric Tooley:

Pat Baker Sirmans

Chanel Baker

Willie Pearl Phillips

Eric Tooley

420 Griffin Ave.

Valdosta, GA 31601

Unity:

Bonita Knight

2908 Callaway Cir.

Valdosta, GA 31602

Angelic Voices
Shebeyla Shepard (Pat Sirmans' daughter)

New Jerusalem Choir No. 1
Sister Mary Moye, President
620 Monroe St.
Valdosta, GA 31601
242-5561
Gail Moye, soprano
Carolyn Newton, tenor
May Williams, alto
Mary Moye (manager and occasional vocalist)

Children of the King (Quitman)
201 W. Hill St.
Quitman, GA 31642
912-263-8042
Robby Christian, lead
Bobby Christian, lead
Andre Marshall, baritone
Rufus Dunlap, bass

The concert, scheduled for 7 p.m. actually started at 8 p.m. There were 30 in the audience, all black except for Dave and myself. The concert followed the form of a church service, with devotion, offertory, and benediction. The offertory went to defray the costs to the host church. With one exception, the groups performed together rather than as solos, duos, or by group. The drummer accompanied, and someone in the audience had a tambourine. A couple selections were performed to a recorded sound track. Various individuals took solos during the concert. Although some in the audience were standing and clapping, I didn't sense real electricity in the room until the Children of the King performed their short set. Pearl Phillips tried to get the audience going, and at one point seemed on the verge of being overcome by the Holy Spirit, but the evening was subdued for a Holiness church, I felt. The church is a small cinder block one story building on the south side, on the corner of Griffin and Paine.

June 17, 1997
notes on Waycross Annual Gospel Sing

Noticed a flyer in the window of Potter's House, the Christian bookstore at the Northside Winn Dixie Plaza. It mentioned the Waycross Shrine 41st Annual Gospel Sing, Sat. June 28, 1997, 7 pm. to 2 am. , Waycross Memorial Stadium, US Hwy 84 South, \$10 admission, proceeds to benefit Shriner's Children's Hospital. Giant Talent Search for Soloists and Groups 3 pm.. For info. on sing or talent search call 941-756-6942.

I was intrigued, since I had just read the music chapter in Jerrilyn McGregory's *Wiregrass Country* (U of Mississippi Press, 1997) and it mentioned this sing. I will be out of town on the 28th, but I called the number to find out more about this event. The number

connected me with Bill Bailey of Bradenton, FL, who is with FCC Ministries, an organization which promotes southern gospel concert events in the Southeast. FCC Ministries hooked up with the Shriner's in 1996 to book and promote the Waycross Shrine sing. Bailey informed me that none of the headliners listed on the poster were from South Georgia--all were national acts. The event is purely white gospel (which I suspected from the pictures on the poster). The audience is primarily from north Florida and south Georgia. The event is held outside in the stadium, and draws from 4-5000 people annually. This certainly sounds like the largest example of a widespread traditional event in the region, but because of its size and lack of local headliners, perhaps not the best focus for fieldwork at this point. The real interest would be in the talent search, for this is where local talent would be able to participate. Bailey gave me the name of a local contact for the event in Waycross: Ben Childers (Waycross Bank and Trust), 912-283-0001; Childers is the Gospel Sing Committee Chairman of the Shriners Club. The Waycross Shrine Club sponsors the Sing each year as a fund raiser for the Children's Hospital.

June 18, 1997

Zeal, performance at the American Legion Post Lounge at the corner of MLK and Lee Streets, Southside Valdosta

Joe Matchett

PO Box 786

Valdosta, GA 31601

h-912-247-4769

Attended a Wednesday night performance by Zeal, (currently) a 3-piece band that has been in existence since the 1970s. Present members are Joe Matchett (mngr., vocals, computerized synthesizer, drum machine, bass, sax), Archie Lewis (guitar and vocals), and Marie Walker (vocals, with group for 2 years). A lead singer had recently left since he had been "saved."

I was referred to Zeal by Pat Sirmans, of Voices of Harmony, who used to sing with Zeal. Both Pat and fellow VOH member Wanda Collins attended the gig with me. It was to start at 9 p.m. We arrived about 9:30 and the band was still setting up. Pat introduced me to Joe Matchett, leader of Zeal, to whom I had spoken by phone before the gig. Joe had preferred that I not record the live performance since there might be mistakes. Instead, he gave me two copies of two 45s that Zeal had cut in the 1970s. I suspect part of Joe's concern may have been that his lead singer had just recently left the band after "being saved." There was a female vocalist, Marie Walker, who was reasonably good, but nothing outstanding. Pat indicated that when she had sung with the group, things were "swinging" more. Joe Matchett played keyboard, sax, and did vocals on the more purely blues numbers. The guitar player also did lead vocals. For this gig Joe used a drum machine, although he indicated that he sometimes uses an actual drum kit for some gigs.

The band is well established, and has played the Valdosta Country Club as did VSU Homecoming last year. They do night clubs, country clubs, and convention work from

Florida, to MS, AL, GA, and SC. Joe now does the bookings himself, but formerly he had an agent that was successful in booking Zeal for the college and military circuit in the region. The Post Lounge gig is currently their only regular gig in Valdosta. Joe did not know of any other “blues” bands in town. He did describe Zeal as doing blues, but this really doesn’t strike me as a traditional ensemble, but rather a good band which plays popular music. Joe learned to play music in HS band (he played french horn) and decided to get into the rock scene. He doesn’t come out of a tradition of musicians nor does he seem linked to any local or regional tradition. His blues are learned from charts or the radio and he doesn’t know any local bluesmen.

The band had been described to me as a blues and R & B band, but in fact it was more of a good, general bar band that does Top 40 (example Whitney Houston), some blues and R & B classics, some more jazzy selections, and rock and roll.

I took some pictures and talked briefly with Joe at the first break, getting basic biographical information and exchanging business cards.

I copied some information from a board they had on the side of the floor with their sets outlined:

First set (predominantly for listening) (not a complete set list)

Every day you have your own special way, Archie Lewis, vocals

When a Man Loves a Woman, Archie Lewis, vocals

Three Times a Lady, Archie Lewis, vocals

blues set sung by Joe Matchett:

lyric “Since I met you baby, people have said I changed”

Some Kind of Wonderful

Give Me Fever

2nd set (more for dancing):

Killing Me softly, Marie Walker, vocals

Down Home Blues, “

Shoop (Whitney Houston), “

I’ll Always Love You (Whitney Houston), “

Return Man

Twisting

I wanna Be Rich

I’ll Never Behave

3rd set:talent show

I was one of two whites at the club on this particular night. When we arrived there were only a few tables full. The band was set up on the opposite end of the room from the bar, with a small dance floor in front. The space in-between was filled with tables and chairs. The band had lights set up, and there was a mirror on the wall behind them, both of which made photography difficult.

During the first set the band played more listening music, although they periodically encouraged people to dance. Joe said they would do more dancing music for the second set. Also, the female vocalist sang the first three songs. After a fairly blazing rendition of Down Home Blues, with the singer (Marie Walker) going out into the crowd and getting them worked up, people started dancing. By this time the room had filled. I was surprised to see so many people for a work night. Some people came to dance and be picked up, but it was a pretty relaxed atmosphere. I stayed through the end of the second set, to be home by midnight since I had to leave early the next morning for Tallahassee. The third set was an open mike talent show. The band had been badgering Pat to sing all night, but she said she didn't know the words to these songs any more. We met two former members of VOH at the club (women) both of whom were planning to sing.

June 26, 1997: interview with Elvira Lee and attended sing at Bayview Nursing Home (outside Nahunta)

Elvira Lee
Rt. 2, Box 273
Waycross, GA 31501
912-283-2590

Drove in the afternoon to visit Elvira Lee, recently widowed wife of Silas Lee. Silas had been the singing school leader in the Hoboken region before passing on the mantle to David and Clarke Lee. Elvira is the daughter of Martin E. Dowling and granddaughter of Lazarus Dowling, both singing school leaders in the area. Martin Dowling passed on the tradition to his son-in-law (Elvira's husband), Silas Lee. I originally had hoped to interview the Lee's together, and had the interview set up, but then Silas passed away. I checked with Tollie Lee (one of Elvira's 10 children) and David Lee, both of whom thought it would not be too soon after Silas' death to talk with her.

Although Mrs. Lee's address is Waycross, she lives in Schlatterville. I turned at the Schlatterville sign off Hwy. 82 and followed the directions I had been given to the Lee home. I continued about a mile and half onto a sandy track once the blacktop ended at Central Avenue. Once I passed through some woods, the land had a surprising number of homes on it, including Elvira's. She is in a cinder block, one story home surrounded by fig trees and a garden. The block home replaced a wood "cracker-style" house which burned. We sat in the living room and I tape-recorded my conversation with her. She will be 84 in September, and does not have a sharp memory for a lot of things, although the interview was useful. The publication *Snow White Sands* by Mrs. Howard Powell (South Georgia College, Douglas, 1975), given to me by both Tollie and David Lee, has a much more detailed description of the singing school and sings held by Martin Dowling than Elvira could provide. Elvira didn't know that her grandfather Lazarus, who died

when she was 6, was a song leader until she read it in the Dowling genealogy (Tollie also sent me a copy of the relevant pages here).

Like many couples associated with sacred harp that I have met, Elvira and Silas met at a sing. They were married in 1934. She gave me copies of the obituary and an article done on Silas and sacred harp in the local paper not long before his death (this is the article based on the video interview that David Lee and his father Johnny did with Uncle Silas and which David let me copy).

Many of her children, grandchildren, and other relatives still live in the area. The phone rang at least 4 times during the two and one-half hours of our visit with people checking on her. Since Silas's death, the children have been taking turns spending the night with her, so she is well cared for despite now living alone.

Elvira Lee has been a quilter and says all her daughters know how, although they are too busy to do it. She likes to make sour cream cake (I didn't get recipes) and fig preserves.

Other leads:

Adam Lee, Silas' cousin, a fiddler now in the nursing home

Blueberry Restaurant, off the beaten track in Hoboken, run by her nephew and evidently the local eatery.

She was using an interesting carved walking stick, which was made by her son, Ronnie Dale Lee (Central Avenue, Hoboken, 912-283-8931). The stick is made out of maple (perhaps a root?) and carved with various geometric designs. Ronnie is a "whittler" she told me. She showed me several other pieces he had made her, these out of tupelo: a bread board, bowl, and wood holder. They all look hand-made. I took photos and she called Ronnie Dale's wife to find out the kind of wood for me.

I left Mrs. Lee and had a quick BBQ sandwich at Frieda's Restaurant in Hoboken on Hwy 82 before heading to the Bayview Nursing Home for the sing at 7:30. There was a poster for a gospel sing in the restaurant window:

Gospel Sing

June 27, open air at Fleming Crews Farm on Mt. Calvary Church Rd. Featured Roy and Scarlett Jacobs (Hoboken) 458-2059; All Time Gospel Singers (Hoboken) 458-3648; Addie Wilder (Nahunta), 458-5024.

The Bayview Nursing Home is on Hwy. 82 just before Nahunta on the south side. The sing takes place monthly (something like 4th Thursday?), led by David and Clarke Lee. They arrived about 7:15 just as I was setting up. There was quite a thunderstorm and it may have affected the number of folks who came to sing. David and Clarke's families were the main singers (11 voices or so) at 7:30, but both numbers of residents and guests as well as singers from outside the nursing home swelled the numbers to 28 by mid-point. Kathy Lee (David's wife) and I were the only trebles, however, so I may be audible on the

tape recording I made. Some of the tunes were less familiar to people and there was some stumbling with notes. In particular, I was confused since the pitches being sung were usually so much lower than the actual notes on the page. The room was very live, with linoleum floors and one wall full of windows. The singers were set up in a square in the middle of the room, with residents, etc. filling in around them. A few residents sang, but most just listened. We sang for an hour, the usual length. David and Clarke switched leads in the middle (Clarke taking over for David) and no one walked time or stood in the center of the square as they do at the Hoboken School sing. They ended with #377, Parting friend, and then David said a benediction. He seemed to get emotional during the benediction.

Afterwards, he mentioned that his Aunt Mary's (in the home) father had been a song leader near Hicox (spelling) just south of Nahunta.

I also asked Clarke Lee, who is a carpenter by trade, about people who made wooden boats in the area. He said he only know one, his uncle Wilbur Clarke (for whom Clarke is named) who is in his early 70s and lives on the Central Ave. ext. in Hoboken. Clarke thought his number was 283-0902. Wilbur has not made boats recently, but he is still active doing other things. Clarke mentioned that his uncle offered to teach him to make the boats, but they've never made time. I mentioned the GA apprenticeship program in this regard.

Field Notes, Sept. 28, 1997

These notes pertain to week of Sept. 15 and Sept. 22.

Wednesday, Sept. 15, 1997

Nashville, GA

Planters Tobacco Warehouse

On Sept. 15 I returned to Planter's Warehouse for another recording session of a tobacco sale for the radio series. I arrived around 8 a.m. at the new warehouse complex just outside of town on the Tifton Highway. As I drove up a group of young migrant men who appeared Hispanic were walking over to the warehouse. They work for the crew contracted to load the sheets onto the appropriate trucks after the sale. As I arrived the government graders were at work and I took a few pictures of them, as well as a shot of the migrants relaxed on top of the sheets of tobacco. I chatted with a couple farmers who were there for the sale before it began. They discussed the changing nature of curing tobacco and confirmed that there had never been shade tobacco in this region. There was one female buyer in the group--unusual, I understand, but it does occur. Last year there was a woman grader, but this business does seem to be a male bastion. Robin Muschamp, the ticket marker and sister of partner LE Watson is evidently unusual; most ticket markers, like auctioneers, are male. I had hoped to get a quick interview with the female buyer, but I ran out of time.

The sale lasted until about 11:00 and it grew quite warm in the warehouse. The buyer from Philip Morris had a soaked shirt which shows up in several of the photos. As before, Robert E. Deatherage was a gentlemanly source of information and spoke, among other things, about his family's association with this region since the 1920s, starting with the market in Adel. There has been a North Carolina/Georgia link in tobacco here for some time. Robert E. as he is called, also introduced me to the senior Mr. Watson, Lewis E, who observes the sale from his pick up truck parked at one of the warehouse entrances. Health prevents him from walking, but he has a special rig on his truck so he can drive. I did a rather length interview with him about the start of the warehouse and the changing nature of tobacco farming. Mr. Watson spans the era of mules to the present day. Since he talked about the older curing methods in the stick barns I have been aware of the large numbers of abandoned stick tobacco barns all over south Georgia. Watson both farmed and worked in/owned a warehouse. His son LE has taken over his share of the business since his illness. One daughter is a bookkeeper; another daughter, Robin, is the ticket marker, a skill he got her involved with. She apprenticed with a ticket marker from NC; there are schools for both auctioneers and ticket markers now, but neither auctioneer Jimmy Parker nor Robin as ticket marker learned in a formal school, but rather mentored into the trade.

The senior Mr. Watson intimated that migrant labor would not have the skill to run the machine harvester; this is something his son LE does. I wonder if that is his prejudice or if this is the case more widely?

A number of farmers were hanging out during the sale; evidently they can refuse to accept the bid if they aren't happy with it. This was the tail end of the season and good tobacco from the top of the stalk was being auctioned. Note: they don't call it auction but rather "tobacco sale." The interviews give a good deal of information about the structure of the sale. I talked with Deatherage, Robin, Lewis Watson, and briefly with a couple of the buyers, (the one from Philip Morris and a local fellow from Blackshear who buys for Dimon). I was told that the Philip Morris buyer was buying 50% of the tobacco on this day because his company was a bigger producer.

I tried not to get into the tobacco lawsuits issue, but the prevailing sentiment here seems to be that tobacco is a choice and smokers should be allowed that choice. Mr. Deatherage, at least, didn't see any immanent threat to the tobacco business.

Thought that it might be interesting to include some oral history of shade tobacco in the finished radio piece if I can find a good source. This would be from extreme sw. Georgia near Amsterdam, s. of Cairo (Decatur and Grady counties).

Sept. 17, 1997

Frank Harrell
Nashville, GA

Stopped by to photograph Frank Harrell making mayhaw jelly from his frozen juice after the sale. He had put up blackberry already that morning. I arrived around 11:30. He was making the mayhaw in the little kitchen shop in the back of his house. He also had a big

jar of scuppernong wine working, and had put up some peppers. He grows a number of the peppers in his garden, and also has both domestic and wild mayhaw. The domestic has a very red berry which he uses to deepen the color of his jelly. Some producers use a dye, but not Harrell. He commented while heating the juice that he adds pectin now, which his mother did not do. They simply boiled the juice all day. I recorded him briefly talking about the process of making the jelly and photographed extensively. When I was there in May I documented him making the mayhaw juice. My color slides of that visit were lost when my camera was stolen.

Harrell is very knowledgeable about the region and interested in my project. He drove me out to the old John Henry Gaskin farm north off the Willacoochee highway to where his son Carl, a contract fence builder, is renting the old home place. Harrell gets a lot of his fruit from this farm: blueberries, grapes, pears, etc. The farm is huge in terms of acreage and the fruit all overgrown, but still producing. The farm buildings are a time capsule: at the entrance to the home place is the company store building which evidently still has all the ledgers in it from the share cropping era. One of the old wooden river boats is laying around, and it was this that Harrell particularly took me to see since I had been asking him about makers. There is a commercial boat company in Nashville (Chaparral spelling?) and one of the employees, Ron Stone, is trying to copy the old boat. Someone had scratched the word "Titanic" in chalk on the stern of his boat in progress! Stone and some buddies evidently often go down to a cabin behind the farm house and cook fish, venison, etc. Most of the farm outbuildings are intact, if dilapidated, and there were several water or feeding troughs hewn out of whole logs.

We discussed possible wooden fishing boat makers: may try Betty's Bait Shop on the Valdosta Hwy across from Ford for leads. Harrell later called me with the name of Laster Harper in Lakeland: 912-482-2715.

Sept. 15, Route 76 from Nashville, through Adel, to Barney and Route 122 from Barney to Thomasville

Noticed a couple interesting leads along this road:

Peanut City, population 2, boiled peanut roadside stand, between Nashville and Adel

1470 am gospel music station located along this same stretch of highway

Barney: along with Morven a peach center; noticed the Burton Brooks peach orchard buildings at the intersection of 76 and 122.

Roi Westbury, cane maker, carver, has no phone, but I was told by some men at the Pavo drugstore that he lives in an old sharecropper cottage just off the intersection of 122 and the Quitman/Moultrie Highway (Rte. 333) between Barney and Pavo, closer to Barney. They drew me a map. Didn't have time to stop since I was trying to make it to the State Farmers Market in Thomasville before closing.

Lewis Produce, State Farmers Market in Thomasville, had just got a fresh batch of split oak baskets from Bessie Bell of Pelham (912-294-1050). I was told it is best to reach her in the evenings. She learned from her late husband and makes these seasonally, when not involved in agricultural work. Photographed the baskets: a nice sampling of sizes and about a dozen or more baskets. Also bought one of the smaller ones for \$16.95. They had been dropped off the end of the previous week. The handles are attached with thumb tacks and the splints are "hairy" unlike Alphonso Jennings' baskets at the Florida Folk Festival, but they are all I have seen thus far in Georgia. The other produce vendor there expressed interest over the phone for handmade baskets and told me to tell him if I discovered any.

The farmers market carried Ziegler's Honey (Stockton, GA) and jellies and jams made by TL Wood Country Products, Rt. 2, Box 212, Thomasville, GA 31792, 912-226-0663. I noticed mayhaw, blackberry, and fig preserves.

Sept. 19, 1997
 Calvin and Thelma Eunice
 813 Eads St.
 Waycross, GA 31501
 912-283-7349

Arrived at the Eunice home an hour later than I'd planned, about noon, to photograph Calvin Eunice's wooden fishing boat for the NEA grant application. I had been referred to Eunice by Wilbur Clarke of Hoboken, Clarke Lee's uncle. Wilbur Clarke had made a boat in the past but it had rotted. He told me Eunice had one in his garage. Mr. Eunice is in his 80s (85 next month) and I was a bit embarrassed as he removed several lawn mowers and other paraphernalia from his garage before hauling out the 14' boat on its boat hitch (in the heat of the day, no less). He was proud to show off his boat, however, which he had made about 38 years ago with his son Charles (his youngest), using all hand tools. It was in great shape. The boat seems typical of the wooden fishing boats of this area I have seen, with a flat bottom and a blunted bow and square stern, shallow gunnels (12-14"). Thus far I have heard no special name for them, and have heard of a lot of people who *used to* make them, rather than those who do so now. The photos of the cypress boats in the *Okefenokee Album* show a pointed bow, perhaps to better go through weeds, etc. Eunice's boat is made of 3/8" marine plywood on the bottom and 1/4" on the sides, with pine ribs. An earlier boat had been made of barn boards which he built with his brother when living in the country outside Waycross. This earlier boat was depression-era, used some re-used nails, and was hand-planed. The boat I photographed was based on a model made by the late Waycross area builder, Clarence McIntosh. McIntosh had a sign shop in town but also built several boats. Eunice tapered the front and back of his boat so that it didn't rise up so much in the front when in the water and could be handled more easily by a single paddler. Eunice mentioned another maker in the area who lived between Waycross and Mainer--Alvin Voigt. He was unsure if Voigt was still living or not.

Due to their age, the Eunices are no longer fishing, but used to take the boat on the nearby Satilla River to catch redbreast (a kind of perch), brim, jackfish, and a variety of catfish

(mud, channel, black). He mentioned that fish caught in the swamp often have a different taste. They would also fish salt water in the mouth of the St. John's River for speckled trout and spot-tailed bass. Mr. Eunice's father taught all his kids to dress fish at an early age. As a boy, Calvin caught little fish in "mud holes" and his mother fried them on her wood stove.

Eunice, a retired barber, was very talkative, and proudly showed me all the remodeling he had done on their home. Mrs. Thelma Eunice is an accomplished crocheter. I photographed a snowflake tablecloth, a popcorn stitch bedcover, and a mile-a-minute pink and lavender afghan. She learned from her mother and has expanded using ideas and patterns from magazines. Mrs. Eunice is also an accomplished traditional cook, putting up food, among them fig pickles. Her health is increasing fragile, however. They gave me some pecans from their tree as I left.

Sept. 19, 1997

Ronnie Dale Lee
Rt. 2, Box 267M
Waycross, GA 31503
912-283-8931

Ronnie Dale Lee is the youngest? brother of Tollie Lee, son of Elvira and the late Silas Lee. I went to photograph his tupelo gum bread trays, having first seen his carving at his mother's last June. Ronnie Dale is a conductor on a local CSX freight train and lives quite near his mother on Central Ave. in Hoboken. He had made about four of the bread trays and given them to his wife. She uses the largest to serve fish. As a boy, as his mother said, he had always been a "whittler," making little toy canoes out of tupelo gum root. The tupelo gum is a very soft wood, easy to work with. He just started trying to make the bread trays two years ago, based on memories of the old bread trays which his daddy said had been used to pull the flour to make biscuits. Tupelo gum is not the traditional wood for these implements (can't remember now what is). His trays are thicker and heavier than the old ones were. Tupelo grows right in the water and flowers in the spring. He cuts a block of wood with a chain saw, finishes it off with a hand rasp and sandpaper. He gave them away to his mother and sisters for gifts, but hasn't done much since. they are time consuming and his wife, Adrian, evidently doesn't approve of how much time he spent on them.

I asked them about the "Turkey Shoot" sign at the turn-off to their house. This is a form of gambling in effect, where men come and pay in a fee into a pot, something like bingo, and then shoot at a target. Whoever gets closest to the bulls-eye wins the kitty. At one time they must have shot for turkeys, esp. around Thanksgiving. It is a common activity in area.

Adrian Lee is related to the Chesser family and mentioned the Chesser Homestead Open House Oct. 11. She gave me the name of a cousin in Folkston to call, Donald Renshaw, 912-496-2444. Another cousin in Folkston is Clifford Chesser. Adrian's mother is the baby pictured with the Chesser family on their porch in the Okefenokee Album (didn't get

her mother's name). Edna Roxie is her mother's aunt. Adrian occasionally goes to the Chesser family reunions.

Ronnie Dale told me that he thought somewhere in this region was the last turpentine being done in the US. He had seen some tapping on the trees on either side of US 1 going south out of Waycross toward Folkston. I later discovered that this is being done by a Chesser in-law, Alton Carter at Racepond (912-496-7756), who is the father-in-law of Sheila Carter, Bernice Roddenberry's daughter who works at the Pine Village Restaurant in Folkston. Bernice is the daughter of the late Harry Chesser.

Sept. 19, 1997

GM Zeigler Jr
Stockton, Ga
Zeigler's Quality Honey
912-244-4470

Stopped following the hand-lettered signs in Stockton on HWY 84 for Zeigler's Honey. The business is just a block or so off the highway. I bought some gallberry honey and talked briefly to GM Zeigler, exchanging cards and taken a few photos. Gallberry is a native plant to the wiregrass, according to Zeigler, and is the specialty honey of this region. There is a little tupelo, generally mixed with the gallberry; most tupelo is in the FL panhandle. The Zeigler business started in the mid-30s and is completely a family operation. They have good distribution, selling to Saudi Arabia, Cracker Barrel restaurants, and I think he mentioned a major supermarket chain. Would make an interesting interview and radio feature.

Sept. 29, 1997

Have been hearing various references to Edna Roxie (Chesser), widow of LeRoy Crawford, who is pushing 90, pictured in Okefenokee Album, and lived on the edge of the swamp with no electricity until the early 70s. She now lives in St. George and would be a great interview "if she decides she likes me." Phone 912-843-2215. Her niece, Bernice Roddenberry, was referred to me by Del Presley at Georgia Southern. Bernice and daughters still sing sacred harp. Various people (Tollie Lee, Adrian Lee) had urged me to look into the Okefenokee Days in Folkston, 2nd Sat. in Oct., especially the doings at the Chesser Homestead. I had some information sent and today got ahold of Judy Drury, one of Bernice Roddenberry's seven daughters, who works for Maggie O'Connell, the Public Use Specialist at the Okefenokee national Wildlife Refuge (912-496-7366, ext. 232, Rt. 2, Box 3330, Folkston, GA, 31537.)

Judy was very helpful. She confirmed that her mama and the seven daughters sing 4-note singing at their church (Philadelphia Freewill Baptist ((the family was formerly hardshell Baptist)), at the Feb. Elderhostel in White Springs at Steven Foster State Park; at an Okefenokee festival in Atlanta next month, and yearly at the festival at the Chesser Homestead. Her mother Bernice is the key contact (h-912-496-2634). Bernice occasionally quilts still, and the family occasionally makes palmetto brooms other than at the festival. She mentioned placemats, hats, and fans from palmetto, and that her great

aunt Edna Roxie weaves a kind of Japanese lantern. Another great aunt, Vannie?? makes a snake (?). She said her brother, Jack, can holler as good as Uncle Tom (Chesser, recorded by Francis Harper in 1944). The family does a lot of memory lore at this event, but seem a rich source of traditional culture, and evidently have been extensively documented by the media as well as a few folklorists like Harper and Del Presley. Presley had never talked to Edna Roxie, however. There is a film on them done some years ago that I need to ask about. They seemed interested in the radio series. I am arranging a special use permit from the National Wildlife Refuge to document on Oct. 11.

Oct. 6, 1997

Chesser's Homestead
palmetto broom making
Bernice Roddenberry
Nell Snowden
Judy Drury
Debbie Todd
Rebecca Crews

After calling back Judy Drury last Thurs., I arrived about 1:25 p.m. at the Chesser Homestead in the Okefenokee Natl. Wildlife Refuge (Suwanee Canal Unit, east of Folkston) to document palmetto broom making. When I arrived, Bernice Roddenberry, Rebecca (her granddaughter), and Nell Snowden (a niece?) were sitting inside at a table. They had no clue I was coming and it was awkward at first, introducing myself and why I was there. Nobody said much until Debbie arrived with her grandson, who she put down in one of the bedrooms on a quilted bed. Debbie was more talkative and the situation was eased as I followed Debbie and Rebecca, the latter pulling a cart, out on the walking trail to cut palmettos. The two, especially Debbie, joked about snakes and bears. Debbie and Rebecca each had a pair of hedge clippers and seemed loathe to get too far off the trail. Debbie always beat the brush around a clump of palmetto to check for rattlesnakes. They had a hard time finding suitable palmetto: tall for the big brooms (which require 10 palmetto per broom), not brown or disfigured, with a sturdy stalk. They wanted palmetto that looked "pretty." Debbie said this was the wrong time to cut palmetto--had to be in a full moon or it didn't look right. Judy latter said it had to be in a growing moon (which this is) or the fronds would droop, and that is why they did it at this time--it was in a growing moon. I suspect Judy had the right version--she apparently has made more of the brooms with her mother than the other sisters. I noticed as we walked down the path that Debbie was humming one of the tunes from the Harper tapes: I need to listen to it again to get the title, but it has a chorus of "marry me, marry me, etc." I asked her if she was doing that just for my benefit (as a joke) and she said, no, that she'd learned it from her mama. I wonder if they have learned it to sing for the open house? Bernice said something later--which I may have on tape--about learning it off the tapes. I wonder if I heard that right? Judy said they tried to learn the Little Mohee, too, but it is too many verses to remember.

At one point we went off the trail and Debbie spied an old piece of board. She fingered it and said, "I bet my granddaddy put that there." She speculated that it might be wood attached to a tree during turpentineing. At one point, Debbie also noticed and pointed out

turkey tracks, and a creek where her mother had come to swim as a girl. Then came the really interesting part--and I regretted only having my camera, not my tape recorder, out on the path. Judy "hollered" to Debbie and she hollered back. They both said that they have tried and can't "sing" the holler the way their brother Jack does, someone who sounds just like their Uncle Tom Chesser on the Harper recording, they say. But I was intrigued that they still holler, and that I had heard women holler (since Harper recorded only men). Upon questioning they said they do it to let each other know where they are in the woods, and if they are coming. I ran back and got my tape recorder, hoping it would happen again spontaneously, and since it didn't, I asked Judy if she wouldn't mind hollering again. She described hollering somewhat like it is done in Okefenokee Album, causing me to wonder if the book had influence, or rather, if Harper and Del Presley had simply captured so well the way people feel about it that the words were similar. Especially hollering for the sheer joy of it.

The really experienced broom makers were Judy and her mother. The Process should be documented on the tape, first as various people were making a broom, and then as Judy explained the process for the benefit of my tape. She is the talker of the group, at least she talked easily without really knowing me. She is also the park employee of the group. Some of the others (Bernice, for example) volunteer. A bunch of 10 palmettos are gathered for a tall broom; 5 for a small. The bottom fronds are cut out so it will be easier to gather. The sharp edges are taken off the palmetto stem with a knife. Then the stick is tied together with cloth strips by cutting a slit in a palmetto stem, pulling the strip through and tying the strips at three evenly spaced points down the "handle." The last tie is tied, and then a loop made to hang the broom from. The slits should not be cut in the same stem, but rather in three different stems. The bottom is cut off with a big knife, finishing off the handle. The palmetto fronds are divided in thirds and tied in bunches with one long cloth strip. Then the individual leaves are shredded with a fork and the bottom of the broom itself cut off with a knife so that it is even. The brooms always are to be stored hanging broom down, not touching the floor.

Bernice learned from her aunts Mattie and Vannie. Evidently the brooms were actively used in Bernice's mother's day, but Bernice and others in the area still have them in their homes, now more for decorative, nostalgic purposes, perhaps hanging on the wall. The family makes them each year for the open house or the "festival" as they call it, and occasionally if someone asks them for one. Debbie said that people use the "bud" of the palmetto to make a Christmas ornament. Judy said that her aunt (Vannie?) knows how to weave a palmetto snake as a toy. The broom making skill has been passed on to the younger generation. Rebecca, probably in her 20s, was there today. Judy said she's taught her three kids.

Nell and I worked on one of the large brooms, which they then gave to me. Nell and Bernice also played around at making whistles out of palmetto. They gave me one to try and we all tried to make a sound.

They spoke some of notebook singing. They were practicing yesterday for the festival. Bernice said that three of her daughters have a trio and harmonize the three parts (no bass, of course). It sounded like perhaps only Bernice knows how to sing the solmization

syllables. She has them memorized for certain songs. They may use accompaniment. I know they have left the Sardis PB church and now attend the Philadelphia Freewill Baptist church (located just down the road from Sardis). This church may allow instruments--I'll need to ask.

Bernice had evidently quilted various quilts in the homestead at the open houses, which have been going on since ca. 1977-78. She has a quilt on a frame made from flower sacks, quilted in a fan pattern like she remembered her grandmother doing. The frame and quilt in progress is hung from the ceiling of the front porch. On Saturday there won't be room to have it hanging down so whoever is working with her will evidently have a hand-held frame.

Nell was stacking the wood so it would dry for the wood stove cooking they will do Sat. I'll have to ask again, but other than the old fashioned cooking method, I'm not sure the recipes are different from what they may make today.

Bernice had a magazine, which is for sale from the Ga. Wildlife Commission (?) and also at the visitor's center, about the Okefenokee, and includes an article on her. I asked about any films on them--who had mentioned this??--and they said the lumber co. (the cypress co. of the 1930s) had movies that had some Chessers in it, but they didn't know of anything recent. Judy mentioned Chris Trowell, ret. from Social Science Dept. at S. Georgia College, Douglas, who "Knows just about everything there is to know about the Okefenokee." Need to try to meet him.

I certainly got the feeling that this was a family still very steeped in local and family folkways. All of Bernice's children except one live in Charlton Co. within seven miles of where they grew up. I have heard mention of 7 daughters and one brother--Jack. Don't know total number of siblings. Just in this brief time I was struck by awareness of natural world (jokes about bears, consciousness of snakes and the wasps which hang out on the palmetto fronds; spiders in the path, the turkey prints), planting by the signs, hollering, singing the ballad--much of what I have been reading the last couple days in the Okefenokee Album is here in some form, despite modernization and the passage of time. Here is a family interested in preserving its past, its heritage. I also realized that, with the exception of some of the songs, and a few cures, much of Harper's information seemed gleaned from men. Perhaps my contribution can be to look at the women's voices. Clearly, there is a lot more in his (Harper's) papers than is represented in Okefenokee Album. I need to question Del presley more about this. Harper's journal mentions movies of them singing, for example. The Harper Papers are at the U. of Kansas, Lawrence. Johnny Lee told me he has a book on the history of the Okefenokee with pictures of Harper, etc. Need to check into this more.

They are making brooms to sell at the festival Sat. Judy and Bernice made most of them. Rebecca and Debbie left about an hour or more before they rest. As I left about 4:45 they were getting ready to go. I think they had made maybe a half dozen to 8 brooms. Later in the afternoon, they were joined by a male park employee in a wheelchair who helped Judy make a few brooms. You need two people, especially when tying the strips.

Oct. 11, 1997

Chesser Island Homestead Open House

The open house was scheduled from 12-4. I arrived at the visitor center about 10:30, picked up my special use permit and bought various publications on the history and lore of the Okefenokee, including the recent Okefenokee Swamp magazine which has the article on Bernice Roddenberry. When I arrived at the homestead Bernice Roddenberry was already sitting at the quilt on the front porch with volunteer Claudia Burkhardt. It was Burkhardt's quilt that was on the frame: something special with a zoo theme for next weekend's Okefenokee festival at the Atlanta Zoo, where this hole event is to be restaged. Evidently there is an Okefenokee habitat section at the zoo. I tried to get an interview with Bernice as she sat at the quilt, asking her about her memories of this place. She has more memories of her grandfather's place (Allan or Harry, I need to check) which was the other side of the parking lot. At Tom and Iva Chesser's (this homestead) she remembers hog butchering and syrup making. Evidently Tom Chesser's syrup was legendary. The recording quality for broadcast won't be great on these brief comments, since various people were already coming up the steps and greeting her. In many ways this event seems to be an "old home" day for many local residents, as they come and greet one another and reminisce about times past when their daddy or grandmother used to do so and so. There were also just general visitors to the swamp from all over. I believe at the end of the day one of the rangers came in and told Judy Drury that they'd had over 11,000 people come through the gate. This event also coincided with Okefenokee Days in nearby Folkston. There was a 13-mile bike ride which started at the entrance to the Refuge in association with the festival: when I drove in there were several bikes on the road. Also, on this day Saxby Chambliss had organized a congressional visit to the swamp. Supposedly it had nothing to do with the Dupont mine issue, but I did notice an anti Dupont banner at the bike check-in area across from the Refuge entrance.

The event is organized by someone on the refuge staff, but members of the Chesser family have taken part in this open house since the homestead became part of the refuge in 1977 (check date). I spoke to Michael Thompson, a grandson of Tom and Iva (some folks pronounced it Ivy), who lives in Orange Park and has come up to help with the wood stove cooking since the beginning. He remembers that his grandmother was still living when the homestead opened, and was pleased that it was being restored and used in this way. She cooked in the early period and served as a hostess, taking visitors through and greeting.

I tried to focus my fw. with the radio program in mind, and with an attempt to focus on activities done by long-time swamper families. Thus, I didn't record the bluegrass group, which really kept up the entertainment throughout the day. The emcee, banjo player was a refuge employee, and he periodically invited old-timers up to the mike as part of their sets or for breaks. Sheila Carter, one of the Roddenberry daughters, was making lye soap for the second season, something she had learned by talking to her great aunt Edna Roxie. I didn't focus on this since it was more of a memory demonstration. Folks were making boiled peanuts in the syrup boilers. I didn't look in on the blacksmith. Bee keeper Ed Nash is a native to the area, but upon brief conversation I discovered that bee keeping is more of a hobby, so I decided that I would follow up on the Zeiglers in Stockton if I did

beekeeping. Nash did tell me that gallberry blooms in April (the main kind of local honey).

There was a turpentine exhibit by Robert Jones, but I heard him tell someone else that he hadn't done much turpentine, so I decided to forego talking with him and focus instead on Alton Carter, whose chipped trees are visible between Waycross and Racepoint on US 1. Carter is Sheila Roddenberry Carter's father-in-law. We were introduced, and spoke for about 20 minutes or so. Carter has been turpentine for 70 years (he is 80). He's also farmed and logged, and still has quite a garden. According to Sheila, who had dipped turpentine for him at one time, all his crew is elderly black men from age 60-80. She said the one remaining still at Baxley (check my notes) is supposed to close next year. Alton Carter I thought said they were cutting back, not closing, so I need to check. The issue is competition from China. Currently they mix gum from GA and China--GA's is better grade, very clean and golden in color. But evidently they can't compete with the Chinese market. Alton Carter said the season is winding down and won't start up again until April, but the down time would be a good time to do interviews. He has some workers who still remember the talley chants--and this would make good audio for radio. Alton Carter is very involved in issues surrounding swamp ecology and preservation of the water. Much of the water is being drained out, and lack of regular fires is reducing the amount of open water. He evidently is pro-Dupont but is very active in consultations and meetings with officials, feeling that the folks who have grown up in this environment need to be consulted--having a lot of accumulated knowledge and wisdom. We exchanged cards.

While talking to Alton Carter I missed the storytelling by Zelton Conner, another life-long resident, who is evidently something of a professional storyteller now, giving presentations especially at Masonic lodge meetings and conventions. He told me a lot of his stories he makes up; I would be curious to hear him. Certainly, he would be less shy about talking if I could get him started. He tends to go to lodge meetings every Tuesday night, and is telling some of his stories at the state convention in Macon this week.

Alton Dinkins was pulled up to the mike when I happened to be passing by and I recorded the few stories he told--more about the Chessers during Civil War times, etc. He is another life-long resident, evidently, and was demonstrating wood duck carving. Fine work which he took up about 20 years ago. He does not do working decoys, however, so I took a few pictures but did not pursue at this time.

Judy and Debbie introduced me to their brother Jack, b. 1941, who I persuaded to holler for the tape recorder. We went back along the split rail fence and he said that He remembered when the scrub beyond the fence was a corn field. He said he still hollers when he's out fishing at night, to let others know where he is. He said it sounds better at night: something about the moisture in the air. He has listened to the tape of Uncle Tom Chesser hollering, but says he can't do it the way he does (this despite the fact that his sisters say he sounds just like Uncle Tom). Hollering was not something he learned from the tape however; but he has tried to copy what Uncle Tom does on the tape. They fish with lights--he would be a good person to talk with more about this. I asked him about making boats, and it turns out he has made one, and is currently making another one:

pole boats with the pointed bows made out of cypress with pine ribs. He now used a motor instead of the pole.

Met also Edna Roxie Chesser Renshaw Crawford--a spry 89 going on 90, who was there with three of her daughters. I introduced myself and arranged to call her at some point.

Spent quite a bit of time in the kitchen with the wood stove cooks. Nell Snowden seemed to be presiding, with Michael Thompson as her chief helper. A separate group of women were making buttermilk biscuits. They went through a 50 lb. bag of flour. The food is available for sampling by the visitors and there was a big crowd. The menu evidently was developed to show the kinds of things people would have made, and also have things that worked more as finger food: fried bacon, ham, sausage, and sweet potatoes: beef vegetable soup (premade on Thursday and heated and thinned for serving today); plus the biscuits. The stove was hot and the cooks worked long and hard. Michael Thompson enters barbeque competitions as a hobby and was an army brat; his mother was Gertie Chesser (check). They spent summer vacations at this farm. Nell Snowden is also related some how (need to check tape). She is evidently quite an acknowledged cook. She had brought some home-made fig filled cookies, and there was talk of her lemon pie, squash pie, sweet potato pie, and pecan pie. Iva Chesser made a terrific pound cake. Mike Thompson showed me the pictures of his greatgrand parents who built the homestead (Sam and Sarah??) and standing by the picture pointed out that people say he looks like his great grandfather. There certainly is a resemblance. Mike was also overseeing the meat smoking, although it was more for show. The meat was already smoked and hanging--he just had started a pecan wood fire inside for effect.

I recorded Bernice and her seven daughters singing 4-note hymns from the Cooper rev. Sacred Harp. They sing the alto, tenor, and treble parts (the latter they call soprano). They don't beat time. I recorded the practice and their singing for 15 minutes or so from the front steps of the homestead. They seem to lack a strong leader to give them pitches, but once they get going they are fine. Bernice kept telling them they were singing too fast. Bernice herself was not raised "hardshell" as they say, but they did go to the yearly anniversary at Sardis Church. Their church, Philadelphia Freewill Baptist, is located just down the road and does allow guitar and piano. The three eldest daughters sing a trio in church. I overheard Bernice talking to a man on the front porch just as I was getting ready to leave who commented on hearing the hardshell style of singing amazing grace; how they would say the words and then sing, but you couldn't recognize the tune. He must have been describing lining out. I didn't hear the influence of Primitive Baptist hymn singing so much in their singing, which would make sense, but I haven't heard them sing much. Interesting about Bernice telling them to slow down, though, since that is one of the characteristics of the style of sacred harp around the swamp. David Lee told me this week that they asked him to go down to Fargo once to help them out with one of their performances. I recorded Bernice and Judy talking some about sacred harp in their family.

Nov. 20, 1997

St. George, GA

Had my second interview with Roxie Crawford today. Arrived late, at 11:45, for an 11:00 appt. She was just giving me a note that she was on her way to the monthly senior lunch at the Baptist Church down the street. We ended up going together. Both her daughters who live locally were there--Ida and Nina. Nina sat across from us. Mrs. Crawford remarked that she was the oldest senior there. when I was introduced as someone doing history of the swamp (a writer), several people said no one would know more than Mrs. Crawford. The lunch was very nice, with a couple dozen seniors in attendance, and a potluck type meal including Nina's homemade persimmon cake. I also noticed sweet potato cookies. Chicken and noodles, peas, corn, mashed potatoes, a beef stew with biscuit dough on top, macaroni and cheese, corn biscuits (with corn in them), sweeto or unsweet tea, various desserts, beans, some kind of greens. There were Thanksgiving motif decorations on the table. After lunch two hymns were sung with song sheets--sort of contemporary sounding tunes from--evidently, the Missionary Baptist hymnal there. The seniors were asked to say what they were thankful for and I felt touched by their comments.

Some interesting comments over lunch. Nina's childhood friend (name?) spoke of the Muletail fire in the 1950s, started by her daddy's mule. The men had man a fire in a wagon to which the mule was hitched. The mule evidently spooked, and dragged the fire through the swamp, also setting her tail on fire. The mule was nursed back to health only to be kicked to death by a horse not long afterward. Nina said fires were named after the man that discovered them. She and her mother have both been up in fire towers spotting: she said people here know the woods so well that you don't have to mention section or anything, just what creek it's near. I raised the topic of the Dupont mine. Nina and Roxie were against it. Nina's friend and Nina were part of a HS graduating class of 7--all girls. Nina's friend mentioned hopping the pasenger train to Jacksonville to go the picture show when she was young. The train didn't stop automatically--you had to hail it. I asked about fiddlers in the area and square dances. Nina had mentioned entertainments when she was growing up; square dances (sounded like house parties), cane grinding, fodder pulling, candy pulling. The only fiddler the three of them had heard of lately (ayear ago) was at a barn dance over in Moniac. Near Eddy's (a local designation for a place). Didn't know whose barn or name of fiddler. I asked Nina about Thanksgiving dinner. Roxie said they usually had a turkey for thanksgiving or Christmas, but it didn't sound like a turkey was essential. There were wild turkeys, but the family raised turkeys.

Back at Mrs. Crawford's. I had called in the morning to say I was running behind, and didn't catch her in. She had been out digging in her garden. We didn't actually get started with the tape recording until around 1:40 or so. I announced the tape and marked the tapes as the 19th, but it is the 20th. I tried to get the things her kids had wanted on tape: the alphabet song and rhyme learned from her mother, and some riddles which her mother said had been used by slaves to stump their masters into giving them freedom (is the freedom part right? I know the learned by slaves is). Mrs. Crawford didn't know how her mother learned these--her people didn't have slaves, nor did Chessers. Interactions

between races didn't seem marked by prejudice according to Mrs. Crawford. There was one old black couple that lived 4 miles from her girlhood home: Uncle Mose and Aunt Grace--called Uncle and Aunt in deference to their age. Of course, there is the song "Little Nigger Waiter" that is on Harper tapes and some of those stories reflect condenscending attitudes, but Roxie Chesser Crawford didn't reflect this in any of her conversation with me. The Alphabet materials was wonderfully poetic (in the case of the song) and humorous in the case of the rhyme. Also, a fun counting rhyme. She again, at the end, recited a number of riddles that sounded like their were about something sexual, but in the twist of the riddle, the answers were benign. she wouldn't put those on tape. He son has given her a book in which to write them, but she remarked she didn't want that to be her legacy to her children.

Interesting that the photo of the family sitting on the porch singing from a notebook, taken by Francis Harper, seemed set up by Harper and not necessarily true to life as Roxie remembers it. She on the ohter hand, was more of a longer, and enjoyed singing to herself a variety of songs as she worked. She describes the family going to the monthly service at Sardis Church in a horse and wagon. Only half the family would fit at a time, so they alternated months, half one month, half the next. She said different people had sings in their homes on the Sat. night between the two services, but they didn't go because it was hard to take a wagon and horse at night.

She spoke of the palmetto--still makes and uses brooms. Makes them for her daughter. Said that they are real good for sweeping cement. In her day, palmetto brooms were for inside the house. Once a week you swept the yard with a broom made out of the gallberry bush. Also made a floor scrubber traditionally, first out of wood with corn shucks poking through holes, then using palmetto in place of corn--the latter worked better. Had the snakes that her sister Vannie makes. Said their mother made them, but she herself never learned how. She had on her kitchen wall a weaving from a Palmetto bud, learned from a friend from Iowa who learned it from a woman down by Okechobee about 20 years ago. May be a craft learned from a book originally, I'm not sure. She had never heard of anyone making palmetto fans like the one in the Chesser homestead. Instead, they cut off the palmetto frond to make a fan, but didn't do any weaving, just used the plant as is.

She said the hardshells had no music, no instruments in the house. She sang me an old hardshell hymn that was her mother's favorite. The slow delivery and ornamentation sounded much the same as hymns in SArdis church today. She said she used to have a high treble voice. Now her voice cracks and is low. The tunes of everything she said were nonetheless recognizable.

She has been asked by a neighbor to make two pecan pies for the neighbor to take to a wedding. Evidently Mrs. Crawford is known for her pecan pies, and her chicken and homemade noodles. Her mother-in-law (REnshaw) taught her how to make the noodles.

Things discussed in the interview (not listed in order):

Alphabet song and rhyme (not in consecutive order)

one room school, her schooling, and learning ABC s
 Singing at home
 Sardis church attendance, sings
 riddles learned from her mother
 frolics
 fodder pulling
 palmetto weaving
 music among Hardshells

We only talked and recorded for a little over an hour, since I had to rush off to the airport. I took her copies of our previous interview and the Harper tapes. Need to send her the Harper index. Took 4 pictures of her with the palmetto weavings.

I still felt like I didn't know enough to prompt her for the right questions, but there is interesting material from both interviews with her.

November 30, 1997

San José Catholic Church
 Lake Park

I attended the 7 p.m. misa at San José after exchanging phone messages and a letter of introduction with Fr. Mark Fallon, one of the Holy Cross Brothers based in Adel who serves the parish. I hope to record the Fiestas Guadalupanas Dec. 13 at 5 p.m., Knights of Columbus Hall, St. Augustine Rd., Valdosta. I went to the mass tonight to get a feel for the parish and to introduce myself in person to key players.

When I arrived about 6:55 most people who were there were outside in the parking lot (basically lawn) or sitting in their vehicles. Only a few people were inside, all single males seated in pews. The church is a pole barn construction on the outside, with folding chairs and some re-used pews (very uncomfortable!). There is a crucifix in the center of the altar wall, an image of the Virgin of Guadalupe on one side (picture), with lighted candles and silk and paper flowers, and a statue of the church's patron, San José with child, on the other side, also with lighted candles. There were two mexican-style wall hangings on the walls, as well as some religious pictures. The mass started about 7:15. The church was fairly full by the time it started with about 80 parishioners, men, women, and children. There appeared to be three Caucasians there besides myself and FR. Mark. Assisting Fr. Mark was Clara Taylor, who is a native Spanish speaker (which Fr. mark is not--he struggles with pronunciation) who has been with the migrant ministries for 20 years. Need to find out where she is from originally. She is clearly the person to talk with regarding history in this area. I got her home number--247-5362.

She greeted everyone in Spanish as they came in, and assisted Fr. Mark with communion. She also appears to be the organizing force behind the Fiestas Guadalupanas. First fiestas were at Hahira. The church in Lake park is only 4 years old. People will come from Hahira, Adel, and Lake Park areas. After the mass tonight--she and Fr. Mark discussed the fiestas guadalupanas. She requested families dress their children in trajes tipicas (girls) and as Juan Diego (boys). She also wanted children to take up flowers to the altar

during the misa. On the 13th, the Bishop of Georgia will preside. There will be a procession around the hall, the mass, a cena (they had a meeting after the mass tonight to determine who would bring what), and a dance with recorded music. There will be a choir during the mass but she wasn't sure led by whom. Their director is from Moody and got sent to the Gulf she said. Choirs locally and from Moultrie.

The mass tonight was all in Spanish. No instruments, but I gather they sometime have guitars, but, again, the director was sent to Gulf. They sang directly out of the printed misalette and canticos books the standard sort of post Vatican II music in Latino churches. I noticed that the Canticos had the standard himnos to the Virgin of Guadalupe printed in it.

Posadas also will be held for the full Novena at San José.

Fr. Mark Fallon
Holy Cross Brothers
601 S. Laurel Ave.
Adel, GA 31620
912-896-7274
Holy Cross Brothers--896-4555

Fr. Lorenzo Garcia in Moultrie, first Latino priest in area
Immaculate Conception Church
912-985-8949 (they have their own Guadalupanas)

Jan. 17, 1998

Singing School and Sing, Hoboken, GA

Attended the singing school prior to the monthly singing, taught by David Lee with assistance from Clarke Lee. I recorded the school and sing. The school was geared to the children, as David said the schools had always been. There were three kids seated up front on the floor directly in front of David and David's niece (?), Tatum Strickland, seated in the front row. There were about 25 adults of all ages seated in rows behind the kids. David had a sheet of paper with the scale sketched out with a magic marker: fa sol la fa sol la mi fa, also numbered one through 8. He had the shapes sketched out and labeled with their name also. We sang the scale by number various times, and also by shape name. He called the notes of the scale stairsteps and said sometimes you skip a step or go backwards, forwards, when singing a song. We used #62, Parting Hand, because it stays within one octave, and also Amazing Grace, because it is so familiar to folks (#45T). On page 11 of the notebook is the section "Rudiments of Music" which David used to teach timing, emphasizing that white notes, black notes, stems, etc. all indicated different timing. He plans to go more into timing in the next session. David is a good teacher, deliberate and clear. He emphasized that this is the way he learned as well. Clarke helped him point out certain things to the children. One of them was his daughter, Mary Elizabeth, who looks about age 7 or so.

Dave (my husband) came with me for the first time to this month's sing. He commented on the community, participatory nature of the sing, involving young and old. I recorded the sing and school with my mike stand in the corner of the square between the tenors and trebles. David said he would like a copy if it comes out well.

During the sing before the break David got me into the center to lead, and DAVE came and joined me. Clarke had just led Happy Birthday for his wife Julie. David told me that when it was my birthday they would sing for me--DAVE told him that my birthday was the next day, so everyone sang for me as well.

January 31, 1998

Tollie Lee

**new address

1022 Wedgewood Circle

Callahan, FL 32011

Drove to Hilliard, FL to the home of Tollie and Ramona Lee, 1022 Wedgewood Way, Callahan, FL 32011. Have many things to talk with Tollie about, as the son of Silas and Elvira Lee who grew up in the country outside Hoboken (Schlauterville), Crawfordite elder, sacred harp singer, former? harmonica player, and hollerer. Worked in turpentine as a boy, young man. We had a fabulous interview about PB singing, Lloyd hymnal, giving out or lining out hymns, the difference between lining and just singing a hymn, the relationship between sacred harp and the Lloyd singing, his father's singing schools (the late Silas Lee), PB attitudes towards music (sacred and secular), and even a little hollering. Growing up in the country Tollie's boyhood sounds pretty traditional--he even remembers Old Dan Tucker and Barbara Allen being sung around the house. He is very eloquent and thoughtful speaking about music.

Also mentioned that Joyce Cauthan from Alabama came and recorded a Lloyd hymn sing this fall. Must see if I can get a recording.

Ramona served a lovely meal: biscuits, collard greens, ham, pot roast, gravy, rice, curried hot fruit (pineapple pears and apple rings), homemade pear relish, corn bread salad (corn bread on bottom, tomatoes, and green peppers on top with mayo), and a pineapple pear pie with ice cream for dessert. They grow the trees. They used to raise their own cattle for beef, and also made their own syrup for about 4 years (Tollie and Ramona). They have 4 children, two boys and 2 girls. Amy lives at home and works for Kings Bay in their hazardous waste disposal area. The two boys live in trailers on adjoining property. One girl (Marlene, Marla?) lives in Texas.

Ramona is from Homerville. Her father and his 4 brothers were bee keepers--gallberry. Clinch Co. in the mid-70s was known for the purest honey. The family name is something like Landrum. She knew of the Zeiglers in Stockton and asked if I had met old MR. Zeigler, now around 80. I think I must have met his son instead.

We chatted about home remedies before the interview was taped. Tollie is knowledgeable about this. AS a youngster and until he was licensed to preach and got his call in the late 60s, he was interested in secular trad. music so would be a good source for info. in a future interview. He commented about the Harper tapes, for example, on how much was left out. Need to talk with him more about his father and sacred harp. He remembered much more than his mother, Elvira, did.

Interesting footnote, in ca. 1959, on a Sat. probably after lunch, Silas Lee took some sacred harp singers to the Florida Folk Festivals. Also the Hoboken school glee club, of which Tollie was a member, sang at the FFF. I should see if there is a tape.

Also mentioned the book *Silver White Sands*, published by S. GA College and now out of print. this is the book that has the description of Martin Dowling's singing school. I should try to see the whole book. Tollie has other books about the area and Primitive Baptists. He mentioned someone who had done some research in Alabama on Benjamin Lloyd. Need to ask Joey Brackner about this, since they have the Lila Wallace grant on the Lloyd's hymnal.

The sing at Nathalene started about 7 p.m. and lasted until 9:30. There were about 29 people there eventually, plus me. Philip Reeves and Tollie co-led, but Philip did most of it. They took one break in the middle. They set up the church pews (sing was held in the meeting house) in the hollow square. Nathalene has recently had heat and electricity added. The inside looked newly finished with cypress walls and floor, cedar doors, and smelled of fresh wood. The ceiling is plastered over with the renovations, but the overall presense of wood gave the room and recording a rich resonance, making it sound louder than the number of people there. Still, I've noticed that especially the men have powerful voices (key men like Philip, Johnnie Lee, and Tollie Lee) which dominate the singing. Philip is the son of Delorese Connor Lee's first cousin, Les Reeves. Delorese was raised in this area on the River Road not far from the St. Mary's bridge into St. George. She said she never went to a singing school, but her mother had, and her mother taught them at home. She said years ago they had sings in meeting houses, but then they were having them in Dane Connor's building which he built for singing. I guess some conservative Crawfordites didn't think it was proper to have sacred harp in the meeting house, forgetting or not knowing that it had been that way at one time. Just recently they have moved back to having it at the Nathalene meeting house, the Sat. before the first Sun. This is also the weekend when there are services at Nathalene.

In this more traditional sing, there is one song leader setting the pitches and starting out, as well as walking time. All songs are walked. Others present suggest hymn numbers, but Philip led. Delorese told me that children didnt used to call out numbers as much as they do now. They sang a number of different hymns, and a fair number that Delorese really didn't know. She said for years they sang the same hymns over and over, and just recently they've been doing a lot more. I wonder what the reason is for the change? There was a man there from the Micanopy sing and a woman from Gainesville, FL's sing. The woman I recognize from the Hoboken sings.

There was no prayer like there is in Hoboken. I wonder if that is to keep happy the conservatives who won't pray in front of outsiders?

There were only three trebles including me, so I will probably be more prominent in the tape than I intended. I requested Amazing Grace, so I could hear the difference between the Lloyd hymnal version and the Hoboken version. As I listened to the recording as I was taping, it really was hard to hear the women at all. Thealtos had their back to the mike, and there weren't all that many more than there were trebles. AS in Sardis, the sound was rich a bottom heavy. A number of men have very strong voices.

Feb. 1, 1998

Nathalene Primitive Baptist Church

Hilliard, FL (along with Sardis and Piney Grove in GA, one of three churches served by Tollie Lee)

I drove to Nathalene for the Sunday service. This time I didn't record (since this church is not receptive); in fact, Ramona Lee told me that it was Les Reeves who was the deacon upset about my recording at Sardis a year ago. He did come and greet me at services. Nathalene is located back off the road (Connor Nelson Rd.) in Nassau Co., FL about 15 minutes drive south of Folkston. As with Sardis, the road is not paved and there is no formal parking lot; people park their cars on the pine straw between the trees. The bathrooms have been electrified with heat added, but no hot water. Evidently younger people and elderly wanted modernized facilities. There are some among the conservative Crawfordites who resist change to the point of wanting to keep the old privies. I spoke with Tollie about building the church. I believe he gave a date in the late 1960s for this building, when they replaced the original log structure. Originally, these churches were built by farmers and carpenters who were members of the church. Tollie as a boy remembers something of the dovetail techniques, for example, in log construction. The old log church building from Nathalene is now on Dane Connor's farm property as some sort of outbuilding. This time, unlike the old days, the work to renovate the meeting house was contracted out. Nathalene is unlike some of the other churches, with weatherboard exteriors, in that it is covered with wood shingles. The roof here as in Sardis is asphalt shingle. The term is meeting and meeting house.

When I arrived about 10:45 some members of the church, including Tollie, Philip Reeves, Mark Reeves, and others, were inside singing hymns from the Lloyd Hymnal. This is one of the times when they sing hymns (not lined hymns as during parts of the service). I noticed that maybe less than half were singing, and many did not have a hymnal. I wondered about knowing the tunes, since--if they come from sacred harp and not that many people go to sings any more--it seemed that many people were singing the melody as opposed to harmony. Amy Lee was singing alto, and Tollie bass, I believe. At least with the men, all it takes is a few of the powerful voices harmonizing and you have a sense of parts. I certainly couldn't hear any treble from where I was sitting with the bulk of the visitors. When the hymns are being sung (not the lined hymns but sung hymns like before the meeting begins) members who plan to sing often move over together to the visitors benches, perhaps to better hear the parts, etc.

I forgot to count attendance, but of say 60 or so, I would estimate that a third were actual members. Although Ramona told me visitors can sit anywhere, most members sat in the pews set up on either side of the pulpit, and visitors were in the pews facing the pulpit. Men and women members sat separately, facing one another. I read recently that this was because of foot washing, so women would wash women's feet, men men's feet, and keep things proper. A few non members were sitting behind members in the pews. In front of the pulpit was a table which was used for communion, and under the table were a pair of white enamel buckets and labels used for the footwashing during communion. A pair of chairs was located on either side of the pulpit. Tollie sat in one of these while Mark Reeves led the morning part of the service. Reeves, a younger man probably in his early 30s or late 30s has been licensed to preach but is not yet ordained. I believe the term is they are "tolerating him." This is a trial period when the congregation decides if he is truly called to serve and ready to serve and be ordained.

The pews are unornamented plain wooden benches. Some people brought pillows to sit on. The interior of the church is completely without ornamentation. There are wooden pegs on the walls to hang coats and hats. On the floor under the table is a wooden trap door which was used to dispose of water after the foot washing, and after washing the communion items. There are now fluorescent lights and ceiling fans in the ceiling at Nathalene, part of the new renovations.

The morning service included a lined hymn or hymns, lined by Mark Reeves, with Philip Reeves actually leading the tune. Mark spoke or chanted the lines, as opposed to Tollie who sings them. In neither case, however, would the congregation know what tune to sing without the leadership of the song leader, Mark Reeves. The lined hymns are universally slow and ornamented, although not as slow and ornamented as the black Primitive Baptists I heard at St. Lukes in Valdosta. Some of them sound more or less unison; some have parts audible. As compared with the hymns which are not lined, the main difference is that the words are repeated twice--once lined and then sung. Some of the plain sung hymns are sung as slowly and with as much ornamentation (passing tones, upper and lower neighbors, etc.) as are the lined hymns. Other hymns are sung in brisker tempos noticeably different from the lined hymns. The service opened with a lined hymn. This was followed by prayer. Various members had requested prayers and remembrances for family members. During the prayer, members get on their knees on the floor and bend over facing the pews, with their head and hands on the pew seat. This was true of most of even the most elderly. Mark Reeves led the prayer and he intoned--chanted it using definite rising and falling pitches--a repeated melody much the way I recall Tollie doing it at Sardis a year ago. There is no scripture reading. After the prayer there may have been another lined hymn--not sure. Then Mark Reeves gave the message. He had a handkerchief in his hand, and paced slowly back and forth in the small pulpit, maybe a space of 5 feet in width or so, stopping to lean slightly over the pulpit and look toward the floor at each side. I recall that Tollie paced in a similar manner at Sardis. At the time I wondered if this was a cue for going into trance and receiving the gift of the Lord's message, but after lunch, when Tollie led the communion service, he went into trance several times and he didn't pace, and was standing on the floor next to the communion table rather than up in the pulpit.

At several points Mark got going with some message, and intoned in a singing chant much like Tollie's. He never got a flow going, however, and there were long moments when he continued to pace without words. Finally, at 11:30 after maybe 10 minutes or so of trying, he stopped and said something to the effect that the Lord had not blessed him with words this morning. They announced they would take 45 minutes for lunch and then resume for communion. Tollie would lead communion, since only an ordained Minister of God can lead communion and Mark is licensed but not ordained.

It was sunny out but with a brisk cool wind. As at Sardis, people brought picnic lunches at in groups inside or outside of their cars. Sort of a religious tailgate (to mix metaphors!) Ramona had thoughtfully brought me a sandwich, so I ate ham sandwiches and chocolate chip cookies with Ramona, Tollie, and Amy.

I was introduced to Tollie's great great aunt Alma, who lives in Pierce Co. She would be a good interview. She evidently received a song in a dream or vision, and David Lee put shape notes to it and videoed her singing it. She must have been in her 80s, but seemed spry. She was wearing an old fashioned bonnet. Several of the oldest women wore head coverings; one a turban. I noticed that all the women members had long hair put up in buns. A minimum or no jewelry, although the women wore wedding rings, where it appeared the men did not. None of the men wore ties, although they had dress shirts and some wore suitcoats. Tollie had his trademark suspenders and a sweater vest.

After lunch, I believe there was more singing as people were regathering (I didn't take any notes at the time, although I did take a few outside photos during lunch). Over lunch Mary Reeves and Emily Connor (latter wife to Dane Conner, former wife to Deacon Les Reeves and mother to Mark and Philip) had set out the communion table. They brought items wrapped in white clothes in a picnic basket. The table was covered with a pair of white table clothes. Underneath was placed the wine (grape juice? in a pair of clear bottles) and small pieces of bread on plates. Tollie preached I believe three times, at some times going into a chant without actually singing, and sometimes singing. When he first started after lunch he appeared to begin with virtually no visible preparation of any kind. He used some interesting allegories, including a quilt, and planting and carding cotton. The carding tool for cotton I remember best, where he compared the cleaning and the removing of kinks and knots in the carding brush to what God does to man through grace.

Communion was served by two deacons, first the bread, and then the wine. It was only offered to members (which the deacons knew). One served the women while the other served the men. Then they served one another. After each, Tollie asked if all had been served who desired, or some such. By this he meant were any members inadvertently missed. After communion they did footwashing. There were a stack of gray enamel shallow bowls, and the members divided in pairs with folks seated next to them. Each pair had a long narrow white towel/cloth and the shallow pan which had been filled with water from the ladels and main buckets (One for men, one for women). Everyone removed socks-hose. Thank goodness for knee or thigh highs--I found myself wondering how the women managed in the era of garter belts. The towels were tied around the waist, with a long end left loose for drying the feet. Afterward most of the women went

to the restroom, presumably to tidy up. As Emily Connor and Mary Reeves cleaned and washed the footwashing and communion implements and put them away, everyone else sang hymns. The trap door was used to dispose of the used water. Tollie may have given another message, and then there was a closing lined hymn, a dismissal hymn. I noticed that after the formal ending of the service, a small group continued to sing a few hymns, as they had at the sing the night before. It was 2:30 when the service ended.

FEb. 1, 1998

Alton Carter
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Folkston, GA 31537

Elliott West
430 Okefenokee Dr.
Folkston, GA 31537

After the service, I drove to Folkston to the Huddle House, where I had arranged to meet Mr. Alton Carter and talk about turpentine. Carter, who was born in 1917, is an energetic, bright man with a hs. education who is full of visionary ideas about recycling. He is one of three board members of the Turpentine Association and one of what he estimates to be 10 or 12 turpentine producers left in S. Georgia. They are located near Homerville, Folkston, McCrae and Sopler(? sp.). Georgia is the only place left producing domestic turpentine (from gum as opposed to byproducts from the pulp industry which isn't as good a grade--check this). Florida stopped about 2 years ago, according to Mr. Carter. Carter has worked in farming and the timber industry, including turpentine, all his life. Currently, the last remaining still at Baxley, GA has said they will take GA turpentine for only this year, and then they will only accept foreign gum. Carter and the remaining producers are trying to see if they can open their own still. Evidently, there is a market for their gum if they can just get it produced. They are trying to keep the industry alive. Lately, most of Carter's work involves the recycling company he founded. He is down to three contract turpentine workers, from a high of 30 to 40, with 13 crops.

We met at 3:00 and he asked if I had time for him to go to a funeral at Sardis Church. I rode along with him. I had noticed that the Folkston tourist brochure being distributed around town featured Sardis as one of the attractions. "Sardis Church is the oldest church in Charlton County and was organized prior to 1821. The pulpit in the church is the same one that has been in continual use for more than a century. The pulpit serves as a reminder of the nation's war with the Indians; there is a hole in the pulpit from a musket shot by a soldier defending the church from Indians. The church is still in use today." Not a very sympathetic view of Indians--something I also recall from the Okefenokee Swamp park pioneer homestead. As a related point, I noticed on the road from Fargo to St. George a meeting place marked for the Cherokee Tribe of Georgia.

It was a graveside service of a woman who had died suddenly of complications from pneumonia leaving a 15-year old daughter. The girl was a friend of Carter's granddaughter. This was not a Primitive Baptist funeral, I'm quite sure, judging from the dress of mourners, if nothing else. I gathered from Carter as we chatted driving over, that the church has long been something of a focal point for the whole community. Although Carter's family were not hardshells, they went to annual dinners at Sardis when he was a boy, and he still remembers the wonderful country food. Everyone went, it seems, Hardshell or no.

We stopped afterward, picked up my gear from my car, and drove to the home of Elliott West a lifelong turpentine worker, African American, and according to Carter an ace chipper. He has no phone, is apparently somewhat disabled now and hasn't worked in two years. He is the one who chipped the faces along hwy. 1/23 at Racepond between Folkston and Waycross. Those were done two years ago and Carter complimented him on how clean and smooth the faces were. Chipping is an art, according to Carter. With all the mechanization of the timber industry, few workers these days are interested mastering the skills and hand labor required of turpentine.

I turned on my tape recorder after explaining my project, and both Carter and West talked, but Carter dominated, perhaps because he is a good talker and perhaps because he is the boss and white. He was dressed for church in a suit, shirt and tie. West had a plaid shirt, jeans, and work boots. He appeared to be quite poor. Has not been married for quite a while, lives alone. We sat on the porch the whole time, and there were traffic sounds and trains in the background. There is no pension for turpentine workers. Carter told me in the car about a black man named Cecil who worked for him--he died in Nov. but was a tall chanter Carter had planned to introduce me to. He evidently called himself "Mr. Carter's nigger" or some such. Carter told him he'd pay for his funeral and get he and his wife a headstone, which he did. Although the days of the commissary and quarters are over, in which turpentine operated basically on a sharecropping type of system, there is still an element of paternalism in Alton Carter. He believes in taking care of his people, treating them well, but not fraternizing.

Both Carter and Elliott would have been more comfortable showing me how to do things in the woods rather than talking about them. I also am not particularly well read on turpentine at this point. I did manage to get some material for the radio show, although I'm not sure how usable the sound quality will be with the background noise. We spoke of my coming back in a month or two when the weather is warmer and going out in the woods with them.

Carter is a wealth of information. We had supper at the Huddle House afterward and I questioned him some, filling out my artist data sheet. He mentioned that he cut the first pulpwood in Charlton Co. in 1938. He remembers his daddy turpentine in the Little Okefenokee, using log rollways to get the gum out of the swamp. Need to talk to him more about this with tape on. He did his first dipping at age 10, and although he has worked for himself all his life, he has also done pretty much all the jobs a turpentine worker can do. Born at Racepond (named for the horse races the soldiers had around the pond during the Indian wars) to John Carter and Emma Dyals Carter, one of 10 children.

Feb. 24, 1998

Henry Rutland and Paul Massey
Thomasville, GA

Met at Mr. Rutland's home where I had arranged to record him playing music for the radio series. At his request, his guitarist--Paul Massey of Boston--came to back him up. I had asked Rutland to play some of the older tunes in his repertoire on his great-grandfather's fiddle. He really doesn't play it much. The fiddle has a longer neck than his regular fiddle, and Rutland had a little trouble playing it. The fiddle has two significant cracks on the top which have been repaired, and a distinctive curly maple back. It is softer in sound than his regular fiddle, which is used to cut through crowds and project over PA systems, but it did not strike me as overly soft. The two older tunes he chose were standards: Golden Slippers and Soldier's Joy, tunes he learned from his father (who taught them to Henry's Uncle Bob--aka Georgia Slim Rutland). Henry plays 5-6 variations on many of his tunes. The most interesting tune was a local one I believe--Albany Reel, which he had to teach (chord changes) to Paul. He said he only knew a couple other old fiddlers who played it. I asked about waltzes and Rutland said as a bluegrass fiddler he isn't called to play waltzes much. He started in on Westphalia Waltz and then broke a string. He finished off the selections on his greatgrandfather's fiddle again rather than change the string.

Paul Massey heads a timber crew. He brought his son Brian (age 8 or 9) because he wanted him to hear the older tunes. He commented that few younger people knew or were interested in the kind of music he and Rutland play (Massey is part of the S. GA Grass, Rutland's bluegrass group). Massey has some relatives around Bainbridge who play music--wrote down the name on the artist data form (check).

There is a Fiddler's Jamboree in Tifton (AGrirama) on April 18.

Feb. 26, 1998

Clara Rodriguez Taylor
801 Smithbriar
Valdosta, GA 31602
912-247-5362(H)

Visited Clara Taylor in her N. Valdosta home as a follow-up to the fiestas Guadalupanas in Dec. Clara works with the migrant ministry of the Catholic Church (Holy Cross Brothers of Adel) and as a native of Cuba and native Spanish speaker frequently translates for Spanish speaking migrants. She confirmed that the largest group is Mexican, most single men--and secondarily Guatamalan. She has met one Guatamalan family and one Mexican young man whose first languages are indigenous languages rather than Spanish.

Before the tape recorder was turned on Clara showed me her lovely home and talked some about her background. She is twice widowed and apparently quite well off. She

lives with her son--one of her three children. Clara has a doctorate in education from Cuba. She left Cuba with her first husband in 1961; he was close to finishing a degree in medicine in Cuba when they left. They left all their possessions in Cuba--possessions were inventoried so as to prevent people from taking them with them. They had hardly any money--first went to Miami, then to Spain where her husband finished his medical training at the University of Salamanca.

They came to S. GA in 196x--one of the early Hispanic families to settle in the area. They went first to Adel, and then moved to Valdosta in 19xx. She recalled how people looked down on her because she couldn't speak English. Her first husband was killed in an accident in 1976. She then tried to get certified to teach Spanish in GA and was put through all sorts of rigamarole--including so many hours of Spanish (her native language!) in order to get certified to teach advanced classes. She began volunteer work in 1980 at the behest of the base chaplain at Moody who was working in Lakeland and asked her to help with Cuban refugees from Mariel. The way she talked about it (replying to him, OK< I guess so, or some such) suggests the earlier Cuban immigrants' common view toward Mariel. She mentioned the criminal element and lack of moral values, for example. The work with migrant workers flowed out of the Mariel outreach.

She mentioned Catholic parishes with migrant ministries in Moultrie, Waycross, Douglas, and Tifton, in addition to Valdosta. She agreed with my theory that the number of Protestant churches with programs and services in Spanish is a function of the Protestant dominance in the region, and the better funding and resources of many protestant churches and denominations. The Baptists in Valdosta, for example, have a van and can provide transportation for migrants to come worship, evening dinners, etc. The Catholics are a minority and generally don't have as much money. I suspect she's right--that most people would prefer to go to a Catholic mass, but distance, convenience, etc. mitigate against it.

Also, as was the case with Detroit early on (and is still the case) the clergy (including priests and nuns) are not Mexican for the most part. There is one Mexican priest in Moultrie--the exception. Waycross has a Panamanian nun, for example. There are several Cuban priests. Douglas, I believe, has an Irish priest, like Bishop Bowlen from Savannah. This means that much of the planning and structure of events like the Fiestas Guadalupanas is orchestrated by non-Mexicans, with varying degrees of input from a few key(Mexicano) parishioners. Clara has been to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico, but of course her Virgin is the Caridad del Cobre, patrona de Cuba, and these Mexican customs are new to her, as they are to many priests and nuns--be they US born or Latin American/Caribbean nationals. Clara bought the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe (statue used in procession) in Miami, with funds raised for the purpose.

Evidently fried chicken from a local franchise was the main meat dish at this year's fiestas--mole was too complicated for that many people. The biscuits which I saw paired with tortillas (some of the latter home-made) were accompaniments to the fried chicken rather than any deliberate attempt at "culinary meeting of the cultures."

I need to find some Mexicans to interview--perhaps the Maria Gallegos who is the teachers aid her and helped her with the celebration. Clara Taylor is separated from the majority of migrant workers by class, education, national background, so that hers is the perspective of an outsider. There is a compassion, but a definite sense of distance. She relates to migrant workers in that she too was an immigrant and far from her home, and has been discriminated against on the basis of language, but I think the sense of commonality ends there.

Feb. 27, 1998

Had lunch with John Crowley to talk about some Primitive Baptist stuff.

He confirmed that the Crawfordites are the dominant PB group on the NE and eastern edges of the Okefenokee. Bethel Church in the Pocket, which Nancy Fouraker Morgan writes about in her memoirs (*Out of the Pocket, My Life on the Georgia-Florida Border*) was more liberal in comparison. The New Congregational Methodists, also in the area, are equally conservative. Bethel, for example, evidently didn't frown on dancing the way some other PBs did/do, esp. the Crawfordites.

The sealing of Tollie's churches at Piney Grove and Nathalene is heresy to the more old line Crawfordites. (adding lights, electricity, covering the interior with boards).

He also said that the old-timers speak of the hymn singing of their youth being more like the old Regular Baptists of Appalachia--surging, slow, ornamented, heterophonic. Not part singing like today.

He said the separate seating of men and women was for footwashing, and also he suspected, to keep youth from flirting in church.

He really doesn't have more information on music than is in his book (so he says) but I suspect if I asked him certain questions he would have information from his experience.

February 28, 1998

Christ's Episcopal Church Annex
Meeting of the Red Oak People (Cherokee)

Vivan Panther Lawson, chief of the southeastern council of Cherokee--makes regalia, beadwork, leatherwork
? Greywolf Lawson, chief of the Red Oak People (husband of Vivian)

contact at Southeastern Cherokee Tribal Council
PO Box 367
Ocklocknee, GA 31773
912-574-5497

Both work. She is there after 3:30. They are both Melungans (Sp.?) from Tennessee originally. People in the group are all Cherokee but are from all parts of the country (now living in Valdosta).

I was invited to this gathering by Deb Whitewolf Cox, who attended my talk on the S. GA Folklife Project last week at the Honors House, and then sent me an e-mail expressing her dismay that I hadn't talked about Native Americans. We exchanged a number of e-mail messages and I ended up attending this meeting.

I arrived about 6:20 p.m. I had been told the evening started at 6. One of Deb's NAI music CDs was playing on a boombox, and people were setting up the potluck and waiting for the chiefs to arrive from Thomasville. I would guess there were about 25-30 people there, almost half of which were children. Much of the evening's cultural activities were geared toward educating and enculturating the kids. The evening began with the potluck. This was preceded by introductions by John Curtis (don't recall his traditional name) (in the Sociology Dept. at VSU) and a prayer by Skywalker (a young man apprenticing with Curtis who will soon move to Valdosta and start a group for youth). The elders were directed to get in line before the youth. The only "traditional dish" (this from inquiring of Deb) was a venison stew she made from a Powhatan recipe printed in Native Peoples, the magazine of NMAI. She had photocopies of the recipe and had them on a nearby table.

Curtis is viewed as an authority on things Cherokee by the Red Oak People. His wife, Nancy, is a first grade teacher. They had their "natural" daughter with them (as opposed to children through tribal affiliations). The Curtis keep membership for the Red Oak People. Both were wearing ribbon shirts.

The Lawsons arrived midway through dinner, having been unclear on directions. The group had waited for them for some time, as dictated by protocol, but since the food was getting cold they eventually started. They brought the drum with them, which is kept in the tribal headquarters in Ochlocknee. The maker is a man by the name of Two Worlds (she didn't know his English name) who makes both drums and flutes. He lives in Poulan, GA. Marjorie Temples, who lives here in Valdosta, might know how to locate him, I am told. The drum has been in the possession of the tribe for about 6 years. The head of the drum (group) is Mike Lonewolf Cagle, who lives in Boston. Deb Cox is also a drummer. John Curtis has recently started. Evidently they learn most of their repertoire from tapes and CDs. The drum is informal and has no official name; Deb said formal names are adopted mostly by groups that play for powwows. This group evidently plays for local events. She mentioned that they were learning a spirit song for an upcoming Spirit Releasing ceremony for someone who had died.

The next item on the program was a slide talk by Dr. Marvin Smith, archaeologist at VSU who specializes in the N. GA/AL Creek through the early contact period, but on this evening was speaking on work he did excavating the Home Depot site in Valdosta, site of a 4th century AD village. Again, he mentioned to me that Chris Trowell at S. GA College in Douglas has done a lot of work around the Swamp. Smith doesn't really work in this part of GA. He brought several arrowheads and pottery shards from the site.

Smith was presented with a leather embroidered item (name? use?) in thanks for his talk. Many of the adults in the room are evidently his students.

This was followed by about 6 short NAI flute pieces from a collection recently transcribed for western flute or recorder. John Curtis, who has training in classical music, played the pieces on recorder, accompanied by a young man on the drum.

Next Adam Lawson, 13 year old grandson of Panther and Greywolf, was dressed in ceremonial regalia by his grandmother, to illustrate this to the children. As is customary, she had made all of his regalia. She brought as a reference Cherokee Clothing by Donald Sizemore, which she told me she used for ideas. She is a seamstress, however, and doesn't need instructions on putting together a garment. The regalia includes:

1. leggings, made of leather, decorated for ceremonial
2. breechcloth (she had made the wrong kind, it will be replaced) with a Thunderbird motif embroidered on the center. Adam's spirit birds are the hawk and eagle, but she didn't have suitable decorations to do the hawk and eagle, so she chose a thunderbird instead
3. ribbon shirt, in the colors of clan or band (red in this case)
4. sash, striped in bright colors
5. choker, with green color symbolizing youth warrior
6. garter (a navy bandana) tied around one leg

The moccasins were not yet finished. Not shown at this point, but later shown to me by Curtis was Adam's spirit shield, in progress, which is a circular leather covered shield about 2' in diameter, which will have a hawk and eagle drawn on it.

Several children were brought up to see the regalia close up.

Next, Adam had his naming ceremony. Deb had brought some sort of vessel/container and filled it with Tobacco? which she put on the floor. The ceremony was conducted by John Curtis, with Adam's grandmother, panther, standing next to him. Adam is a junior warrior in the Black Wolf Warrior Society and Curtis held him up as an example to the other youth present, as one who knows Indian ways, for example, respect for his elders. I recall Curtis urging him to eat, and Adam saying he had to wait until everyone else was finished. I'm not sure I'm totally clear on this or have it quite right (despite later being explained to me by Greywolf, Adam's grandfather) but Adam was given two spirit names, Brother of the Hawk and Eagle, and Spirit of the Hawk and Eagle. The second is for his older brother Jacob, who died of leukemia. Greywolf says that Adam has always played with Jacob's spirit. Adam was visibly moved and shaking during the ceremony.

Finally, the drum was brought to the center of the room and they practiced the spirit song from one of Deb's CDs. The two CDs were:

Robbie Robertson and the Red Road Ensemble (includes ancestor song)

Peter Buffet and the New World Ensemble "Spirit Dance" (includes spirit song)

Skywalker had a small basket of tobacco and all the drummers blessed the drum with tobacco. They eventually invited Marvin Smith to drum, and he too blessed with tobacco. Adam played, several of the adult men, one woman, and a girl. Deb Cox plays but she was busy holding her young son, "Monster." Mike Cagle did not play, perhaps too shy in front of outsiders (Deb said he got nervous in front of crowds).

Conversation with John Crowley, 3-30-98:

Marcus S. Peavey, pastor of Union Church at Lakeland 1935-1977: There's some tunes that go to your heart and some that go to your feet.

April 18, 1998

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Elliott West
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Alton Carter and Elliott West met me in Hoboken at the Old Feed Mill two miles west of town. Carter had picked up West, who doesn't drive. We drove to some state timber land outside the entrance to the Okefenokee Swamp park where there were some slash and broadleaf pine (called "hill pine" by Carter) (mostly slash because it produces more gum). Black pine, also found in these forests, doesn't produce gum. On the way over we took back roads, sandy, around Laura Walker State Park. A family named Taylor was turpentineing some trees in the state forest lands near there. The Taylors live in Hoboken (older) and Blackshear (younger). The industry certainly seems to be waning--Carter estimated about 25 workers for the 10-12 producers left. He himself has only one (the fellow we met in the woods--name???) and did not start any virgin (first year) trees this year because he thought this was the last year the Baxley still was taking domestic gum. Now they say one more year. Contacts at still are Rita Boyette, head buyer, and Jim Baker, head man. Carter could put me in touch. They have told the Georgia turpentineers that they will take local gum, but at half the current price. Carter is not alone in wonder how they can pay freight for foreign gum and still pay so little a barrel. The Turpentine Assoc. pays Allen (sp?) Hodges from UF Gainesville to develop new technology for them. Currently, he is working on a bag to collect the gum which would not require a streaked face, or nails to attach the cup. Both are disliked by the timber industry, which--it seems--is sometimes at odds with turpentineers. The timber workers don't like to cut around or detect nails in trees, for example. Grady Williams, of McRae, retired from the GA Forestry Commission, would be a great source of information. Evidently there are some old movie footage of turpentineing, but they contain some potentially controversial,

sensitive material. Many turpentine contacts in Valdosta. Joyce Lamb, for example, former secretary to Turpentine Association.

In the woods Elliott West had brought his hack for chipping. He is disabled now, and not actively working for several years, but is an ace chipper, producing a smooth face. He brought special heavy weight rubberized gloves used by turpentiners to keep acid from hands, and an apron to protect his pants and keep them clean. West isn't much of a talker and I didn't get much verbal material from him, although there was a good segment talking about his tools, carried in a leather holder and attached to his back belt above the hip. Most of these tools are no longer commercially available; many companies used to make them, including some in s. Georgia (see Agrirama materials). (The Agrirama evidently has the Valdosta still from Union Camp.) West and others often make some of their own tools, however, especially the stalk (?) or handle to the chipping hack. His was made out of a black gum and fashioned with hand tools. The size of the stalk is adjusted to the hand size and "feel" required by an individual worker. Sharpening the hack blade is a specialized skill. The sharpening tools are carried by the worker into the woods.

West restreaked over some faces from last year made by the younger African american man now working for Carter (name?). He drove up and joined us half way through our recording session. West also applied the paste now used to stimulate the production of gum; paste reduces the need to streak the face to only one time per month during the season (Mid-March through Oct. or November when the cold weather stops the production of gum). Carter said that Langdale used to make all the acid and paste. Should check with John Lancaster, VSU history prof., who is completing a book on Langdale. The first cut or streak is called the corner streak (a term held over from the era of boxing trees?). The cup is attached and then elevate 6 to 16" or so per year for four years. Before the use of acid and paste the face went higher up the tree. The cup is often full of "trash" (chips of bark, water, dirt) which has to be filtered out at the still. Through out the season the cups are removed and emptied with a dipping paddle (metal or wood) into barrels and then taken to the still.

Carter also mentioned that his nephew? im O'Brian, is an ace banjo player. There will be a big bluegrass event in Hoboken the last Sat. in May or some such. Carter had a big family gathering for Easter--invited all his grandchildren and had a big egg hunt and coloring with eggs from a family member. He had a BBQ and made his own recipe for Brunswick stew. This is not a family recipe or tradition, evidently.

Hoboken Sacred Harp Sing, April 18, 1998

Attended the sing, which was well attended, including two couples from Minnesota which David, Clarke, Johnny, and wives had met over the past two years. They have been traveling a great deal lately to sings around the country. In the past month or two Seattle, and Washington DC. In Seattle they made a tape of David and Clarke leading a singing school, as they had done in Chicago last year. This one is evidently going to be sold. Also, David is working with Keith Willard in Minnesota on a CD of the all-day

sing in Hoboken in 1996. David said he edited the tape to include more of the "Hoboken sound." Tollie and PHillip Reeves also led a sing up in Indiana near Kelly Day's. When I was consulting with David about sacred harp material for my Musical Atlas article, he mentioned a practice of the drone which he is teaching in these other places but hasn't been done in Hoboken since the early 1980s or so. This is something Silas Lee did at his sings I know. A central core of singers sing the melody, encircle by a circle of treble, tenor, and bass respectively who move counter clockwise to each other holding the tonic, dominant, and octave. I asked him why he didn't reintroduce it in Hoboken. He said he'd have to think about it. I find myself disturbed that the "Hoboken" sound is becoming more and more like everywhere else. The tempos in Hoboken are much faster than in Nathalene. In Nathalene it appears they are keeping to the old style, slower tempos, one song leader, walking time. David is of the opinion that it is better to lose the Hoboken style rather than lose sacred harp. This sing seemed to me to be a wonderful sound, but tempos were very fast. I really think all the traveling they are doing is affecting how they lead. It was most evident in Little Pilgrim, which was also sung at Nathalene much slower. The slower tempo sounded almost medieval, with rich modal harmonies that were lost at a brisk tempo. I guess I wonder why the style can't be passed on and why David feels like they have to be more like everyone else. I requested Love Divine and David said I wanted it the old way. The tempo was slowed down. At that faster tempo it isn't possible to add the kind of ornamental passing and leading tones that transferred from the Primitive Baptist meeting house to sacred harp. David and Clark didn't walk time either. Phillip Reeves was the only one who did that. Interesting, since in talking to Phillip's father, I learned that Phillip is really a protogee of David and Clarke (cousins) not by any older song leader. John Crowley confirms that tempos used to be much slower at Hoboken and David and Clarke lead every song, walking time, as Phillip still does at Nathalene.

I sat next to Jesse Roberts, a strong PB singer from around Atlanta. I sat next to the microphone, placed between altos and basses. Mrs. Elvira Lee, Silas' widow, had the old Hoboken tunes memorized, but used the book for those evidently not sung as frequently here. The sopranos were sometimes singing a line other than what was printed, and Jesse Roberts told me at least on one occasion that it was the Denson book harmonization.

Field Notes, fall 1998 to ---

South Georgia Folklife Project

Dr. Laurie Kay Sommers

Field Notes

Sept. 19, 1998

Valdosta: Attended a march and rally over the Sheriff's Dept. involvement in the homicide of Willie Williams. Est. 1500 marchers from South Side (near scene of arrest) to county jail. This was intended to be an activity separate from my work with the SGFP, but I realized that the tradition of the black church, as incorporated into the civil rights movement of the 1960s, was being enacted here in Valdosta. The leading figures in the organizing team were black (Male) preachers whose gift of oratory (esp. that of Rev. Rose) rallied the crowd. While we were waiting for a PA system to arrive, several black

women got up and led the group in a call and response or lined out version of congregational hymns and spiritual songs. One was Soldiers of the Lord. I don't clearly remember the others, since I hadn't planned to document the event, but music was clearly used to build the spirit and sense of unit of the marchers. As the rally was nearing an end, Rev. Rose said he'd just been handed a note that "the brothers are singing inside the jail." Everyone cheered.

Hoboken:

Attended the monthly sing in Hoboken and recorded with the DAT recorder. Halfway through David gave a brief overview of what shape note singing is, and encouraged people to come to keep the tradition going.

Alton Carter attended and we chatted about the situation with turpentine. I hope to get some good video footage of the final turpentine here (at least for the time being.) The association is not meeting (too few of them) and they haven't set up another still. There will be a little bit of turpentine next year, and then, apparently, that is it. He said in late Oct. they would be scraping, streaking, and dipping, so that would be a good time to have a video camera. We also spoke about following the last barrels of turpentine to the still in Baxley. I would like to document and interview the Taylor family (African American family that is still turpentine around Waycross) as part of the effort. Carter seemed receptive to that idea. Didn't have too much time to talk to Mr. Carter, unfortunately.

March 20, 1999 will be an all day sing at Hoboken. Next month, the Oct. sing will be the convention meeting at DeFuniak Springs, FL. I need to interview Johnnie and Delorese Lee among others.

At my request, David introduced me to Eugene Hickox, a member of the Bennetite arm of the Alabama Primitive Baptists. They split with the Crawfordites sometime in the 19th century—I was interested in seeing if I could record their hymn singing, also out of the Lloyd hymnal. I arranged to meet the Hickox's at 9 am Sunday morning to follow them to Big Creek PB Church just over the Wayne/Pearce county line in rural Patterson. They were having their annual association meeting, but unfortunately I couldn't stay for the whole meeting, which included dinner on the grounds. The church was off a county road on a sandy, red soil road about a mile or two off the black top. The church had no steeple; simple gabled structure with white asphalt shingle siding. These churches have had heat and electricity for some time. The floor was carpeted, but there was no adornment of any kind (religious imagery) as with the Crawfordites. There were hat racks for the men, and a vase of flowers on the table with the hymnals and items for foot washing located in front of the pulpit. Men and women sat on opposite sides of the lectern. There were also three sections of pews facing the lectern for visitors and perhaps members as well, with men and women sitting together.

They use the 705 version of the Lloyd hymnal and keep hymnals on hand to pass out to folks. The pastor, Winston Boyette, was raised in this church but now lives in Fernandina, FL. He was a bit late in arriving. I noticed that he wore a tie, as did a few other men, but not many. Everyone greeted each other as they were gathering, including me, with a little

embrace. Mr. Hickox told me that there were only two members younger than he (he is 68) and that the churches are dying due to lack of young people. There were certainly a lot more families and children at Sardis and Nathalene. His home church (I forget the name) has borrowed a pastor from the Union Assoc. (John Crowley's home association).

From 10 to 11:00 they sat in the pews and sang 4-part a cappella hymns out of the Lloyd Hymnal, people calling out numbers of favorites and deacons seated on the men's side of the church starting out the tune. There were about 65 in attendance. David Lee had said something about their singing being more free since they didn't walk time and weren't as linked to sacred harp, but this subtlety escaped me on first listening. Johnny Lee walked in just as the hymn singing was ended, so I should definitely talk with him about this. In one instance they added a chorus that wasn't in the hymnal, which Hickox told me was from an old Missionary (Baptist) hymn book. I did get a recording of Amazing Grace which I should be able to compare with the Sardis version.

About 11:00 the paster said a few introductory words to begin the service proper, and then lined a hymn. He only recited the first two lines, and then the congregation sang the hymn much like they did the earlier hymn singing. The lined hymn was sung standing. This was followed by a prayer by Pastor Boyette; all the men get on their knees and put their heads down on the pews during the prayer. The prayer was to be followed by the sermons, but I left (11:30). I was to pick up Dave and then go to Ramona and Tollie Lee's for a noon meal.

At the Lees' home in rural Hilliard, FL I learned that Pauline Lee, Clarke's mother, is an excellent quilter and makes a living quilting. Delorese Lee is an excellent cook. Ramona's meal for us included purlieu (southern style chicken and rice) and a homemade pear pie from their pineapple pear tree. They had a bunch of Ronnie Dale's canes and I bought one for Dad for Christmas.

After dinner, Tollie got out his harmonica, which he has played only sporadically since joining the church. His mother taught him a simple version of Mary had a Little Lamb and from there he taught himself. I believe he said he had a uncle who played? This harmonica is a D instrument he bought in Massachusetts about 10 years ago when at a business meeting. When he was actively playing he preferred C and G, so he could play with guitar players. He played in a lot of talent contests as a boy, but dropped it since the church frowns on secular music. His repertoire is now mostly a memory culture: he was good on Wildwood Flower, his signature piece. He also played KY Waltz, Camptown Races, Pop Goes the Weasel. Ramona and daughter Amy seemed delighted to hear him—he plays so rarely.

Nov. 14, 1998

Pauline Lee
Rte. 1, Box 179

Hoboken, GA 31542
912-458-2534

I had heard not long ago (from Ramona Lee???) that Clarke Lee's mother, Pauline, was a fine quilter and had a business quilting in her home with her sister. I visited Pauline today in her home in Hoboken. The house has a garden (didn't get a look at it) and a number of large pecan trees from which Pauline has been harvesting nuts for sale.

Pauline Lee is an accomplished needleworker who learned from her paternal grandmother at home at a young age. Her grandmother was Amanda (Mandy) Powers Clarke. Pauline's mother, Minne Lee (Cason) Clarke was also a quilter. Pauline was born in 1936 at home in Pierce County. She has wonderful stories which I need to come back and record about her mother's resourcefulness in "making do": crocheted pieces out of tobacco twine, raising and ginning cotton to make home-made mattresses, for example. Minne Lee Clarke was the kind of woman who could see a dress in a catalog and reproduce it. From her mother Pauline also learned to embroider. Whereas now Pauline buys cloth pre-stamped with designs, her mother would buy stamps at the dime store. Pauline showed me a number of pillow cases she has embroidered with mostly floral designs in satin stitch. She also crochets, learned from her mother. She has some old worn quilts made by both her mother and her grandmother. The grandmother's quilt is a simple piece of faded striped, heavy denim quilted with batting in-between. It looks very functional. She has a crazy quilt made by her mother with some very tiny scraps worked in. She said her mother would have a paper rectangle cut out as a pattern and would lay the strips on it, sew them together, and then cut off the excess fabric on the pattern to make an even rectangle. This quilt had flower sacks for backing. Pauline described how she made many quilts for her family's use after she got married. She used to go and quilt at her mother's house. She has been quilting most of her life. Since 1990 until this past May she quilted with her sister (15 years older) Allie Mae King. They developed a business quilting tops for people, all word of mouth clients. Pauline has a large frame suspended from the ceiling in her living room. She and her sister figured that it takes 80 hours of combined work (40 hours each) for them to quilt a regular sized quilt. Her sister became ill and is currently unable to quilt. Pauline is doing lap quilting now. She has made quilts for her children and grandchildren. She had about a half dozen of her quilts to show me, which I photographed. This includes pieced tops and pr-printed tops. She mentioned that her sister-in-law, Lorraine Clarke (912-283-0792, Central Ave., married to her brother Wilber) also pieces by hand, as does her daughter. There is a fabric store in Hoboken—I suspect an active quilting and sewing community.

Pauline is also a rich source for women's lore and oral history of Primitive Baptists and the role of women. She mentioned that the man is the head of the household. She has been a lifelong PB (Crawfordite). In her childhood there were 18 churches in the association. She described the annual "Big Meeting", held in Sept., when everyone brought a lunch and then would spend the night near the church. The families who lived close to the church would prepare lunch the next day. Her family served as many as 100 people. She remembers sleeping under the dining room table with a whole row of girls lying on quilts. The boys slept in the barn; took quilts and threw them over the hay. The women got up at 4 a.m. to fix breakfast and lunch for the guests. 5 to 6 women would

help cook. They left church early to start cooking the lunch. She has a story about making two large pots full of dumplings.

Her brother, Wilber, is the one Clarke referred me to about wooden boats. Her daddy used to make boats. She remembers them heating gum from pines to seal the joints and cracks in the boat. He also used to build fish traps (illegal) out of strips of wood. The traps would look like a cone. He would put them in the river and catch fish for the Big Meeting. He would always fatten up a cow about 6 weeks before hand. The ice man would come, and they'd wrap the meat in fertilizer sacks, cover it with saw dust, and store on ice.

She had no radio in her house coming up. Her husband, Leon, joined the church when Clarke was about 8, and as long as he was a member (ca. Another 9 years or so) they had no radio or TV in the house. She said the man is the head of the household, and the church will tolerate these things if the husband is not a member, even if the wife is. They now have a large screen TV. She has left the church after the split over sacred harp. She said she tried to stay in it for a while, but it just didn't seem right. She said if she was a member of a church, she wanted to abide by its rules. She now goes pretty regularly to the Hoboken sings.

I took pictures but did not record. I need to go back and do that. Pauline Lee is a good talker. Her husband Leon is evidently a fine coon hunter but he has trouble with balance now so he doesn't do it much. Used to raise dogs.

Hoboken Sing

Small attendance. Tollie's family were out of town. Few young people except David and Clarke's kids, and David was discouraged. He said the tradition was going to die because the younger generation wasn't coming. He asked me again about the grant and the museum idea: he really wants to have some record of the singing in the community. He has several friends who are legislators and feels he can get money from them for such a purpose.

Cathy Lee requested a song (I need to get name from the tunebook) that Clarke and David sing together like they used to. It was slow and much more noticeably ornamented, and both men got choked up singing it. Cathy told me later after I asked that that was the first sacred harp song she had ever heard them sing, and she fell in love with David and his voice.

Dr. Willard of Loma Linda, CA (father of Keith) came up to me afterward and asked if the university was doing anything to preserve this music, and did I know how unique it was. Evidently there has been some technical trouble with the CD that Keith is working on. Willard mentioned that while the revival sacred harp was social and secular,, this was a form of worship, and the groups in Minnesota and CA that the Willards are associated with are changing over to a more religious experience as a result.

The video of David's singing school in Seattle is now available for sale. Need to get a copy.

Field Notes 2-27-99, Mt. Zion Music Hall

Jimmy Watkins, guitar, vocals, fish lure collector and maker (son of DC): 263-9777, beeper 249-3845

Joe LeBlanc (Canajun) (fiddle, accordion, guitar, mandolin)
4857 McMillan Rd. Site 39
Ochlochnee, GA 31773
912-228-9520
leblanc@rose.net

Thomas Hale (rhythm guitar, vocals)
901 E. Walcott St.
Thomasville, GA 31792

Lazy Lynn Robinson
WTUF, 106.3, Thomasville
bluegrass radio show Sats. 12-3
912-225-1663 (or 1063--can't read my writing)

Went to the music hall tonight particularly to hear Bud Zorn on fiddle, but it was a productive night in terms of leads. The place was packed with musicians--perhaps more than audience. Mr. Watkins has doubled the audience seating since I was there last, and put in new speakers--some near the stage and another set halfway back in the hall. I arrived about 7:30. Set up about 5 rows back, and as a result probably got more crowd noise than anything. Mr. Zorn's spoken comments didn't come across the PA well at all.

I ended up recording three things:

1. set with Bud Zorn on fiddle and Tommy Hale on rhythm guitar. Bert Rutland stepped in on electric bass. Mr. Zorn told me he and Tommy had been practicing, esp. some of his original tunes which no one knows. It was a rough performance in places: tempos got too fast, the accompanists didn't know the cord changes--but on the hoedown numbers Bud still has chops. He must have been a fine fiddler in his prime. He brought me tapes and video tapes of his playing. His set was 7:30-8. Tommy Hale, from Thomasville, has played with Henry Rutland and Pullen Grass. He has been in s. GA 25 years, originally from the Blue Ridge of Virginia.
2. Set with band "4 Hire" with Joe LeBlanc (fiddle, squeezebox, mandolin, vocals), Bert Rutland (bass), Fred Bostick (Valdosta lawyer not native to s. GA) rubboard, mouth organ, vocals; Tommy Hale, rhythm guitar, tenor vocals. I bought one of LeBlanc's cassette tapes of his playing. His repertoire includes a number of Acadian tunes from

Canada. He is French Canadian (Acadian) from New Brunswick. Did a little interview while filling out the data sheet. Has just moved to Ochlocknee within the last few weeks from Live Oak, in order to be closer to his picking buddies. He has come later in life to music. He played a little guitar before coming south in 1986. He stayed from 1986-91 at the Suwannee Music Park, and there he "got the bluegrass bug." From 1991-99 he was in Tallahassee. He is a carpenter. At the Suwannee Music Park he heard lots of artists coming through, would make tapes of them, and go home and practice. His mentor on Cajun tunes and squeezebox was "Papa Joe," an elderly Cajun staying at the music park. For LeBlanc this is like going to his roots in a way. He plays a number of Canadian Acadian tunes, esp. fiddle tunes. These he heard growing up and has learned some from recordings. His uncle on his step-father's side in Canada was a fiddler and Joe backed him and others on guitar. He is definitely a novelty in this region--the crowd at Mt. Zion really seemed to like the accordion. There is nothing like it here. He hopes to exploit this niche. The trailer park where he and his wife just moved (Sweetwater?) is starting a every second Friday show at the campground with a 5 dollar cover. He also is marketing his tape through the manager of the park who books a lot of RV clubs. The Cajun stuff didn't sound very authentic rhythmically since none of the musicians around here really know that style. Joe can't play his Canadian jigs either, for example, because no one knows how to back them up. The repertoire of the group now is a mix of Cajun, bluegrass, novelty numbers by Mr. Bostick, and bluegrass gospel. LeBlanc (who speaks French) calls his style "Canajun."

3. I was getting ready to go and had said greetings and thanks to DC Watkins when he told me that there was a lot of bad music on stage--the really good stuff takes place in the jam sessions in the back room. This is often true, and I hadn't recorded there before. There was quite a banjo picking session going on, so with the impromptu assistance of Robert Lester manipulating the mike stand to better record certain solos, I recorded some of this. Lester is quite knowledgeable about local musicians--evidently played a little himself or sang, but a small stroke has made his voice soft and he doesn't do this anymore. Runs Lester appliance in Valdosta. Home phone: 242-7335). He told me, for ex., that Vassar Clements worked in the Clyattville Paper Mill for a time. The session included Hugh James, a NC banjo player who is currently teaming up with CE Pullen, Robert Byington from Clyattville area (banjo) who is with a band called Georgia Five; Earl Rowe (banjo--no info), Dick Cutforth guitar (no info), Jon Banister and Billie Joe Tuten (guitars, Thomasville), Curt Pitman (Madison, mandolin). Lester mentioned the bluegrass show by Lazy Lynn Robinson, WTUF 106.3 (Thomasville) which airs Sats. 12-3. I have heard him once--very down home style, local sponsors, lots of local info. Evidently he has played some of LeBlanc's tape on the air. There was a sign for the station hanging from one of the music stands on stage. Lazy Lynn is a friend of Mr. Lester's. Phone #: 912-225-1663 (is this on air number??). Lester also mentioned Gurdine/Burdine Stanley as musician with lots of good contacts. Is he the one who left a message on my machine after the piece in the Valdosta Times a year ago??

4. Got some interesting info. from Jimmy Watkins, who was wearing his police uniform. I gather his beat is Pavo. He said he would help me track down Roi Westberry, the cane carver in Pavo. Jimmy said he thought he saw some canes in the MiniMart in Pavo.

Jimmy himself collects antique fishing lures and makes his own. Phone 293-9777, beeper 249-3854.

March 17, 1999 (Moultrie, Colquitt County Overview)

1. Colquitt County Arts Council

Visited Moultrie as part of prep. For the Exploring Community Heritage Workshop. The Colquitt County Arts Council has a tremendous facility with at least a 4-person administrative staff. Jane Simpson and Connie (Marketing Director) were my contacts. Both are natives of Moultrie—both seemed very receptive to the SGFP.

Items of interest:

****new initiative in Colquitt County in partnership with city: Making a Difference for Georgia's Families, based on 1998 Report for the GA Policy Council for Families and the Family Connection. The exact direction of this vis a vis arts and humanities is yet to be determined but the Arts Council is on board. The initiative is based on building on successes of other GA counties with single parents, literacy, abuse, at risk children, etc, but I can envision some sort of community building through arts or family folklore type project.**

****they are expanding the building, also have their own entertainment series separate from ABAC now**

****cultural tourism efforts in Moultrie have no real momentum or focus yet**

****serve two rural counties as well as Colquitt—Baker and Mitchell. Are beginning to take more services/programs out to these communities**

****Connie who does theater is interested in developing some sort of local history play**

****Connie mentioned that the cultural events in the auditorium (part of their series) except for a few very popular musicals usually only attract about 75 people**

****facility is located in the more white, upper middle class part of town in a former HS building (probably a "white" HS)**

****the recent Community Assessment and cultural plan for 2000 and beyond (facilitated by Danielle Withrow, Community Ventures, PO Box 1740, Forest City, NC 28043, 828-453-8228 doesn't seem like a "complete" document at this point (recall Fitzgerald/Ben Hill and Tift/Arts Exp. Station also participated—a 5-county group). Looking at focus group comments diversity and accessibility seems to come up frequently. They have an interesting start with an exhibition done fairly recently called In Living Color—Our Changing Community. The photographer was Wayne Odum, not a professional photographer. Works for Southern Powder Coating. The idea was to address the increased diversity of Moultrie's population which includes migrants (Mexican, Central**

American, Haitian, perhaps other Latinos), Asian (mostly restaurant business, Chinese and Japanese), and Indian (Patels in restaurants and hotels), in addition to European American and African American. Jane noted how different the demographics were from when she grew up. The text panels and photos are now at the Colquitt Co. Historical Museum (Marty Steiner?). Possible idea to do something in depth with oral interviews and schools on Making Moultrie Home, etc.

**spoke of a Chinese woman, recent immigrant, part of their grass roots board, and experience with customs surrounding recent birth of her child. She initially was very negative about them having a western style shower for her (you mean people come and bring you gifts?) but evidently has recently changed her mind

**contact on Hispanic/Migrant is Cynthia Hernandez, on the Arts Board, works with Dept. of Labor

**local visionary artist: OL "Geechee" Samuels, former boxer, worked in lumber business, now lives in Tallahassee, has exhibited various places. Photographed muscle man (?—in Jane's office) and Sick Cow (wood, gift of artist to Arts Council)
Web page—<http://www.ar.com>
e-mail OL Samuel.yahoo.com
www.artlister.com

2. **Johnny B. Bright Video Services, retired posatal worker, author, historian
913 12th Ave. SE
Moultrie, GA 31768
912-891-3827

Specializing in African American videos for Schools, centers and other events:

1. Oyotunjo African Village in SC
2. Ibo's landing in SC
3. The Buffalo Soldiers
4. Black Indians
5. Black Cowboys
6. Slave Islands in W. Africa
7. The 54th Massachusetts
8. Family Across the Sea (video No. 8 is about my family's histrical findings in West Africa. I was over there two times. From SC and GA.)

He is Evidently of Gullah and NAI background.

2. Mexican connection

Saw a couple places, restaurant, taqueria while driving into town. There is evidently one Mexican restaurant I didn't see. Ate Lunch at La Fogata on Tallmadge and 5th Ave. Very much a white persons restaurant. Interesting take over of a classic looking "cracker"

house. Family business. Owner is from Michoacan, has been in Moultrie 8 years. First came to Atlanta and stayed over in Moultrie on his way to Panama City. Thought the town had room for a restaurant. My waiter is his cousin, from Mexico City. Velvet paintings, sombreros, sarapes on walls. Had standard Mexican fare plus some pork, shrimp dishes. Something with Tampico and Sinaloa in name.

Stopped at L---- ? Mexican store (see slide) and chatted with owner. Forgot to write down his name. One of his workers, Maria de los Angeles (didn't get last name) works at the lunch counter. They sell a lot of taquitos of tripe, etc. (more traditional fare), barbacoa, and menudo on weekends. She was making tortillas de maiz with a tortilla press. We chatted. She has been her two years. Other family include her children and nephews and an (ex?) husband. She seemed to like it—said the work was good.

Info on musicians from the owner of the store:

Flyer for Promos Santos on window. Bringing in a band from Mexico. Took photo.

Spanish lang. Radio: WMGA 580 (586?) AM , Moultrie
WUFE 1260 AM, Baxley

This on a card for Promos Santos, Tifton, GA They have a salon in Tifton, evidently live in Omega. (the other contact for Omega is Luz Marti in Tifton—see my files or Syd)
Thinks there are some local musicians in Tifton/Omega.

Santos
196 Deese Rd.
Omega, GA 31775
H-528-6286
Club 382-1555

3. Walked into the area just NW of downtown, seemed to be a black section. Driving further NW passed some brightly colored but run down shotgun houses in black neighborhood. Connie at Arts Council told me about the checkers tables behind Starkie's Cab. The men sitting there shooting the breeze weren't checkers players, but I took their picture anyway. There were some murals across the street—religious subjects and MLK theme. Need to ask who did them. Located on NW 1st St.

The OK Barber Shop (NW 1st Ave) windows caught my eye—nice window painting of black hair styles. Evidently the man who did it has since left. Proprietor James Weeks (maybe in his 40s) was giving a young man a haircut. Once I broke the ice he was friendly, said I'd just missed the checkers players who play in the back of his shop. More comfortable than outside usually. There are checkers tournaments with teams from nearby towns, including Albany and Valdosta. He played checkers this past weekend with the seniors at Wade's Barbershop in Valdosta—also mentioned another one behind welfare office. Thinks the checkers thing was started in the 80s by a man in town.

4. Lots of produce stands on RT. 133 from Valdosta to Moultrie through Morven. Also State Farmers Market in Moultrie. And site of Sunbelt Ag. Expo. I noticed a cotton and peanut gin as well, and quail plantations. The latter is evidently where the old money is.
5. Ellen Payne Odum Genealogical Library at Moultrie Public Library. Result of 1 million bequest in mid-1970s. Run by Beth Gay who moved to her Husband's family home of Moultrie in 1981. She originally from Jacksonville, FL of Scottish roots. A member of various clans, including the Donalds. Her clan connection has resulted in the library being a major repository for clan geneology. Beginning with Donalds in 1976, library has now records of 108 clans. Other groups represented as well, such as Cherokee Federation.

She hosts the Scottish Weekend (sponsored by library and 1st Presbyterian in town) which celebrated its 9th anniversary in 1999. She also puts out the Family Tree, a monthly international genealogical publication which caters heavily to things Scottish but includes other groups as well. She is a wealth of information about the self-consciously "Scottish" groups in area and about her own family heritage (including foodways) and about the Celtic heritage in the South. She does radio and free-lance writing as well, including writing for Moultrie Observer and GA Times Union. The local community is not interested in or supportive of her events—few locals come to Scottish Weekend, for ex., which had representation of 35 states this year. Her husband's cousin? Roscoe Gay, a big farmer in the area, caters an southern style dinner with seafood (I presume fried) and cheese grits.

Contacts and Info from Beth Gay:

Savannah SAMS pipers (see copy of newspaper)

Culloden, GA, (middle GA) since 1995 has sponsored highland games (began in conjunction with 250th anniversary of Battle of Culloden in Scotland). Contact: Sherri Ellington, 770-358-0754. Other than Tallahassee, this is the nearest Highland Games in GA

Centerville/Warner Robbins, Centerville VFD Pipe and Drum, 4-5 years in existence, come to Scottish Weekend

Eric Duncan, Savannah, Scots-born musician, entertainer (vocals, guitar)

Nearest bagpiper in Tallahassee, Tallahassee Pipe Band, John Love bus. manager

Celtic Irish Studies at Georgia Southern, PO Box 1993, Statesboro, GA 30459, Dr. N. Kemp Mabury. Had third annual Irish music festival in 1999

As a genealogist she is interested in family stories and knows a number of her own. Migration from Scotland through Augusta, GA, with connections in Cherry Lakes, FL eventually (family farm) dates to her great great great grandparents (her grandmother

Annie MacDonald was the great granddaughter of immigrants) She has various family heirlooms (include. Quilts, afghans, stitchery) and knowledge of family recipes (mentioned dressing, pot roast, cabbage, pound cake, liver and onions) Did a family cookbook.

Also mentioned Ludlow's Porch radio show, 9-12 daily on various stations, out of Cummings, GA. Bob Hansen, originator, has books, etc. Some relation to the late Louis Grizzard. Beth goes up and does a genealogy call in on his show.

March 19-21, 1999

All-Day Sacred Harp Sing and assoc. activities, Hoboken

Mar. 19

Note: spelling is Kathy Lee for David's wife, Elvera Lee for Silas' widow.

Stopped by at David and Kathy Lees, per an invitation from David that folks would be gathering at their house Friday night. Kathy later told me that she had never intended to have so many people--it was more to be dinner for her out of town guests and a place for other folks to gather as they arrived. Instead it became a full-scale dinner with socializing and singing (mostly around the dining room table) for at last 50+ people. I took a layer cake. Kathy, fortunately, had planned ahead enough that there was plenty of food. She was raised in Folkston as a Missionary Baptist. They have been married 20 years. She met David through his cousin, with whom she worked, and their first date was to a Prescott Family sing. She learned how to prepare food for such crowds from her mother in law, Delorese. Delorese's expertise as a cook came up again. Ramona Lee, also, was new to preparing food for such large crowds when she married Tollie. Ramona was raised Methodist in Homerville. I wonder if this kind of food-based hospitality is tied to the Big Meetings of the PB church earlier in the century. Remember Pauline Lee talking about having 100 people stay at their home which was closest to the church? There was a lighter supper and more singing at Carolyn (Lee) and Jimmie Carter's on Sat. night, and this morning there will be lunch and more what I overheard David call "soft singing" at Johnny and Delorese's.

The sing attracted folks from at least 20 states: GA, FL, AL, IL, DY, MN, TN, OR, VA, NJ, NY, PA, NE, IN, CA, MI, MD, ME, MA. There were 200-300 people there with each section fully powered by strong singers. The sheer force of sound was overwhelming. Both David and Clarke became overwhelmed with emotion at various times--I think because the singing was so strong, because so many people had come, and in some cases, when folks from Chicago and Minneapolis/St. Paul walked time when it was their turn to lead, as they had been taught in Hoboken-style singing schools. There

seemed to be a good crowd right at 9 a.m. when the sing started. All the out of town folks seemed to be in place. Locals came in later, including Elvera Lee, holding one of Ronnie Dale's walking sticks, escorted by Ronnie Dale's wife Adrienne.

Kathy was a nervous wreck about the dinner on the grounds, worrying that there wouldn't be enough food. As it turns out there was plenty, but she sent folks out at the last minute for big pans of green beans and greens from a restaurant in Nahunta. A group of men, spearheaded by Robert Johns and Wendell Hickox were out back with two big cookers going with chicken. The cookers were fired by oak and hickory wood. A marinade of lemon juice, margarine, garlic, worcester, salt was used--Johns recipe. They have done this the past two years as well. The meal was held in the school cafeteria. One long series of tables for main course and a separate one for desserts and tea, all served buffet style.

The sing lasted till 3:30. Amy Lee and a fellow from Alabama were calling out song records. Everyone was asked to register on cards at the door (manned by Rodney Carter and his wife), and to put on a nametag. ON the cards you marked whether or not you wanted to lead. At one point David came up and said to Amy, I wish Uncle Silas was here. Amy--So far we have leaders from 12 states. David, wonderingly, Who would have thought it?

In addition to a lot of northeast, Midwest, and western singers, guests included some of the stalwarts of Alabama traditional sacred harp singers: the Wooten Family, Tommy Spurlock and Stanley Smith from Ozark Alabama, folks from Henegar, AL. Need to check some books for other names and key areas for singers. Buell Cobb was there, also Kelly Day. JohnBayer and his family of Brethren--Old German Baptists from Dayton. John has just put together a tune-book, instruction book for kids on sacred harp.

Steven Levine from MN. Joked when he led that he was from Hoboken, MN.

Susie Jacobs had another nice bulletin board history of sacred harp up on the wall. Need to get with here about this history, newspaper clippings, etc. There was a humorous singing dust gag in the back with mocked up pictures of Tollie and David--took a picture.

Sat. evening folks gathered at Carolyn and Jimmy Carter's from a light supper and more singing. I arrived at 6:15 and left at 9:30. Some folks were leaving but Tollie had gotten a third wind and was leading another group of singers. I had my tape recorder in the middle of the table around which the singers gathered and recorded for about 2 hours. The evening took place outdoors, with tables set up and food in the larger workshed or garage that Jimmy is just finishing. Carolyn had sisters, etc. helping her with the evening's feeding of the multitudes. There were sandwiches, soups, horsd'oeuvres, desserts, salads rather than a full supper but it was plenty of food.

I spoke with Keith Willard a bit Sat. evening. He brought 50 early copies of the CD of the Hoboken All-Day sing in 1996 (Dec) which is selling for \$15 as a benefit to the Twin Cities sacred harp group. They have to rent their hall, etc., unlike groups in the South. David wrote a dedication. In Keith's intro. he speaks of a bootleg tape that began circling

in the sacred harp community in 1993 of the this group near Waycross that no one had heard of. They heard the group didn't sing with outsiders. Evidently Judy Hoff in Chicago has more info on this, and David remembers when the tape was made--check story--a cousin of his recorded it at someone's house? Keith said there are two types of sacred harp groups outside the south--those who really do anything they want and those who try to emulate and learn from the more traditional singers. There seems to be a trend of having singing schools led by some of the traditional southern families, such as the one David and Co. did last month in Minn. St. Paul. Keith told me they were hesitant to intrude on the Hoboken group because they heard that these folks didn't sing with anyone else (outsiders) but said he thinks that curiosity would have prevailed, and if Hoboken hadn't reached out, they would have been "invaded" eventually (Keith's word). I asked him about increased religiosity of the sings in MN after the Lee's involvement. He said he thinks they have allowed folks to feel more free in expressing the religious feelings aroused by singing. I spoke with three folks—Max from Maine and Keith and Steve Levine from MN about corresponding with me about interactions with the Lees from their perspective.

The prevalence of the Lloyd hymnal at the singings Fri and Sat. night surprised me. Suddenly all these Lloyd hymnals were popping out of nowhere from folks from all around the country. I wonder if the AL folks sing out of it regularly? Need to check. I assume so. Jerry Wooten commented to Tollie once last night about how slow something went. I eventually had my recorded in the middle of the table around which folks were gathered and recorded about 2 hours of Lloyd hymnal singing and Cooper book. Tollie seemed tireless---just kept singing. The Lees and Wooten family were the key forces in the inner circle of singers.

According to Joyce Cauthen, whom I met on Sunday, the Wootens do sing out of the Lloyd hymnal. She mentioned the interrelationship between sacred harp and PB hymns in general. If that is so, why is it that the Lees et. Al. Have such a distinctive style? On Sunday I learned, first from Joyce and then from David, that last Wed. Philip Reeves and his father (perhaps others from Nathalene) came to Tollie's house and demanded that he repent or leave the church. Must get this from Tollie. According to David this is now a third split, since Phillip etc. aren't communicating with the High Bluff contingent. I wonder about the folks at Sardis as a possible fourth split? Amy Lee reported that her dad is preaching at New Hope or some such church in se. GA—need details. High Bluff and the split seem all the more tangible when you drive past it on the way to Johnny and Delorese's beautiful home on High Bluff Rd. I overheard David tell someone from the MN group on Friday that his grave site is at High Bluff and something about sacred harp on the stone. He drew a little map showing her where to find it. David told me he was in High Bluff not long ago. He said it felt the same to him, and he still believes the same as he always did, that hasn't changed. They would take him back if he went. But the price would be giving up his friends—he gestured to all the folks who had come to the sing over the weekend—and he didn't want to do that.

When I arrived at Johnny and Delorese's about 11:30 on Sunday you could hear singing from the driveway. A crowd was crammed into the living room or family room, centered around Sybil Wooten Adams, Tollie, and initially DJ Summerlin and his wife from

Pearson, GA. They sang out of a red hymnal (get name from notes), the Cooper book, and the Lloyd hymnal. At one point Tollie lined out some hymns from Lloyd's and did a spontaneous prayer in his chanting/singing style. He remarked simply, "this is who we are" at some point as well during the singing. Delorese Lee got very emotional as she was preparing lunch in the kitchen, with the help of her daughters, Kathy Lee, and childhood friend from Lakeland, FL who came up to help. She told me, "We've just been through so much in the past few years" referring to the split. Having the music and all the people there was very precious to her. David was in tears while Tollie was praying.

I noticed there were some of the Lloyd's hymns that only the Hoboken folks seemed to know and others tried to follow along. I had the tape recorder on a table to the side, behind the inner core of song leaders. Got a verbal consent from all present for recording.

Met Joyce Cauthen and her husband Jim, and Charlie Brewer, music Prof. at FSU who does 18th century stuff but sings sacred harp. Also a teacher, Midge Olsen from Minneapolis who has a grant to explore southern root music traditions this summer.

We asked one of the Seattle folks about the drone. She said they did it at Seattle with about 30 people. There were 4 strong singers in the middle, and then a circle of treble, tenor, and bass each, move counterclockwise to each other. She said they formed a triad, each section taking a pitch. They were instructed in staggered breathing so the sound was continuous. Then the four singers sang the hymn. Keith Willard (from MN where they also taught it) said it felt "really old." This woman, whose name I didn't get, said it felt like a fountain of sound welling up when the 4 singers sang the tune in the midst of the drone. (I've ordered the Seattle video tape, which should have the drone on it.)

Food was fabulous. A buffet style with chicken and dumplings, chicken and rice (purlieu? Sp?), creamed corn, homemade yeast rolls, sweet potato soufflé casserole, to name just a few, and an assortment of cakes, banana pudding, etc. Three layer cakes seem to be common here. But Delorese's specialty is a one layer yellow sheet cake with fluffy white icing and fresh strawberries. Folks sat at the dining room table and outside in chairs and tables set up. I left about 2:30 p.m. Some folks were leaving but there were still some who weren't leaving until Monday.

David told me on Sunday that he considered me one of the locals now. "People will wonder where you are if you don't show up." That made me feel good.

This was a very well documented event. There were video cameras, tape recorders, mini disk recorders, and all sorts of cameras going all the time.

April 5, 1999, Cordele and Crisp County overview

--Cotton Museum in Dooley Co., I-75 exit 36 toward Vienna.

--Andersonville Trail—75 mile loop of "12 quaint towns and endless countryside"

--no historical organization in Crisp Co.

--Cordele Crisp Carnegie Library has a local history/genealogy room

--Cordele has a main street program

--centennial in 1989 included a history pageant, Arts Alliance has script

Traditional artist/folklore leads:

Arthur (last name?) woodcarver who works at International Paper, Arts Council did a show of him last year. Native of Cordele. European American. Makes walking sticks, animals from found pieces of wood.

Quilters—contact Sr. Citizens Center (273-1183) or Ann Livingston at Council on Aging (273-6510). Dianne plans an exhibition on senior citizens work

Ersine Weaver, principal at SW Elementary and on Dianne's board of directors. Contact for AA music in community. Dianne mentioned Miracles of Music and Nubian Voices.

Thomas Phelps, Hindju Graphics at 410 W. 9th Avenue, 912-273-6038, paints on gourds, has African items in shop. Was closed when I went by. Located in black section of town. He lives upstairs. Closed on Mondays according to sign on door.

Ken Lewis, extension agent, 276-2612

Old fashioned gospel sing contact for 1998 Watermelon Festival, Paula Lowery, 273-4038

Rusty Parker, fishing lures, H- 276-1738, works for fire dept. (ref. Chamber of Commerce)

Gene and Genia Gay
G & G Specialties
275 Gene Gay Road
Leslie, GA 31764
912-853-2713

fish baskets, oral history, tales, walking canes (gives presentations to elementary schools, Ref. Sonny Carr at Camper's Haven

Calvin Parker, fish Baskets, Leslie (ref. Sonny Carr)

Donnie Swearington, Warwick? (ties flies, fish lures) Ref. Sonny Carr

Danny's Melon Shed (trucks and melons, brokers, offices)
1815 Hwy 41 North
Cordele
912-273-2036
located out by State Farmers Market

Chamber of Commerce recommended Cecil Bagwell as watermelon farmer, 273-1841

Calhoun Produce (farmers market)

Two locations: 5075 Hawpond Rd., Ashburn, GA, 31714, 912-273-1887; or I-75 exist 30, east 6 miles. Flyer from Cordele Chamber of Commerce includes butterbeans, peas, squash, okra, tomatoes, peaches, corn, watermelons, cantaloupes, peanuts, strawberries, etc. Also carry jams, jellies, dressings, crafts, gift baskets, ice cream, and strawberry lemonade.

Striplings General Store
2346 Hwy. 300 S.
Cordele, GA 31015
912-535-6561

Located just north of Warwick in Crisp Co. but with Cordele address. Business features "whole hog sausage" and a new product-jerky. Other items at store but sausage is what they make themselves. Have about 30 employees at two stores. Second store, open 3 years, is located across from GA Veterans State Park. Founded by the late James Stripling 1962. Store was located on his family farm about 2 miles s. of Warwick. Now in new building north of town. Business currently run by James' brother, Jack, and Jack's son and daughter in law, Lisa and Rick Hardin. I spoke briefly with Lisa and took some pictures in the store. They make sausage on M and Th. Do mild, medium, and hot, using James' recipe. Serve a breakfast of sausage and biscuits and then their own sausage dogs.

Cordele, Crisp County Notes

Met with Dianne Langston, director of the Crisp Cordele Arts Alliance, a relatively new organization, formed in 1994. They really don't have a decent facility yet, but have been active in bringing in performances, sponsoring exhibitions featuring local and regional artists, and doing arts in education residencies. Dianne is not originally from Cordele. She was raised in Perry, spent 20 years in Atlanta, before coming as founding director of Cordele Crisp Arts Alliance.

Items of note gleaned from Dianne:

Population of Crisp Co. is ca. 20,000; 10,000 in city of Cordele. Racial ratio is roughly 50/50 black and white, with black ratio higher in the schools. The Hispanic population is transient. There is a small Asian Indian population of mostly professional people. The Methodists and Baptists are the dominant religious force in town. There is a Catholic Church, St. Teresa, with Fr. Raul Perez who does Spanish language mass. 40% of the adult population is illiterate. 50% of children who start 9th grade don't graduate. The US Dept. of Ag. Has designated Crisp and Dooly Co. an empowerment zone. This will bring a major infusion of federal dollars into the community to focus on economic development, education, tourism, and arts. Dianne wants to build a facility as a basis for arts development.

Major crop is watermelons. Also pecans, peanuts, cotton. Watermelon Festival (this is 50th year) takes place in July. Cordele is the "Watermelon Capital of the World." Popular varieties include crimson sweets, jubilees, Charleston Grays and Blackstones. In 1996 Crisp was the #1 watermelon growing county in the state, #4 in the country. Crisp

Co. is the largest concentration area of melons in the country (more melons go through the Cordele State Farmer's Market than any other market). Unlike the State Farmers Market in places like Thomasville, which has a couple retail outfits open year round, Cordele is a true farmers market, operating seasonally. Nothing was happening when I drove by. The watermelon festival will include a watermelon gala, watermelon days golf scramble, community wide worship service, 4-H youth dog show, Downtown Taste of Melon, Melon Decorating contest, Watermelon dance lessons, A Slice of Talent (sponsored by Arts Alliance), Mr. Melon (Men's beauty pageant), Watermelon Walk, Downtown Old Fashioned Gospel Sing, Watermelon Days Dance "The Fabulous Classics," seed spitting contests, parade, arts and crafts, horseshoe tournament, watermelon eating contest, etc.

Drove out to Camper's Haven, one of the fish camps along Lake Blackshear, a dammed section of the Flint River. Proprietor Sonny Carr had only taken over a year ago (268-9076).. Had spent 12 years across the river in Sumpter Co. Rich river lore along here waiting to be tapped. His business now is mostly jet ski type boats, pontoons, and fishermen. No longer sells bait—says there is no money in it. Makes his money with pool tables, liquor. Had catfish basket out front made by Gene Gay (see contacts list above). These wire mesh baskets are used for catching bream, catfish, and crawfish. Sonny told me that Gene could tell me about Arrowhead, I gather one of the older or bigger fish camps around? Used to be ferries crossing river here, now bridges.

Lake Blackshear is a major recreational feature of the area, located about 10 miles west of Cordele on Crisp/Sumpter Co. line. The Georgia Veterans Memorial State Park, on the Crisp Co. side, built in 1946 is, according to Dianne, the most visited state park in GA. Dianne mentioned that the Chamber of Commerce does fish fries out at Lake Blackshear for "groups who come in." The men cook—most work for the power commission according to Dianne. Menu is catfish, hush puppies with jalapeno peppers, cheese grits, Cole slaw, and watermelon.

April 24, 1999

Festival of Colors, sponsored by Black Heritage Committee, Okefenokee Heritage Center

Spent the day at this event, in part of network with and support members of the Heritage Committee. Gleaned some useful contacts and had an opportunity to meet and hear the McIntosh Co. Shouters, purchase the new book by Art Rosenbaum, and buy the Folkways tape on the Shouters.

Event was poorly attended, mostly by blacks. Concessions included fried fish and BBQ chicken, sweet potato pie, sweet potato pone, tea cakes, ginger bread. The actual roster of entertainment was not as printed in the program. Further, no ice cream making, no lye soap (wrong time of the moon to make, wouldn't set), and no quilters. The program

opened with a Maypole by local black school kids, to recorded accompaniment. I was told that last year the teacher was more organized, had the kids in suits and white dresses, and it was very nice. Then Willie Character sang some unaccompanied spirituals and explained briefly about the meaning of each. This was listed as “slave songs” in the program. Mrs. Cheryl Lott of Blackshear, who was supposed to bring Signers for the Lord, a gospel sign language group, sang unaccompanied since the group couldn’t come. She was very approachable and I think a good contact for Blackshear. She has a song ministry. H-912-449-4966; w-912-285-9663. Her home church is Zion Missionary Baptist, family has been in Blackshear at least since turn of the century. She helped me locate members of the Taylor family of turpentiners in Blackshear, along with another man whose name I didn’t get.

One of the other performance groups, Praise Team, was a group of youth who did motions to recorded music.

McKinney Community Health Center had an informational booth. Ruth Frazier, author from Tallahassee, read some of her stories. Many of these are on inspirational themes, trying to address social problems among youth. Frazier’s Books, 3211 Notre Dame Street, Tallahassee, FL, 32310, 850-586-8411.

The Shouters were the featured performers, called “Historic Performers” in the program. They did two sets. They had also performed last year. It was hot up on the wooden platform outside the train depot building, which served as a stage. The women are dressed in long colorful dresses with kerchiefs. The men in straw hats, jeans, white shirts. One of the women in the group serves as the emcee, interpreter. She talks about the history/meaning of each song. She also describes the shout and its context. It was interesting to see how each woman has her own style of dancing. Men did not dance. Men were the sticker, basers. Both men and women served as lead. One of the younger members has a terrific voice and sang a gospel song not part of shout repertoire. The Shouters said they are making a new recording, but the older one (from the 1984) is more authentic, with older, more traditional performers some now deceased. They have t-shirts and a bookmark as well. Their promo packet includes a video. Need to send for it. Evidently they are working on another documentary with someone. Perhaps as a result of participating in TATAP they didn’t allow any video recording or sound recordings. I was allowed to take photos. Their contact:

Carletha Sullivan
Route 1, Box 1917
Townsend, GA 31131
912-832-5826

The time to do the shout in Eulonia, Mt. Calvary Baptist, is Watch Night. They have various out-of-town visitors who have heard them perform around the country, so apparently that kind of activity is welcome. They invited all who were in attendance. They apparently aren’t worried about losing the tradition—Carletha said younger members of the church know how to beat the stick and dance.

OHC paid \$500 for their performances. Carletha Sullivan wouldn't be pinned down to a price for a possible appearance at VSU—wanted to hear our price and negotiate the best price we could afford. They travel together in a van.

May 11, 1999

Met with Black Heritage Committee at Okefenokee Heritage Center (Waycross) re. collaboration on African American music fieldwork for Okefenokee Traditional Music Survey. They meet second Tuesdays at OHC, but take summer months off. They agreed to assist, and we are meeting in a week to brainstorm. I think they were pleased, as this is an area which has not received much attention. They were also pleased with the prospect of an exhibition at the Okefenokee Heritage Center.

Committee founded 1994. Has developed exhibit on African Americans in Waycross at OHC, an 8th grade curriculum approved for use by Ware Co. Schools: Exploring the Past—A Survey of Black History in Waycross, GA, started Festival of Colors last year (Mrs. Maceo Johnson spearheaded), is working on a Black Veteran's Day program, etc.

Key players:

Willie Character, President, retired music teacher, b. Rome, GA, in Waycross since 1965. Taught in public schools, now teaches music apprec. At Waycross College part-time. Interested in photography, old hymnals. Ret. 7 years. Still not accepted as "local" but regarded as knowledgeable by committee.
1503 Buchannon St., Waycross, GA, 31501, h-912-283-4298; answering machine at OHC 285-4260.

Harold Smith, H-912-283-8427, photographer and saxophone player, played major bands around the country in 1960s and 70s. Mentioned that he learned from a few key individuals in Waycross, many deceased. 3-4 left, elderly, need to be interviewed soon.

Others in attendance today:

Vickie Leverage, Chamber of Commerce, tourism division (white)
Catherine Larkins, director
Ann Tweedy, former director, board member
Lewis Gray, retired military officer
NE Fluker, ret. Funeral director
Jimmie L. Williams (female), ret. Teacher
Lannie Fountain, ret. Teacher

Note: board member Larry Purdom is reporter for Waycross Journal Herald

Another contact: Howard Potts, Waycross College, has Ph.D., done work on black culture around Waycross--check

Information gleaned:

Waycross had a vital, almost self sufficient black community from 1912-1940s. 100 black businesses with Oak Street as the main hub, own auditorium (McGraw). Negro Supplement to Waycross paper beginning 1940. Most of major black entertainers of day came through Waycross.

In 1865 Ware County had one of smallest black populations in the state (1 % I believe). Most of farmers were self-sufficient subsistence farms of GA crackers, virtually no slavery. Blacks came to work on RR, and in turpentine camps. Heritage Committee has researched a black census for 1870 which is in museum—small numbers, mostly domestics and farmers at that time.

Early black churches:

1869 Gaines Chapel, AME
1870, Antioch First Baptist
1872 King Solomon United Methodist
1883 St. John Baptist
1892 Macedonia Baptist
1892 St. Peter's Missionary Baptist.

The committee had difficulty gaining access and trust by some members of black community. Willie Character feels that clear guidelines about the goals of this project will help.

****Other leads for Okefenokee Music Survey**

Hovie Lister, of Georgia Statesmen quartet, (Atlanta?) involved with/ started ? shrine gospel sing (held in August); all night gospel sings started in assoc. with tobacco sales according to Willie Character. Lister in GA Music Hall of Fame, had a gospel group—GET MORE INFO. This event does not include African Americans. Now handled by a company in FL. Which books southern gospel talent from around the country. There is a local talent show.

Ralph Crews, treasurer of Cherokee Tribal Council with tribal grounds near Moniac/St. George. There was a St. George Pow-wow several months ago. Catherine Larkins and her mother attended. Cherokee name is Running Deer. Lives in Folkston. 912-496-2235.

May 13, 1999

Meeting with Syd Blackmarr, Christine Tibbits, Beth Nesmith, Arts Experiment Station, ABAC

Met re. the GHC grant to work further on needs assessment and planning for GHC workshop. Tifton/Tift County has active arts and historic preservation community. I noticed in the Tifton Magazine, latest edition,

Tifton Heritage Foundation which just did a tour of historic homes

Theater curriculum in schools which used theater to address/explore social issues. Facilitated by a theater educator from Atlanta

Main Street Program, past director Bruce Green, present director Julie Smith

Historic Preservation Commission, city/county appointed, chair Charles Steiner

ABAC has humanities and social science department

Agrirama, Kim Littleton, new director, Johnny Johnson, director of interpretation. Store is good source of local books on historic material and folklore. I took the tour again to take pictures of historic folk architecture. Buildings are a combination of historic structures which were moved there and historic reconstructions. Lots of school groups. A special option is a day of workshops with hands-on activities—cleaning and cooking in the houses, chores on the farm, working at sawmill, etc. 4th Sat. in April they work the turpentine still. The fellow working as an interpreter there (and in cooper shop) has been at Agrirama 14 years but learned everything on the job—no previous experience. Interpreters are mostly retirees. Somewhere I have a schedule of various activities of interest, which include a folk festival, fiddle jamboree, Wiregrass Opry, cane grindings in fall, etc. Exhibit on cotton at Agrirama had a 1996 map of major cotton producing counties in 1996. Heavy production in SW GA.

Luz Martí, works at Coastal Experiment Station, coordinates Hispanic Festival in Omega, 1st weekend in Oct. This coming fall is Oct. 9. Luz is Puerto Rican. W- 912-386-7069

Tifton Police Annual Gospel Sing, May 8 (picked up poster)

Contacts:

Peanut Growers Magazine has offices in the restored hotel complex downtown

Wiregrass Writers Group

Wiregrass Quilters (regional group)

Geraldine Cottle, basketmaker, not sure if trad. Or not, used to work at Agrirama, now works at Conger Gas Co.

Mark Dixon, sheep shearer/historian, Alapaha

Bob Porter, Blacksmith, Omega

Albert Culbreath, cowboy poet, fiddler

Frank Malloy, fiddler group, GA Ramblers

Otis York and Bill Nicholson, musicians, from earlier fw., still alive???

Tifton-Tift Co. Arts Council, has been part of Arts Experiment Station, which serves as an umbrella organization for cultural organizations in town, including the plans for the museum in restored Methodist Church (evidently that is stalled at present) Pres. Of Arts Council is William Bowen

The cultural plan for the year 2000 and beyond by Danielle (last name?) has not been completed. I gather there is a lot of emphasis on history and heritage tourism but not folklife per se. Asburn-Turner Co. folks remembered folklife project in their focus groups. Syd and Christine are enthused about the Heritage Corridor audio tour idea that I shared from Washington State. Syd and Christine are still consulting with Fitzgerald and are trying to link it with the Jefferson Flight Trail which goes from Richmond, VA to Irwinville, GA where he was captured (Jeff. Davis State Historic Site).

Dennis Coelho, (Sp?) did a staff development course at ABAC for teachers on folklife—intro to subject, how to research, how to help teachers/students appreciate. Very well received. Contact to set up again would be Marianna Keese, curriculum director for Tift. Co. Schools, 386-6500.

Copies of the LC survey in 8 counties, 1976, at Arts Experiment Station in boxes. They have reel to reel tapes, plus master for Yonder Come Day LP. Some things may have been lost because so many things have been loaned. Originals at LC of course. Updated traveling exhibit in storage—they are willing to give it to SGFP. Syd feels that African American lore is an understudied aspect of region—also folk crafts. FW team for LC evidently felt not much here in that regard. The team spent 6 weeks doing fw. Beverly Robinson found it difficult to gain entrée into black community.

Barney, GA

Early peaches are in a Peach Festival at Morven is Sat., May 15. Two peach farms at intersection of 76 and 122 in Morven. Both have roadside sales operations, as do various stands in Morven and on Hwy. 94. Early peaches are Florida Kings. I stopped at Burton Brooks farms, operated for the past 30 years by John Dewitt. His daughter, Lynn Abbott (??) also was there and is involved in operation. Son has a farm down the road raising tomatoes and cucumbers. They used to sell blueberries, but they plowed them under this year—too hard to pick and make money. He is thinking of getting out of peaches. Took pictures at 4:00 when belts started up again for grading and packing. He has a crew of 60 now, sometimes it is as many as 100. They work for about 6 months. Crew appeared to be heavily Hispanic to me, with a few blacks (women on the line, men with forklift) and some family members or locals who were European American. Use a broker to ship to various markets. Season will last to mid or late July.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT—PRELIMINARY IDEAS SHARED WITH GROUP

--FIELDWORK, emphasis on African American

--centralized resource collection of books, videos, field materials, links to collections elsewhere in region or copies, perhaps ultimately linked via internet

--teacher training, perhaps using satellite uplink??

--traveling exhibits—identify suitable exhibits to bring to region as well as create new ones

--develop some model projects combining folklife with historic preservation; ex. James Horton and Gail Golden with Brooks Co. Schools Annenberg foundation Rural Challenge project; perhaps also Syd et. Al in Fitzgerald

--work on heritage tourism, heritage corridor ideas for region: possibilities so far—441 heritage corridor, Andersonville/Presidential trail, links to Fitzgerald, Wiregrass Parkway

--exhibit on Okefenokee Rim music as follow-up to Lila Wallace grant

May 15, 1999

Elder Frank Lee, Johnny's father, David's grandfather passed away within the week or so at age 91. He was part of the group responsible for the split and throwing David and Clarke out of High Bluff. Delorese mentioned at the sing that there were still some difficulties related to the split and Frank's passing. Frank's mother, Mary, was Georgia Butts' older sister.

Interviewed Georgia Butts, Catherine Larkins' great-aunt and one of the 14 children of David and Sinah Hickox who attended High Bluff Church and lived near where the

Blueberry Hill Restaurant in Hoboken currently is located. Georgia and her younger brother were really a second family, born when her mother was in her 50s, and so she really didn't know many of her older siblings. Mrs. Butts had a few memories of attending singing school in the Cascade School held by Martin Dowling. None of the folks interviewed have the kind of memories as are recorded in Snow White Sands, however, where there is a several page description of singing schools with Martin Dowling. Interesting that Martha Mizell Puckett talks about weddings as outcomes from sings, while Miss Georgia didn't ever remember going to a church wedding or anything out of the ordinary as far as wedding celebrations were concerned. She did have her parents' copy of the Lloyd Hymnal (1927 edition) which had been given to her by some relatives. Hers was evidently not a family really involved in singing except at Big Meeting. She didn't remember singing at home at all of any kind. Whereas Catherine Larkins and other family members present at Miss Georgia's 88th birthday party in the evening, perhaps closer to the Lees, all remembered singing in their childhoods. One of the things that intrigued me was her recollection of a music teacher at Hoboken HS (or secondary school, 8th-12th grade, she left school and married at 17). There was a piano, and they marched into class each morning. I wondered about the use of piano vis a vis hardshell beliefs, but John Crowley commented that even by this time the Crawfordites weren't in the majority (Miss Georgia was born in 1911, so would have started school in Hoboken around 1923 or so).

I'm not sure of family relationships, but those present were off-spring of one of Miss Georgia's 13 siblings. For example, Milton Craven, who now in the past 10 years or so has picked up bass guitar and plays with a gospel quartet in Blackshear—the Palmetto Quartet, said that by the 1930s the singing schools had pretty well died out. But all those of the older generation that I talked with (say 50s and older?) remembered sacred harp from their childhoods.

There was some discussion over dinner of Hardshell practices. Milton said they didn't believe in public gatherings or meetings in public places, so he imagined Silas Lee's singing schools held in public schools were not looked on favorably. They will hold family reunions in someone's home, but not in a public place. They attend nothing that is advertised.

Got some leads on music in the area:

Twin Oaks Park, High Bluff Road, Hoboken, just had their twice a year bluegrass festival the weekend before. Catherine Larkins said it was terrible weather. They get folks from around the country, evidently. The park is at Witmer Crews' old home place. He is a good contact for country and bluegrass musicians. Part of a bluegrass band himself: Flat Top Travelers with Witmer Crews, Karen Lee, Hubert Cox (fiddler) gives fiddle lessons out of the park. Hold bluegrass festivals in May and Oct.

Similar bluegrass park at Traders Hill in Folkston.

Revelators, bluegrass gospel group out of Patterson. Members include Robert Thorton and Laquita Boatright.

Woodsen Chapel on Tomlin Rd, minister Emerson Hayes (from Alma) is a good flat top guitar picker.

Harmony Boys Quartet, from Albany has a member from Hoboken or Waycross named Alton Harper. Group has TV sponsors in Camilla.

Banjo and other string instrument player lives on Central Avenue, member of Oak Hill Baptist Church.

Obediah's Okefenok will have bluegrass festival on July 3. This is a new event in area according to Milton Craven. 912-287-0090. They had a number of localized publications in gift shop, including two genealogy publications by Luther Thrift and Billy's Island by Eugene Velie. The property has an 1870 cabin, detached kitchen and most original outbuildings. The property was listed on the National Register in 1996. There is pavilion available for family reunions etc. at the entrance. Catherine Larkins said they are running on a shoestring. Have a pow wow on site as well.

May 18, 1999

Mr. Peanut selling boiled peanuts out of his truck on Corridor Z (white man)

Black Heritage Committee Leads

Catherine Larkins and Larry. Purdom (reporter for the Waycross Journal Herald) remember seeing black street corner musicians in the streets of Waycross during the 1950s, children buck dancing. That is all gone. Tenor of meeting started out with sense that tradition was gone, folks dead. Strong heritage of railroad yard, RR workers in Waycross. Recall worksongs by RR. Workers but these folks all gone—last one appears to have died recently—had a fruit stand, didn't get name. Waycross not a turpentine town, but a lot of smaller surrounding communities were.

Larry Purdom, Writer, Waycross Journal Herald, w-283-2244, h, 283-0264, 400 Isabella St., Waycross, GA 31501

A couple members of the committee were pretty insistent that I include "Negro spirituals" as the root of all present day music.

Leads:

Sessoms in Cogdale leads on turpentine camp oral history (note one of elder Sessoms just passed away last weekend). Same family has Sessoms Cattle Co. in Homerville. This pasture now filled with lumber.

July 4 celebration in Stadium, 4-9 p.m., bands, quartets, patriotic, gospel, Taylor Brothers quartet usually sings

Larry Purdom doing a 50 years ago column in paper, going through old issues. Bound copies from 1949-69 at paper; microfilm at library/college.

Lion's Club had minstrel show in 1950s

Harold Smith good lead for secular; hasn't played his sax since 1967, now full time photographer and President of Keystone Voters and Civic League in Waycross. Learned from Burney Cooper, still alive

Burney Cooper, leader of several local groups, deacon in church, played trumpet, piano, keyboard, photographer, chef. Splits time between Waycross and Savannah. Member St. John's Baptist

Gospel quartet leads:

Taylor Brothers out of Hoboken, around for 60-70 years, contact Rev. Taylor of Shiloh Baptist Church, 1700 MLK Drive, Waycross. Church phone 283-9700. This is family of turpentiners

Baxley has an a cappella trio of women, very good (ref. Willie Character)

Wandering Angels, has done some recordings, Waycross. Bishop E. Elder Williams, 11006 Byrd St., 287-1710, ref. Willie Character

McGauleys, Pierce Co., Blackshear (ref. Character, others on committee)

Jackson Family group, Dr. Andrew Jackson dentist in Waycross, work # 283-1340, 2009 Tebeau St.

Charles Lowd, "Mr. Gospel" had gospel show for many years on WAYX a.m. sponsored by Fluker Funeral Homes, now works for Metropolitan Insurance

Early black churches:

1869 Gaines Chapel, AME, 1st or 3rd Sundays, Rev. Bernard Benson, 801 Corridor Z (Reynolds St.), Waycross 31501 lives in Waycross: sings, plays, preaches. Plus pastor leads choir.. Mr. Character organist, 285-8489; (church secretary in mornings), pentacostal music influences, smaller Methodist, 1st Sundays (communion—largest attendance)

1870, Antioch First Baptist, 5th Sunday Union meeting??, 283-0190, Pastor ? , very small congregation

1872 King Solomon United Methodist, pastor commutes in, no phone in book

1883 St. John Baptist, Rev. Dixon, BHC member Mr. Grey. Is a member here; church 285-5904

1892 Macedonia Baptist, BHC member Jimmie Williams a member, also member of senior choir. Rev. Ferrell Malone, pastor, 702 Arnold Drive, Waycross, 912-283-8314. Malone is director of State Convention to be held at Macedonia in July—get date—begins third Monday in July and runs for a week? 11:00 service features senior choir. **perhaps best for Baptist music, check out Wed. or Tues. night devotionals, also prayer song service before actual 11:00 service begins

1892 St. Peter's Missionary Baptist., traditional, Rev. Mincey lives between Waycross and Valdosta, 283-0355, Pastor's residence, 487-2674

St. Paul Baptist another possibility

**January 1st, Emancipation Day, New Year's Day, parade, speaker in church

Watch Night, 10-12 p.m., some churches combine

MLK Celebration, January

Not much with Kwanza yet

November, a big month for Homecoming in various churches

July 11, 1999

Met John Crowley and his aunt Nell Parrish at High Bluff this morning to attend services. I would guess there were around 100 in attendance, at least half non members who sat in the back. High Bluff has a handicapper ramp, but other than that is a plain unfinished board and batten exterior, interior all unfinished wood, ceilings with open rafters, straight back wooden pews, wood floor, no ornamentation or religious symbols at all. There were nails for hats on the walls and on some of the rafters. At two of the entrances there was an enamel bucket with a dipper. I'm assuming this was just for thirst. Another similar bucket was up by the pulpit for foot-washing. Male and female members sat accross from one another as in other PB churches I've visited. It occurred to me that the unfinished wood interior enriches the sound of the acappella hymn singing. Windows have casements with glass panes, and shutters. All the windows were open today and someone passed out fans, since it was a very hot and sticky day. No one handed out extra hymnals as they do at the Bennetite churches.

Only three hymns were sung this morning. Elder Daniel Draudy actually read through all the verses out loud, which I was told later is mostly done at funerals. Then the first two verses are lined (really spoken, not sung here) and folks sing. After the first two lines, everyone rises and stands for the rest of the hymn. I could really only hear two parts, although there many have been more. Especially on the last hymn of the day I heard a lot of open fourths and fifths. Male deacons in the front row, including Wilson Wainright, lead the tune. The hymns were selected by the Elder and sung before his message. Ruth Lee mentioned later how she liked to seek out one of her brothers (can't recall which one)

across the room and sing against his part. Both Elder Draudy (who preached first) and Elder Herman Lee lined a hymn before preaching. Then there was a closing hymn.

During the prayer, as elsewhere the male members who are able and some of the women pray on their knees, turned around and facing the pew bench, with their heads resting on the pew.

When Elder D. got up to preach he had his hymn book and Bible on the top of the pulpit. Again, he paced back and forth the 5' or so of the pulpit area, stopping and leaning out over the pulpit slightly on each end, a white handkerchief in his hand. When he started to speak, it was in that soft almost singsong tone of voice that sounded remarkably like Tollie. He paces, waiting for divine inspiration on what to say, without any prepared remarks or notes. Elder D. did not sing once he got going, as Tollie does, but he did use a kind of pitched heightened speech, with the pitch rising as he warmed to his message. Then he would stop and speak softly again, raising pitch and volume slowly. This contrast had the effect--on me at least- of maintaining my attention. The cant-like nature of the speech, punctuated by "huh" or an intake of breath and occasionally spitting of saliva, made it difficult for me to concentrate on the words. One of the themes for the day was on the "one true church" and following the way of God not man, PBs being the best representatives of the true church. Elder Herman Lee had much more of a monotone. I found myself wondering if Herman sounded like his father Frank when preaching. Herman's text followed a theme of Elder D's on care of widows and orphans. Evidently he mentioned a story he heard from his father Frank about Greatgranddaddy Bobby? who was in the civil war, but deserted after he came home at one point and discovered that the man who was running the local commissary was taking advantage of the women, asking for certain favors before he'd sell to him. He told his commander that he didn't feel right about fighting so far away when the womenfolk back home were suffering. He deserted and the family relocated to somewhere in Florida between Orlando and Tampa to escape recapture. As Billy Lee said, I always knew he deserted but I never knew the reason. This was for a good cause. (Billy made a video tape a year ago at their family reunion of his daddy Frank, Aunt Georgia (Butts) and (Frank's sisters?) Mattie and Lottie telling stories and reminiscing.) Each preached for about a half hour. The service lasted from 11:00 until about 12:15--a blessing given the heat inside.

I noticed that the men did not wear ties (a worldly adornment??? check) and woman no jewelry, makeup, members with hair all put up so probably uncut. I recognized four of Johnny Lee's brothers before they even introduced themselves--there is a strong family resemblance: Eddie, Billy, Tommy, and Herman. Many people came up to speak to us afterward, some beforehand. The woman behind me introduced herself beforehand and asked if I'd ever been to a PB service before, using the word "Hardshell" to describe herself. John had called Elder D. yesterday to check on the time of the service (11:00, the Crawfordites don't observe daylight savings time) and told him I was coming, what I'm interested in. John thinks Draudy would talk to me--he was very interested in and complimentary of John's book. Evidently had read it and provided comments.

Wilson Wainright, the song leader who taught Clarke Lee, seemed perfectly happy with the prospect of talking to me about singing. I introduced myself and mentioned that I

recently had talked to Woodrow and Mary Wainright, Jerome Lee, etc. about singing. Jerome and he had been in singing schools with Silas Lee. Wilson is in his late 60s. Only with him did David and Clarke's name come up. He asked me if I'd been to the sing at Hoboken, and if they walked time. He has not been. He mentioned that the style of singing David does now with different people leading is more like they saw when they visited these other sings. I'm not sure how many times they've visited others--I'd have to find that out. He mentioned that they don't draw attention to themselves or the singing (I guess alluding to the newspaper coverage on sacred harp at the school--he had seen my name in the newspaper), and that they sing softer and slower than what's done now. They don't sing "so loud" is what he said. They still have sings--evidently there was one not long ago at Eddie Lee's home with about 25-30 people.

Wilson is interested in sacred harp notebooks and has a collection of them. He asked me later about the black sacred harp singers, and I mentioned the Colored Sacred harp, in which he was interested. He certainly seemed aware of other sacred harp traditions. He and Billy Lee had visited PB churches and some sings elsewhere in the late 60s (mentioned an Araby church near Cordele) so they must have known that other folks sang, making me wonder about David's assertion that he wasn't aware of others until 1994. He was aware that Silas had taken a group to White Springs but didn't go--another example of drawing attention, like David going public with the Hoboken sings. He told me I would be welcome to tape for my own research but I don't think they'd want any public access. I'll have to discuss this with him. Wainright is a butcher, in business now with his youngest son Troy. The business started with home sausage making by his father. We had some of their sausage at supper.

Billy Lee invited John, his aunt, and I home for dinner (what did they call it?) but John declined. I wasn't sure what I should do, but the invitation seemed genuine and I was curious. I did feel awkward, knowing what I do about the split, but Wilson at least must have realized I'd talked to "the other side." Anyway, I accepted the invitation, the only guest other than Lee family which included hosts Billy and his wife Barbara (marvelous cook--Billy had bragged on her at High Bluff) the oldest son Tommy and his wife Adelyne (sp?), Connie and Herman Lee, and Wilson and Ruth Lee Wainright. Then there were two grown sons, a daughter or daughter in law and a couple grandkids. While the dinner was being prepared Ruth, Billy, and ? showed me some photos from their daddy Frank's home, which family is now clearing out. They told me they'd lost their father in April and he was buried there in High Bluff. Among Frank's children and also with Wilson (who was evidently sort of a 6th son) I sensed strong love, admiration, and devotion to Frank Lee. If it was Frank who spearheaded resistance to the "new sacred harp singing" I could see how the strength of this devotion and the evident strength of his personality could cause a rift in the family. Among the belongs from Frank's home was a framed photo of High Bluff. They also showed me a framed photo of their parents, and Wilson reminisced about hearing their mother sing treble and Frank sing Tenor. Frank was evidently a born storyteller and liked to be the center of attention. He was a farmer by occupation. There was also a photo of Frank's parents, Raymond and Mary. I noticed the quick mind and joking nature I've found in Johnny especially in his brother Billy.

Not all the women helped Barbara cook, and evidently she made pretty much everything. The dinner was served buffet style: fresh garden tomatoes and cucumbers, potato salad, some sort of field pea, green beans, butter beans, creamed corn, fresh okra, turkey, white rice, turkey gravy served near the rice, meatloaf, Wilson's sausage, biscuits. For dessert there was peaches and poundcake or blueberry buckle, with dream whip or ice cream. I sat at the table with the elder generation, and the sons and kids were at another table.

I noticed a handsome embroidered quilt in one of the bedrooms. The embroidery was done by Barbara's late mother, Flora, who was evidently quite skilled. Barbara quilted the cream colored squares with a border of kelly green. Barbara's half sister Blanche Aldridge is evidently quite a seamstress--quilts, crochets, knits. Miss Flora died with a quilted block in her lap--the piece is framed and hung in the living room. Adelyne Lee is neighbors with Leslie and Myrtie Highsmith, parents to Tina Rowell who manages Obediah's.

I felt awkward during the afternoon just because of my knowledge of the split, and my pain for them all that this has happened. Everyone was gracious and friendly, and they all share so much. It is more powerful and poignant somehow, that David and Clarke could love the tradition so much that they have risked and lost the fold of this large family. Somehow, hearing about them all first through David's eyes, I didn't expect them to be so open and friendly, and actually approached the church with apprehension, not wanting to go in without John Crowley.

Okefenokee Traditional Music Survey

One Day of Fieldwork in Baker County (Florida)

Thursday August 26, 1999

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Researcher: Jon Kay

P.O. Box 376

White Springs, Florida 32096

8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Telephone:

Home: (904) 397-2201

Work: (904) 397 4462

Mileage

Begin 180527

End 180734f

Total 207

Notes: Laurie, sorry this is so late and there really is not much to it. I only spent one day doing fieldwork and hoped to return to follow up on these contacts. You do not have to pay me for the one day since it is so late and produced so little. I spent the day asking about local musicians talking with various leads and driving to various communities in

Baker County. Much of the county is part of Osceola National Forest.

Findings

The best contact was Watson Goodwin who works at City Hall in Macclenny. He is a local musician who has played music in Baker County all his life. His father played oldtime country and gospel music with his guitar. Watson continues the family tradition of playing older styles of popular country music. He and his musical friends play at local events. He performs and organizes a county fish fry for senior citizens each May/June out at Ocean Pond in Osceola National Forest.

Goodwin has played with many local musicians. He recalls two musicians that he performed with in the 1950s that were carry-overs from the older musical traditions. Kossie Mizell was a noted oldtime fiddler in Baker County. He played at frolics and other musical gatherings in Baker County. Once the musical tide shifted from dance tunes to the oldtime country music popularized by Ernest Tubb and Hank Williams, Sr. the fiddler played backup for the emergent local country bands. A contemporary of Mizell, Ray Prevatt played lead guitar at these local dances. Both Mizell and Prevatt passed away many years ago but the guitar players son Vernon Prevatt would be a contact on life and music of these local musicians: (904) 259-6800.

The best known Musician to make the southern edge of the Okefenokee Swamp his home was Chubby Wise. Wise was a fiddler for Bill Monroe and was perhaps Florida's best known and most influential fiddler. In fact, he helped define the bluegrass sound. This musical legend was from Lake City Florida but retired to Macclenny. Although in waning health, he continued to play music in the region. He played with local guitar players such as Goodwin; in fact, Goodwin became Wise's friend and brother in faith at St. Mary's Church. Goodwin, Wise, and a second fiddler, Robert Combs, played together at church.

On the surface it appears that most of the musical styles in Baker County are based on gospel or oldtime country. More detailed time is needed to talk with the locals about the music in everyday life. In my whirlwind, one day search I was pointed to the local musicians, most of whom play contemporary, self taught and/or popular music. I am sure that just beneath the surface there are many that remember the frolics, singing schools, ballad singing on front porches and the older musical forms.

Additional Contacts

Ernie Anderson at Mud Lake plays bluegrass and country. (904) 275-3430.

Jimmy Burton sings oldtime country (904) 275-3430

Gene Barber is a possible contact he works at the Baker County Press and writes on local history and heritage arts.

Contact at the Baker County Historical Society —David Richardson (904) 259-2049
Mr. Richardson is the Baker County Clerk of Courts and knows a lot about local heritage,

but not specifically about traditional music. The hours for the Historical Society are by appointment only.

Carlton Thomas is a senior that went to frolics around the lower edge of the Okefenokee Swamp. I talked with his son in a local antique store in Macclenny. His son said that he would enjoy talking to someone about it. I did not actually talk to Thomas.

Barbara Yarborough at the Tax Collector's Office is a contact on contemporary Christian and local country and pop groups. She lines up the local performers for the County Fair.

Dan Gibbs is an African American gospel singer at the Baker County Agricultural.

Christian Fellowship Temple has local gospel music every 5th Sunday night.

Support Information

There is a series of books on local history by LaViece Moore Smallwood entitled *Once Upon a Lifetime*. In the series, she writes about local families and significant events. These books are in the Baker County Library.

10-2-99, Saturday

The annual Billy's Island Reunion was yesterday at a picnic shelter across from Registration at the Stephen Foster State Park, Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge. I arrived about 10:30 in the morning and only Bernice Roddenberry was at the shelter. She had stayed in one of the cabins with daughters Debi Todd, Judy Drury, and grandkids since Thursday night. Mrs. Roddenberry had a photo album with pictures from the Billy's Is. Reunion since its beginning in 1989 (over the phone she told me it started in 1986) and shots of Chesser's Island and her family, many from Harper photos copied from a National

Geographic article which used Harper's photos. Mrs. Roddenberry and another lady (get name) born on Billy's Island started the reunion. She said she wanted to meet some of the other people born there, and approached the other lady to see if she would help her organize a reunion. This woman was not there today. For this reunion, Judy Drury helped her mama organize things.

The event was basically a potluck, although several of the families seemed to use it as a kind of family reunion. There was no formal program and no name tags, so people who didn't know each other (and there seemed plenty of those) didn't necessarily talk or share experiences. I kept asking Judy, Debi, and Mrs. Roddenberry if they knew all the people, and they said "no." There was also a guest registry of Mrs. Roddenberry's where folks signed in. I'd guess there were about 50 people there.

Thursday, Feb. 17, 2000

At the African American Studies 2000 lecture series tonight the featured artist was 1997 VSU grad Kuanita Murphy, who uses collage and assemblage to create pieces whose inspiration comes from her own family and community history and tradition (Cuthbert, GA) and from general research she has done with black history from the rural South. Her two main works so far are the Plantation Series and the Pumpkintown Series (the latter named for the black section of Cuthbert). The Plantation Series is based on research she has done on the plantation system and role of blacks in it. She has various buildings, from the Big House to the outhouse, smokehouse, barn, etc. and shows some traditions such as "jumping the broom" in her pieces. Each piece is accompanied by a story written in dialect. She told me that since the ex-slave narratives she has read use this dialect, she followed suit to keep it more authentic. Her stories are her own creations, based on what she has read and heard, which are designed to bring the pieces to life. In Pumpkintown she does use some family and community stories as a point of departure, but uses her own version and voice. For example, she made up a story about the birth of her (great?) grandmother, once she had researched the date of birth. One of the pieces here is the Primitive Baptist Church. The roof comes off most of her pieces so you can see the figures and activities inside. She recycles a lot of things: plywood, cardboard, etc. to construct her pieces.

There are several visual artists in the region whose work reflects southern African American work, life, tradition: Henry Gorham (?) of the Thomasville exhibit, from McCrae, Annie Green in LaGrange, the fellow who did all the RR murals, etc. in Moultrie, Charles Everett the sign painter (?) in Jakin/Donalsonville. Then there are carvers like OL Saunders (?) and George King. Might be the makings of a nice exhibit here.

Shirley Hardin has some of the Pumpkintown Series in her office which either she personally or AA Studies has purchased.

Friday, Feb. 18, 2000

This morning attended the 50th anniversary Ham and Egg Show breakfast at the new Convention Center. The show had its judging Tuesday morning this week, and then an auction of the country cured hams and eggs on Wed. afternoon from 2-4. I couldn't attend the auction, but I did attend the other events. There have been several good articles in the Valdosta Daily Times this week about the Ham and Egg show. This year they involved youth and 4-H to try to increase education and get some of the younger generation involved. Melva Morfaw and her son Therus Brown were there; Therus won the egg competition and came in 5th in hams. Evidently some youth purchased hams or had hams purchased for them to be involved in show.

Lowndes is apparently the only GA county which still has a show of this kind. The Ham and Egg show was founded in 1950 by the late county ext. agent John Saunders and the Black Farm Bureau. Now the event is co-coordinated with the Lowndes Improvement Assoc. in assoc. with Extension. The shows began as part of an effort to help black farmers improve the quality of livestock and home-produced meat. At one time they were curing their own hams; now, with government regulations, the butchering and curing are outsourced, so that the criteria for the judging (flavor, aroma, trim) are really out of the farmers' hands. Williams Meat Co. in Sparks is the primary place for these farmers to take their hams to be cured, also the Spicy Meat Co. in Ocilla. Youth were taken on a field trip to Williams. This company, according to John Baker, really emphasizes their sausage and other meat products other than ham, so careful curing these hams for farmers isn't a priority. Baker would like to see the local farmers band together in some sort of cooperative to have their own curing plant.

The extension office has some good historical photos in the files. Earlier on, the show included some entertainment, a parade, etc. At the breakfast this morning one woman recalled how they always sang "I'll Fly Away." Mr. JC Perry of Clyattville was recommended to me as someone who would know the history of the show and has been there from the beginning. At breakfast today Baker mentioned John Saunders and Paul Hughs as co-founders.

The 'Show' portion included judging in both categories by Dr. Hill for hams and Johnny Mixon/Brad Bush (according to program) for eggs. I didn't see the egg judging. I was told there were 52 hams entered; each family has a limit of four. At the auction, money is raised for the Lowndes Improvement Assoc. (Extension too???) and some goes to the farmers who entered the hams and eggs. The grand champion ham went for something like \$76/lb. Bringing in over \$900 dollars. Bids are made by many local businesses.

This organization is a good entry into black farmers in the area. I met:

Ivory Lucas, 45 years with Ham and Egg, family farm on Val Del Rd at Lucas and Richardson Roads. He has a brother also involved in farming (didn't catch name). Ivory's grandson, André, had the grand champion ham

Eddie Tucker, appeared to be a talker, worked at S. GA Pecan (formerly Dasher Pecan) for 40 years, farmer, with son Jerome recently built a smokehouse; farm near the Florida line in south Lowndes (H-559-7298); his son Jerome is running things now. Met Jerome at breakfast this morning. He works part-time at Griffin

Mr. Arletha Sermons, current President of Lowndes Improvement Association, Sermons St. Food Store part-time, his grandfather homesteaded the farm 120 years ago, w-244-3584; h-794-2713, 40 years with ham and egg show

Arizona Sermons (sister in law to above), 50 years with Ham and Egg show, head of eggs this year, grew up on Eager Farm, H-794-2873

Two other women there: Laura Lucas and Emma Butler

John Baker, retiring Co. ext. agent, new one will be Mr. Micky Fouraker who come over from extension in Early Co.

Joe Slater, assisted with record keeping

Dr. Glenwood F. Hill, Ext. program leader from Ft. Valley State U., was judge

March 13, 2000

Spoke by phone to David Lee about plans for an exhibit on sacred harp. He also hopes to build a "sing house" in Hoboken which would also serve as a museum and archive for local sacred harp.

During the conversation he mentioned that he had been asked to lead a singing school, held outside in the carport of private home in Blackshear, for the Satilla River PB group in Patterson vicinity, some of whom came to the singing school earlier this year in Hoboken. A few of them were there Feb. when I went and taped. This is evidently a group that split off from the Alabaha assoc. in 1968 due to some issue with Frank Lee, if I have the story right. They are now called the Satilla River PB Association which has around 3 to 5 churches according to David. One name he mentioned was New Oak Grove. Key figures in this group were Elden Dowling (brother to Elvera Dowling Lee) and Ruby Lee Dowling (sister to Silas Lee). So brother and sister married brother and sister. Both Ruby and Elden are now deceased. But it is their family, as I understand it, that requested the sing.

This group quit coming to the sings in Hoboken because they didn't approve of tape recorders. When I asked David why, he said it is because tape recorders were a "new thing" not used by their elders. AT the singing school in Feb. David announced that he would be happy to come and do a singing school for any who were interested. That remark was aimed at these folks. The sing and singing school at Hoboken in Feb. was full of tape recorders and cameras, including my own and Kathy shooting video, so evidently they can deal with this now.

At the sing there were about 30 to 40 people. The older generation (about 10-15 in attendance) know how to singing but there is no one among them who can teach it. The sing was really requested by the younger generation (the grown children, in their early 20s), some of whom came back from jobs/college out of town to attend. There were about 20-25 of this age group. The sing was held from 3-8 p.m. Johnny and Delorese were there. Bryant stayed through supper; Kathy and Rachel came for supper and stayed through the rest. David said he sold about 7 of the new Cooper revision (1992) and they evidently have no problem with this newer edition. The other side of the High Bluff split only use the 1960s Cooper book.

Field Notes, April 15, 2000

Georgia Agrirama Folk Life Festival and Fiddlers' Jamboree

Arrived at the Agirama a little after 10 a.m. to attend and record fiddlers' jamboree and also to see the firing of the turpentine still.

The former is organized by Tiftonites and brothers Joe and Frank Maloy, the former a guitar/mandolin man and the latter a fiddler. Frank is a storehouse of information on fiddlers and fiddling. He introduced me to Olan Watson of Pitts, GA (912-648-6264) whose father, the late Ernest Waston (d. 1977) was the other legendary fiddler of S. GA., along with GA Slim Rutland. Olan is not a musician, but he did have some stories of his dad, and might be worth interviewing. He also has some recordings made in the 50s which he says aren't real good quality.

The fiddlers' jamboree took place in the Wiregrass Opry pavillion. There were no female musicians and none that appeared under 40--indeed, few under 60. There was a pick-up band of guitarists, bass players, etc. The fiddlers were introduced individually in a group session of "Bile them Cabbage Down" and then each picked one tune to play. The jamboree started at noon and was over pretty much by 1:00. Cal Carpenter, and younger guy (late 30s?) of the Carpenters, a CW group from Tifton, was emcee and also provided the sound system. Plugged my recorder right into the sound system (the portable DAT) and tried to photograph each fiddler. I'll need to check with the Maloys as to how long the jamboree has been going on. Neither Henry Rutland nor Bud Zorn were able to make it, but there were eight fiddlers who took part:

Frank Maloy, Tifton (Golden Slippers and Mockingbird)
Mac Suggs, Tifton, Sally Gooden
Marion Jones (89) of Ellaville
Edward Howell, Cochran (Take me Back to Tulsa and Amazing Grace)

CE Pullen showed up as lead vocals in a new band, Hugh James and Boston City Limits (see flyer). They played after the jamboree.

The turpentine firing seemed to attract a group of men for whom this had been part of their heritage. Bubba Greene, of Madison, FL spoke to me, making the comment that most northerners associate turpentine with blacks, just as they do sharecropping. But a lot of whites farmed for groceries, and he feels this story isn't really told. He now has a tree farm, but turpentine with his father in the 1960s. He has some photos and artifacts at his house. He also commented on how each little area developed its own approach, perhaps its own variant of tools. Someone from Madison developed something (can't recall what) that became widely used but was never patented.

Carroll Butler was there (Shalimar, FL) with his exhibit which includes a small model of a still, a number of artifacts, products made from turpentine, photos and text. He is a storehouse of information, and grew up working with his father (a gum farmer) in Bickley, GA, 20 miles from Waycross, during the 40s and early 50s. He went to GA Tech and is now retired from a career as an (aeronautical?) engineer. Bought his book, Treasures of the Longleaf Pines Naval Stores, self published, which is a marvelous

resource. So is his exhibit, which I mentioned to John Johnson as a possibility to go into the new exhibit spaces to be built at Agrirama. If the items were in cases or vitrines and the photo text on sturdier, more attractively designed panels, it could also travel. A Mr. Skinner from Jacksonville was chatting with Butler--didn't get the first name. Was this the last turpentine operations in FL?? He had a poster print of a typical still from the Skinner family 100th reunion in 1999. Evidently the family got started in turpentering, moving down from SC and working for 4-5 years near Homerville in the 19th century before ending up in the Jacksonville environs.

There were no blacks involved the firing--saw few iblacks at all. Was not able to video the firing, but will have another opportunity in Portal, GA near Savannah on Sept 30. This still (contact is a Mr. Carter) is still on its original site, as opposed to Agrirama. The same stiller works both, David King, who apprenticed under the McCraney Brothers from Willacoochee. The public is kept at a distance for safety--fire, scalding rosin, the possibility of things overheating--makes it potentially quite dangerous. A firetruck was on call. At 11:00 the Forestry Queens (didn't get what this was about) lit the fire. These were girls dressed up--at least one was African American. The fire heats the raw gum in the still. They didn't know how long the cooking would take because they had never run gum so pure before. This was come from Grady Williams who is using the bag and plug method developed by prof. Alan ? Hodges at UFlorida. This method is less labor intensive (no chipping is required) and is healthier for the tree. The bag keeps a lot of the dirt and bark out the raw gum as well. There was virtually no dross (dirt, bark etc.) in this batch. The gum was finished about 3:15 or so. Butler describes the fire still process starting on p. 239 of his book. There is a lot of terminology here, and the skills seem a vanishing art. The stiller would listen to the sound at the base of the worm (a copper tube in which the spirits mixture runs through a big vat of cooling water out to a series of barrels where the turpentine rises to the top). The temperature must be just right and water is added a a crucial moment: a skilled stiller can judge the temperture by listening to the frying sounds at the end of the worm. Butler told me of one stiller who was deaf but could judge by putting his teeth on the end of the pipe where the water/spirits mixture runs out and judging the temperature by the vibration. Eventually, a thermometer was added for more reliable judging of temperature.

When the spirits are pretty much boiled out and the temp. reaches 315 degrees, the still is discharged. Rosin has collected along the edges of the vat. The still is uncapped and long poles are used to stir loose the rosin which flows out with bursts of steamy vapors to a series of pallets, lined with cotten batting, which skim off the dross. The rosin is then dipped into barrels. John Johnson did most of the interpreting of the various stages. To film it, one would probably focus on the lighting and loading, deciding when to add water, and then the temperature checking, the running of the turpentine into the barrels, and the discharge. This would mean sporadic shooting over a 3 hour period or so. Someone would need to explain what was happening at the various points. The schedule highlighted the firing of the still and the discharge of rosin.

Field Notes, Silas Lee Memorial Sing, Florida Folk Festival, White Springs, May 28, 2000

Went down just for a few hours to the folk festival due to my recent surgery. A singing school and intro. to sacred harp was scheduled on the main folklife performance stage from 11 to 11:45. Then from 12-1 was the sing in memory of Silas. I introduced both, but really DAvid did most of the talking. Paul Butterfield recorded the whole thing, as well as performances by the New Taylor Singers, Paul Massey and Henry Rutland, and the 2:30 to 3 performance by the Lee Family, all on the main performance stage. On Friday and Saturday, the Roddenberry clan was there making palmetto brooms and doing sacred harp and gospel. On Sat. all seven daughters, Miss Bernice, and Jack Roddenberry came, according to Adrienne Lee, Ronnie Dale's wife, who is a Chesser. Ronnie Dale's wood carving table was set up next to the Roddenberry's palmetto broom table. **Need to ask for copies of recordings of all relevant GA folk from Brent or Tina. But on Sunday I got consent forms and paid Paul to do recordings just for the Folklife Project, and for the Lees.

I didn't hear the singing school, since I was being interviewed by Bill Dudley for the FL Humanities Council radio series about sacred harp. The yellow handout (see attached) prepared by David Lee. Both DAve and Lee Bradley thought he tried to cover too much in a short span of time: Lee said it was too mechanical, I believe. I'll have to listen to the recording. But already a number of the Lee family were on hand, including a number of younger people who don't come to the regular sings, and I heard DAvid say something about taking advantage of the fact that they were there at a singing school.

I took quite a few photos, as did Bob Stone, and a number of the volunteers and participants. The Gainesville sacred harp folks were there, and were having a sing (at 4:00, in a dead spot on the printed schedule: Sweetwater Singers? is that their name?) to which I'm sure a number of the Lees there attended.

The main thing I wanted to write was something Johnny Lee said when I asked him about how he thought the sing went: he said you can record the words and the notes, but you can't record the feeling. I think many of them who were close to Silas were quite overwhelmed by the experience. There were over 30 family members there: I took a group picture. Also, I photographed those there who had been there in 1958: some had just sung with the Hoboken glee club (Carolyn Lee Carter); others were part of the group that sang with Silas.

David had the chairs put in a circle, not a square, because that's the way Uncle Silas told him he did it. David was quite emotional and made some fairly long introductory comments about Silas and the roots and strength of the tradition; in particular, I remember him commenting that Silas had taken him aside and asked him not to let the tradition die. The first songs sung were the three that Silas had led on the 1958 (check date) recording that I had copied for them from the Florida Folklore Archive of festival recordings: 358 (Murillo's Lesson), 63 (Parting Hand), and 72 (Firm Foundation). The leaders chosen seemed to reflect the key figures in the tradition today: David, Clarke, Tollie, Johnnie, Bryant, and then David. Each, with the exception of Bryant, made a few remarks before leading the selection. Bryant was asked by his father to walk time to 104. David also seemed to suggest or request particular tunes for people to lead, so the choice of tunes was apparently thought out. I need to ask him about this. Near the end, Tollie

requested 53, Jerusalem, one David hadn't planned I'd guess, as it was the last song Silas had helped lead at Hoboken, and one which had words that Tollie quoted for the benefit of his grandchildren present (will need to check tape or ask Tollie).

I felt like it was a little rushed at the end: they were making announcements at it was almost 1:00, so I told David we'd have to end. I felt badly that it was so abrupt--wondered if they'd like to do something else.

I was glad I could be there--it seemed like a special and very meaningful time. I was also glad that I had been the impetus--and I think I also suggested that they sing might be held in honor of or in memory of Silas.

Perhaps I should get follow up from David, Tollie, Carolyn, Johnny.
Field Notes, Sept. 8, 2000

Gary Walker, Ty Ty
JW Walker Jr.
Jimmy Brown (standing in baling box)
Tommy Singleton (kerchief)
Mike Cole (long sleeve white shirt)
Gary McKenzie, short sleeved white shirt with ball cap
John Stokes, colored stripe shirt (year round hire)
Lester Jackson (plaid shirt) year round hire
Rodney Singleton, younger, white shirt, no cap

This morning I drove to Ty Ty to the Walker Family farm, a 4th generation operation, to photograph baling the tobacco and removal from the "cooking ovens." My contact was Nikki Walker Weaver, who participated in the SGWP Summer Institute this past July. She had brought in a framed newspaper article about her granddaddy, JW Walker. Walker, b. 1919, still goes out to the work sites, but the day to day operations are handled by his son, Gary Walker.

JW recalls that tobacco was first grown on the family farm when he was around 15 (early 1930s). People from North Carolina came to S. GA. As "demonstrators" and introduced tobacco cultivation techniques. This is similar to what Robert E. Deatheridge at Planter's Warehouse told me. As a boy, JW recalls that cotton was the only cash crop. They grew peanuts, but it was for family use only. Otherwise, livestock, eggs, produce were raised for family subsistence. He ate plenty of hoe cake and syrup for breakfast, he recalls. One year, 10 bales of cotton fetched a nickel/pound. They had 25 bales for the season. (I believe he said this was 250 dollars?) If I have my story right, JW's grandfather, John R. Walters (not Walker??) bought the farm from a family named Gibson in 1910.

Gary Walker info:

In 1977, only cash crop was tobacco. In the 1980s diversified to add peanuts and cotton. They are set up to handle a quota of 100 acres of tobacco, but currently their quota is only 60, part of shrinking market for farmers in the current anti-tobacco climate.

I wanted to document the new style barns which have replaced the old stick tobacco barns of 20-30 years ago. The Walkers are now completely mechanized, both in cropping (done with a combine, as opposed to some families who still crop by hand) and curing or "cooking." The cooking barns, called a bulk tobacco barns, look sort of like metal quonset huts. They are fired by LP gas. The newer "enclosed chamber cooker" soon will be required by the fed. Govt. It lets a little less carcinogen into the tobacco. It costs \$5600 to convert to the new style ovens (is that per oven???).

The Walker farm switched to bulk tobacco barns in the early 1970s. For the past 7 years, they have baled their tobacco, rather than delivering it to the warehouse in sheets. I did pass a smaller operation today near Fitzgerald on the road to Henderson's hives, where they were emptying the barns into burlap sheets. Bales are easier to handle, according to Gary, and the companies prefer them. Export marketers, on the other hand, prefer sheets. A bale has 800 lbs. Of tobacco, which equals 3-4 sheets. Gary warehouses his tobacco in Moultrie.

850 lbs. = maximum weight for a bale
250 lbs. = maximum weight for a sheet

There are two types of bulk barns: the box type and a rack barn. Walkers use the boxes, which are taken right out to the field and loaded. The box is on the combine, which takes 4-5 leaves from the plant. A spreader spread the leaves in the box. To cook properly, you have to pack more tobacco on the sides than in the middle. This is something you learn from experience. I believe he told me there are 500 lbs. Of cured leaf per box, and each barn can hold 8 boxes. The barn temperature starts at 95 degrees, for 36-48 hours to set the color of the tobacco at the preferred lemon orange (demonstrated in one of my slides). Goal of the curing at this stage is to bring it to that color. Next is the wilting process at 118 degrees. The leaves must wilt so that air can circulate in the packed box. Next, is the drying, at 135 degrees, which removes moisture from the leaf. After this process the leaf is 70-80% dry. Finally, at 165 degrees the stem dries. The process takes 7 days total, and needs to be assessed and monitored using the skill and experience of the farmer. Gary checks the barns 4x/day to see if modifications need to be made.

Suckers are removed by hand after the leaves are removed from the barns and before they are placed in the baler. The boxes are unloaded removing the metal rods called "pins" which are attached to racks which keep the leaves from all clumping together inside. Gary supervises the baling carefully to make sure the weight is right—if they put in too much, over the limit, they lose money.

The crew here is all "local" as Gary put it, and black. He prefers to hire local people if he can get them. Two of the guys are year round workers. The Walkers started using migrant labor (which means Mexican here) about 3-4 years ago. He estimated when

asked that 3/4 of local tobacco farmers use migrant labor. He uses Mexicans to set out tobacco plants, but not here, although he said he certainly could. Again, he prefers to use local labor. He works through a labor contractor. Said he thought most of migrants were from Mexico proper, lived in trailers. I noticed that the cardboard boxes used inside the baler had "this side down, boca abajo" printed on them.

Beekkeeping

Next, I drove to Ocilla and met Walter Henderson and his apprentice/friend Joe Worthington who were "making increase" in one of his bee yards, placed along side a cotton field between Ocilla and Fitzgerald. Henderson is on disability from the RR, Worthington retired military, both from Manor. Henderson has been inbeekeeping around 30 years, learning from his father-in-law, Huey Hendricks, and other Clinch Co. beekeepers. He has about 300 hives. His son Brian, helps out, but works for the large mechanized Jimmy Bennett Honey Co. in Homerville. His wife Dicie, has bee keeping on both sides: her father Huey Hendricks, and her mother, who was a Landrum and related to Ramona Lee's father, Fred King Landrum. Landrum's father, raised in Branford, FL, started the beekeeping and then moved north to Homerville. Interestingly, Zieglers of Stockton also have roots in Branford. The senior Ziegler who started the business, "Lee L." (??) was a friend of Fred Landrum. The Landrums are the oldest beekeeping family in Clinch Co. Clinch Co. is the nation's (world's??) leadingproducer of comb honey, evidently. The Hendersons have Milt Landrum's and Huey Hendricks' honey house equipt., which I've not yet seen, but which is described as the "old way." So it seems that this family is a continuity of the Landrum honey line.

Walter Henderson started beekeeping in 1946. This occupation seems to thrive on apprenticeship. Worthington has been going out with Henderson to learn the ropes. We all donned white bee suits, and Worthington and I had head netting and protection. They said the bees were mean because it had been rainy and cloudy. Beekeeping involves a lot of knowledge of the local landscape and the seasons of the year for the flowering of different plants. Ramona Lee told me how her father used to love to "ride the woods" in the spring to see if the bees were out and what was in flower.

The hives we saw had been here since mid-June, mostly to pollinate and spend the winter. They pollinate cotton and peanuts. The farmer of this field, Gerald Williams of Ocilla, gets one case of honey per bee yard in trade for using his land. Henderson has used this site for 5 years or so. Bee yards range from 1-100 hives. This yard has 60 hives.

The bees were really too mean today to make much increase (divide two hive bodies to make a new hive), one of the activities for this time of year. When they do make increase, they have to move the new hives at least a mile a way, otherwise the bees will return to their original hive. I photographed as they checked the racks of bees andhoney inside the hives, using a metal smoker fired with pine straw and activated by a small bellows to "calm the bees down." A "hive tool" really a metal prying tool, is used to pry off the lids of the hives. You could see red, yellow and white pollen on their rumps. White was cotton pollen. As we were leaving about 12:30 p.m., the bees were flitting in and out rapidly, bringing loads of honey. They were also "feeding the hives" with mason jars of

sugar water, with holes in the cap and placed on a open hole in the top of the hive, since the bees are too weak to get food this time of year. They need to feed the bees so they have enough food stored for the winter months. "Brood rearing" starts in Feb., and then the beekeeper really has to feed the hive.

The larger wooden box is called a "hive body" and this is where most of the hive hangs out. The smaller box is called the "super" and this is the location for most of the honey. The super and hive body are filled with wooden racks to which the honey and bees cling. A hive weighs about 60-80 lbs.; a super 30-40 lbs., 30 of which is honey.

A beekeeper can tell by the color and esp. by taste what kind of honey it is. There is a seasonality to where to place the bees and when certain types of honey is harvested.

March: Ty Ty honey, in the swamps

1st week April: black gum

Ap. 15: swamp gallberry

Ap. 25: tupelo, mixed with gallberry

May 10: gallberry

June 1: Palmetto,

Rest of summer until harvest, I presume is cotton

April 1-July 1 they are in the honey house. They sell comb honey to Ziegler (who now only packs rather than produces) and to Grobe Farms in Bellview, FL, which gets barrels of less high grade honey used as "bakery honey." This is packed in tanks, selling for 43 cents/pound. Comb honey sells for 50 cents/lb. In a good year they will gross \$30,000. And net about 22,000-23,000.

The main honey crop time is March-May. Typically, a beekeeper will move his hives 3x to accommodate the changing season. In March, Henderson carries his hives from Ocilla down to Manor. April 1 he goes south to McClenny, FL. Then back to Ocilla in June. Some beekeepers go south to the FL orange groves.

Biggest threat to bee business is foreign competition/imports and new pests such as beetles and mites.

According to Worthington, watching Henderson is the best way to learn. He is first learning "making increase". Bees are fed every two weeks or so. You learn to recognize sounds, such as a roaring sound in the hive often means there is no queen. If you raise the lid and hear a sound like chicken or fish frying, you have a good hive. "I could sit in a

classroom all day and never learn what you learn out here.” Bees “tote honey” later in day, midmorning to lunchtime.

The key to good beekeeping is location (where to place hives) and having good bees (right number in hive). If in March the bees are “laying out” on the front or mouth of the hive, that is a good hive. If not, you have to check it. “Brood rearing” is when the Queen starts laying eggs. The brown cells in the racks inside the hives are baby bees of the brood. The brood gets stronger as more pollen and honey enters the hive.

Feb. GA Beekeepers Assoc. mtg. InHomerville with a big fish fry.

April 14, 2001

Went with Suzanne Matos North, her mother Carol, and Jessica Torres (also Cuban American, in Jessica’s case from Atlanta) to Maria’s Lounge for the Latin Night. It is advertised to start at 9 but things don’t get rolling until about midnight. Suzanne is doing her independent study field project on this, and Sat. was her third visit to the club. They had already generated a small network of contacts with regulars and with personnel. All three women speak Spanish, so they had found out something about the men who were their dance partners.

9. Willis Lopez is the prime mover here. He used to do dances at Moody, but non-military personnel had trouble with access (this according to Carol). He has been active, along with his wife, in promoting Latin dance in town. Willis is a New York Puerto Rican; I believe Wandamaria is Dominican. I chatted with him briefly. He has worked with the deejay, Louis (also Puerto Rican) as a unit doing these dances for some time. They try to play a mix—music for everybody. However, my take is that overall there was about 75% Caribbean dance forms (salsa, merengue and variants, also bachata according to Suzanne, although I don’t know what bachata sounds like; there is a chacha line dance also), and maybe 25% Mexican and then English language “techno” as Suzanne called it. Jorge, a Columbian who hung out with us all evening, had told them previously that this music had been popular in Cali a few years back. Most of the dances are fast tempo: I would say 80% during the time I was there (from about 11:45-2:15).
10. The bar tender said the crowd changes every week. On this night, there were a vast majority of single guys without dates. Suzanne said that hadn’t been the case before. The bar tender said there were a lot of migrant workers (he said he could tell because of the way they dressed) and some doctors (professionals from the area, in the minority). He said the El Potro, El Toreo Restaurant people always sit in one spot. On Friday night the crowd is country western, and they wind it up around 1:30. On the Latin Night, they go to 3 a.m. The bar tender said everyone had to clear out by 3:15, Willis echoed this, but Suzanne said they were not so strict on one of her previous visits. Willis told me things used to get started earlier, around 10:45 or so, but now its later. It certainly struck me as an event on “Latin time.”

- ◆ There were some murals on the wall going toward the restroom that looked like they could have been Hispanic farm workers. I'll need to ask about this. Typical dance floor with flashing colored lights and a hanging strobe in the middle.
 - ◆ Dress was very diverse; from a few suitcoats and a few long cocktail type dresses, to one woman in a halter with a long black skirt slit up to the top of her thigh. She was a very limber and sensual dancer. Mostly it struck me as more casual, esp. given the preponderance of young, single, apparently migrant worker males in attendance.
6. Willis serves as the MC, is nattily dressed, and cruises smoothly around the room to make sure everyone is comfortable, seated, greets and welcomes. There is a security guy working the room also. They don't do requests, it seems, or dedications; very little interaction with the deejay. Willis did raffles from the stage, dances some. Suzanne said he was more active getting people to dance in previous visits.

In terms of repertoire and dance styles on the floor, it struck me as a deliberately pan-Latin event which tried to cater to a broad mix of Latinos. Willis said once they got established, and also started offering the dance lessons (Weds. At 7) they hoped to attract "everybody" meaning, I gathered, a cross section of S. GA population. Willis' remarks from the stage were in Spanish and English. The help (bar maids) appeared to be both white and Hispanic. The bar tender was white and am not sure if he spoke Spanish or not. I thought the biggest crowd on the dance floor was for the merengues. The polka/banda set got a fair number—I would guess the majority of the crowd was Mexican, but the majority of dance selections were not "Mexican" music. I asked Willis if he had been to any of the Mexican clubs in S. GA and he said he didn't go to Mexican clubs. He goes to Latin clubs in Miami/Atlanta. So my sense is that although trying to be pan-Latin, the PR bias of both Willis and the emcee means that Mexican music certainly does not dominate here, the way I would guess it does in Tifton and Douglas. I'll have to see.

April 17, 2001

Went to the opening of Folklife of the GA Wiregrass in Cordele, held from 5:30-7 at the Cordele Crisp Carnegie Library. Recorded the bluegrass band Diane Langston had lined up (director of Crisp Area Arts Alliance). She refers to the groups as "the Boys" (they have no formal name) and calls upon them to do Arts Alliance functions since there is a former board member and the current board president in the group. They didn't seem particularly polished, but did a good job telling a little bit about themselves and what they played.

Drew Matulich, mandolin, from Tifton, friend of Anthony LaPorte. He told me "Matulich" is Austrian.

Greg Leger, guitar, the current President of the National Watermelon Growers Association. 3rd generation farmer in area; family originally migrated from Kentucky. Last name is French. Runs a watermelon brokerage, L & M Melons on the north edge of the State Farmers Market in Cordele. Said they don't grow locally since this would

conflict with the broker role, but they do grow out of state and out of area. Just starting to harvest down near Immokalee, FL, moving north with crops. Rent land in other places. Might be a good contact for the big watermelon business in Cordele/Crisp.

Gary Barker, banjo (had trouble tuning or with strings for most of evening; seemed to be one of their main “leads”)

Anthony LaPort, upright bass

Phil Whelitz, vocals and dobro.
313 McKinney Rd.
Cordele, GA 31015
229-273-3841

Program:

Summertime
Blackberry Blossom
Old Home Place
Salt Creek
Muddy Waters
Old Joe Clarke
Dear Old Dixie
Blue Ridge Cabin Home
Big Mon
Cripple Creek

Whelitz deserves follow-up. Diane had “fluffed up the exhibit” as she called it, with tobacco crates, croker sacks, and old milk jug and other pieces, and some pieces by Whelitz: copper ornamental frogs with wonderfully big legs, and some large copper vessels shaped like coffee pots (very tall), and a sun wall hanging, also copper. He described himself as a 4th generation tin smith, beginning with his great grandfather who was killed in WWI (he was Lithuanian). Family in Cordele since 1936. He has some of his grandfather’s patterns, worked with his dad in sheet metal shop, is now trying to make a go of it on his own. Is making some gas grills now to generate some cash.

Library has a display of local photographer (now deceased) Earl Murray, from 1940s and 50s. Black and white documentary work. Would be interesting to see what else is around.

Notes on Hoboken All-Day Sing, March 17, 2001

- It strikes me again that today is also a big day on Beaver Island; how different my research is here!

- Today's sing had representation from 13 states. Amy thought the highest # was 21 or 22 at a previous sing. The room was full. I was struck by the facial expressions: Laura Densmore seems transfixed when she sings. I could see people sitting next to others with strong voices and enjoying the communion. I still feel too much of the academic, separated from the feeling of it all. Well, as I think, a lot of local people in particular are pretty Calvinistic in their expressions; some of the Primitive Baptist men are more emotional; you hardly ever see women weep in public at a sing like the Lee men do, for example.
- Zelton Dixon mentioned in the announcements at the end that his family has a Labor Day sing in Racepond with sacred harp, Lloyd hymnal, and gospel songs
- Twin Oaks Music Park had the (south) Florida Bluegrass association or some such there this weekend
- Susie Jacobs again had a wonderful display, one on the history of Sacred Harp in this area and another on singing schools. She included an excerpt from Snow White Sands and a general description of s/h from one of the Lomax collections that seemed so much more evocative than what I am writing. She comes from a s/h singing family, her grandfather James ? Lee, who was a well-known treble singer (or is it tenor, need to check again; this through her mother's recollections). Susie however was not involved in the singing until David started holding sings in the school. This is her 35th year in Education. She had in her display clippings from the first sing held in Mt. Calvary in 1995. Her scrapbook is quite a resource; need to make time to look at it, make copies. These clippings from the Brantley Co. Enterprise, and other papers are esp. important. Jason Deal, the editor, is related to her. Susie showed me the former lunchroom, now library, in the new part of Hoboken School (built ca. 1954-55) where Silas held his sings. Where the sings now are held, in the auditorium, is the oldest part of the building. Need to try to lock in this date--would be good to have a 50th year celebration. When I stopped by her home after the sing to borrow a photo I saw a number of student papers she had saved regarding the History of Hoboken. She also had a History of Brantley Co., published in 1999 and available at the courthouse in Nahunta. Evidently it mostly deals with the eastern part of the county; not much participation in the development of the book project from the western part which includes Hoboken. Her family home place is just down from High Bluff Church. An aunt lives there now. Borrowed a picture of Pierce Chapel school, where her father, b. 1898, attended. According to Johnny Lee, this was one of the schools where singing schools were held. Perhaps can use it in the exhibit? Borrowed it to copy.
- Bernice Roddenberry was at the sing with her daughter Kathryn Lett (sp. ?). I also met Roy Harris of Hoboken who is contracted by GA Southern to lead Elder Hostels. He has the Roddenberry's come and sing s/h; focus is Okefenokee region. He invited me to come this Tuesday night, 7:30 at the Holiday Inn.
- Miss Roxie Crawford was also there with 4 of her children: Arthur, Ida, Flora, Nina. Miss Roxie will be 93 on April 5; they are having a big birthday party April 7, Ida invited me. When I was out of the room, just before the lunch break, David had her

up to lead Angel Band with him, her favorite. I think I had told him that and he remembered. He said she had tears in her eyes.

- Several families got up and led as a group: Johnny, Delorese, and their children; Amy Steuver and her girls. Nice.
- Mrs. Florence Herrin told me she is the baby in the picture of Cripple John Lee and Sally Chesser by Harper (her parents). In the back row, the girl in the middle is Miss Roxie Chesser Crawford. Mrs. Robert Allen Chesser is seated at the left. Need to ID other sisters next to Miss Roxie.
- Had an interesting conversation with Laura Densmore at lunch. She spoke of what she felt was southerners distrust of northern singers at some level, although she feels the southerners need the northern singers or the tradition will die out for lack of participation. She does not feel that separation with the Lees, however. Northern singers have a spiritual aspect, but it is not their religion the way it is with David. She mentioned DAVID's metaphor of the circle, which was broken, but now reformed into a much larger circle. She has really hit it off with Tollie and Ramona, e-mails back and forth several times a week. Was one of the outside folks Tollie brought in to help him lead the first singing school in Hilliard last night. There were 25 people, and some of them bought books, expressed interest in another sing. Laura said she spoke up and called the singing her a "national treasure." Ramona later told her how glad she was to hear Laura say that because Philip Reeves was there. Laura spoke of the number of gay men in sacred harp singing and how open Kathy and David are toward this. We wondered if that would have been the case before the split. Evidently Richard DeLong at Carrollton is gay. She spoke of some turf battles or jealousy on the part of Hugh McGraw about David's idea for a sing house in Hoboken--could he be jealous of this great interest in the Lees from the larger s/h community? David will lead a singing school, sing at the NY State convention the weekend of Oct. 21 or so.
- Philip Reeves, his parents, brother Mark, and Mark's wife came to the evening hymn sing at Mars Hill. Kathy Lee told me that Mark, the elder at Nathalene, has recently been told he can preach anywhere he feels called to go; a big step. Clarke had Mark and Philip seated in the central seats at the front of the church with him and David. They no longer hold the sing at Nathalene. 15 members of Nathalene came to the Feb. sing in Hoboken.

Field Notes, week of April 30, 2001

April 30, 2001

Arrived at 10:30 at home of Lottie Lee Carter on Central Avenue, age 91, born Feb. 26 1910, lived in the area all her life, married Mannen M. Carter in Nov. of 1935. He was brother to Jimmy Carter's father, who started Mars Hill Church. Lottie attended High Bluff all her life. Had 10 children. When I arrived she had just taken 2 nitroglycerin for her engina, so I never turned on the tape. We just visited and I didn't stay long. There was

the same picture of the home place on her wall that Johnny and Delorese have. The old house is now gone; had 5 rooms. Lottie is the 2nd or 3rd, I believe, of the 19 children of Raymond and Mary Lee. Raymond had two children with his first wife; Mattie Shuman in Bayview Nursing home in Nahunta is the younger of these two. Her older sister died leaving 4 children, and for a time they went to the home place to live with Lottie and her siblings. She said they had 21 in the house, but the "children didn't take up much room." !!!

I could tell she had a good memory but she was nervous about her heart, so I just asked her one question, about Singing Schools with Martin Dowling. She said she remembered them well, went when she was 16. Only singing schools she remembers were led by Dowling, although she remembers them talking about old Bill Guy, who had taught Dowling. Dowling had one school for a couple weeks in the summer between tobacco and cotton, and before school started. It lasted 4 or 5 days, and on weekends visitors from the community came for a sing. As Lottie remembers, he was a very serious and attentive teacher. "He was good, but he was strict." When they would cut up as kids do, he'd remind them that this was a sacred affair, "Kind of kept us in line." It was a one room school. Dowling would arrange desks in a circle, with younger ones in front with the smaller desks, older in back. Everyone faced one another. He would write the notes on the blackboard. They learned how to walk time: common, compound, triple. At the closing of the school, he would hold a drone. The main song she remembers is "Ye Children of Jesus" although he had other drone songs, too. He would give everybody their sound, and then they'd march around in a circle: bass, treble, tenor, each with their own circle. Dowling would be inside the ring, facing them, walking and listening, saying "somebody's not holding their sound." He would have the younger men who were learning inside with him.

Sat., May 5

Attended monthly meeting at Mars Hill, which was to be followed by Kathy Lee's baptism. Got there about 9:45 in hopes of meeting pastor J.L. Rowan, who drives in from Pavo, but he didn't arrive until sometime during the singing. Rowan grew up in Chaserville, Cook Co., and according to John Crowley, has lots of stories, including how Chaserville got its name. Mentioned in conversation that his grandfather led singing schools.

Spoke with John Gardener, who works for the FAA in Hilliard. He is the one who found something about sacred harp, read about it, got interested, and looked on the Internet to see if there was anything going on locally. Said he found Tollie's name and a woman named Connor. The Connor woman was abrupt with him on the phone; Tollie said nothing had been going on locally for a while. It has been John's interest that has gotten the singing school going in Hilliard, held at the Episcopal Church, again through his contacts (via his wife who has subbed as an organist there). I guess this past Friday (May 4) when they had their third singing school they had to move it to the Methodist Church due to a conflict. John said local people don't know anything about s/h and are very suspect of Primitive Baptists, so if it was held in a PB church no one else would go. Tollie echoed this sentiment. Friday night there were 37 people there, the smallest group

of the three. Philip Reeves and family have come to at least one. Philip evidently has an interest in starting up the Nathalene sing again, dormant for a year or so. Tollie didn't seem too interested in going there, but spoke of trying to start a monthly sing in Hilliard on the 3rd Friday, before Hoboken. John, unfortunately, is being transferred next month to D.C., so we'll see if this continues without him. He has put together a video of s/h with some of the more familiar hymns to mainline denominations, and wherever he goes he is sort of a missionary for sacred harp. This is evidently the 3rd time he has heard J.L. Rowan preach and spoke about how he really had a message that spoke to him (Gardener), how Rowan was in perfect 4/4 time. Unfortunately, my tape battery was low and I didn't get the middle, more chantlike part of Rowan's message, but his cadence was very slow and deliberate, rhythmic, almost punchy, compared with the sung styles of Tollie and now Clarke Lee, whom I heard for the first time. Did John Gardener and wife go to the sing in Texas last weekend with the Lees? I'll have to ask. Now that I am back on fasola.org singings list, I see reports of various singings with references to Tollie, Johnny, etc. as known figures in these various national sings.

Clarke, David, Kathy, and Johnny Lee are now members of Mars Hill. Delorese has not joined a church. Ramona and Tollie joined New Hope, all on the Bennetite side. After today, Julie also joined Mars Hill.

Singing was to start at 10 at Mars Hill, I had been told, but didn't get under way until about 10:15 and lasted until 11. Clarke Lee was songleader for most of the morning although a few others started. The singing really filled out when David and Kathy Lee arrived, between 10:30 and 10:45--then you could really hear multi-part singing. Up until that point, all I could hear was a little bass from Johnny Lee to go along with the tenor melody line. These sung hymns are not lined--lined hymns occur only in the formal service.

I ended up knowing the majority of the people there: Eugene Hickox and his wife (he is a deacon, along with Johnny Lee), Tollie, Ramona, and Amy Lee, their granddaughter Catherine, and Catherine's mother (name??, their oldest daughter who is now living in their house), Clarke, Julie, Riley, and Mary Elizabeth Lee, Tammy and her husband (she is Willis and Sandra Lee's daughter; Tammy and husband joined last month with David and Kathy); Karen Martin, David and Kathy, Rachel, Bryant, and Hannah Lee plus Bryant and Hannah's fiances, Mary and Woodrow Wainright, John Crowley, John Gardener, Kathy Lee's parents from Folkston. With all these folks present, the singing was strong. By the end of the service many members of David's family had arrived for the baptism.

Mars Hill is carpeted, air conditioned, but still nothing on the white cinder block painted walls except hat pegs. Johnny Lee told me the church started in 1913 by Jimmy Carter's daddy. Jimmy is not a member, but the reason he and Clarke were hosts at the Tri-State last Oct. was because Jimmy's daddy had started the church.

Primitive Baptist style, everyone greeted each other when they came in, although I guess not me in all cases, although many did. It seems such a friendly way. The singing ended

promptly at 11; J. L. Rowan provided a greeting and opening remarks, then Clarke lined an opening hymn, #362. He spoke the words rather than sang them. Clarke, Tollie, and Rowan all preached. All three were shorter than I'd heard in the Crawfordite churches, or even at New Hope in Nahunta. The men still all hold white cloth handkerchiefs, and take their message from scripture, but without any notes. Tollie's style seemed different; he didn't pace back and forth for a while without saying anything, as Crawfordites do, but began speaking right away. Didn't need the handkerchief like he did before. I'll have to compare my recordings of him to see what I hear in terms of differences, and perhaps talk with him about it. The message comes as a divine gift, some days longer than others, some days no message at all.

After a 10 minute intermission the conference began, with clerk Eugene Hickox taking notes of proceedings and reading a letter to sister association church Bethesda, I believe. Seeing the handwritten letter seemed fitting to a church that abides by its view of the "primitive church." J. L. Rowan declared the church door open for membership, and a tearful Julie Lee came forward. I wasn't sure if I should keep on recording, but I did. She spoke in a faint voice, seated, looking down at her lap, tears streaming, and spoke about how she had wanted she and Clarke to be in the same church, how it bothered her that they hadn't been married in the church (?? she had never joined??), and of a dream she had the night before of a cog with a chain, and how the device wouldn't turn unless the two parts worked together. There was some reference to trying to build up church, and how it kept being torn down (was this the High Bluff expulsion of Clarke, David, Johnny, etc.?). A number of people were visibly in tears. I had tears in my eyes. Afterward, Rowan said that was the sweetest testimony he had ever heard, welcomed Julie into the church, and then members, followed by visitors/friends all came up and hugged her, greeted her. Now she and Kathy would be baptized together in the same place where as young men Clarke and David had been baptized, Blue Hog on the Satilla River, on property now owned by Ronnie Dale Lee (formerly by Silas Lee). At the end of her coming forward, Pastor Rowan had a lovely metaphor of pruning the fig tree; old branches die, but new shoots spring forth to take their place.

There was a lovely dinner on the grounds. I took a chocolate, two layer cake with white frosting--wanted to take something for the baptism, to contribute in some way. Of course, all the other cakes were THREE layer!

A line of cars drove a couple miles down to Schlatterville, up the sandy road past Ronnie Dales and Miss Elvera's, to a rutted turn-off through the woods down to Blue Hog on the banks of the Satilla. Ronnie Dale and Adrian have a river cabin up on stilts at the waters edge, with a blue hog attached to the side. Ronnie Dale said there is blue clay under the Satilla here, and some of the old piney woods hogs used to look blue--hence the name. David and Johnny directed cars to park along the edge of a grassy knoll above the river. There was a place to wade on in, with burlap or something covering the earth so it wasn't so muddy as you walked on down. Clarke, who did the baptism, waded in ahead of time to plumb the river depth with a staff provided by Ronnie Dale. He had carved it with the date--May 5, 2001, and sacred harp notes around the handle. J. L. Rowan took a liking to it, so they gave it to him afterward. It was a lovely May afternoon, with a warm sun bordering on hot, but lovely in the shade with a breeze. The river looked dark and

tranquil, bird calls, pungent smell of pine needles in the hot sun, and a now grown over sand bar directly across from the baptism site dappled in white and green. Ronnie Dale said it was a good swimming hole. By this time a crowd of 50 plus friends and family had gathered, more than were in the church, to witness and support. Ramona and Delorese prepared Julie and Kathy by safety pinning their skirts together more like pants, so they wouldn't float up when they entered the water. It was sad that Julie's parents couldn't be there--or wouldn't since the split. A couple hymns from Lloyd's were sung: one was a particular number to the tune of the Dying Californian, "just like we always done" said David. Julie and Kathy held hands. Julie told me later she is afraid of dark water. Clarke, Julie, and Kathy walked out slowly into the center of the river. Clarke raised his hand when each woman was ready, said the words of baptism, and then each went backwards into the water, totally immersing. David was kneeling and watching intently, saying mercy, mercy, at times. Julie looked petrified; I heard Clarke say, its OK, I've got you. As the two women walked out their families were waiting with towels, blankets, to wrap them. I saw Ramona tenderly wipe Julie's face with a towel. They then went into the cabin to change into dry clothes. They wore no special clothes; just what they'd had on in church.

After a number of people had left, and I had put my tape recorder into to car, a core group sang a couple sacred harp songs with photocopied sheets Julie had in the car. I'll have to ask David what these were, what significance. Songs they had always sung at baptisms? I didn't record, but sang with them. David had said to me earlier, do you remember what we talked about. I hope you didn't spend the day hiding behind your tape recorder and camera. I was driving home by 3:30 in the afternoon.

Local Latino Notes, June 4, 2001

Conversation with Jonathan Beebee, Holy Cross Brothers, Adel
Office, 333-5218

Fr. Marc Fallon left two years ago. Fr. Beebee has taken his place, and works part time with the migrant ministry, based at San Jose Church in Lake Park. They will have a small Fiestas Guadalupanas there; they no longer do it at the Knights of Columbus in Valdosta.

Employers for San Jose community: Coggins farms in Echols Co., Hahira Nursery, some businesses in Industrial Park. Mostly Mexican, some Guatamalan, also Columbian, PR, Cuban (latter not migrant workers). Unaware of who the employers might be in Cook. Coo Latino community is evidently viewed as pretty small, so no special attention is being paid.

Mary Margaret Catholic Church in Adel serves an Anglo parrish of about 30 on a good day. The priest comes from Lakeland and is elderly (81). If Latinos come to the mass (6:30 on Sat.) they may sing a few songs in Spanish, but there is no Spanish language service in Cook.

Fr. Juan Lopez at Our Divine Saviour in Tifton and 3 Mexican sisters there serve a large Mexican/Latino community in Tifton. They apparently don't come down into Cook.. Need to check.

16th St. in Adel has young Latino men living in trailers and low income housing.

Thought best contact for children/schools would be Southern Pines in Nashville (migrant education program, Israel Cortez)

June 16, 2001, NOTES

EDDIE RICHESON

(SPARKS)

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Met Richeson by chance on the plane from JAX to Detroit. He is 47, graduated from HS in Cook Co. in 1973, a native of Cook Co. He is kin to the Crosby family. His wife, Shirley Richeson, is an office manager at Cook Elementary, also a native of Cook Co. They live on her mother's home place, visible from I-75 near Sparks: Evelyn Nipper (maiden name). The farm still has a lot of original outbuildings, including a sharecropper home (not in great condition). There are three ponds on the property which Eddie fishes. He is a good contact for hunting and fishing in particular. Richeson is a member of Adel Church of God, works for Black Box Network Services currently.

Here are notes from our conversation on the plane:

HUNTING/FISHING:

11. Worm grunting: Eddie learned this from his grandfather and some buddies. Hasn't done it for over 25 years, but claims he still could. Might be a great demonstration for elementary age in particular, along with science classes.
12. Howard Little's is the local bait shop of choice. Howard is deceased but his widow, "Ma Little" is still living. Shop is behind her house in Adel.
13. Fish baskets are made and sold at Ace Hardware in Adel
14. Red Robert's Landing on Little River, north of Reed Bingham. Red Roberts used to make home-made wine. Doesn't know if Roberts is still living or not.
15. AD Shealy of Adel fishes out of a plywood boat that he made. Flat-bottom boats are called john boats. These wooden boats tend to leak along seams. Shealy a good old-time fisherman contact.
16. Eddie Richeson used to work for Glasstream in Nashville, the now defunct boat works run by A.L. Kirkland. Richeson does not make wooden boats, but does make adaptations to his store bought boats. Has several, including a bass boat, Basshunter,

built at the Ind. Park in Valdosta. Discussed “limb fishing” for catfish, with baited hooks hanging off tree limbs, and other types of fishing. Good source.

17. Live Oak Plantation, run by Buddy Rogers, age 40s, native of Cook County

FOOD:

7. Cane syrup: Jimmy Rountree’s daddy makes, live on W. side of I-75 toward Reed Bingham
 8. Mary Gibbs, member of Richeson’s church (Adel Church of God) makes divinity out of pecans for him
 9. Home gardens: says they used to do it, but its cheaper to get produce at Wall Mart etc. now.
- ◆ Used to have canning plant in Adel, went under in 80s. They used to take fruits and vegetables to be canned. Don’t do home canning now.

MUSIC:

- ◆ Used to have a gospel sing at the old H.S> auditorium for many years., with dinner on the grounds. Not doing it currently. Ended ca. mid 70s. Richeson’s granddaddy, George Partain (?) sang, Eddie sings in his church Praise and Worship group.
- ◆ New Tradition a gospel group in Cook Co., also the Boyettes sing, as do Bruce and Greg Day.

FESTIVALS/HOLIDAYS:

- ◆ July 4 there used to be a fishing tournament at the Lime Sink (his term for it rather than “Duck Pond” when he was a kid). Currently, there is a big fireworks display at Reed Bingham, jointly between Cook and Colquitt Counties. Also boating, family picnics, etc.
- ◆ Lean-Ox festival includes “pickin’ and singing”—Red Lindsey is usually there. November.
- ◆ Sparks plans to start the first annual Pickle Festival this year

MISCELLANEOUS:

- ◆ His daughter Jill is finishing a history degree at VSU and plans to get her MA in history here. Advisor is David Williams. Might be able to get her to do an independent study on some aspect of Cook.
- ◆ Restaurant at red light in Ocilla has a ceiling lined with tobacco sticks from old stick tobacco barns
- ◆ Mexican labor began coming in to Cook Co. the late 70s, early 80s
- ◆ Cecil Farms raises plants for truck farming
- ◆ Pacific Collier is new
- ◆ Robert Sumner barn in Barneyville/Sparks area discovered names of World War veterans when remodeling. This was in the paper?

Notes on Conversation with Shirley Hardin, native of Jakin, Early County,
Director of African American Studies at VSU
November 26, 2001 (phone conversation)

I called Shirley to try to get some more information on African American involvement in the sucker fishing in SW GA. Shirley Hodge Hardin grew up between the Flint and the Chattahoochee. She recalled eating suckers as a child, although she said her mother was leery of feeding them to children because of the bones. She said her paternal grandmother, Daisy Brown Hodge, also born in Jakin, fished three to five times a week on the banks of the Chatahoochee and along creek. She often went with Shirley's mother, Susie Johnson Hodge, now age 74 (grandmother is deceased). The two women were quite close. They would fish for food, often early in the morning, and all day when children were at school. Shirley knew the term gashing. She said they didn't seek out suckers but if her grandmother caught one, they'd eat it. She has never seen anyone use nets or fish from a boat. She was unfamiliar with swamp gravy. They usually had their fish fried; her mother sometimes made a stew out of catfish, made in a pot on the stove top with onions and spices. Shirley said the cure for fish bones in your throat was to eat a half slice of light bread or corn bread, and don't chew it much. It takes the bones right on down.

Shirley was going to see if her mother would talk with me.

She also said that her Uncle Thomas (the grandmother's brother) in Bainbridge was a big fisherman. His children are still living there.

Field Notes, 2nd Annual Flint River Sucker Fish Festival, Jan 12, 2002, Earle May Boat Basin

Laurie Sommers, fieldworker

Arrived at the site of the Sucker Fish festival around 11:15 a.m and almost immediately ran into Carol Heard, the originator of the festival idea. Carol, born in the West and a resident of Miami for 5 years, married Terry Heard, a local man, and someone who grew up with the sucker fishing traditions of this area. Perhaps because she was an outsider, Carol recognized the unique nature of this tradition and its many facets. She did work for the city, and just this month became managing editor of the local paper. She thought sucker fish would be a good emblem around which to build a local festival for Bainbridge. Perhaps because she just switched jobs, certain things which I believe took place last year, like netmaking by Dennis Mock (fire chief) didn't occur this year (Dennis was cooking fish). There is a nice brochure that Carol did that was part of a GA Folklife Program grant.

I was disappointed in some respects with what happened with the grant and also the festival. The grant was to gather information for this brochure and to document the tradition. I did an interview training session in late September which had about 10 people. As a training session it was probably my worst, since everything got changed the last minute. But the real point here is that no one that attended actually did any interviews. I interviewed Jack Wingate (a pretty good first interview, I thought, especially considering the man had had a bad accident the day before and had various stitches in his nose and was not feeling well), Mark Darley (who was the model interviewee at the training workshop--not a good interview at all though, the best material came when the tape was turned off). Carol had absorbed a lot just being around her husband's family. She also went to a senior citizen's center and recorded Eliza Louise Barwick. That was basically it with interviews. Two other positive things happened in terms of documentation, however. I was able to arrange for Diane Kirkland, photographer with the GA Dept. of Industry, Trade, and Tourism, to come down and do a photo essay in Nov. during Media Day in Bainbridge. Kent Williams of WALB, Ch. 10, Albany, also did a video piece and we are arranging to get a copy of that plus his raw footage. He was also there during Media Day. Carol's and Diane's photos are in the brochure, which turned out quite nicely.

The Boat Basin is the site of a nice park along the Flint River with a large outdoor covered stage (the VSO performed their in the fall). When I arrived there was an announcement of the festival on the marquis; a garage sale was set up along the drive closest to the river (maybe 6 or 8 tables), and men from the City were already into cooking. There had been a 5 mile run in the morning (everyone can run 5K but only suckers run 5 miles....). The four contestants for the swamp gravy cook-off were stirring up their versions. These were spread out to the west of the stage and cooking area, and I doubt most visitors to the festival really got to these. They were not marked in any way. All the contestants had set up their pots on some sort of portable cookers. The winner, Larry Funderburke assisted by Jerry Toms, told me he used to cook at the Moose Club and watched them cook swamp gravy. He used a base of the leavings of crumbs and grease from cooking fish, diced potatoes, onions, bell peppers, corn, fresh tomatoes, hot sauce. He adds water instead of more grease to keep it from burning. Other contestants were John Monk and David Cochran (second), Phil Long, Joe Anderson, and David

Burton (third place, a team of Decatur Co. Young Farmers, recipe from Long's grandfather), and three generations of Newberry's: Keith, Kenneth, and Keith Jr. I sampled this one: it tasted more like a Brunswick stew without the pork. They used bacon grease instead of fish grease. Some people just went around and sampled the swamp gravy: it wasn't served formally as part of the fish plates.

I also had wanted to record the Fish Tales on the stage starting at 12:00. Carol had told me that there was a tape recorder as part of the PA system, so I didn't bring my tape recorder. As it turns out, they had long play-back, not record function. Someone whose name I didn't get (Mr. ? Lucas) coordinated the contestants (all men), and I got a signed consent form, but then we couldn't record. Jack Wingate was emcee. Contestants were to be Gene Dunlap (former mayor of Climax who is working on a book of stories titled Small Town Mayor), Jack Wingate, Doug Collins, Guy Farmer, Jim Beck, and Dennis Mock. I ended up only hearing Jack and Gene. The fish tales were over in about 25 minutes.

Carol had told me people came mostly for the food, but really there wasn't much else to see anyway. A local man had a nice collection of wooden fishing lures and duck decoys (none local) displayed in the paved area in front of the stage, and a local band (country, rock) called Due South played from 1-3. By the time they ended their first set most of the people had cleared out. Lunch was served starting at 12:30: suckers, French fries, and jalapeno hushpuppies @ \$6 a plate. I took quite a few pictures of the cooking: they prepared 400 plates worth. Cookers were all men, all city employees. Tommy King (with the "Get Hooked" t-shirt in the photos), has done fish fries for nearly 30 years. He prefers catfish or mullet because you can buy them ready prepared for cooking. Suckers are a lot more work: they have to be caught, dressed (gashed), dipped in flour, salt and pepper. Local fishermen were paid \$4/fish for the redhorse suckers, \$2/fish for the pond suckers. King, at my questioning, seemed to think fewer young people were interested in suckers because it was hard work to catch them. Of course Mark Darley (who I believe is in his 30s) takes his teenage daughter fishing.

They had large rectangular cookers which I believe belong to the city. Tommy King said he had been their since 8 in the morning. They didn't start cooking until 11, however.

All of the men cooking were middle aged white males. There were a few blacks at the event (a garage sale table with some older black ladies and some families eating the fish plates) but they were greatly in the minority.

thankVisit with Angie (Angeliki) Poulos
April 9, 2002
113 Devereaux,
Thomasville, GA 31792
229-226-7083

(With clarifications from Tina Bucuvalas via follow-up email, and Lainie Jenkins, now of Guyton, GA, a friend raised Greek Orthodox in Joliet, IL.)

Met Tina Bucuvalas of the Florida Folklife Program at Poulos home about 10:00 a.m. Tina had set up the interview through contact with the priest of Holy Mother of God Greek Orthodox Church in Tallahassee. Tina was pursuing leads on Eastern Mediterranean traditions for the 2002 Florida Folk Festival. Tina, who is half Greek, is much more familiar with Greek traditions/spellings than I. We took notes, photos but made no tape recording.

Angie Poulos is a very outgoing, talkative woman who came to Thomasville from Greece in 1965. In terms of traditional arts Angie is especially skilled in needlework and foodways. This is what the conversation focused on--there may be other aspects of tradition which didn't come up. Their home is full of items from Greece on the wall, in china cabinets. She is from the town of Karpenisi in the state of Efritanias, but was raised in Athens. Coming from a big city to small-town Thomasville of 1965 was initially very hard, but now it is home and the place she and husband Andrew raised their two sons, now grown and in their 30s living in Atlanta and Augusta. She has a close relationship with her neighbors, many of whom have lived in the neighborhood for over 30 years. She is the oldest child of 6, 3 sisters and 2 brothers all now living in the U.S. (none in GA or FL, however). She met her husband, Andrew, when he came back to Greece after returning from the U.S. where he had gone to join an uncle in Thomasville, trying, at age 19, to support his mother and 5 sisters after the death of his father. His family was in Athens at the time, as was Angie's. The family name is actually Papadopoulos, shortened in the U.S. He and Angie were married in 1964.

The Efritanias Convention (people from their home region) meets yearly at various locations, and serves as a reunion for people from this part of Greece. Their family tries to go every year, including their grown sons (who speak Greek and still attend and support a Greek Orthodox Church near their homes). There is also an Efritanias newspaper published every three months to which they subscribe.

I am not quite clear about the origin of the small Greek community in Thomasville. There were evidently 5 or so original "old people" as Angie called them, all now deceased. There are currently about 10 Greek families in Thomasville, down from a high of 18-20. Some, but not all, of this is via chain migration. Originally there was a military base there which apparently drew some people. The Plaza Restaurant, which Andrew has been associated with since first coming (via his uncle) has actually been in existence since 1916, originally in another location a block or so away (did not begin as a Greek Restaurant). There is apparently a history of the restaurant on their placemats (we ate there after the interview), but I carefully put my placemat away before checking it, and mine is a general history of Thomas County. I'll have to try to get the restaurant history. Chris Blane acquired the Plaza in 1942. Louis Mathis served in the U.S. Army at the Thomasville base and started working at the Plaza for Chris Blane in 1946. Louis later brought over his brother, Tom. Andrew Poulos came in 1955 after finishing HS in Greece, following uncles Louis and Tom Mathis. He started washing pots, and then learned about the steam table and buffet line. At one time he was a cook, but now he is

one of three partners (with his two cousins, George and Angelo Mathis). They now have taken over from the older generation, who are deceased. They have a Greek night every Thursday, and operate 7 days. The Greek night appears to include fairly standard American Greek restaurant food rather than any regional specialties. Today they had a busy lunch clientele. The buffet featured a few Greek dishes or touches (Greek olives in the green salad, rice pudding for dessert, and "Greek chicken" as advertised on the special board), but most of the offerings show accommodation to the south Georgia palate: lots of southern vegetables (greens, butter beans, squash casserole, green beans), pork rind, fried mullet, liver and onions, sweet potato and raisin soufflé, corn bread. Also an Italian pasta or perhaps goulash of some sort, iced tea, coffee. For dessert cream pies, cakes, rice pudding. Andrew said that they had a French chef at one point who gave them their recipes for chicken soup, and lemon, coconut and chocolate cream pies. Maybe chicken pot pie, too? They have one or two Greek cooks, but also local non-Greek women in the kitchen. Angie says she hasn't been involved in the restaurant in terms of recipes and cooking at all, even though she is an excellent cook and has quite a collection of Greek cookbooks. This (the restaurant) appears to have been a male domain. Before the church was built in Tallahassee, they used the Episcopal church in Thomasville and then would go to the restaurant for social events, meals.

An interesting sidelight is that the restaurant as well as the church now go to South GA Pecan in Valdosta (used to go to a local person in Thomasville) to buy wholesale nuts. The church buys 600-700 pounds of pecans a year for the festival and bake sale. They put their order in in June, so they are getting last year's crop. They also get other nuts as well. Angie now prefers pecans to walnuts (the traditional nut in Greek pastry) because they have more oil and are better for baking than walnuts. I first thought they used pecans just because of the prevalence of pecans in the region, but evidently walnuts are cheaper per pound than pecans (the explanation was that pecans are much harder to shell than walnuts). Anyway, an interesting adaptation to the local.

There is also a close knit relationship with the Greek Orthodox Church, in which the Poulos' are very active. Angie is a member of the Holy Mother of God Philoptochos association (she calls it a club), which is a women's association which supports the church in various ways. The church, built in 1965, is located at 1645 Phillips Rd., Tallahassee, FL 32308. This church basically serves much of north Florida and south Georgia. Families from Valdosta, Bainbridge, Thomasville, Tifton, Moultrie, Albany all attend Holy Mother of God, the nearest church to them. Otherwise, GA churches are located in Columbus, Metro Atlanta, Augusta, Macon, for example. There is apparently nothing south of Macon. There are about 140 families in the church currently. The church alternates a bake sale fundraiser with a festival (the festival this year is Nov. 1 and 2), and Angie is active in both. Tina's original contact came through seeing at the church the acolyte robes for altar boys, altar coverings, communion cloths, and vestments for the parish priest which Angie made. She is a skilled seamstress, learning in Greece both traditionally from her mother and grandmother and other women, and through school for 3 years. I understood this more to be a private school for needlework arts, rather than something she would have learned as part of regular school and academics. Her father was a tailor, so clearly she inherited a great deal of skill in these areas. She has now made

three sets of altar boy robes, replacing as new sets (and sizes) of boys becoming involved (usually from age 12-18) or when the robes become worn or can no longer be altered. I photographed a gold robe she had made for her sons when her sons were altar boys. She no longer had the wide belts, which would go around the front, cross in back, and then fall over the front of the shoulders. The gold brocade material was ordered from a special store in New York which specializes in ecclesiastical materials for the Greek Orthodox, Catholic, and Episcopal Churches. The gold color is common in GO Churches because there is so much gold in the interiors of the sanctuary. Red, White, and blue also are used. Angie learned how to make her own patterns in school. She was more active sewing when her boys were growing up. She also sewed clothes for her family, sewed baptism clothing, crocheted, and did cross stitch. She also does pulled thread work like Mexican deshilado (whatever the Greek equivalent is) but I didn't see any examples of that. She had various examples of her own work decorating her home (pillows, doilies, table runners) and work by family members, including a colorful fireplace cover done by her mother with embroidered flowers and birds. I took pictures of some of this handwork. Some of this work, including some exquisite cross stitch, was part of her dowry or trousseau ((note from Tina: prika is for dowry. And I think they gave the same word with a different accent for what the woman brought with her for the household. And in retrospect, I think you're right about the trousseau vs dowry. Dowry being stuff given to husband, trousseau being what she takes with her, though I doubt this would include clothing other than hand-made underclothes or nightgowns (from my somewhat distant memory of interviews with other Greeks)).

The tradition was that Greek girls and elder women worked for some time on household items like crocheted bedspreads, runners, pillows, etc. which were to go with the girl at marriage. Angie has a number of these items in the attic. After her boys left home she started doing more alterations. She also became more active in organizations in the church as I understand it.

Angie brought out a platter of two kinds of Greek pastries and offered us coffee or soft drinks. The Easter cookie, sort of a twist, is called koulourakia. There was also a cookie that was like a biscotti (taximadia according to Tina: Lainie calls it paxemadia). Angie is apparently very active with Greek traditional foodways, although like any good cook she is always trying new things as well. There are a number of food traditions and customs associated with the church. At Christmas the Philoptochos Society makes Christmas baskets to sell as fundraisers. Along with Greek wine, they include a number of pastries, koulourakia, kourambiedes (star shaped), baclava, taximadia, others (I couldn't get all the names). Angie said they first year they made 427 baskets. They started the Christmas baskets 6 years ago.

[Clarification from Lainie Jenkins: For Easter, Greek Orthodox have communion during the Divine Liturgy service, which immediately follows the Saturday night celebration of the Resurrection. (FYI, a few minutes before midnight, the church is darkened to resemble a tomb. The only light in the church is that of an oil candle on the holy altar. At midnight the royal gates to the altar open, the priest appears holding a lighted candle and joyfully proclaims "Come receive the light from the unwaning light, and glorify Christ who rose from the dead." The light is given to the congregation, and

parishioners pass it along to each other. At the end of the service, parishioners greet each other with "Christos Anesti" (Christ has risen) and respond with "Alithos anesti" (Truly he has risen). This is a time of forgiveness, peace and joy.....this is such a beautiful service, Laurie, you would love it.) The old tradition is to have a special meal afterward with eggs, magerista (margaritsa is Tina's spelling) soup (made with chopped lamb heart, liver, stomach and intestines, lemons; it is considered a gentle way to introduce meat back into the diet after a week of fasting from all meat products) and sweet bread (tsoureki). (We are talking about 2 in the morning here)]. (Tina's note: today, the margaritsa soup is replaced by a lemon chicken soup called avgolemono).]

Then on Easter Sunday, after church, they have a picnic luncheon with a lamb roasted on a rotisserie spit (recently purchased, before they baked the lamb, but the spit is more reminiscent of village life in Greece). They have the Greek dancers from church , kids play ball etc. Andrew helps cook the lamb. The Easter bread is decorated with eggs (a symbol of resurrection) dyed red, to symbolize the blood of Christ. The bread is flavored with anise and mastika. At Easter time, Greeks also use the hard-boiled red to rap against others' eggs, and the person with the last uncracked egg is considered lucky. [More from Lainie: The Easter bread (tsoureki) is decorated with eggs died red, to symbolize the blood of Christ (secured to the bread with small pieces of dough in the shape of a cross) Anise flavored ?(usually, yes)(the kids have traditions of hitting their eggs against those of others, to see whose cracks first).]

On Christmas they traditionally have pork cooked on a spit. [via Lainie on her experience: Christmas bread (kouloura tou Christou, "round bread of Christ), along with many other foods, and usually including pastitio, which is macaroni, layered with a cream sauce, and a meat sauce.....some people call it Greek lasagna)]

On March 25, Greek Independence, they have fish, a parade, usually with Kalymnian dancers from Tarpon Springs

On Palm Sunday, they have fish cooked with garlic sauce(skordalia) [via Lainie: . (No meat is eaten at all during Holy Week, which begins on Palm Sunday. No meat or dairy products are eaten on Good Friday)] Angie mentioned the Orthodox tradition of fasting for the Lenten period; she only fasts a couple days a week.

Coggins Farms, south Echols County
May 30, 2002

Had permission of Anthony Coggins to take pictures in camps, packing house; from owner Jay Black at RJ's. No one to ask at David Corbett farms--the contact was through one of Susan's students, Justin, who knew the family.

Went with Susan Wehling and her VSU Spanish class on a field trip to South Lowndes/Echols County to visit the packing houses and fields where a predominantly

Hispanic migrant work force supplies labor for 6 packing houses within 5 miles of Lake Park. (According to 1997 Census of Ag, 29 farms in Echols). Susan instituted a service learning course at VSU and is well connected with social services serving the migrant community.

Coggins Farms is east of Lake Park just over the Echols/Lowndes County line. You take hwy. 376 east from 41 toward Statenville, and then south on Culpepper to Coggins Farms. There are several large packing plant operations here. The first of the Coggins packing house operations was the one opened by Zellwin after the farms on L. Apopka (FL) closed. Coggins took it over in July 2001. There are still a few of the Zellwin management folks working there, according to Anthony Coggins, who took us around the packing house. Coggins also told me that some of FL workers came up here--I'll need to follow this up. Today we saw cucumbers being graded and packed; also peppers. There is a carrot packing house also (formerly Zellwin). This they call the "carrot house." The other facility, which we toured, is called simply the "packing house." (used for a variety of items) Coggins' raise over 50 different crops, including greens, cucumbers, eggplants, bell peppers, snap beans, squash, tomatoes, carrots. They have two crops yearly and thus two seasons in the packing houses (spring and fall): April 15- July 1 and Sept. 15 to Thanksgiving. Carrot season is Dec. to mid-June. I spoke with Alex, crew leader for the packing house who is from Tamaulipas. He said that during the hot months when the work is stopped most folks stay around in the area, but some travel north working other crops. He said in the packing house the crew was about 60% from Chiapas, 10% Tamaulipas, and 20% Guatemalan. There are apparently no workers who are U.S. Latinos. During the peak (mid June) there are about 1000 migrant workers working for Coggins.

The field crews are paid by the piece (40 cents/box for cucumbers) and some hourly. The crew I photographed was on the David Corbett Farm, picking cukes as a machine with a conveyor belt moved slowly across the field. I talked briefly with the man on the end. The crew was all male (typical, there are relatively few women working in the field crews). He was from Veracruz, others were from Chiapas. HE TOLD me they got \$6/hour and worked from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. (I may not have heard the times right). Vegetables are all hand harvested.

(Susan mentioned that there is a new law/procedure that crew leaders now need some sort of official stamped booklet from the state; workers are encouraged to get other booklets to keep a record of their work. These documents help ensure that the crew leader pays them--need to clarify this--from an Amigos meeting yesterday).

At Coggins, the packing house crews grade, pack, and load boxes or crates into the trucks. Packing house is considered an easier job, hourly wages, shade, fans. Most women work here rather than the field crews. Work from 60-70 hours/week. Anthony said they send out 8-20,000 boxes of cucumbers/day and load 75-200 semi-trucks/day. The produce is sent to fresh market, grocery stores, broker houses. Sell some directly to local grocery stores, if I understood right--need to follow up on this.

Anthony Coggins asked the students first thing if anyone was looking for a job. He said 10-15% of the work force is local labor, but "If we didn't have migrant workers we wouldn't be in this business." Mexicans first question is how much can we work? Locals ask what time do we go home? As Susan pointed out to her students, a different work ethic. Anthony seemed to call all the migrants "Mexicans" even though there are some Guatemalans. He uses 10 crew leaders/labor contractors for their total operation. He depends on the crew leaders for translation. By law, they require 2 forms of ID and an I-9, but is not allowed to ask about the IDs (if I understood him right, for example, to check if it is legal or illegal). INS hasn't been in the area for several years, ever since they raided the vidalia onion crop in middle GA and extradited so many workers that the crop was threatened. The feds required the state in which the illegals were caught to pay for sending them back to Mexico. The governor cut the extradition funds and said that the fed. govt. could pay for extradition from now on (this according to Anthony Coggins).

We walked down a sandy lane to the Coggins labor camp, a bleak building with a communal eating room and kitchen, bathrooms, and a series of dormitory-like rooms, cement floors, beds. According to Susan, the Ortega family (Mexican) runs all the labor camps. What we saw is the Coggins camps, which Coggins let the Ortegas run. Evidently they sell alcohol, which is a problem, there is also prostitution. Susan says it can get pretty rough. Julesa (?) who works at the Migrant Clinic, from Honduras, is in the know about all the camps. Susan says she took Susan to one once and they were chased out with guns. We passed a number of trailers on Hwy. 376 which appeared to be migrant housing.

AT the Coggins camp, I saw some bicycles and some clothes hanging out to dry out back. It looked like this was a bunk for all men. I saw little evidence of a garden or any attempts to make things "homey" such as was possible at El Pozo in central Florida, where the same crew came back to the same housing year after year. One window did have a Mexican flag in it. The kitchen didn't look too heavily used and was a mess--there were some bags of masa and a fry pan on the tables in the group eating area. I suspect much of the food is bought from the "lonche" trucks (I was told there are several) which come by for the noon meal break, or from the counter at RJ's convenience store on the corner of hwy. 376 and Culpepper, right at the Echols Co. line.

According to Susan, there are only two convenience stores in Echols County, and locals haven't taken kindly to RJ's being taken over as a Mexican store. Friday is a particularly busy day, since the workers all come in to cash their checks. RJ's owner, Jay Black, has had the store for about 2 years, and began catering to the Mexicans when he took over. He has a full-time cook (Pilar, from Guatemala) who cooks for the lunch counter--they serve breakfast, lunch, and dinner. There was a Mexican woman in the back working with her. Pilar starts working at 5 a.m. Today they had chicharron with salsa, barbacoa, frijoles, gorditas con barbacoa, hot wings, gizzards (not sure the Spanish name, wings are alas), they also have menudo, etc. I took a picture of the items (in Spanish) listed that they have daily. Items on the buffet vary daily. Pilar makes only one Guatemalan dish apparently, Guat. style tamales made with banana leaves. The leaves come from a store in Atlanta, she said. Some of the hot dishes were "southern" such as corn dogs, mac and cheese, fried chicken. Most of the products cater to the Mexican population--they had pan

dulce from a bakery in Atlanta, for example, Mexican vegetables, canned goods. A nice touch on the wall-- a Mexican and a Confederate Battle flag.

We stopped at the migrant health clinic located between the two Coggins packing houses on Culpepper road. There was a poster on the door advertising a dance in Jasper, FL the second weekend in June. Also they had copies of the free newspaper La Explosion--La Voz de nuestra comunidad serving s. GA and N. FLA. The following local businesses are advertised:

Ortega's Mexican Store and Video, one location off Hwy. 129, one in Lake Park; Tortilleria Los Girasoles in front of Farmer Browns in Valdosta, La Princesa Mexican Store at I-75 and the Lake Park exit, Barnes Health Services, Blanton's Meat and Grocery in Valdosta, Hermana Bishop (curandera, psiquica, consejera--has an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the ad), Latino Motor Cars Quincy FL, El Gymnasio de Douglas, a Mother's Day dance featuring Mandingo from Monterrey NL, Mexico, also Estruendo Norteño de S.L.P., two DJ sound and light outfits, advertising services for events such as weddings, birthdays, etc. (Sonido Jackson, 229-985-9047 and Sonido Lobo, 229-616-1101 or 229-292-5713), Iglesia de Cristo del Aeropuerto, Valdosta (according to Susan, minister Ralph Romero is in trouble for selling fake drivers licenses). Other churches listed, many with pastors with Hispanic-sounding names (neither of the Catholic Churches have a priest listed--Fr. Marc Fallon left a few years ago).

On the Internet I looked for info. on Coggins, Zellwin, Echols County. Didn't see anything specifically on these farms, but there was something on Echols Co. The top employers in 1999, in alphabetical order:

David Corbett Farms
KMA Employee Leasing Inc.
R & H Farms, Inc.
Walter Michael DeLoach
Zellwin Produce Co., Inc. (now Coggins)

According to the 2000 census, demographics

| Echols | State |
|---|-------|
| 77.1% white | 65.1 |
| 6.9% black | 28.7 |
| Hispanics (either white or black 19.7%) | 5.3 |

A publication called Rural Migration News, July 2001, Vol. 7/3 listed Whitfield County (Dalton) as the highest proportion of Hispanic residents in GA (22%) (this seems low?); second leading Hispanic county is Echols whose 3,800 residents are 20% Hispanic. (ref. AJC article, April 8, 2001: "Farm worker responsible for Latin boom in rural Echols".

Brooks and Echols Counties were the sites of the first Emory PA-SOWEGA AHEC Farmworker Health Project in May 1996 according to their website. June, 2000 approx.

494 farmworkers and family members seen during the 5 day clinics (up from 150 in 1996). (Note: Diane Howard and I ran across the Emory folks at the Cecil packing house on Hwy. 41 last June.)

Echols: according to 1997 Census of Ag: 29 full-time farms (averaging 267 acres) produced a total market value of over \$5 million in ag. products. Crops sales accounted for 94% of this.

Field Notes,

June 19, 2002

Independent sawmill operator/lumber manufacturer

“Swamp Art” wood sculptures from cypress knees and fat “lighter” pine

Mr. Steve Cross

Rt. 1, Box 340

Iron City, GA 31759 (zip code is changing soon)

229-221-7373 (phone at sawmill)

Steve Cross contacted me after seeing me quoted in an Albany Herald piece on a local woodcarver which appeared over Memorial Day weekend (Sunday feature). I haven’t seen the newspaper piece. We made arrangements to meet at Richardson’s BBQ in Iron City, where Curtis Everette was confirmed as the painter of the windows of the BBQ and the traveling BBQ stand parked off to the side. There were two other Everette murals in Iron City which I photographed: one on the side of the local café (Richardson’s competition I guess) and another on the side of a black-owned barbershop. Edward Weatherspoon, who is the son of the elder Richardson’s who founded the BBQ, confirmed that Everette lives in Donalsonville and I have a map of where he lives. He reportedly has done many murals, an African American man perhaps in his late 50s.

By the way, the train came by when we were eating about 1:00 but it didn’t stop.

I followed Cross 5 miles or so out of town, behind his fire engine red motorcycle, to his sawmill, on the edge of a 602 acre swamp property that is a major bird rookery when it isn’t so dry. Steve is a muscular, tanned man in his early 50s, with striking blue eyes and straight, fine-textured medium brown hair—perhaps a legacy of his great (great?) grandmother Mariah who was Indian. His mother apparently has a photo of her and knows the story—I recorded an abbreviated version from Steve. He comes from a longtime Iron City area family. I noticed driving into town that the town was only incorporated in 1900. He has a very distinctive southern accent. It would be interesting for someone who knows something about accents to comment on it. He has a HS degree and then spent two years in the Air Force at the Warner Robbins, GA base in the early 70s working on nuclear bombs. There is clearly a story here which I didn’t have time to pursue; “nuclear” he said was the other “N” word. No one wants to talk about it.

There is a 1997 documentary “The Sawyer” done on him by Vincent Nuñez, Victor Nuñez’s son (I think the latter did the movie Ullee’s Gold?) He is a rarity—an independent one-man sawmill operation. He claims to be the smallest sawmill operation around. A recent job was providing lumber to the restoration of the train depot in Plains,

GA. He embodies the spirit of making do and recycling, with his sawmill equipment either built himself from parts in his junkyard or adapted to suit his needs from purchased equipment. He was raised on a farm, but sawmilling goes back in his family to his maternal great grandfather. He is the fourth generation in his family to operate sawmills. Steve has worked in the sawmill, initially with his father (now deceased) since 1976. There is a very small sign at the highway, but I might well have missed the mill without following Steve since it really looks like a junkyard from the road. Steve has an old bus that he uses to house one of his saw blade sharpening machines. There is a stray dog that has taken up residence in the junkyard; I'm not sure if the dog food Steve feeds the soft shell turtles in his pond is bought for the turtles or for this stray which has showed up recently.

Back behind the mill (where Steve was working on a load of black cherry, all local wood sold through a timber broker named Thigpen) is a deck on the edge of a pond and a small wood building which is his gallery. The railing around the deck is topped with all sorts of interesting shaped pieces of driftwood which Steve has gathered. He reminds me of what I wrote about Charlie Boren in SW Indiana all those years ago: "he sees visions in wood." Much of the wood is from his property or from the Flint River. He likes to take his boat out, relax, and find interesting pieces. The shapes of the wood inspire him to carve: a pelican, a flying fish, a horse head, a cobra, a snake coiled around a pole for a walking stick. He has won best of show recently in the Bainbridge Arts Council show (exact name of show is on the tape). The work is interesting because Steve has an obvious talent for this and also because of the occupational link. Some of the bigger pieces are first cut out into rough shape on the sawmill. Most of the tools are power tools he is used to from milling and from growing up on a farm. He does most of his work outside, either on the deck or in a nearby shaded spot. The work generates a lot of sawdust and noise. There may be some finishing with hand tools, but most is machine done and then finished with polish or oil. He has been whittling and working in wood by trial and error since he was a kid, but only in the last seven years ago has he begun to produce pieces that he has kept. The first was the Spirit of Cedar Horse. With the tape on, I photographed each piece and had him talk about it. There were maybe 15 or 20 pieces. The artistic talent perhaps comes via his mother, who does a lot of flower arranging, but there are no other wood carvers or other mentors. He seems interested in SE Indian art and recently had acquired a book on NW Coast Indian art which was lying in his gallery. Some of the stands or non wood pieces that are part of his sculptures are recycled items from the scrap yard.

Rogers/Coggins Agriculture/Latino labor Field Notes
6-20-02

Ran into James Rogers, who works in Phys. Plant here at VSU and is a farmer in Echols Co, double first cousins with Coggins. He recommended Felton Coggins as the one to interview about their operation. Rogers is a talker; his sons are now the third generation to farm. 100 acres, vegetables. Plastic farming new comparatively. Coggins began in 1989; Rogers the past 6 years or so (check the latter). With plastic you can control everything; chemicals, water, fertilizer, and can guarantee delivery of so much produce by a certain date. Rogers works for the past 7 years or so with a Guatemalan married to a

Mexican who gets his labor for him. They have a pre-K son and a home in Ft. Lauderdale. First started working when the man brought his 60+ year old father and both needed a job. Rogers' neighbor wouldn't hire them because the father was too old. They walked down the road to Rogers farm and Rogers gave the old man the job of driving the tractor, something he could do as well as any younger man. The family has been loyal to Rogers because of this. Crew size varies depending on need. Made up of Mexicans and Guatemalans. Some are family. Rogers has housing on his place and controls it himself. He says in the mid 50s he and his brother traveled up to Canada to pick tobacco and could make more money in less time than they could even growing their own crop here in GA. So he understands the Latinos plight and situation. They need the money, want to work, and can make so much more here. He pays them minimum wage for a day and then piecework for anything over that (I assume min. wage for 8 hours?).

Finished squash and are just finishing peppers. With vegetables the operation is now year round.

Coggins also now third generation farmers. The big change with more labor and more Latinos came with the shift to plastic/vegetables. Said Coggins had about 2000 acres. Felton Coggins would be a good one to talk about the Zellwin connection.

7-29-02

Notes from Conversation with James S. Rogers, b. 1941, Echols County, employee VSU Physical Plant and local farmer. He was in my office in follow-up to a previous conversation: he knew I was looking for quotes for my exhibit (additions to Last Harvest exhibit, S. GA panels).

Native of Echols County: 3rd generation farmer: Quote from James S. Rogers re. migration to Canada to pick tobacco:

I went to Canada for 7 years starting in the late 50s picking tobacco. The Only cash crop we had here in the summer at that time, was picking tobacco. We could pick tobacco here for 3-4\$ a day; we picked it up there for 13-14\$/day. This has been 40 year ago, but I was talking to one of my Mexican workers recently, and he told me a good job down there is \$20 week daylight to dark. (That's how we worked back then.) Now they make close to \$50/week here minimum wage. So I can relate to why they do it. To Better yourself. They're making a lot more money. 40 years ago I was doing the same thing they're doing. It's easy for me to understand because I've been there. You'll see people around here who say, I don't understand why they do this. But if you've been there, you understand more.

They furnished room and board, and plenty of work. We worked 7 days a week up there.

My dad, we didn't hire anybody. We swapped. Families swapped each other. We would work 3 or 4 different farms, and then he'd get his pick. From 41-50 (I was born in '41), we swapped labor. From 50 on they'd be hiring. Neighbors, same people that was swapping. Local labor.

Mexican help in warehouses before in the fields. From here south, first of the 80s began using migrant labor.

Field Notes, April 12, 2003

Agrirama, Tifton

Spring Folklife Festival and Fiddlers Jamboree

I am on the mailing list for the annual Fiddler's Jamboree, coordinated by Joe and Frank Maloy of Tifton, along with staff at the Agrirama. The Maloys are terrific resources on bluegrass and old-time country fiddling; Frank has transcribed a number of tunes for bluegrass and fiddler publications. Evidently he was quite a fiddler in his prime, known esp. for his playing of Mockingbird. I have yet to sit down and interview them.

I get an announcement for the Fiddlers Jamboree each year in the mail; this was the second time I have gone. Previously, it was several years ago. The event is held at the Wiregrass Opry stage at the Agrirama, which has a sizable wooden raised (covered) stage and a large covered seating area for audience. There were around 20 or so fiddlers present: not all stayed for the jamboree, which was not a contest, but rather a chance for fiddlers to jam together informally backstage, and for each to play a tune of choice on stage. There were also opening and closing sessions where everyone was on stage jamming on Bile them Cabbage Down and Soldier's Joy (at beginning) and Faded Love (at the end), where I was pressured into taking a solo with Henry Rutland playing harmony (my debut!). It was a blast, and my "debut" since I don't play by ear, but I had my violin with me because of a gig and rehearsal later in the day at the Tiftarea Easter Pageant, so I guess it was proper etiquette to play. Cal Carpenter, the emcee, came up to me and asked if I was going to take a solo. I originally said, No, I would just play in the background, but he told me "If an 11-year-old girl can do it, you can:" (or something to that effect).

The stage this year was swathed in a backdrop of the flag. The jamboree was to start at noon. I got there a little after 10:00. They had already started the sets leading up to the jamboree: there were two women singing country gospel when I arrived. The groups didn't exactly follow the printed program. I recorded the following (either with a signed consent form, or a verbal consent: there were really too many people to get an individual consent form signed, record, and take photos):

Country Fever with Charles Bartlett, Fiddle, of Byron, GA and Jeff Walker, Guitar, of Ildo, GA.

The Joyful Country Boys of Thomasville (got card) with

Fred Bostick on harmonica, Thomasville (I had previously recorded him with CE Pullen at the Mt. Zion Music Hall several years ago),

Bill Nicholson, Tifton (bass)

Tess Warren, Ochlochnee, washboard, vocals

Jon Bannister, Thomasville, guitar

Bob Gartman, Thomasville, guitar

Marvin McConnell, Albany fiddle (sat in near end of set, didn't stay for Jamboree)

The Carpenters (host band)

Cal Carpenter, Tifton, mandolin, vocals, emcee,

Fred Carpenter, Tifton, bass

Clint Carpenter, Tifton, guitar

Jerry Conway, Tifton, Guitar

- One of the Maloys told me that the Carpenters' late dad was a fiddler, and they continued coming to the jamboree after he died in tribute to him (3 Carpenters are all brothers)

This year at the jamboree it was nice to see 3 or 4 teens and younger and several females. One of the young men was Joe Maloy's grandson, Joey Griner, of Enigma. Fiddling in south GA doesn't seem to have much young blood. Frank Maloy had made me a tape of the late Stanley Bailey Sr. of Enigma/Nashville, GA, who was a fine old-time fiddler who played a number of local South GA tunes. Henry Rutland learned Albany Reel from Bailey, for ex. Bailey reportedly learned it from an old fiddler in Tifton named Bruce Bass, according to Henry Rutland. Stanley Bailey Sr. is included in Joyce Cauthen's fiddlers book, and his son, Stanley Jr. said he has been in communication with her recently regarding an update to the book. Stanley Jr. has recently moved back to Nashville after some 30 years in Florida. He has a number of recordings of his late father which he is mastering for family and friends, and said he'd be happy to get me a copy. (not sure what generation tape the one the Maloys gave is, but I got Stanley Jr.'s permission to put it in the collection.). Stan Bailey seems like an interesting guy: has a business in Nashville GA repairing and selling vintage guitars, banjos, and mandolins. He mentioned that he thought the best regional fiddler was Chubby Anthony, who played with the Stanley Brothers. Born in western NC, moved to FL in 1958, capturing FL State fiddlers championship 3x, played with Stanley Bros, made his home in Wellborn, FL, died 1980 at age 44.

One of the fiddlers commented on the dwindling of numbers; how in the 70s you'd have all these fiddlers, maybe 30 guitar players. The audience seemed middle aged or older for the most part, but there didn't seem to be great crowds on site in general (at least that was my impression about 2:00 when I walked over to the turpentine firing). The fiddlers ranged in talent from beginner to accomplished, but clearly the best fiddlers were Henry Rutland of Thomasville, and Tommy Harrelson of McCrae. Henry, on fiddle, with Stan Bailey on mandolin and James Mullis of Tifton on bass, played about 5 tunes after the jamboree, which I recorded. Frank and Joe Maloy also played some tunes with Vicki McMullan and Jack Leiderman, now of Rockville, MD. Vicki is originally from Tifton. I stopped recording during this set, and a man came up to me and said I was missing the best part of the day, Joe Maloy playing Mockingbird. I, however, was trying to get over to get some turpentine leads at the turpentine still firing elsewhere on site.

Agrirama Folklife Festival, Turpentine still firing, contacts
April 12, 2003

Turpentine Still Firing, done once a year at the folklife festival here. The firing was slow, so by 2:00 it still wasn't ready. I had to leave by 2:30 to go to a rehearsal, so my plan was to show up and get some contacts for the project on the occupational folklife of turpentine with Tim Prizer. This event tends to attract people who were involved in turpentine, or whose family members were. John Johnson knew I was coming (he was the Agrirama employee in charge of the firing) and he directed me to various individuals. Alton Carter was there (Racepond) so I refreshed his memory on who I was. New leads:

Hubert H. Howard (former lawyer)
PO Box 543
Jessup, GA 31598
912-427-3285
wife Alta Lee

worked turpentine in 1950s-70s, his father from the teens to 1955. May still be an African American worker around. Will need to call. Also ask him about the book he has on turpentine. Mentioned GA Forestry mag. Recent article on Jim Gillis. Said he'd been working Mexicans the last 15-20 years. Need to follow up on this.

George Varn, Jr. (folks were big producers)
PO Box 128
Hoboken, GA 31542
W 912-458-2187 (sawmill)

His father bought mill from a Mr. Larkin; I'm guessing this is Wallace Larkin's father. Wallace told me his father had the first turpentine still in Hoboken, I believe. Had leads to two black workers: Ralph Wilkerson, who worked in the still (shut down 21 years. Ago) and Willie White, who still works at the sawmill

Carlton Lee, another producer mentioned by Varn. S. Side of Hoboken, tree planter, phone 912-458-1215

Gillis Carter, involved in turpentine late 1940s to mid. 1970s, father Era Carter from late 30s to late 1970s
Rt. 2 Box 4320
Willacoochee, GA 31650
H-912-534-5117.

Quit 1976, but still farms four trees in his yard; provided gum for this year's firing. Knows 3 black men living in Willacoochee who worked turpentine. Retired, seemed very eager to talk. Might be entrée for Shasta McCranie; McCranie interviewed at Agrirama but not sure if anyone has video taped him giving a tour of the McCranie Turpentine Still NRHS in Willacoochee.

Fieldnotes, Friday April 18, 2003

Zeta Phi Beta (check) Probate Show, just northeast of West Hall, VSU campus

This was my first viewing of a Probate show, and any kind of Greek activity, really, either male or female, black or white. This is the end of Greek Week on campus; on my way home from the office today I passed by Sunset Park and two white male fraternities were engaged in a intense tug of war, with "coaches" spurring them on and a large crowd that roared every time one of the lines (they were virtually laying down, with their feet dug in) moved an inch one way or another.

Arrived about 8:10 p.m. and could see folks gathering. There was a barbecue of grilled chicken set up on the walkway in front of West. Soon after I arrived I ran into Melva Morfaw, of African American Studies, who it turns out is the sorority advisor. Melva and I chatted briefly. The Probate Show is the coming out part for the new pledges. There were 9, and they arrived in style in a white stretch limo probably around 8:30. Prior to this a crowd gathered, spectators, other sororities and fraternities. There were some elders seated in front, but the majority of the crowd was black college age students. Melva explained that her sorority is the only one with Brothers (a brother fraternity). They each had their own "cheer" which they used throughout when they especially liked something in the presentation. The nine young women were dressed in white two piece suits with a jacket and slacks, white high heeled sandals, and masks made out of blue and white feathers (the Zeta colors). They all had hair pulled back and long straight pony tails, so I suspect some of this was extensions or hair pieces? They walked up the sidewalk to the site of the show on a rolled out "carpet" of blue. Some brothers helped them out of the car. There were two muscular brothers without their shirts waiting at the foot of the blue walkway with Greek insignias painted on their arms and torsos. I assumed these were from the brother fraternity. As the pledges walked the carpet, I heard a female soloist singing down at the show site, but couldn't make out much more than that.

I went to photograph the arrival of the limo, and by the time I got back to the site of the show, the pledges were entering and the crowd had tightened up the circle maybe 4 or 5 deep in some places so it was difficult to get in to get photos, but I think it was too dark for my lens and flash. I also enlisted Melva to hold the tape recorder for me. The event is fundamentally visual, with dance body percussion routines, poses, special attire, processions, so video would be the ideal means of documentation.

The show was all about style. I'm not sure I remember all the stages, but after the procession/entrance. which involved a choreographed, coordinated routine the 9 pledges stood in formation. One by one they were unmasked by a big Sister (?), who gave her a hug and wiped her brow. Then each young woman walked around the circle, declaiming or rapping her own speech announcing her personality, her nickname, where she was from, her loyalty to the Zetas. Each young woman was a number (1 through 9) until she declaimed her nickname. There was a lot of cheering, interjections by the crowd as a favorite was unmasked. There were also original songs, sung call and response style, and a final step routine which seemed to me a direct descendant from patting juba and earlier forms of body percussion. When they were not doing a routine, the pledges stood in an erect body posture with their hands over their chests forming something which may have stood for Zeta Phi Beta. I was standing in front of the sound system where a senior member of the sorority who seemed in charge in some way was helping keep a clear view

of the pledges for a cue as to when to play CDs. At various points when the pledges were describing the positive characteristics of Zetas and dissing other sororities, the DJ announced "Remember, this is just a Probate Show," to remind listeners of the performance aspect, not that this was being deliberately antagonistic (or that was my take after questioning Melva afterward). After the final routine, the crowd moved in, the DJ played something on the PA, and it looked like a party developing. Melva came and told me to turn off the tape recorder, and seemed to urge both of us out of there quickly. A number of spectators also left, but as we walked away (about 9:30) there was still a crowd gathered at the show site.

I'm these events have been well documented but their use of the African aesthetic is striking: participatory interaction with performer/audience, call and response, union of movement and music, emphasis on verbal prowess and dramatic presentation, creation of rhythmic drive with body percussion, hand clapping, foot stomping.

Thursday, April 24, 2003

Miss Rutha Harris
623 Whitney Avenue
Albany, GA 31701
229-436-1997 (H)
229-347-5768 (cell)

At the opening reception for the Folklife of Wiregrass, GA exhibit at Georgia Southwestern in Americus, the Freedom Singers sang a program (from the Albany Civil Rights Movement Museum at Historic Mt. Zion Church). Angela Whitmal, former curator of the museum and contact for the Singers, has recently left the museum. There is a new curator I haven't yet met. The contact for the Freedom Singers in the interim was Eartha Watkins, a middle School band director in Albany with a very strong alto voice. There were only 5 singers for the program and Eartha described the Freedom Singers as "in transition." There are voices which are not very strong, so in an a cappella situation with smaller numbers, they do not sound as good as when I first heard them in Albany in 2000 at their regular monthly singing. Rutha Harris, the original SNCC Freedom Singer, is retiring at the end of this school year after 30 years as a HS teacher for exceptional students. She has been at the same school, Monroe, for all that time. She was not in her best voice Thursday either. She truly has a powerful, extraordinary voice, and I told her that I wanted to nominate her for a National Heritage Fellowship. She was touched.

Bernice Johnson Reagon wants to produce a CD that Rutha will do after she retires (the other original SNCC Freedom Singer from Albany). I should ask her to write a letter or perhaps the nomination? At any rate, they are on good terms.

The other extraordinary voice there on Thursday night was Emory Harris, Rutha's "baby brother," who doesn't regularly sing with the group but helps out when they need it. She had him do a solo a cappella: he is eternally in her shadow at these events, but was as he

said, with the second group of Freedom Singers, and is a very smooth, versatile, expressive tenor. There were about 60 people in attendance. They didn't do as much interactive stuff, which surprised me, but I didn't get a chance to ask about that. At VSU the second half of the program, as in Albany, involves audience participation.

Gabriele Stauf, the local contact at GSW and faculty in the English Dept., said she was able to use \$300 of her Springfest budget toward the exhibit opening, so I can use that as match and don't need to pay them honorarium as a local host. I discovered that I'd put "Bertha Harris" in the exhibit caption instead of "Rutha"--very embarrassing under the circumstances, so will pay \$200 to have the panel redone.

April 24, 25, 2003

Phillip (Phil) Wehlitz (wife Claire)

313 McKinney Road

Cordele, GA 31015

Home 229-273-3841

Fax 229-271-9381

Mobile 229-924-1709

"Southern Eclectic, LLP" original Art and Designs, Authentic Reproductions in Tinware, Copper, and Wrought Iron, folk art, commissions, Uncle Phil's Charcoal Grills

Visited afternoon of 24th and 25th in his shop behind their home, which is located near his wife's family homeplace (she was a McKinney; teaches kindergarten for 28 years in Crisp Co., has 2 sisters who teach HS). I had met Phil a couple years ago when the Folklife of Wiregrass GA exhibit was at the library in Cordele and the local bluegrass band, in which Phil plays guitar and resonator guitar (dobro) plays. Diane Langston, of the Crisp Arts Alliance, had some of Phil's pieces on display around the exhibit (a copper urn/vase and some ornamental frogs). He told me he was a 4th generation tinsmith, and I was intrigued. Finally got up to visit him and learn more.

When I arrived he was working in the shop in back of the house fashioning the metal charcoal grills he has started lately as a cottage industry, using a modification of a design he inherited from an older man (didn't know name) who had died. The grills were being sold at Stripling's Market down the road on 300 (known for their meats, espec. homemade sausage--I took some photos a couple years ago) and the owner, a friend of Phil's, called and asked if he could make them. He now has several distributors and seems to be doing pretty well at it. He at least the 4th generation in his family to work in metal, and his oldest son, Russell, although currently "a ski bum" in Colorado, as Phil puts it, has shown some interest and aptitude.

Phil's paternal grandfather, Otto Albert Wehlitz, was born in 1898 in East Prussia, and then moved to Germany. His father had been a tinsmith, also; Phil doesn't know anything beyond that. He married a German woman and had some of his older children in Germany before emigrating through Ellis Island to Wausau, WI in 1911. An uncle had preceded him to the States. Phil's father, Herbert Paul, was born in Wisconsin. Eventually the family moved to Cordele, GA, although Phil doesn't know why they ended

up in Cordele, but before 1936 he was working in Cordele and founded the Cordele Sheet Metal Works. I took a photo of the picture Phil has of it (the original building is no longer standing). Phil still has a tool chest made by hand by his grandfather using traditional tinsmith techniques. As a child he used to like to look at and handle his grandfather's tools. Otto Wehlitz, called "Mr. Wehlitz" by everyone in town, did a lot of work in the community: roofing for the old courthouse that was torn down, and number of roofs and gutters and down spouts in town, etc. The Sheet Metal Works became mechanized, mainly making blow piping for sawmills, cotton gins, and peanut mills, serving a large customer base from Macon south. Phil's father and two uncles, Otto Albert Jr. (on the right in the photo) and Richard Carl (next to Herbert Paul--Herbert Paul is wearing the hat) also worked in the family business. Phil has one cousin, a son of Richard Carl, who still works in metal. At age 13, Phil starting working at the Metal Works making \$10/week, something about fastening rivets inside a cyclone? which ultimately, he thinks, is responsible for his hearing problems today. He soon graduated to making patterns.. Otto Wehlitz died in the early 1960s, Phil as born in 1949. Phil did not directly learn tinsmith techniques from his grandfather, since the business was primarily mechanized by the time Phil came along, but he clearly continues family tradition in metalwork, the craftsmanship and quality standards of his grandfather. The metal Works closed in 1974, by then in second building, which still stands. on 6th street between 8 and 9 Avenue in Cordele. I photographed this two story brick industrial building--the sign, hand lettered in metal by Phil's grandfather, is gone. I also photographed his grandparents home with its metal roof, done by Otto, at 1002 E. 28th Ave. in Cordele.

Neither Phil's grandfather or father did any decorative work. Both were fairly gruff, non communicative types as Phil remembers them. The family's German ancestry became an issue in World War II, when a German born aunt was asked to leave her teaching post in the Cordele schools, and had to go stay with relatives in Chicago. Also, sometime during this period the family home was burned down. Phil was not privy to other family stories of this period; he describes the family as being typically German and closed mouthed. Also very frugal. He told a story after the tape was off about his grandfather, who was in bed after a stroke, and called a lawyer to come settle his affairs. He asked the lawyer how much it would cost, and when the lawyer told him about \$150, Otto, outraged, leaped out of bed rather than pay the fee. The lawyer told Phil he always thought he saved his grandfather's life.

Phil is a self taught welder and did some work in mech. engineering at Southern Tech. He has spent most of his life in Crisp Co. A bad shoulder injury in 1997 caused him to be let go from his job, and he has been trying to do something to make money that involves the metal working that he so enjoys. He first tried his hand at making pots and pans out of copper and tin, using his grandfather's old pattern books. He also had a watering can that was his original design. He tried going to some art/craft fairs but really couldn't make any money this way. He started looking around at what was selling at these fairs, and in this way got into things like ornamental leaf candle sconces, garden art like frogs, sea turtles (because people seem to like them), and butterflies/dragonflies for decorating gardens. He has also made sun faces. In front of his yard he has a sign in metal, Garden Art, and has a pond. lily pad, frog sculpture, a garden gate, and a dolphin. The "folk art"

wasn't profitable, so he has gone into the charcoal grills which are quite handsome and are selling well. These use welding techniques and his grandfather and the tinsmith craft was all handwork and hammering, so in this there is no connection, but Phil definitely sees a continuity with his family legacy and calls himself a 4th generation tinsmith. The other tinsmith's he has met work at places like Williamsburg, or do restoration and reproduction work.

In the Wehlitz home his tinsmith's work is displayed in copper containers used as planters, and in a sun face on the wall. He also makes cherry walking sticks. He enjoys bluegrass and going to bluegrass festivals. His "mark" is a stylized "W" on all his pieces.

Phil's work would make an interesting radio piece, I think, and would tie into a diversity theme of an Old World craftsman and his legacy.

April 24, 2003

Joyce and Luther A. Oakes
PO Box 3 (Oak St. at Haslem)
Pinehurst, GA 31070-0003

I first came in contact with the Oakes when the Folklife of Wiregrass GA exhibit was in Cordele a couple years ago, and someone saw the 1977 photos from the Royal Family Singing Convention in Mystic that included Joyce and LA as part of the Convention Quartet. A close-up of the quartet was the title panel photo for the Of Church and Sacred Life section of the original exhibit. Through that connection LA called me up and I helped them get copies of these photos. He also sent me quite a bit of information about the Oakes family, including his father as a singing school teacher (Luther "Pop" Oakes Sr.) starting in the 1920s in the 7-shape note tradition, a partial list of the country churches where Luther Sr. held singing schools, a photo of the Wiregrass Quartet which included his dad, photos and info. on the Oakes Family String Band, in which LA played fiddle. On Sept. 15, 2001, I went to Wesley Chapel, an abandoned Methodist Church outside Vienna just off Hwy. 27 on the Dooly/Pulaski Co. Line for one of the two annual singings held by the Pinehurst Singing Class of 1952; Joyce and LA are the only two surviving of the original members. The singing is now called the Wesley Chapel Sing and many folks think it started in Wesley Chapel, but it had its roots in the original singing school class held in Pinehurst by Mr. Wilbur Wilson who represented the Stamps-Baxter Co. in Dallas. For 12 years the class continued to meet in weekly in private homes every Thursday night and then for another 4 or 5 years in local churches every other Thursday. The class was given the use of Wesley Chapel after the Methodists left and the land reverted back to the original land owner. They have use of the building as long as they keep it up. They have two singings a year: the (Saturday before?) 2nd Sunday in April and the 3rd Sunday in Sept. They also continue to meet the 2nd and 4th Thursday nights of each month from 7-9 p.m. Numbers are dwindling, however, to maybe 8-10 people. Joyce talks about the Pinehurst class and Wesley Chapel history in more detail in the interview.

Whereas they once would go to singings every weekend, now the number of singings are greatly reduced. In the area the remaining singings are: Midway Church, Crisp Co. run by Bill Dorough, on the 1st Sunday in May; Antioch Church, Cordele, 4th Sunday in April (fading away according to the Oakes) Arabi Cemetery, Crisp Co., Arabi, 3rd Sunday in May; Rocky Mount, Turner Co, 2nd Sunday in June. The GA State Convention rotates to various locations. They go, but Wesley Chapel is not formally affiliated in any way.

Luther A. Oakes is now 87 and seems to have faded since I spoke with him a year or so ago. Joyce, 10 years younger, was much sharper. I spoke to them about Luther's fathers singing schools, which he had attended as a boy. I should have read more about 7-shape singing before I went, but I am not all that familiar. LA didn't know much about his father's musical background and training, came from N. GA to Irwin Co at some point, and then Turner Co. He and his wife Martha were good singers and sang quite bit; evidently they were asked if he could teach it. The singing schools were held for 2 weeks, yearly, in the summers, in the "laying by" time for farmers. LA has some memories of these schools, which would end with singing by the pupils, to which the community was invited and could participate. The schools were attended by kids, but their parents sometimes came, too. Luther Sr. had sheets of paper on which we would write out exercises and examples. They always had a pianist, and would learn to beat time, would learn the key signatures, which I gather they had to memorize. The songbook companies printed theory books which had the rudiments in them: Joyce had saved hers, I think from the 1952 singing school. She also had something like a bluebook for homework, which had some exercises she had done in it. There was never any walking time at these schools or the singings that Luther A. remembers. It certainly seemed less institutionalized in Pop Oakes time--now the teachers come from the publishing companies. Singing schools are not held locally--we discussed on the tape when the last ones are. 7-shape continues to be active elsewhere, but not here. Each county used to have a convention, but no longer. Dooly County's died out in the 1980s. When the LOC team documented the Royal Convention in 1977, that must have been the beginning of the decline, although if I recall the caption from the original exhibit, there were supposedly thousands at that convention earlier in the 1900s.

****Interesting aside, Mrs. Georgia Griffin of Newberry, the great informant ballad singer/fiddler for Alton Morris, talks of her father John Hart as singing school teacher in Dooly County, GA. This must have been after the Civil War.**

Schools and singings were nondenominational, but there was a close relationship with the host churches. Most churches of the time in Luther A's boyhood used hymnals in 7-shape (vs. round notes as he calls it). He doesn't read round notes, and has had a difficult time in church with all these new, professionally trained choir directors, as he described it, who have introduced round notes to the churches. The singing schools thus taught parishioners how to sing better from the hymnals, and there were songs that overlapped from the songbooks provided by Vaughn, Stamp's Baxter, and the other 7-shape publishing companies. These companies came out with new books, new songs every year, however, whereas the church hymnals seldom changed. LA says that this music was about the only music they had growing up; no one had a radio. So it was widespread in

the neighborhood. The rise of the new choir directors, round note hymnals in church, and a host of other musical options, have caused a great decline in the 7-shape tradition locally. LA and Joyce have been mainstays for years, both in the group singing and as part of quartets and trios who sing specials during the breaks in the regular group singing. Joyce may play piano, too, and actually started taking piano as a girl using standard notation, so she said it took her a while to get accustomed to shape notes. Her first singing school was after she married LA. They raised their kids in the tradition, and at one point had a family gospel group, but none of their kids or grandchildren are active today. Now, with numbers dwindling and their increasing age, they feel it a burden to go to singings and to try to keep it going. For years it was pure pleasure, and they enjoyed the harmony and the singing experience. They don't wax about the fellowship and the sacred in sacred harp as the Lees do, but they spoke about the message in the words and the joy of harmony. LA turned to gospel music exclusively after he returned from WWII and 3 years as a POW, part of the Bataan Death March. He has been interviewed by Fred Sanchez for the collection of the National POW Museum in Andersonville and donated a copy of his self-published memoir to the SGFP: *Trials and Tribulations of an American Prisoner of the Japanese in World War II* (1999). They showed me a notebook into which they've pasted songs cut out from other songbooks which they have sung as specials. They select their songs based on good 4-part harmony and a good message.

I asked if there had been any interaction between black and white 7-shape singers in the area; the answer was "no." I mentioned my student, Kuanita Murphey, who is doing an independent study with African American 7-shape singers in Randolph County this term, and how that tradition is fading, too. They mentioned going to a mixed race singing in Jacksonville one time, and how the blacks had a different style, a lot of "hooting and hollering" as LA described it; a different culture he said, and it didn't fit with their way of singing.

Field Notes, 5th Sunday Sing of Central Singing Convention,
Held at St. John AME Church on S. HW 27 in Cuthbert, GA, Randolph Co.
12-3 p.m.

Martin Embry, President, Central Singing Convention
102 Key Street
Cuthbert, GA 39840
229-732-6273 (h)
229-732-6440 (w)
229-732-5364 (fax) Randolph Co. Commissioner, District 3

This fieldwork was a follow up to an independent study done with me Spring Term, 2003 with Kuanita Murphy of Cuthbert on the African American 7-shape note singing tradition of Randolph Co. and environ. She had recorded two different singing contexts, but not with DAT, so I wanted to record the next sing I could arrange to attend. This was it. Kuanita was not able to go, but she talked to Deacon Johnnie Jones from her church, Piney Grove, who was her chief contact in her research and regularly attends these sings. I asked if there was anyone else I should notify about my coming: the answer was "no"

but I now know I should have contacted the president of the convention and the host church committee. It turns out Piney Grove was not one of the churches represented at this singing today except by Mr. Jones: Mr. Jones “helps out” with Pleasant Grove as he said. He arrived late, and I had to do some quick explaining as to who I was and what I was doing there. I first met the women of the host committee at St. John AME Church: Mary Culbreath, Dolly Hart, Mattie Smith (age 90). Ms. Culbreath told me after I explained who I was that it “sounded like a beautiful project” and it was all right to record, but I should talk to the president, Martin Embry from Mt. Vernon Church.

I had arrived a little after 11:00 and parked in the grass at the side of the church under a tree. No one else was around; no services there today. The women began arriving around 11:40 and the singing started before I had time to finish explaining and set up.

I was the only white person in attendance and among the youngest. Everyone appeared to be over 60 except for Jevon Eutsey, the Vice Principal from Randolph/Clay combined Middle and HS, who at 23 is the youngest deacon in Cuthbert. He was very helpful, and went to the various church groupings to get the name of the song and songbook for me. He also helped me load up my gear. The majority of the participants were women. The exception was the contingent from Mitchell Grove and Mt. Vernon (mostly male). A number of the women had large church hats. Everyone was nicely dressed: church dresses or suits and ties.

Everyone seemed willing to let me be there and record. The church is a small brick building with painted wood pew benches, carpeting, high ceilings with ceiling tile, an enclosed pulpit area, and a raised choir behind. Behind the choir is a small kitchen and seating area with tables and chairs. This is where the meal preparations took place. St. John has a new (I gather) female pastor, Izora Lynn, who was in attendance.

Directly in front of the pulpit area was a simple wood table and two chairs. This is where the convention president, Martin Embry of Mt. Vernon, and Roy Burks (VP from Benevolence MB church) presided. I was set up to their right, next to the wall and the benches where the Mitchell Grove and Mt. Vernon members sat. They had put a small table by the window and the electric outlet for me to set up: I was unpacking when the convention started pretty promptly at noon with a lined hymn by Deacon Embry, so I was still trying to set up, and ended up with two mikes on stands, spaced about 6 feet apart, facing toward each other in hopes of getting the range of singers, from the three St. John ladies in the choir, to a scattering of ladies at the back of the church. This worked fairly well, except for the opening prayer, which was muffled as Deacon Burk? (I believe) was kneeling and facing away from me.

This early singing, not in the shape note tradition, was perhaps the best singing of the day to my ear, and certainly provided an interesting contrast to the convention singing that followed. These early lined hymns were ones everyone knew, so the singing was fuller. It was also much more improvisatory and interactive. Especially during the prayer, there were sung responses, moans, spoken interjections, none of which occurred during the three rounds of the convention itself.

After the Sunday School lesson by Deacon Embry, minutes of the last meeting at St. Luke MB Church (recorded by Kuanita in March) , and remarks by Mildred Harris, they sang one more regular hymn (We'll Understand it all bye and bye) and then began the Roll Call, where each church sang a shapenote selection. The representatives from the different churches sat together grouped in a something of a square around the President and VP in the middle. Churches in attendance included the following (singing in this order):

Antioch
 Mitchell Grove MB
 Mt. Vernon
 St. Luke MB
 St. John AME
 Virgil Chapel MB
 Pleasant Grove AME
 Benevolence MB

There were three rounds of singing, as they are called, with a set order of churches leading/singing (see order above). Each church offered a selection, usually using a photocopied page from a song book or an old, worn copy of a songbook. If others in attendance knew the selection they sang along, but this varied. Occasionally if the singing was particularly strong, some people clapped along, some on 1 and 3, others on beats 2 and 4. There were not improvisations or interjections as in the lined hymn, however. Applause followed each group's selection, so it almost seemed more like a performance by the individual church groups rather than a communal singing. This seemed to be much more by the printed page than most African American church singing traditions. Because not everyone had access to the music, it was much less participatory. Each church group, if big enough, had a song leader. There weren't more than 35-40 people in attendance and not all of these sang. The largest groups of singers maybe had 8-10 at a time; the smallest 2-3. At one point, Deacon Jones went and joined in with Benevolence and also Mt. Vernon. There was one man from Mt. Vernon who told him to go away, he wasn't part of them. Mr. Jones seemed hurt and taken a back: it's not like that, shouldn't be like that, he said. Some groups of singers, when questioned, knew what songbook their selection came from; others didn't. Examples of books included Endless Joy, Chuck Wagon Gang, Wonderful Message, Songs of Praise #2, Heavenly Highway, Sparkling Songs, Benevolent Songs, Morning Sunbeam. These are all 7-shape books, but as Deacon Embry said, we don't sing the notes any more (meaning the note names). Deacon Jones did one song singing the note names to demonstrate, but few were able to join him. He and the woman next to him were apparently in different keys most of the day.

During the 3rd round, where they could sing out of hymnals other than shape note songbooks (Jevon Eutsey told me this round was "general singing"), the collection was made. Each group would sing and then make a donation. For the 3rd round the host, St.

John, went first, since they had to prepare the dinner on the grounds. At the end of the 3rd round Deacon Embry said "That completes our class of singing." They then went into the business meeting, with the sick offering, the blessing by Pastor Izora Lynn, Announcements, financial board report. The collection today was \$880.56 minus expenses. During the announcements Deacon Jones spoke about the need to bring in young people or the singing would die, much the same theme as he had shared with Kuanita in her interview with him. There was then a blessing of the food, again by Pastor Lynn, and a song "Get Right with God."

At the dinner on the grounds, most people took a plate to go in a Styrofoam container. A number of youngsters appeared to eat the food, either grandchildren, or children of younger women who came to help with the meal and bring food, but who didn't participate in the sing. The kids and a few people ate at the tables provided, but most went on home with a plate. Jevon Eutsey prepared my plate, and by the time I got to eye the table it was pretty well picked over, but some of the items were roast turkey, baked ham, fried chicken, lima (butter?) beans, a type of pea (red with a black end), peanut butter layer cake, sweet potato pie (very good, with orange flavoring), banana pudding, various other cakes, coleslaw, tea or coke (couldn't tell from the color) , Sprite. I was back on the road by 3:30 p.m.

I agreed to send a master CD of the sing to Deacon Embry. I had announced that I would make copies available to anyone interested, but hope that most of it can be done through this copy, with Jevon burning extra CDs for those who want them. Jevon also requested copies of the photos.

Mrs. Mildred Harris
PO Box 205
Cuthbert, GA 39840
229-732-6540

Said she writes for the Tribute newspaper; wanted me to send her something for an article. I'll look at my photos. Said she should contact Kuanita about her independent study. Harris was one of Kuanita's interviewees.

There was a woman singing with St. Luke , I believe, who said she had recently retired, grew up with the note singing, and looked forward to doing more. Get name: possible interviewee. Also Ruthie Fair, song leader for St. Luke.

Sept. 6, 2003

Mars Hill Primitive Baptist Church, Hoboken
Ordination of Johnny Lee

Attended the ordination at Mars Hill, which began at 4 p.m. during the annual conference. There had been services in the morning, recessed until 4:00 for this, and then would continue Sunday morning. I had asked earlier in the week about recording; David had had no problem, but when I asked Johnny he said "it left him cold." He didn't say no outright at the time, asked if he could sleep on it and tell me at the service. At the service he said he liked me as I was (without tape recorder) and was glad I had come. I had pretty much decided not to record anyway.

David told me earlier that normally an ordination would occur after the regular morning service/conference, but because Bethlehem was in conference the same time, and Johnny wanted Alvin Johnson there, they had scheduled for 4 p.m.

There were about 85 people in attendance. Of these perhaps a dozen were actually members at Mars Hill. Others were attended from other PRIMITIVE BAPTIST churches in the association and perhaps other PRIMITIVE BAPTIST churches outside the association. Annie Crews was there from Sardis, and I think it is independent now. Melinda Lee (Johnny and Delorese's youngest, don't know her married name) is married to someone who goes to High Bluff (this I was told by Amy Steuver), but he was there. I suspect he's not a member or he wouldn't have been here. Many of the people (I'd guess at least 1/2) also go to the s/h sings. Then there were a lot of family. All Johnny and Delorese's children and grandchildren (although not all of the daughter's husbands I don't think), Delorese's three sisters and some of their children. Most of the members were seated to the right and left of the pulpit, men on one side, women on the other.

Julie Lee, as clerk of the session, kept minutes of the proceedings. There are formal names for each part that I didn't get. Letters had been sent to associated churches requesting pastors to attend and assist (Alvin Johnson from either Big Creek or Bethlehem) and Tollie Lee from Good Hope. Clarke Lee was also there. J. L. Rowan is the pastor of Mars Hill. He was seated to the right of the pulpit as I faced the front of the church; Julie as Clerk sat to the left. Johnny and Delorese were on the right and left with the men/women respectively until the ordination began, and then first he and then they both moved to chairs in front facing the pulpit.

The kitchen/social hall area of Mars Hill has been expanded and improved since I was here last. The church itself is still plain; carpeted walls, whitewashed white walls, hat pegs, a simple plain pulpit, wood varnished pews, ceiling fans. There was a single vase of flowers (dark purple roses?) on the pulpit.

With so many members of the Lee family, and a number of sacred harpers there (certainly the majority), the singing was strong. I could hear the treble clearly coming from the women's section in the front of the church. The melody (tenor line) was strongest, but there was bass harmony, too. I had brought the old PRIMITIVE BAPTIST hymnal from Union Church I had gotten from John Crowley (who was there with his Aunt Nell). David joked me that as they were trying to move forward I was hanging on to the old ways. I

n PRIMITIVE BAPTIST churches they sing from Lloyd's before the formal start of the service, and this was happening as I arrived about 3:50 to take my seat. I was greeted with a handshake or embrace as I sat down, as is the Primitive Baptist way, not by everyone, but by members who knew me, by J. L. Rowan, David, Clarke, Julie, Johnny, as I recall.

As the service began, J. L. Rowan greeted everyone and mentioned that they had recessed in the morning until 4:00 to continue with the business of the day. The first hymn was sung, 559, requested by Clarke, that comes from the Ordination of Minister section in Lloyd's. All stood.

Rowan announced that Mars Hill Church once again considered itself in conference. Received report from Bethlehem Church (this regarding Alvin Johnson being in attendance).

Rowan used the phrase "to sound the church" regarding support for Johnny's ordination. Members stood to show their support.

Clarke Lee read the passage from Mark 3 about calling of the Twelve. He also read another scripture I didn't catch. He commented on the importance of the Bible, saying he always liked to read from it, "That's all we got to go by is that book."

Johnny now moves to the center. Clarke questions him about his belief in the Articles of Faith, which are read aloud.

The ministers present prayed, laying their hands on Johnny while he kneeled; prayer by Alvin Johnson.

At some point Delorese joins Johnny in the center: didn't write down when this occurs.

Tollie read extended passages from Timothy 2 and Titus 2. His role was to "deliver the charge." His remarks were given in the style of his preaching, first talking in the someone stylized, more singsong spoken voice, and then moving into his sung chant. It was a specific and personal message for Johnny with advice and comments about the role of a minister. He mentioned how he remembered Johnny's early years at High Bluff, how he has two daughters who wanted to be here, how the word of God comes through preaching, singing, visions, and dreams. "I hope to God we've got some sweet years together in singing, preaching, and prayer."

J. L. Rowan spoke especially about the role of wives, spoke of Delorese as Johnny's fellow laborer.

Alvin Johnson, a close friend of Johnny's, mentioned that he had become a minister 29 years ago. I thought of Johnny's path, with his father and brothers so prominent at High Bluff (had Johnny been a deacon, too? Frank Lee had been a minister, I believe) and the hurtful path of the split, coming to Mars Hill, and now this. What must he be feeling?

Clarke Lee spoke briefly and emotionally.

Johnny and Delorese face the church. Next is what I believe David called the time of Fellowship where everyone greeted them both with an embrace or handshake. The greeting took place in a prescribed order, something like Deacons, members, family, and then others in attendance. David Lee was in charge of indicating when people went up. People stood and sang while this took place. Not all these selections were from the Ordination section, but some were. 558, 1145, 208, 576, 211, 75. The singing continued until everyone had greeted.

All seated. Johnny gave brief thanks.

Clarke asked "Is the church satisfied" with the proceedings.

JL Rowan announced they would adjourn and have the minutes. Julie read the minutes which were approved. Everyone sang 362 and were dismissed.

At this point there were announcements, and David invited everyone over to dinner at their home at 6:30 for David and Kathy's 25th anniversary. Alvin Johnson presented them with a gift, a small wooden rolling pin, with a hilarious message that David read aloud about marriage and how it was to be used.

There is something warm and inclusive about these PRIMITIVE BAPTIST services with the greeting that goes on. You can't sit by as a stranger, as you could in some mainstream Protestant churches of my experience. The singing was rich and full today with so many singers present. The tempos seemed faster to me than when I had been in the past. We didn't sing any of the really slow ornamented ones, although I could hear Clarke's voice clearly above all the rest and he was stepping up to notes the way they do in their ornamentation. I wonder if the tempo is also influenced by exposure to outside in the s/h. There have been different tempo tunes, certainly, but I did notice this. I wonder if any particular songs were requested or chosen for this service, perhaps because they had special meaning to Johnny? I should ask. At the beginning during the general singing pre-service it is by request. I think there was some of that during the fellowship, but I'll need to check. It will be interesting to compare this to High Bluff next weekend. According to Wilson Wainright, they don't approve of "loud" singing, at least in s/h and I think from past experience this also applies to Lloyd's.

Notes on Annual Meeting (Conference?) of High Bluff Church (about one mile south of Schlatterville, GA) Alabama River Primitive Baptist Association
and sacred harp sing at home of Billy and Barbara Lee, Central Ave., Waycross

Sat. Sept. 13, 2003

Note: meeting had started Thursday, would continue Sunday morning

I arrived at home of Billy and Barbara Lee about 10:15 Sat. morning. I had arranged to come early to set up the tape recording equipment so it wouldn't be disruptive to the group later in the day. Billy was very accomodating: he put a hook in the ceiling of their

family room, directly underneath the large rectangular dining table around which they would be seated or standing to sing. We hung two Sennhauser MD241s from the two mike mount (used for placement on a single mike stand) and ran the mike cables along the ceiling and down the wall over to where I had the tape recorder set up. The recorder was actually in the kitchen area, just outside the laundry room door (out of the room where the singing took place). I'm not sure I needed to take this kind of precaution to be discreet with my audio recordings (video would be another matter). Eddie Lee also had his recording machine (some sort of deck with external mikes attached--I loaned him a mike stand for one of them). He said he bought his first tape recorder in 1957 and made what was probably the first tape recordings of singing in this area. He has a collection of his recordings on reel-to-reel and cassette. They are used to recordings of sings by association and family membes, and seem to trade these around for their own use and pleasure (I guess that is the key as Wilson Wainright made clear in the recent interview--no commercial gain or undue outside attention). I have been treated very warmly--as is the Primitive Baptist way toward visitors--and most people at High Bluff, esp. members of the Lee family and the inner circle, seem to remember me. Maybe the word was out that I was visiting again? I had recorded the sing in 1999, but I may have come to High Bluff another time with John Crowley before that. Perhaps they don't get that many visitors? Then, I am a researcher interested in the singing. I seem to have provided one of the best quality tapes they've heard of their singing from my 1999 recording. Both Billy and Eddie Lee asked me about my recording equipment and remembered the recording--have asked what I used, how much it costs, if I sell my used equipment. At any rate, I can provide them with high quality recordings and they value those. Maybe I shouldn't be surprised at the hospitality at all; just knowing about the split in the Lee family over sacred harp, however, makes me wonder what they think of me, knowing I work with David and Clarke (but then, the difficulty, after all, was not with me as an outsider, non family, and non Primitive Baptist). I even confessed I was raised Methodist! I see the adulation of Frank Lee in his children, and perhaps this explains in part their willingness to throw part of his family out of the church, since, as I understand it, he was the instigator. I listen to the singing and realize how much the presence of those missing family voices would add. Ruth Lee told me at one point that daddy had taught them to sing at home and then later took them to singing schools. Eddie Lee said that almost every Thanksgiving they would go to their parents' house and ended up singing around the table. Frank Lee evidently remarried at age 79; died at 90 or early 90s about four years ago (not long after the split occurred).

When I arrived at Billy Lee's, he was playing the CD that David made for the family with the picture of Frank and Martha Lee on the cover. Ruth Lee also mentioned the CD and how much she appreciated it. "For family, you know" she said. There is a cut of Frank Lee singing alone (one of Eddie's recordings I believe) a song that the family didn't know, so he just sang it. The Tennessean (check). It has the quality of an Irish ballad with the degree of ornamentation and the solo singing. When I first heard it it sounded a lot like David Lee and I remember he told me he grew up singing at his grandfather's side. Eddie Lee mentioned that David had used some of his Eddie's tapes acquired through others Eddie had shared them with. This latter makes me wonder about the feasibility and ethics of a documentary recording of family singing if I don't have full cooperation from

everyone. I can get the tapes through David--I need to discuss this with him. This singing doesn't "belong" to anyone, of course, but there are strong feelings about it.

I arrived at High Bluff about 11:55 a.m.. Services were to start at noon daylight savings time, but that is 11:00 "sun time" (since they don't recognize daylight saving time). Wilson Wainright later told me they sang a couple hymns from Lloyd's before church, but they were not singing when I arrived. This is in contrast to Mars Hill and Big Creek, where the singing goes right up until the service starts. It was a warm day, and the windows and doors of High Bluff (no electricity) were wide open. Church fans were placed on the pews and at the entrances. The three pastors present were Elders Herman Lee, Daniel Drawty, and Freddie Thomas. I am not familiar with the terminology and names for different parts of the service (perhaps John Crowley's book or looking at the Minutes?) but certainly these four remaining Crawfordite Churches preserve so many seemingly archaic ways passed down from the early days of the church (established 1819) and their beliefs in the "primitive" ways of the early church of Jesus. Of course, there is the church itself, with its plain wood construction with only nails for hat pegs, no electricity, the plain pulpit, the starkness of it. There is terminology that is poetic and to me at least, archaic-sounding: receiving correspondence from the messengers (this in the age of the Internet and email and telephones and faxes); being "blessed to suit the tune" (select/start a tune for the hymns), "striking hands with the messengers" (shaking hands).

There were about 52 people present from the 4 churches in association: High Bluff, Oak Grove, Mt. Olive, and Shiloh. The seating arrangement is what I remember from previous visits: the pastors in chairs in or by the pulpit, the Deacons on the first rows (mostly to the right as one faces the pulpit), other male association members behind; visitors in the center pews (although not exclusively), women members to the left. Some of the older women had hats and turbans. Most of the member women had uncut hair put up in a bun. Men shirts with no ties: a few the 1940s style hats, suspenders. Women members no make-up or jewelry. In front of the plain raised pulpit is a table and chairs with two white enamel pails and dippers for use in foot washing. There is the opening in the floor right below to empty the water.

Pastor Herman Lee made a few introductory remarks and then lined #271 (to tune of Salvation, 47T in Cooper book). The first two lines of text are "given out" or "lined out" but spoken. Wilson started the tune. As the second two lines of the first verse were lined, all stood, and stood for remainder of singing. I asked later about the lining, and if Frank Lee or anyone ever pitched the lining out. They said, yes, sometimes, not really singing the tune, but there was a pitch to it, especially often at the end of the lined section, where the pitch would go up. The singing is dominated by men, who sing the loudest, and by tenor/melody line. There are a few trebles (women, Eddie Lee, perhaps other men) so if you hear harmony it is tenor and treble lines from tunes in the Cooper book. The harmonization and lack of other parts results in a lot of parallel fourths and fifths, also adding to the "archaic" feel. There are few basses and they generally are not audible. There are no altos. The women who do sing sing softly, especially compared with the men. There seems to be an aesthetic of not singing "loud" (this directed at David and Clarke and company). So whether women don't think it is seemly to sing out, I'm not sure. I'll need to ask. They don't make hymnbooks available as they do at Mars Hill, for

example, so if you don't have one you don't know the words. (I suppose unless they are memorized, by many are quite long.) The slow tempos and ornamentation of the meeting house still clearly shows the cross influence with sacred harp singing for this fairly closed, insular community of singers and worshippers.

Prayer followed the singing of the first hymn. Members kneel if they are able, facing back toward their pew seats with heads down. The prayer is given out in the tuneless, chanted monotone typical of this tradition. I noticed there were some pillows piled up in the back: perhaps as aids for the elderly or infirm? I'll have to ask.

Sermon by Elder Herman Lee. He removed a white handkerchief and held it in his left hand to wipe his mouth as needed during the sermon. He began pacing back and forth in the small pulpit, waiting for inspiration. His initial words are so softly spoken they are difficult to hear, and I find his words when chanting his sermon hard to understand (as compared with Daniel Drawty who is louder and clearer in his delivery). The initial spoken speech of prayer or sermon is soft and without a lot of tonal inflection. As the divinely inspired message begins to come (if it comes) the voice gains strength and the "chanted" portion begins. Perhaps the different voice quality signals the divine presence? I didn't get all of the message, but he spoke of High Bluff's beginning in 1819, of its traditions being passed down from generation to generation, how there are still a few places the Lord visits in the wilderness (I assume a reference to the Crawfordite churches?), then discussed David of the Old Testament, the passing of Brother Ray (last name?) this past week, age 93, and calling to mind the hymn "When o when will the storm pass over?" . The message didn't seem that long. As I understand it, they last as long as the divine inspiration. He would pause at each side of the pulpit and direct his message toward the seated brethren, then the seated sisters. I did not really see him direct his gaze toward the center section. There is a formulaic quality to his movement. We were recessed about 12:30 for a 25 minute intermission, after which the association meeting began.

I sat during the service behind Jason Deal, now working for the Blackshear paper, whose grandmother, Georgia Lee Jones, had gone to High Bluff (not a member). Her parents were members. His family is progressive Primitive Baptist, but he attends annual meeting. I think out of respect and love for his grandmother, who is buried here. Jason greeted me before the service, but others did not. During the intermission more people came up and spoke with me, including the pastors. Ruth Lee took me under her wing, and she, Wilson, Eddie Lee, and I visited. People again were in their own groups or own cars eating a sandwich or getting a drink. By this time it was quite warm out, certainly high 80s if not warmer. Everyone was standing in the shade, using fans in church. Wilson offered me a cold coke from a cooler in their car.

During the break Billy Lee spoke about the Annual Session which would take place a month from this Sat. He gave me a copy of the minutes of the last annual session. During it, the delegates assemble in the meeting house for the business of the association while one of the pastors entertains the rest "under the arbor," a wooden structure that is assembled each year outside in the grounds for the occasion. Evidently there is hymn singing as part of this. I understood it to be more like a regular service with preaching and

singing. I need to find out more. The Minutes list the "Decorum" or what is supposed to happen at an Association meeting, as well as the Articles of Faith. It doesn't describe the arbor.

After the intermission the conference meeting began. Elder Drawty started by saying, "If some could be blessed to suit the tune and all are invited to sing the tune while we try to line." I later asked Wilson about this phrase, which implies a tune that "suits" the words. All stood at the second verse. Drawty called for new members to come forward and Earl Lee (blind, with cane and dark glasses) stood. He is a son of Sally Chesser. Billy Lee as clerk moved forward to the chair at the table in front of the pulpit to take minutes of the meeting. Elder Drawty asked if there were any sisters that wanted to move closer to hear. A few came over and stood closer to the men's side (these the members of High Bluff who were able to stand). I don't know the protocol here, but there was some sort of statement about why he wished to (in this case) be restored to High Bluff. I couldn't hear what was said. To start, Drawty said something to the effect, "state to the church what is on your mind." Then there was a motion and a vote to restore Brother Earl Lee to the full fellowship of High Bluff. This passed, followed by a period of "fellowship with Earl" in which all association members shook his hand in a prescribed order: I think it was pastors, deacons, High Bluff brethren, High Bluff sisters, visiting brethren, visiting sisters (from fellow associations). The actual High Bluff members were not more than 10 or so. Visitors did not take part.

Elder Drawty preached from the floor (as opposed to the pulpit), again with a white handkerchief in his left hand. He would spit periodically during his chanted message. His style is louder, easier to understand than Herman Lee's.

Asked for contributions for printing and distribution of association minutes. Clerk: announced total members 24. (?)

Call for messengers holding corresponding letters. Letters read by messengers from Oak Grove, Brantley Co (Elder Herman Lee, Elder Freddie Thomas), Mt. Olive, Ware Co. (Elder Herman Lee, Asst. Elder Daniel Drawty), Shiloh, Pierce Co., Elder Daniel Drawty, asst. Pastor Herman Lee.

High Bluff members extend hand of fellowship to visiting association members by "striking hands with the messengers while singing a song." This was #209 long meter sung to Restoration (265T in Cooper book). Visiting association members "line the aisles" and file by the center section where High Bluff members are arranged in a sort of U around the table in front of the pews. The hymn is lined, and during the actual lining, the line of visiting assoc. members stops moving. When they begin to sing, they move around shaking the hand of the High Bluff members ("strike the hand"). It sort of struck me as being similar to a drone, with one group of voices moving around the other, but of course, they are all singing the same words, note holding a pitch, and only one group is moving. At the end, all were seated.

The announcement is made that from this point on they are one conference with all seated as the same (as opposed to just business of High Bluff, which was the case up to this

point). Drawty asked if there were any questions to be brought to the annual conference for guidance. He explains the procedure is for issues first to be discussed at the home churches before being brought to the conference. There are none.

Billy Lee reads the minutes.

Announcements Brother Billy Lee hosting a sacred harp sing at 6:00, all invited.

#505 lined. Adjourn until tomorrow.

I noticed pronunciation here in the hymns and also in the s/h sing, as I have at Hoboken, but more pronounced here because it seems the vast majority do it: heaven-lye.

I got to Billy and Barabara's about 2:30. Her daughter Teresa and sister-in-law Juanita (Eddie's wife) had arrived to help. Adeline Lee (Thomas' wife) had stopped by in the morning with a 15-layer chocolate cake (each layer one spoonful of batter from one of her baking spoons, cook about 10 minutes three pans at a time). Barbara told me the hardest thing was not knowing how many to expect. The tradition is that visitors are invited to a home nearest to or close to the church. We talked, and evidently the story is told of a time when FRank and Martha Lee had 128 for dinner.

I sat in the family room and chatted in the time before dinner was served, after offering to help the women but no luck there. I asked a few questions about the singing at the meeting house. There was a period of storytelling about Primitive Baptist preachers which had been passed down to them: Owen Gibson who served in the legislature, taught school, wrote the book of poems (Billy had a copy); John Dryden (?) who had a vision of preaching under a tree in Texas and took 3 years and much hardship but finally reached his goal and found his tree; John Leyland (Sp.?) a PB preacher somewhere up north in plantation country who was invited to preach at the plantation, but arrived dirty and unkempt, so was ignored by the mistress of the house. He asked if he could sleep in the quarters with the slaves, while she kept anxiously awaiting the arrival of pastor John Leyland. The next day one of the slaves told here that the man who slept in the quarters had led them in quite a prayer, so, having no other paster she allowed him to preach. He preached on the text that you never know who is an angel of God. There must be a whole repertoire of stories about PB preachers.

While I chatted with Ruth and Thomas Lee, I learned that Thomas had gone at age 16 (now 72) to Burford Ontario to pick tobacco. He was given a bus ticket and was there for a month. Made \$8/day where it was only \$3/day in Georgia. He still remembers the slab of Borden's Ice Cream they would get on Saturday in town. Thomas has a remarkable memory for dates of births and deaths in the large family.

It came up somehow that Billy and Barbara were taking their first trip to Los Vegas. It seems so incongruous to me that the church would sanction trips to Los Vegas but throw out family members over prayer with a non-association member and the new-style sacred harp.

The meal was served from a counter in the kitchen area, men first. It was quite a spread. Barbara Lee is renowned for her yeast dinner rolls. There was white rice, gravy, chicken and dumplings, squash casserole, sweet potato casserole, green beans, ham, beef, dressing, creamed corn, broccoli salad, fruit salad, pickles, some sort of yellow relish, sweet and unsweet tea, coffee, water, lemon merangue pie, carrot cake, the 15-layer chocolate cake, pound cake, and Barbara Lee's 3-layer jello (orange, some sort of whipped cream, a lemon custard). Then at the break in the singing there were 4 kinds of cookies: choc. chip, oatmeal, peanut butter, sugar.

The singing started around 6:00. Wilson led, starting with 127 as he told me is his custom, and ending with Passing Away. The rectangular dining room table had been placed across the room with the narrow end facing the windows. The main group of singers stood or were seated around this, with a second tier seated on the couch or other chairs around the perimeter of the room. The center table had a container of table salt and a scattering of peppermints (for the throat). You can hear the crackle of unwrapping the peppermints on the tape. There were some people there who didn't sing, and hung out in the kitchen or the living room. There were from 27-31 people in the family room singing. A number of people showed up for the meal and singing who weren't at church, esp. a number of family members, siblings, children and grandchildren. For example, Eddie Lee's 3 children, Frank Lee (Thomas' son), two of Herman's sons, 2 of Wilson's sons, 2 of Barbara and Billy's children and their children, Anna Sue Lee (married name?) the youngest of Frank and Martha's children, Zoe the only one of Frank's siblings there I think. Others I didn't know and couldn't name. But the composition of the group was definitely closed. This is a group of people who are so used to doing things among themselves that they don't need to designate "top" or "bottom" in the Cooper book, because for the most part they only do one of the tunes on the page and they all know which one that is. The orality of the tradition was striking. They may all spontaneously add a verse from the hymnbook, or as Eddie told me for 388 in the Cooper book, "that last verse was handed down." At times they simply weren't singing the notes in the book. With the slow tempos almost everyone ornamented, especially on the way up to a note when there was a leap, or an upper neighbor turn, or falling down esp. at the end of a phrase. I think they are less likely to ornament on a downward leap in the middle of a phrase, but I need to listen more. The pitch is so low I lose my bearings sight reading. Wilson rarely sounds the pitches and leads in singing the notes. There was a request for this at the end. Not sure why that is: maybe he has lost his knack for it? Need to ask. Mostly they sing a verse or two of words only, going through as many as possible to get various favorites in. Wilson had told me they were going to do mostly songs from old books that they used to sing out of, but Billy prevailed that the first half would be out of the blue book (1960 Cooper ed) so everyone could feel more included. No one sang alto, and although I'm told there were more trebles than usual, they were hard to hear (maybe 6 plus me: Eddie Lee and his son, Adeline Lee, Ruth Lee, Anna Sue Lee, and one other?). There were only two basses (Billy Lee and Mr. Wingate who also asked me for a copy of the tape) and the rest tenor. So it was difficult to get a blend on the tape. The pronunciation of "lye" for ly and a long "A" and other ways of pronouncing vowels speak to the orality and lack of formal musical training here. I'm being analytical, but I was delighted to be part of the singing and to hear all the rich ornamentation going on around me. I find this older style so much more interesting than what the public Hoboken sings,

the "new" style has become. I sang next to Eddie most of the time and listened to his ornaments. When I sang next to Adeline Lee (Thomas' wife), who has a good treble voice, I wasn't as aware of her doing it, but then she married into the family even though she's been a part of it for years now.

After the break they sang from the photocopies put together from the old BF White book and two from the Denson Rev. I kept a copy.

Notes on Phone Interview with David Lee
Follow-Up to Boulder Singing School
Monday, Oct. 13, 2003

Spoke with David about this singing school and singing schools in general. He had said before going that he thought this would be his last that he would lead. He has said his piece and now it is someone else's turn. Has led in Chicago (the first), Seattle, Minneapolis (both at UM and at a convention), Washington DC, NY State Convention (small town outside Syracuse-Laura Densmore), Oxford, England, Atlanta (GA State Convention), Dartmouth College, and finally Boulder, CO (this list not in chronological order).

When went to Chicago the first time had a sheet of paper with a list of things he wanted to cover. Never got list out, but thinks he did cover most of what was on it. He approaches the singing school the way PB preachers do and is aware of this: in other words, letting divine inspiration come to him from above.

He has seen singing schools led by other Southern singers, esp. Richard DeLong and the Sheppards. He says what they do is different: they talk about the history, how they sing, the history of the book (red or Denson book). They don't talk about how they feel about the singing or why they sing. He thinks they don't feel the same way about the singing as he does, that it is a sacred or divine thing. Terry Wooten does feel the same way; they have talked about it. He has seen footage of Terry leading a school at home, not one away. Anyway, David has not adopted anything from these other schools he has seen to his own schools.

He was uncertain about how he would be received in CO because he didn't know anyone but Sharon Kermiet, who had met him through the singing school he did in Seattle. She told him ahead of time that she thought singers in her area would benefit from his message of why he sings. He realizes there are folks who aren't receptive to this approach, perhaps those "professional" singers as he calls them who have advanced musical training or "folkies" (a term he has picked up since singing out in this s/h circuit so to speak for those people who have gotten into s/h as a type of early American folk music). These latter folks are more into the mechanics of singing. There is an intellectual curiosity about how they sing (in Hoboken) but not why they sing, "that feeling of sharing together" and what happens when you do sing together. The transformation that takes place that you can't really describe, the gift from above. Unlike

some other forms of music, where you can just sit passively and listen, s/h is deeply participative. He thinks people invite him because they sense there is something he has, or has access to, that they are searching for.

David's strong feeling about "why we sing" explains, I think, why he and Johnny are reluctant to make recordings of the ornamentation so people can learn how to do it, and why he is willing to let aspects of how they used to sing in Hoboken go. He said, if people want walking time to continue, they need to walk time at all these sings. The old way is gone, dead. [Of course, this doesn't jive with the fact that members of the Crawfordite churches and his family are continuing the old way. For him, as the leader of the public face of the local singing, it is dead. He wants people to feel comfortable leading songs at Hoboken the way they want them led, not that they have to do it the way its always been done). He realizes that people have this intellectual curiosity about Hoboken style, but that is not the main point of the singing. He also doesn't feel he has the musical training to teach anyone of these highly proficient outsiders "how to sing." He thinks he is invited to lead because folks feel or understand that there is something else, and they are looking for a way to access it.

He also wants to teach out of the Cooper book because that is the book he learned and grew up on, and he wants to see that preserved. So in the schools he is now balancing introducing songs from the Cooper book, ones that have been sung at Hoboken for a long time, with his history of his singing community, his "references" to the songs as he calls it (memories, stories associated with particular songs), and why he sings.

He developed a list of Cooper book songs he wanted to sing when they went over the England. That list was in his blue book; he found it when he went to Colorado, and he selected some examples from that list to lead at the school.

Back home, the "references" he shares, this storytelling aspect about people and experiences associated with particular tunes, isn't necessary because at least with his own children, the process of transmitting family and community history is more informal, spontaneous, and going on throughout everyday interactions. Plus, they are developing their own stories and references. People know why they singing, and feel the sharing, it doesn't have to be taught.

I talked with him a little about the sort of self-deprecating humor he uses: playing with stereotypes about Southerners, for example, saying he is "fifth cousin to himself." Part of this is a presentational style to an audience of outsiders; part is to make the point about the importance of family and family connections, which is central to his life, his singing s/h, and to who he is.

We talked about the notion of front bench singers. Hoboken never had them, of course, because "our best singer was on the floor" leading all the time.

So, the sacred in sacred harp is the special gift, the special ingredient here. The Wootens view it similarly, but we don't know if they have taught this at outside singing schools. David commented that the folks in Chicago at that first school were impressed and

appreciative at how open the Lees had been, open about their singing and why they do it. Clarke's "Why we Sing" statement that David included in the Local Legacies material I think came out of articulating these things at those early singing schools. Check.

I felt awkward as we talked, because of course I am doing the very same intellectual deconstruction of the singing in the research that he implies many outsiders have. And ultimately, this is missing the point.

Notes on Conversation with Sharon Kermiet by phone (recorded)

Oct. 14, 2003

Follow-up to Boulder/ Rocky Mountain Singing Convention

Sharon (and Chris) Kermiet

2267 Hudson Street

Denver, CO 80207

B. 3-29-52 in SE Nebraska

Moved while still in elementary school (?) to Golden, CO

Raised Wisc. Synod Lutheran, went to Lutheran schools

I had approached Sharon about a follow-up interview since she was the one who had invited him to lead a singing school. Several interesting things came up in the conversation. Sharon is very perceptive and very interest in the Lees and this topic. She has been involved in s/h since 1991 and sings by ear. She was raised with the Lutheran tradition of hymn singing.

There is a degree of competition in the larger s/h world/network; for example, how many people come to your convention, even private exclusive parties for the "elite singers" at some conventions. Some folks said to Sharon, "You got the Lees! How did you do that?" It amused both of us: like supernovas of the s/h world. The Lees who are asked to sign songbooks like Rock Star autographs...In fact she just called up David, who remembered her from previous meetings at the GA State Convention, at the Stateline (AL) singing, and at the Seattle Singing School David led.

The GA State Convention in Mar. of '96 and then Stateline in Ap. 96, with a Wooten sing the next day, were her first exposure to Southern singing. She was struck by the abundance of food. The friendliness. "I felt the history so much more." She was aware that these people, communities had really deep roots, generations. She was impressed by the lack of self-consciousness in the leaders. There is again this competitiveness she observes in northern singers: how fast you can sing, how many songs you know and can lead. Sharon herself is drawn to David's extra dimension of singing, that singing from the heart, something that can't be put into words. She recalls at the Seattle singing school how people were "startled" by the depth of experience they had. That was the only singing school she has been to where you could sense the richness, the "why we sing" as I paraphrase David. When she and Mary Lou Van Laanen talked about this year's convention and the possibility of a singing school, Sharon mentioned David and this extra dimension he brings that she thought the people in CO need to hear. David stressed to her

on the phone that he didn't want her to be disappointed, that he doesn't teach the notes and music at singing schools, but why we sing and the meaning behind the words. She was struck when she experienced his first school about his commanding presence, she describes him as a "shepherd" with a great, at times self-deprecating sense of humor.

Hugh McGraw was very instrumental early on in helping the Rocky Mountain convention get going. She has been to singing schools led by Richard DeLong, Hugh McGraw, Judy Hauff (Chicago, spelling?), and David Lee. They have all been wonderful, but she enjoyed Judy's and David's the most because they didn't focus on singing the notes but on feeling and paying attention to the words. Judy apparently teaches singing schools and tells fascinating stories about "discovering the living tradition in the South" with Ted Mercer, and can teach about the different ways different families/singing communities sing. But David stands out because of the extra dimension he brings, again. She also likes the stories David tells about his family and the singing history.

She recalled that at the 1996 Wooten family sing people were talking about how David and Terry Wooten had made a connection, perhaps because both families sang at a slower tempo. Of course, David just told me yesterday that they were alike in the view of the sacred in sacred harp.

Sharon loved the idea that the Lees sang slowly, time to savor the harmonies and focus on the words.

Tri-State Sacred Harp Singing Convention
Sat. Oct. 18, 2003
Mars Hill Primitive Baptist Church

A beautiful, sunny, pleasant fall morning. Drove to Mars Hill for the Tri-State, which is in Hoboken every third year. Unfortunately, I was about 10 or 15 minutes late for the opening. This was an historic moment, as David Lee had officially handed over the reigns to the next generation, having them run and host the convention. Co-chairs were David's son, Bryant, and his son-in-law, Martin Highsmith. AS he said to me on the phone, this meant that his daughter Hannah and his daughter-in-law Amy did all the work. Also assisting were the Steuver girls, Jenny and Stephanie, who handled the registration table, and Mary Elizabeth and Riley Lee, Tatum Strickland, Shane O'Neil, April Dell, Rachel Lee. This group took turns sitting up behind the pulpit area, where they had the registration cards arranged to call leaders and kept the list of song leaders. Evidently a lot of the young people did the early leading. David's mailed announcement noted that the young people were hosting and asked peoples' support of them.

Laura Densmore reported that at the beginning, as Martin and Bryant greeted everyone, David cried. Perhaps he said some remarks about handing on the reigns? There was an older gentlemen video taping but for his own or private use. I'll have to ask David if he got or can get a copy. Didn't get the fellow's name. At the blessing just before lunch Bryant asked his father to pray. David's prayer included the line, "as we see thy mantle

fall from one generation to the next." He was visibly pleased during the morning, taking pictures. He plans to do a photo book for them about this day, and asked if I was taking a lot of pictures "of the kids" which I was. I reminded him of how he had told me in 1997 when we did our first interview that the biggest sign of success for the new way of doing sacred harp was that his children were now interested. And also, how he would get so emotional in some of the early monthly sings if there were few young people; he wanted the documentation of the tradition so in case he failed in his attempt to keep it going at least there would be a record. I told him today was evidence he had succeeded. David told me he didn't remember saying those things, but he crossed his fingers and looked very happy. He said the best way to learn was by doing. He said you can tell them how to do things, but it isn't the same as doing them. They were doing such a good job, he said. Indeed, they all seemed to be taking this very seriously.

At one point Hannah was doing sign language with her mother about how to make coffee (how much coffee to put in the pot) for the first break. I asked both Julie and Kathy if they really hadn't been involved in preparation. Both had cooked. Kathy said she had gone out in the ditch and picked the yellow black-eyed susan type flowers on the center of the tables for the meal. Of course, all the women began to gather in the church hall (now enlarged), attached to the side of the sanctuary, to get the food ready. Amy Steuver was helping out in the kitchen all morning (she also couldn't sing--had laryngitis). But women young and old congregated to cut the cakes and pies, take the lids and covers off the dishes and get serving spoons. Laura Densmore and I commented to each other how we wished they would recognize the behind the scenes critical role that women play, but as I said, it's their tradition not mine. Both Kathy and Julie had cooked. I saw Julie unloading her big cooler on wheels, set up with three or so racks on one side for several covered dishes, and rooms for smaller round bowls on the side. Is it this Primitive Baptist ethic, or is it southern hospitality, or? The amount of food is always staggering and it seems to be mostly home-made. I know that Julie, Delorese, and Kathy, for example, all brought at least four dishes each. Delorese had made a pork and rice, something with dumplings, peanut butter cake, chocolate cream pie, and buttermilk pound cake. Raymond Hickox was grilling with his big Tom's Transport cooker. I don't know as I ever saw what it was: pork, chicken? I overheard Hannah tell Mary Elizabeth that she was in charge of the drinks and ice. As usual, the women waited until others had eaten and ate standing up, still surveying the table of food. I'm always taking pictures, and I feel somewhat odd about my role, half guest, half researcher, and of course a woman, so I feel somewhat crass taking pictures while they work. This time I did cut a few pies. I asked Amy Steuver if they needed help, and of course, what you need to do is not ask, just step in.

Bryant and Martin starting things up again after the break. Hannah was keeping an eye on getting things ready for dinner and giving them the cues as to how long. David and Clarke took turns as usual pitching and serving as song leader, alternating with each break. David started out.

I left after the noon break. It was a noticeably smaller crowd than the all-day sing. Of course, Mars Hill doesn't hold as many people anyway, but their were empty pews near the back through the morning. More local women showed up to help with the food as the noontime approached. I would guess there were about 170 people by lunch. Mars Hill

attracted a different crowd, with more locals from the churches which associate with Mars Hill in particular. However, there were a number of locals who were sitting at the back who were just listening, not singing, much as you'll find in the monthly sings. AS usual, the stronger, more interested singers were in the square on the folding chairs and in the front and side rows of pews. There were some out of town people, but I would say half to perhaps more than half were locals. Some out of towners included Laura Densmore, Stan and Jenny Jenson of Salt Lake City (their first trip to Hoboken), Don Clark and his wife from Alabama, some other Alabama folks, a gentleman from England, Joan from Massachusetts who I sat with at lunch, Kit and Jim Pfau. John Gardener was there (back at Hilliard), Jesse Roberts and his daughters and grandson. I met one woman in the lunch line, a Ms. Strickland, who had come down from Atlanta. I'll have to look at the song leader's list. Amy Lee was there, first time I've seen her in a while. Mrs. Herrin, Elvera Lee, who recently turned 90. Walter Justice greeted me. Hazel (Lee, his wife, sister to Silas) was visiting her sister Lottie. Tim Prizer came and also stayed through lunch.

I did notice that DAvid and Clarke were not doing some of the more "local" things that they have done at the past, and continue to do in the monthly sings. For example, they did not sing through the rests. It seemed odd to me, used to it as I am, and the rests were sometimes rushed through, or people came in early, perhaps as a result. I noticed at the Boulder Singing School, David said they sang through the rests because of walking time. I hadn't heard this before--I wonder if someone suggested this to him? I know that some of the northern singers have wanted to edit out singing in the rests as not proper or some such. Tollie, in his Portland singing school just a year ago, made a deal about singing the rests in Hoboken, and Peter Irvine, at least, I remember, tried to do that. Of course, it is not part of standard performance practice. They seem to be trying to adapt more and not stick out. But this really struck me. Also, David did not pitch the songs as he does in the monthly sings, saying "Treble takes the first sound, tenor and alto below..." or some such. He simply pitched, and I don't think it was top down like he typically does. Again, I wonder if I could listen to a tape? I wonder if Laura taped it? I also wonder if Bryant walked time on the first song at the beginning? Martin, as I understand it, just came to s/h after starting to date Hannah. Will need to check this. Rachel's fiancée wasn't there or involved. I wonder why?

Having recently been made aware through the singing school in CO of the importance of "why we sing" I was struck by the third verse of Hester: "I love to sing the song of grace in concert with the saints, but all the songs we sing below cannot extol his praise."

I noticed Tollie again with his use of the word "sweet" to describe the singing.

There were maps at the greeters table of how to get to New Hope and Big Creek; I assume for Sunday morning services? Also the 1996 and 2002 CDs for sale, Cooper books for sale.

October 26, 2003

Did a follow-up interview by phone with Stan and Jenny Jenson

297 East 760 North
Orem, UT 84057
h-802-229-3374

The Jensons were at the Portland Singing Convention last year when Tollie gave a singing school, and this year at Boulder when David gave a singing school. In both cases they came because the Lees were giving schools. I didn't take good notes as I was talking with them (interview was recorded by phone), but I had sent a list of questions ahead of time. Stan did most of the talking; is interested in folk music and historical American music, also Celtic music, country western music. Both got into sacred harp through an interest in singing and folk music. Stan is LDS, Jenny is not currently affiliated with any church.

My general impression is that they are attracted to s/h and Southern singers because they love singing, because of the authenticity and depth of tradition they sense in the Southern singings. They have been South 5 or 6 times: (check) Antioch/Stateline twice, Hoboken, DeLong Sing in Georgia, also Cherokee the same weekend (need full names). Also 100th anniversary of the Union Sing (location?). They have heard singing schools by Hugh McGraw, Richard DeLong, Jeff and Shelbie Shepherd, Tollie and Phillip Reeves (Kelly Day's sing in Buck Creek, IN—this was Jenny's first exposure to Lees.), and David Lee. They did comment that Hugh McGraw makes a point of singing the printed notes correctly: a contrast to the orality of the Lees. Shelbie Shepherd teaches standing facing the tenors, whereas Tollie moves around the square. They have been fascinated by the Lees style of singing, are supportive of my efforts to document it, curious about the style, are among those who wish David would hold on to more of what makes them unique. They seem less struck than some of the spiritual side, at least personally, but well aware of how important it is to the Lees. Stan had even found and read my article in the Society for American Music Newsletter.

They had heard about the Lees through the Seattle singers: that there was this newly discovered group that sang in a unique style. Jenny wrote up the Buck Creek sing for the fasola list and said she thinks she could find it and will send me a copy. That was a fairly profound experience for her, she said. She recalls how animated and personable Tollie was and how reserved Philip was. Also, Antioch evidently has a wood floor and a large number of singers so that it is a very powerful singing experience. By this time (coming to Hoboken) they had done enough of these singings that the novelty has worn off. Mars Hill is carpeted, didn't have the volume and number of singers, but still found it a warm and pleasing sound, and they enjoyed the fact that there weren't so many outsiders. Stan said he could hear the ornamentation in the front bench singers and they thought Hoboken did "sound" different than other places. Especially they noted the slower pace, the lower pitch, not so many fuguing tunes (fast). They noted that the slower tempo gave more time to savor the song—some phrase like squeeze the juice out of it??? Need to check tape. The food particularly struck Jenny; she said she didn't think she'd ever seen so much food. They commented on the hospitality and how comfortable and welcome everyone made them feel. Johnnie took them to High Bluff after the sing on Sat. and then some of the out-of-town folks apparently gathered at Johnny and Delorese's before the evening sing out of Lloyd's. They mentioned that Stan recorded the Lloyd's singing with

David's permission, because they were interested in what tunes went with the words, so they could sing out of Lloyd's back home. They were involved in starting the singings in Salt Lake. They now have regular Cooper Book singings there. They also go the Seattle, California, Albuquerque, Denver, and have been to Minnesota.

Tollie and Ramona invited them to stay with them Sunday night; they went to New Hope Sunday morning to connect with them, and then Tollie and Ramona took them to the Okefenokee and to the coast before their plane left later on Monday.

Field Notes, Diwali/Annakut at Perry Middle School
Sunday, Nov. 9, 2003

GP Patel. organizer
Manager, Super 8 Motel
102 Plaza Drive
Perry, GA 31069
478-987-0999, Fax 478-988-1513
cell 478-714-0300

Jay Patel—sound, singer
3005 Columbia Lane
Albany, Ga 31721
229-291-5266

CM Patel, Valdosta
W, 253-1455
H 242-7676

Satish Bansal, contact Valdosta
229-242-6949
cell 563-2777

Poonam Goel (Asian Cultural Society, mehendi artist)
w-5797 (VSU)
h-244-4156
cell 630-3554

Yogi Patel, Spice Garden Rest.
Cell 293-630-1534

Purnima Patel
w-293-0055

I had planned to include Diwali as part of the radio series fieldwork in the initial conception. I really didn't know much about it, except it seemed like one of the major festivals that would be celebrated by a large segment of the Indian Diaspora population. These notes are written based on what little I know at this point, and on my observations and contacts to date. I did some crash reading before I went and knew the basic outline of the event, and that I would be hearing *bhajan*, North Indian devotional songs.

I had made initial contact through Yogi Patel (cell 293-630-1534) and Purnima (spelling) Patel (w. 293-0055, restaurant), of the Spice Garden Indian Restaurant in Valdosta (moved from downtown to a N. Bemis Rd. location within the past 6 months). Once the restaurant moved I hadn't been until Thursday night, Nov. 6, when I stopped in for dinner. I was the only patron, so there was time to talk. The restaurant is evidently doing more catering now than dine-in service. At any rate, I learned that Diwali had occurred the previous Sunday evening, Nov. 2, in Mathis Auditorium in Valdosta. There were 300 to 350 people there. More of the musicians for the Valdosta event evidently came from Orlando. Yogi and his family have an Indian restaurant in Orlando area, and he moved to Valdosta from there. The contact (or one of them) for events in Valdosta is Mr. CM Patel, who owns motels on Ashley Street. CM introduced himself to me in Perry. Apparently the community meets for religious services in his home, and women got together to prepare food for Diwali with his wife at their home (wife named Sandia, sp?).

By community, I am speaking of Gujaratis who follow the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha path of Hinduism with their guru Pramukh Swami Maharaj. (this is a socio-spiritual organization that was revealed in the late 18th century by Bhagwan Swaminarayan, who settled in western Gujarat, hence its popularity among Gujaratis. It has 1 million followers worldwide; see the BAPS website: <http://www.baps.org/introduction/index.htm>) One of aims and objectives of Swami Maharaj is to sustain Indian culture, esp. among the young, as one of the young male musicians told me in a short interview.

The interesting thing about Perry is that they are in the process of completing a BAPS temple there, on donated land. When I asked "why Perry?" GP Patel, the coordinator of the Perry Diwali and manager of the Super 8 Motel in Perry, said that someone had donated land. It seems curious that Valdosta is not a site, since there seems to be a large community here and there is even the Downtown Market and the Spice Garden Restaurant. Maybe the community is more diverse here? Something to look into. There are other BAPS centers in GA in Atlanta and Augusta. The third will be in Perry. The temple will be dedicated sometime in the next couple months. It is apparently 80% complete.

According to conversations with Poonam Goel of Valdosta over the past week, who contacted me through a friend of hers I had met in Perry, the Gujaratis are the majority population in South GA. In bigger cities you will have more regions represented, more

professional people, more diversity. Many of the Gujaratis, with the common surname “Patel,” own motels and convenience stores. Poonam (from Bombay?, at any rate, not Gujarat, married to Sudhir Goel in Math Dept.) told me that the Gujarati women get together and cook as a group, whereas other women (for example her newly formed Asian Cultural Society) cook individually at home. I picked up some class distinction, and cultural/regional distinction vis a vis many of the motel-owning or managing Indians vs. professional people like educators or doctors. An important question here would be the cultural blending that may occur in Diwali, since it is celebrated differently in different parts of India, although I gather that it is the major, if not one of the major, festivals celebrated in India. I am wondering if it is something like the Fiestas Guadaluapanas for Mexicans/Mexican Catholics. “The event” in Diaspora. Anyway, there may be some regional/class divisions among the Indian American community here, which certainly wouldn’t be surprising. So who I talk with is critical.

The event in Perry was done entirely in Gujarati, at least the spoken parts (perhaps a few of the bhajans in Hindi. Not sure if any in Sanskrit). There were easily 350 people there; the Valdostans in attendance said the one in Valdosta was better, but since I didn’t see it I can’t judge. I don’t know, either, the criteria for judging what was “better.” According to Poonam, in Valdosta it was in English, which would be more a lingua franca and certainly more accessible to the American-born children. A number of the Gujarati are recent immigrants who don’t speak English. This may be more the case with women who aren’t in the work force—would need to check.

The Perry event was to start around 5:30. I had previously called GP Patel and gotten permission to record. I arrived around 2:30 to set up and see if I could get any short interviews or sound while they were setting up. When I arrived they had already decorated the stage of the middle school lunchroom where the event was to take place, and there was a **health fair going on out in the hall. Certain packaged Indian products were sold at both the health fair and Diwali. Richard Kurin’s article on Mela in the 1985 Smithsonian Folklife Festival Program talks about such events (fairs/festivals) typically being educational in nature as well, so combining this with a health fair is actually traditional. Check—was this intentional?**

I believe GP told me that they had done this event in Perry for the past 4 years??? Check.

Actually, I need to clarify exactly what was being celebrated. **Diwali is 5-days traditionally; various people told me what I saw was Diwali, New Year, or Annakut. Maybe the different days are merged here?** There are different names/traditions in different regions. What happened sounds to me like how Diwali’s fourth day is celebrated in Gujarat, according to what I read on the Internet. According to what I read, in Gujarat **Diwali is celebrated to honor the goddess Lakshmi, goddess of wealth.** I don’t know enough yet to know whose image I saw on the **shrines? (term?)** on the stage.

There were both graphic images and three-dimensional figures. They had built up three multi-tiered platforms, in a **stairstep pattern** from wider at the bottom to narrower at the top. There were various devotional images placed at the top of each, and they were

covered with colored cloth. **Don't know if the color had any symbolism?** The front of the stage was also swathed in swags of color. The stage floor was covered in cloth. When walking up there everyone removed their shoes. **Look at photos: were the images of deities specially dressed or decorated for Diwali? Who were the deities?** As I arrived the basics of the stage were arranged, and the women were using the lunchroom tables to gather and arrange the quantities of food that had been brought as offerings. People continued to arrive right through the early stages of the event with food, and the later arrivals also were placed on the altar/stage. During the afternoon the women were arranging the food in containers if needed and then placing the offerings on the series of altars and on the floor. Purnima had told me I could bring anything, but when pressed it sounded like dried or fresh fruits were something I could bring, so I had brought two bags of dried apricots. In fact, anything seemed to suffice. Although the vast majority of the food offerings were Indian dishes, and a high proportion of those traditional sweets, it looked like anything that didn't violate the dietary proscriptions was fair game. I saw pizza, for example, and something that looked like Mexican bean dip, a gingerbread house, Christmas candy, and even what appeared to be Mexican bakery bread in the shape of a turtle and alligator (if I got this right I could be correct here, since Purnima had seen it at the celebration in Orlando and had asked if she could have it to bring). I later in the day saw a stack of pizza boxes being taken in, so obviously someone was eating something other than Indian food. This may have been to tide folks over—about 5:00 I had some Subway sandwiches with some of the doctors who had participated in the health fair.)

Purnima told me that the sweets typically are only made at home—this is not food you get in Indian restaurants. Yogi, however, did show up later in the day, before things got started around 5:30 in the afternoon, with supplemental food made at the restaurant to go with the Prasand (eating of the blessed food from the altar afterwards). Rice, dahl, etc. I never did see what he brought. Yellow lentils/dahl are for special occasions he told me. There was a staggering variety of foods, textures, and colors. I looked at several websites about recipes/foods. The names appear to be spelled differently depending on language spoken. It is difficult to convey the foods in radio—at any rate, I didn't get any good audio descriptions, just names. I think what is needed here is to have an English speaking cook, and record women making the food together, and get them go describe the process, ingredients, while I get sounds of cooking. According to Purnima Patel, **Gujia is unique to Diwali**. It looked sort of like a small turnover, a half moon with a crimped edge. It was not filled with anything however, just the dough. Other sweets may be made for other festive occasions such as weddings or other festivals. Gujia is what the women in Valdosta made together in Sandia Patel's home, as I understand it. **Poonam Goel said they make gujia also for Holi (comes up in early March). This may be a regional difference? Check.**

Varieties of sweets offered to the deities as “Bhog”(check term, got this off diwalimela website) and then the devotees approach and take “Prasad.” (term/spelling from GP Patel at event) (Prasad means eating divinely marked food).

Spices and pungent foods, such as garlic and onions not suitable offerings to the gods. Also no meat and eggs.

Various traditional sweets listed in one of the websites I looked at <http://www.diwalimela.com/recipes/index.html> spellings may vary. <http://www.bawarchi.com/cookbook/diwali.html> good website on foods, with glossary explaining ingredients in Hindi, with English translations

During this time of organizing the food, one professional woman (I got her name on tape but didn't write it down) who is a doctor in Valdosta along with her husband, was working on rangoli. She had also done rangoli for Valdosta's celebration. She is from S. India/Valdosta and talked to me quite a bit. I now realize that she would be different in her outlook/belief than the majority who were followers of Swami Maharaj (which she may not have been) and Gujaratis. For example, before the tape recording was on I asked if the event was in honor of Lakshmi, goddess of wealth, as I'd read was common in Gujarat. She said something to the effect that there were many gods/goddesses but they were all manifestations of one. She didn't seem comfortable with the Lakshmi thing, but then she is not a Gujarati. **She told me the rangoli was from her culture, and they had asked her to share it. I thought rangoli was done all over India, however?** Evidently her husband, also a doctor in Valdosta, is a Gujarati. She didn't say that the design had any particular symbolism, although I did ask her to talk about it on tape. Either there was no symbolism or she didn't want to /couldn't share it with me, or?? The rangoli was about 4' x 5' if that big, and was located on the floor about 15' in front of the stage, centered. The main design was in white rice flour or paste I believe. I remember the color, not the composition. Color was added with different brightly colored powders. I took quite a few pictures of this. She had done rangoli for the Valdosta event in Mathis also. This woman spoke English; several of the women I randomly went up to and asked if they could tell me what Diwali signified to them didn't really speak English.

Both the rangoli and the altar/stage had numerous lighted candles added to it, so the total effect was quite lovely and there was the aroma of scented candles and the faint scent of Indian spices in the air.

Once the event starts, the woman are all on one side (to the right facing the stage) and the men to the left, separated by a central aisle. Several tables were shoved together and covered with white cloth on the men's side, just to the left of the stage. This was where the musicians would play. They were setting up, practicing, when I arrived. The sound, ably done by Jay Patel of Albany, was already set up, with various microphones and a large mixer, large speakers on both sides of the stage, and a screen and video projection unit used during the ceremony to show a video of Swami Maharaj. I got permission to be on the men's side (as long as I didn't sit down, something I did briefly and was corrected by GP Patel, who said there were folks there to make sure they did things right seeing as the temple was to be in Perry). Jay saw me setting up the mikes and intervened, saying there would be too many microphones. This saved me some trouble in set-up in the end, since I took my main sound with the Tascam DAT of the house mix and I thought the sound was pretty good. The problem was that I didn't get any live sound—for example people singing along with the bhajans and clapping their hands in rhythm. The sound

was so loud that you couldn't really hear this anyway, but I could have put a shotgun mike on some of this and gotten this affect of participation.

Before the event started I got sounds of them practicing and warming up, and got a good segment of Ankit Patel playing and describing harmonium, tabla, and dhol. The small handbells weren't around at the time. Ankit is from Atlanta and had played there for Diwali, which he said attracted 12,000 (?) people. I tried to ask him about talas, rhythms, but he didn't seem conversant on the subject. The musicians were all young men in their teens and twenties. Possibly Jay Patel was in his early 30s. I didn't get ages. Some were dressed in western attire (the majority), but 2 were in some sort of Indian traditional dress. Mayark Patel (?) of Lawrenceville wore a two piece white outfit, the top called a jhabo and the bottoms pajamo, he said. All had taken off their shoes. They were all from Georgia: Albany, Cordele, Lawrenceville, Macon, Perry, Atlanta. Once the singing began they switch instruments and especially roles as lead singers. They sang their devotional texts using lyrics on pieces of paper, or working out of a series of paperbacks of devotional texts. I didn't get what language these were. Didn't get quite everyone's name, but got the majority:

Ankit Patel, harmonium, Atlanta
 Sharad Patel, Perry, chorus
 Mitul Patel, tabla, Macon
 Jitu Patel, Dhol, Cordel
 Mayark Patel, singer, Lawrenceville
 Jay Patel, Albany, vocals, sound, tambourine
 Aakash Patel, Albany, bells (manjirs)

Bhajan: devotional songs. Texts? Meaning? Young man I asked didn't speak the language of the songs; his mother had given him the lyrics. I was told first song or so was for Diwali, then two for Swamimaharaj, last one devoted to Swami, describing his character.

_P. 253, Guy Beck in Garland South Asia Volume describes performance practices as “lead singer reads from a published volume of lyrics or a handwritten ledger and frequently accompanies himself on the harmonium, a small version of the upright portable reed organ that originated with Christian missionaries” (in Perry the harmonium player and singer were usually two different people). “Chorus members repeat the leader's words line by line in unison, although in some cases the leader may sing solo through out a song or with occasional group refrains” (always group singing in Perry). “Besides the harmonium, the most common instruments include pairs of hand cymbals (kartal or jhanjh) (they called it manjir in Perry) and drums such as the tabla, the dholak (Cylindrical drums)....Other types of percussion instruments sometimes accompany devotional singing, including bells, clappers, and tambourines” (Perry had tambourine).

The same man (need to get his name) chanted from the podium several times. Need to find out if these were prayers or what. He always did this unaccompanied. When

the musicians finished, he would come up from his seat at the front of the lunch tables and go to the podium. Again, nothing in English.

“Swaminarayan movement in Gujarat....the bhajan session was distinct from other Hindu occasions in fostering informal social relations based on mutual respect, in which everyone sits, sings, and eats together without regard to caste, gender, or religious viewpoint. A typical sessions starts with the recitation of ‘om’ followed by invocatory prayers in Sanskrit in honor of a guru or deity, divine names such as Jai Govinda, Jai Radhe, Hari Narayan, or Jai Sri Ram, and a sequence of specific songs in preferred or random order. Sanskrit prayers or short sermons may punctuate the event. Eventually a formal worship ceremony “arati” occurs during which the congregation rises and devotees make offerings of food, flowers, incense, and lamps to the deities. These items are usually distributed as sacraments to everyone at the end of the session. Bhajan song texts vary from complex structures to simple litanies containing several divine names, refrains, or the constant repetition of a single name. The song repertoire draws mostly from medieval saintly compositions, only simplified, and constantly acquires new compositions or arrangements...The rhythms are mostly up-tempo, avoiding the slower talas found in classical music...” from Garland Encyclopedia of World Music vol. 5, South Asia, Religious and Devotional Music: Northern Area, by Guy Beck p. 253-55.

For the most part the audience is seated during this singing and chanting. Children are running around in the hall where the health fair was, outside, and at the back of the room. I don't think I saw one woman or girl who wasn't in a sari or some form of traditional Indian dress. Purnima and the women from Valdosta had left to go somewhere to change from their everyday saris which they wore to help set up to apply make-up, jewelry, and their dress saris. Some women had special matching shoes.

This part of the event lasts from about 5:15 to 6:00. Then the musicians leave their platform. The guest speaker is introduced, and he gives a 40 minute talk, all in Gujarati. I sat by Purnima during part of this; she said at one point he is telling the audience that every home should have a special place put aside for prayer.

During some of the talking, which goes on a long time, I took photos and tried to see if I could get interviews. I interviewed a couple young men (names on the tape) about the meaning of Diwali. One was one of the musicians, born in India, who compared/contrasted Diwali here and in India. For him, Diwali meant that you look inside yourself to create light.

7:35, there is a video of Diwali with Swami Maharaj, and it shows a profusion of carved fruits in all sorts of shapes. I realize there is some imitation or attempt at that here, especially with a watermelon. Afterwards, as Prasad, I am given an apple carved like a swan.

7:48, another speaker or talks about Diwali around the world, and about the health fair. Again, all in Gujarati. There are a few words in English interspersed, but I don't really know what was said. My sense was he was talking about the temple, and things in Georgia with BAPS, the community.

I didn't take enough notes and write this up soon enough, but I think at the end, was the aarti, where they were playing a devotional song over the PA, and people all had cream-colored candles that looked like oversized chocolate kisses, and they were waving them overhead facing the altar and singing. The traditional oil lamps are called diyas, but variations are used in Diaspora, it seems. I got some sound of the young men, some of them musicians, lighting with a match and ghee to make candles burn longer? round trays decorated with colored rice in various designs and the Hershey-kiss shaped candles; this done by the women, the young men knew little about the designs or what they meant. I did try to get sound of the match being struck, but the sound of ghee being poured, etc., wouldn't pick up on tape. Lights were dimmed for this and the only light was from the candles.

Diyas, small oil lamps lighted and placed on altar: ask about symbolism of lamps, parts of lamp, lighting lamps.

Aarti: formal worship ceremony when diyas raised toward gods by all devotees. Music was pre-recorded and played over PA for this. People singing, but I didn't record the live portion since I was recording directly off the sound guy's mix.

After this the lights came back up, and a group of men and woman began to take the now blessed food back to the serving tables at the back of the hall for Prasad (the divinely marked food). Purnima or someone got me a plate, so I didn't really get a photo or a good look at the serving line with all of Yogi's prepared food from the restaurant. People were putting their Prasad into Styrofoam containers. By this time it was about 9:00. Purnima insisted that I take something home to my husband, so we got a pineapple and some candies. People were also beginning to dismantle the stage/altar while others were eating. I packed up and left by 9:30, after getting GP Patel to sign a consent form. I decided not to drive back this late at night and stayed over in a motel.

Diwali Celebrations Around The World

The festival of Diwali has been celebrated for ages and grows in attraction by the year. Everyone enjoys the goodies, the shine, glamour, and the endless enthusiasm for living that suddenly grips people around this time. But there is much more to Diwali than feasting and merrymaking. Diwali is a holy tradition, not to be put in the shade by the lights. Deepawali symbolizes the victory of light over darkness. Celebrated joyously all over the country, it is a festival of wealth and prosperity. Dipawali is essentially a festival for householders. The preparations, the rituals, the entire celebration focuses on the home and family, spanning out to cover the community as a natural extension. Diwali is a festival synonymous with celebrations in India and among Indians all over the world, is an occasion for jubilation and

togetherness. This is an occasion for young and the old, men and women, rich and poor - for everyone. Irrespective of their religious and economic background, the festival is celebrated throughout the country to ward off the darkness and welcome the light into their lives. At a metaphysical level, Deepawali is a festival signifying the victory of good over evil; the latter is destroyed and reduced to ashes by fireworks is the belief of the people. This festival is celebrated on a grand scale in almost all the regions of India and is looked upon mainly as the beginning of New Year. As such the blessings of Lakshmi, the celestial consort of Lord Vishnu are invoked with prayers. Diwali is also celebrated outside India mainly in Guyana, Fiji, Malaysia, Nepal, Mauritius, Myanmar, Singapore, Srilanka, Trinidad and Tobago, Britain, Indonesia, Japan, Thailand, Africa, and Australia among the Hindus world over. Places as far as Southern America have record of celebrating Diwali.

From: <http://diwalimela.com/aroundtheworld/index.html>

Indian Festivals: Diwali

“This is perhaps the most well-known of the Indian festivals: it is celebrated throughout India, as well as in Indian communities throughout the diaspora. It usually takes place eighteen days after Dusshera. It is colloquially known as the "festival of lights", for the common practice is to light small oil lamps (called *diyas*) and place them around the home, in courtyards, verandahs, and gardens, as well as on roof-tops and outer walls. In urban areas, especially, candles are substituted for diyas; and among the nouveau riche, neon lights are made to substitute for candles. The celebration of the festival is invariably accompanied by the exchange of sweets and the explosion of fireworks. As with other Indian festivals, Diwali signifies many different things to people across the country. In north India, Diwali celebrates Rama's homecoming, that is his return to Ayodhya after the defeat of Ravana and his coronation as king; in Gujarat, the festival honors Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth; and in Bengal, it is associated with the goddess Kali. Everywhere, it signifies the renewal of life, and accordingly it is common to wear new clothes on the day of the festival; similarly, it heralds the approach of winter and the beginning of the sowing season.” Web site created by: Vinay Lal Assistant Professor of History, UCLA

Send e-mail to: vlal@history.ucla.edu

<http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/southasia/Culture/Festivals/Diwali.html>

Many legends about origin of Diwali: here is one from one Internet site. Need to get versions from people here:

“An Ivory image of Lord Rama. According to mythology, the celebration of Diwali is closely bound up with one of India's two classic epics the Ramayana. Lord Rama is said to have reigned for a long time during which the people were happy and contented. Ramrajya (the reign of Rama) has come to connote an era of peace and

prosperity. The festival of Diwali; we were told is celebrated to commemorate Rama's return from exile.” Author Sudheer Birodkar]

<http://india.coolatlanta.com/GreatPages/sudheer/book2/festivals1.html>

“Govardhan-Puja is also performed in the North on the fourth day. This day is also observed as Annakoot meaning 'mountain of food'. In temples especially in Mathura and Nathadwara, the deities are given milk bath and dressed in shining attires with ornaments of dazzling diamonds, pearls, rubies and other precious stones. After the prayers and traditional worship innumerable varieties of delicious sweets are offered to the deities as **"Bhog"** and then the devotees approach and take **Prasad**. Goddess Lakshmi is worshipped in every Hindu household. In many Hindu homes it is a custom for the wife to put the red tilak on the forehead of her husband, garland him and do his "Aarathi" with a prayer for his long life. In appreciation of all the tender care that the wife showers on him, the husband gives her a costly gift. This Gudi Padwa is symbolic of love and devotion between the wife and husband. On this day newly married daughters with their husbands are invited for special meals and given presents. Diwali celebration is a very happy occasion for all” from www.diwalimela.com/customtraditions/index.html

Notes/Questions

New clothes?

Women's contact?

Order of events, program, names?

Temple/ why Perry? Who, when?

Field Notes, Old Timey Harvest Day, New Zion MB Church, Riceboro, GA
Sunday, Nov. 16, 2003

Had contacted organizer Mary McIver (no relation to Lawrence McIver of the Shouters) via Carletha Sullivan of the Shouters. Wanted to record the Shouters in a black church environment for the radio show, and looks like I'll be unable to go to their watch night service and shout on New Year's eve this year. They are just more interactive with a black audience. Carletha mentioned this event as upcoming. Unfortunately, I didn't try as aggressively as I should have to contact Carletha to confirm that I was in fact going to record this event. When I finally got through to someone at her home Sunday morning of the event, she was in Atlanta and wouldn't even be there that day. Mary McIver was very accommodating, and after I sent a fax about what I wanted to do, she got approval of the pastor and deacons and faxed me back a signed consent form. She also met me and let me into the church early so I could set up.

I had driven up Sat. night as far as Darien, and then arrived at New Zion about 8:30 in the morning. I needed to set up before Sunday school began in the sanctuary around 10. This is the new church, the old one is just down the road. The church was built in the early 1940s (I have exact date either on the cornerstone photo or my tape). At the end I interviewed Mary McIver's husband (C. W?) Mc Iver, about the history of the church and community. He talked about worshipping in a tent on this site before the building went up, and in praise houses before the building of a church (not sure if that was before the original Zion MB Church?) He also spoke of doing the shout in church in his youth, and using washboard and stick for rhythm. This would make some good background for the radio piece and broaden it out beyond the Shouters. Riceboro is an interesting community, originally the county seat of Liberty County and the scene of colonial rice plantations, hence its name. The original economy was farming, but now there is a paper mill and a chemical plant nearby for employment (I think I recall this correctly; I'm writing these notes over a week after the event). Many descendents of former slaves on the plantations still live here.

I wrote down the name of the core group of women cooking the meal during the Sunday school time and took some photos, but I didn't really get sound of them, since the focus of the radio piece was to be the Shouters. They were in an attached 'L-shaped' section with a small dining area and kitchen. They had some home made and purchased pies and cakes, were making old fashioned corn bread they said (took some photos), had a couple turkeys already roasted. Had cooked there and at home. Main menu items listed in the program. The banana pudding was great!

I set up the mixer and four mikes (3 Shur SM 58s and the Sennheiser shotgun for the speakers) in the front row of pews. I also had my DAT walkman and single stereo Audio Technica mike up next to the podium, so I could get better audio of the speakers. This worked fine as long as they stayed at the podium, which was not always the case. This tape also ran out—not sure where. The house PA was on, and several of the vocalists shouted into it, causing distortion. This was particularly the case with Sister Francis Howard, who lined some hymns, reminisced, and cued the congregation to sing Kumbaya. This would have been some good stuff for radio, but there was the distortion problem, and I'm not sure she would be that easy to understand. Check this.

Someone, I think it was the pastor or one of the Deacons, describes the significance of hymn lining after this, which might be a good sound byte. They then lined several hymns.

The sanctuary wasn't large, but it was full, with guests from the community and various other churches. I was the only white person there I believe. There were all ages. Many people were dressed in a deliberately old fashioned way: men in plaid shirts and jeans or overalls, women in denim dresses with Kerchiefs, caps, or turbans. Some were in African attire (most notably of course was the guest speaker, Rev. Desmond C.O-Hankwere, a Nigerian born Catholic Priest currently serving at St. Benedict the Moor in Savannah. One of John McIver's brothers attends there. He was in African Kente cloth attire in bright colors). The church had carpeted floors, and red cushions on the wooden pews. Mary McIver had decorated the sanctuary with tables on either side of the pulpit. There was a vase of artificial flowers in fall colors, some jars of canned goods, nuts, squash. A

table with some old timey artifacts like a sedge broom, a paper fan, a cast iron “iron”, an oil lamp, a school bell. In addition to Sister Francis, there were a couple of other occasions when folks reminisced about times passed (see program and tape log).

Other than the lined hymns of the devotional service, the only other special music was provided by the New Zion Male Singers and the Shouters. The New Zion Male Singers apparently perform only once a year. This is made up of some of the older men 50s-70s. William R. Bunn was the leader of the call and response most of the time. The sound was distorted through the sound system, so I don’t think there is anything of the Male Singers that would be good for radio.

The Shouters came just before the program started and I didn’t really get much of a chance to brief them and they left before I got a signed consent form. The younger women in the group (name) was not happy with my recording, since Carletha hadn’t told her I was coming and they were short, three men and two women. We agreed that I would record and see how it came up, and would send them a copy to approve. They only sang three selections: Move Daniel, Lost in the Red Sea, and Adam in the Garden. The younger woman was the narrator. Women of the church of all ages joined the women in the shout on the 2nd two. I couldn’t record any of the foot movement since the floor was carpeted. That would have to be done in a special separate recording session at another time.

I marked a couple places on the tape log where there might be some nice sound bytes for a piece on the Shouters: Pastor Curtis Lemon saying “Every time I see the Shouters it joys my heart...” just after their performance. And then Rev. O’Hankwere talking about cultural connections with Africa/Nigeria and what he had just seen. “In our culture we tell stories and dance. God has brought me back to my roots, to my foundation.”

And at the close, John McIver “Shouters are one of a kind....We will not get this at our high schools, MLK, or emancipation celebrations. Our history, our foreparents brought from Africa.”

And, the previously mentioned CW? McIver talking about shouting in the praise houses in the follow-up interview.

**Rev. O’Hankwere wants a copy of the program (cassette is fine)

Field Notes

Posadas at Town and Country Trailer Park (Dec. 16, 2003)

And Broxton Ttrailer Park (Dec. 17, 2003)

St. Paul’s Catholic Church, Hispanic Ministries, Douglas, GA

Met Sister Berta Capetillo at St. Paul’s Church both nights around 5 p.m. and followed her in my own car to the posada locations. I had brought two bags of tangerines and two bags of candy. By this time the piñatas and bolos were already prepared, so they were left for the next night.

I had learned of the Posadas in Douglas through my former student, Olga Contreras, whose family lives in Willacoochee. St. Paul's Catholic Church and its Hispanic Ministries, although ostensibly serving Coffee County, also serves Pearson and Willacoochee. The church is lead by an Irish Priest originally from Cork, Father Daniel O'Connell, who learned Spanish in Bolivia and Ecuador, where he served 5 years I believe he told me, on a mission project. Sister Berta Capetillo has been running the Hispanic Ministry since 1997. She is 49, born in Matamoros, Mexico and then eventually moved across the border to Brownsville, TX. She and I were chatting last night and she shared that in the barrio she grew up in in Matamoros there was a strong sense of community and tradition. Her orchestrations of the Posadas here are shaped by her memories of this time in her youth. Toys were home-made, folks looked out for each other and re-distributed wealth, goods, gifts, to the most needy so everyone had something. They made piñatas. She also has instituted traditions for Dia de los Muertos—interesting, and must get more on this from her. The Hispanic community at St. Paul's is about 200 families. They are from various states in Mexico, but 2/3 are from Durango. They work at Gold Kist Chicken, McCraft (? Spelling), WalMart. There is now enough work to support a year-round population. Most of the adults are born in Mexico. Some of the older children are born over there, too, with most of the younger born here.

For Sister Berta, the Christmas season starts with the Fiestas Guadalupanas and continues through Noche Buena, including the nine days of Posadas. Sister Berta needs a follow-up interview about organizing the Posadas, their model in the Posadas of her youth, etc. I arranged to attend the first two nights of the Posadas, Dec. 16 and 17, to document for the radio series. The audio was recorded the first night at Town and Country Trailer Park just outside the Douglas city limits; it was outside, much larger (probably 75+ people), better organized. I took most of my photos and some limited audio in Broxton on Dec. 17, where the procession and piñata took place outside Irma Ortega's trailer, but the food was inside. There were 30+ people, and inside the trailer it was crowded and noisy. It would have been difficult to get good audio and I would have felt intrusive and conspicuous doing it. The temperature had dropped some 20 to 25 degrees from the night before, so it was too cold to do the whole thing outside.

Synopsis of items on tape (recorded on DAT Walkman with Sennheiser shotgun; I appeared to be getting two mono channels recorded simultaneously. The audio is hot at times, but seems good based on my preliminary check. Once the procession started I turned on the limiter and kept it on for the duration. Names of folks are on the tape and will need to be added later).

- Preliminary remarks
- Overview and description of food by Mexican woman with the Anglo husband from Douglas: ponche, tamales, pozole, tacos of chicken salad, tuna salad, potato salad. IN English

- I try to question Eli Bustos (who was Sr. Berta's contact here) and the woman with the young daughter from Willacoochee, about what happens at a Posada, what it means. This wasn't very successful. IN Spanish.
- I talk with Sister Berta about the different communities represented in the 9 days of the Posadas, etc.
- Sister Berta and the two teenage Bustos girls practice the songs
- I start to talk with Angie, from Toluca, who runs the store, about the neighborhood; she would be a good interview, but the tape batteries run out during this. I need to go back to the store and talk with her. She seemed to be the main person from the neighborhood in charge.
- The procession, including sounds of walking and talking, saying the rosary, singing the traditional request for lodging and reply, and then posadas songs while walking. Sister Berta's voice is prominent here. The inside isn't as loud as the outside as they sing through a closed door. I think there were 5? stops including the last one at the store where posada is granted. On the last one, in the store, I went inside with the inside group to record.
- Pouring ponche, sounds of serving food. During part of this I eat something, and set the recorder down in the back of a flatbed truck. It was dark, and I inadvertently set it down in a small pool of water, but fortunately, with the windscreen on the mike and the cover on the tape recorder, everything kept running.
- At some point I catch up with the young woman who played Maria and try to get a few comments.
- The Pinata, which took a while as there were at least 4 or 5 pinatas for people of different ages, beginning with small piñatas for the littlest children. I got some good sound of hitting the piñata with some of the smallest children, diving for the candy, singing the piñata song. As they are setting up the piñata at the beginning you can hear the engine of the pickup truck as it moves into position. One teenager climbed a tree and tied the rope. Another stood in the flatbed of the truck and held the rope, moving it up and down as the kids tried to hit it. Only the older kids wore blindfolds. At one point I asked a kid in line what the truck was for. I also struck up a conversation with two girls in line (names on tape), age 12, who were waiting to hit the piñata again. There are some good short comments about the piñata. One's aunt made the Donald Duck piñata. I also talk with one of the Bustos girls about the Chilindrina (spelling?), the pigtailed cartoon character from Mexico that was the first small piñata, purchased in Mexico by Angie for the store.

- When the teenagers did their piñata, there was a good rendition of the “dale dale song and a counting off from 1 to 12, then the hitter has to give up his or her turn. This was the shorter of the two girls. Judy?
- While the piñatas are going on, Angie is back at the store handing out brown paper bags with a green Christmas ribbon: the bolos or anguinaldos. I talk to a tiny girl about hers. Dulces, she says. I go in the store, and the same 12-year old girl whose aunt made the piñata is there. I get her to describe for me what is in her bag. There are various Mexican candies from Angie’s store.
- I left around 9 p.m., as the men and boys are putting the folding chairs in the truck bed.

Other than not getting many comments on what Posadas are and their meaning, which I can get later from Sr. Berta, I think I got some good sound to tell the story of the posada. The shotgun mike seemed to work well. I arrived at dusk but it rapidly got dark, and there were enough people there that I really didn’t attract that much attention. A number of people, including someone for Sr. Berta, were recording with digital cameras and video camcorders.

Description/Impressions

We turned off a black-top main road into a fairly large trailer park with dirt roads. The focal point was la tienda, in what looked like a half trailer. The trailers all appeared to be a yellow beige color but I’d need to see them in the light. It was a clear night, cool but not cold. When I arrived the area was ablaze with tiny white Christmas lights. The outside of the store (which didn’t have any sign that I noticed) was decorated in white lights, as was the manger scene off to the right as I faced the store. The area in front of the store was marked off in a large rectangle of white Christmas lights, bordered by folding chairs. To the side right of the store mini-trailer were tables, about 6 of them, where women were beginning to set out the food as it arrived. The next trailer over, inhabited by the mother of the girl I talked to about bolos and piñatas, was decorated with a fringe of multicolored Christmas lights. The atmosphere was festive. Sister Berta had met with the parishioners in the Hispanic Ministry and designated leaders in each community who organized the Posada. I think this meant getting the bolos, piñata, bringing the food, selecting and dressing the young boy and girl who posed as Maria and Jose. This is a communal affair, where the burden of expense for putting on the fiesta is shared in the community. After having participated and studied las posadas in Detroit ten years ago and more, I was struck with how much more like Mexico this must be in its sense of a small town or rural neighborhood sharing Posadas with family, friends, neighbors. Some people apparently attended from other communities (Eli Bustos, for example, does not live in Town and Country) but having it outside like this, and walking from trailer to trailer as los peregrinos had a much different feel. This was more like the posada viva at Ste. Anne’s. The food staple at the two posadas I attended was pozole and also tamales. There is less use of pork and beef and more of chicken than I would have expected or than would be traditional. Perhaps because of Gold Kist, or because of price?? Food and drink was brought in large aluminum stock pots. The punch (ponche) is served hot, with fruits,

sugar cane, spices. Do I have the ingredients on tape? Get in interview. Tostadas (is this what they called them?) where another staple: a crisp, fried tortilla topped with a cold topping of tuna salad, potato salad, chicken salad. This also surprised me. Perhaps cheaper than meat? Easier to have a cold food? There was also hot chocolate. I didn't have any there, but I understand it was plain hot chocolate, not atole or champurrada, thickend with maiz as was common in Detroit. The women did the cooking and the serving. It seems that a group of women got together or helped with the making of the tamales. There is a Mexican store in the area where they can get hojas, or the corn husks to wrap the tamales. All the tamales were savory, not sweet. I didn't taste the pozole here. I had it the next night, the 17th, which I'll describe later.

The event was to start at 6 but people were still gathering. I didn't check my watch to see what time we actually started, but it was dark. By that time, a crowd of at least 75 people were there. They were expecting over 100, and that figure is possible. It was a nice crowd with a nice mix of ages and a good, warm, communal feel to it. Sr. Berta says that this community is very active. It was nice to see families with fathers, not just mothers, participating, young children and teenagers, including teenage and middle school boys. They handed out white candles, although I noticed that many didn't have holders. Some people carried candles in a Styrofoam cup. As the procession started the neighborhood had a warm, peaceful feeling of quiet joy and celebration. The sky was brilliant with stars, Orion hanging heavily overhead. Peoples faces were burnished with the golden glow of candlelight. You could hear the footfalls as the people walked, soft talking, and the rhythmic ebb and flow of the rosary, in a call and response by leader and people. I moved to different points in the crowd with my microphone. As we reached a house where the peregrinos asked for posada, a group which included the Bustos girls each time would go inside and take part in the tradition sung request for lodging. I think a different verse is sung each time? Check. I have a songsheet. Sister Berta was probably the strongest voice and led the singing, both the request for lodging, and the posada songs sung as the group walked away. Others sung and knew the songs, but the majority of the people didn't sing. Of course, not all had songsheets, but certainly, unlike Christmas carols, this group didn't seem to know the songs by heart. All were sung in Spanish. Although the conversations of the school-age kids were mostly in English, most seemed bilingual. The singing participation may be because there isn't the strong congregational singing tradition in the Catholic Church.

At the last stop, the store, the peregrinos are invited in and then the food was served. I asked Sr. Berta why there was a Christ Child already in the manger in the nacimiento: she said they had wanted to enact the whole thing (??? I need to clarify this with her), including dressing the Nino Jesus, but they ran out of time. Normally, she agreed, the Christ Child wouldn't be in the manger until Noche Buena—Christmas Eve.

The air was alive with conversation, Sr. Berta's calls for senoras to help with serving the ponche, children playing, people serving and enjoying food. Maria and Jose quickly changed out of their robes and headgear into their streetclothes. At some point after the food had been served for probably at least 30 minutes or more, people began gathering the piñatas and you could feel the children's excitement rise. This event seems to be about children: youngsters playing Maria and Jose, young children with their parents

walking with their candles clutched in little hands, older children caring for the young ones or hanging out with their peers. Children forming an excited, chattering line to hit the piñata, children shrieking and diving for sweets and fruit falling from the shattered piñata, children questioning to make sure the piñata isn't filled with confetti or flour instead. Older kids taunting and laughing at their blindfolded peers swinging at the piñata. The first blindfolded girl was led not to the piñata but to the tree which secured the rope, and she began to swat at a limb, thinking it was a piñata. Judy Bustos got a grip on the soccer ball, blindfolded, and ripped it in two. She and her sister had helped stuff the piñatas. Children with their crackling paper bags of bolos, with a tangerine, a flavored marshmallow, peanuts, animal crackers, and all sorts of interesting Mexican candies from Angie's store. The piñatas were both store bought and hand made: a soccer ball, Donald Duck, a star that was saved for the next night in Broxton where the community was smaller and poorer. Passing on the tradition, the language, the knowledge of the coming of the Christ Child, the Mexican Catholic concept of fiesta. Banding together in an in-group, safe neighborhood to do something familiar and beloved in a new home, far from their roots in Mexico. I believe I was the only Anglo there, other than the spouse of one of the women.

I left feeling as if it had been a magical night, full of mexicanidad. When I asked Eli Bustos and the woman from Willacoochee if/how it was different from Mexico they said it really wasn't. I wondered, but this seemed more like the outdoor neighborhood parties I remember reading about than what was done in a church basement or hall inside in Detroit. I asked about different customs in different parts of Mexico; these women weren't able to articulate that, if it exists, which I think it does since Sr. Berta mentioned it. But she also said 2/3 of the people were from Durango. Something to follow up with her.

I got such good audio this first night I really didn't need to go the second night, but I had planned to go, so I went. This night Father Daniel O'Connell also came along. The temperature had dropped dramatically and there was a freeze warning; it had been cold and windy all day. We arrived at a small trailer park on the south side of the Broxton School grounds, in the community of Broxton on 441 about 6 miles north of Douglas. The sun had set by the time we arrived and unlike the night before there were no people out, no cars parked, no people setting up. Sr. Berta inquired around and finally located the trailer where the posada would be. Due to the cold, the posada was moved inside the home of Irma Ortega. She was steaming chicken tamales on the stove when we arrived. The gal from Willacoochee arrived about the same time we did with a big tureen of ponche, cold, which I don't think we ever did drink since there was no good way to heat it. Someone had brought a large sheet cake decorated with white icing and pineapple rings with a maraschino cherry. We had stopped at the Valle home first (Tony Valle played Jose) and Sr. Berta called to see if people had gone to the wrong house. Folks gradually arrived, but I don't think we started until 7 or so (but I didn't look at my watch). Women slowly arrived bringing food, and sister Berta and other women (perhaps the mothers) dressed Jose and Maria, the latter played by Adrienna (check) Ortega, Irma's daughter. Dressing consisted of a home-made robe, and rolling and tying a piece of cloth (in Mary's case always blue) to simulate an Arab/Jewish style headpiece. Adrianna giggled a lot during the process. It began to be increasingly crowded in the

small trailer living room as more people arrived. I had been recording, including the sound of the tamales steaming, and the dressing of Maria and Jose, but the room was crowded and the group small. I decided against recording, which was good, since the singing and overall sound the previous night would make much better radio. Instead I concentrated on taking photos, but especially after the procession began it was quite dark and I had a hard time getting the camera to focus. Also there were at least two or three video cameras going with lights that seemed to get in the way of the shot. I was shooting 400 ISO black and white.

Candles were handed out, and some song books before folks went outside. The beginning readings and the rosary was said for the first time indoors. Then everyone filed out and their candles were lit by one of the boys on the way out. We stopped at three houses, including Irma's where we were invited in in the traditional way. The rosary was said as the night before, but the wind kept blowing out the candles, plus, the teenagers around Maria and Jose were blowing out each others' candles. The rosary was said, and songs were sung, but here really only Sr. Berta seemed to be singing. There were about 30 people of various ages, but no one probably much over 40.

We filed back into the home for food. The women worked to serve; this time we had pozole with cabbage, lime, and onion; tamales with a green sauce on the side, and new, atole or champurrada (which was cool when I tried it) and bunuelos, the latter traditional items as I recall it from the Detroit posadas. Father Daniel and I chatted when eating about the other churches in the area, including the small historic Irish church in Willacoochee that he serves, settled in the 1840s by Irish railroad workers who were left stranded when the railroad work stopped, and stayed. There is also the small historic church in Alapaha. There are Colombian priests serving Tifton and Nashville now. I think the Nashville priest covers San Jose in Lake Park. I didn't get names of these priests at the time, however. There were two piñatas done outside, but I didn't photograph the process, just the set up, including the woman with the star piñata made for her son's birthday, today, which she had made during work lunch hour??? She said her boss asked what posadas were and she tried to explain. The women made sure Father Daniel and I got bolos, more modest this time: a snowman cellophane bag filled with peanuts and Animal crackers. I left about 8:30.

Field Notes

1-31-04

Georgia Christian School Homecoming

Dasher, GA

Books not on the State Archives Site on Salzburgers (ref. by Geraldine Thompson)

Ye Old Salzburger Cookbook, A Book of Recipes and Remedies used by the Early Salzburgers (no date)

Paine, Reba Wisenbaker. Christopher and His Children. (1994, self published, copy at Lowndes County Historical Society)

Wharton, W. Ralph (Ch. of Christ minister). Restoration Movements Around the World, self published 1980. Includes material on Dasher Church.

Thompson, Geraldine. book on Churches of Christ history in FL, includes chapter on Dasher

Contacts:

Marty Broome, music teacher at school, (chorus), song leader (get exact title) at Dasher Church of Christ; interviewed by Billy Ezra in fall 2000 PERS 2690 class. w-333-2219

Beverly Broome, secretary at GA Christian School

Donna McLeod, cook (married into community???check. Made 7-layer cake, so called, really 13 layers. Said she and daughter used to have a bakery in town), h-242-0890

David Nelson, current pastor of Dasher Church of Christ, H 559-1820, worship 10-11 Sundays.

DeMaris Murphy, Church of Christ Secretary, church # 559-5723.

Dasher City Hall, 559-3146, Mondays 8-11; Thursday 9-noon.

Anita (Wisenbaker) Armstrong, my main contact into the community, newly elected to Dasher City Council, grad of school, father Frank Wisenbaker was church song leader for 53 years (now deceased), the person everyone told me to contact regarding history and culture of Salzburger; Richard Herman Wisenbaker who settled s. Lowndes County was her great great grandfather. H-559-6468

Jack Exum (wife Ann)

Rt. 23 Box 1426

Lake City, FL 32025

386 755-9525

Minister in Ch. of Christ, grad of school, was there for Homecoming, attended 11th and 12th grade, grad. 1946, stayed in dormitories, would be great interview if I want stories of the school of that era.

Charles White

Dasher

559-0848 W

559-1312 H

from N. Georgia, Ch. of Christ missionary. History major, has done a lot of research on history of Ch. of Christ and on music in the church (unpublished);

Geraldine McLeod Thompson

Jacksonville

has published a book recently on Ch. of Christ in FL; includes Dasher however. In her 70s. Has useful scrapbooks on history of Salzburger, on the school, perhaps more. Had an undated paperback cookbook of early Salzburger recipes (from the coastal Settlement area I presume, not Dasher/Lowndes Co.) which did show survival of German foodways.

Ralph Hamm retired coach, teacher
GA Christian school historian, scrapbooks
559-5503

Barbara Wisenbaker Copeland
GCS administrator, don't recall her exact title

Lucille Small, age 89, Anita Armstrong's aunt, lives in Dasher, great cook.

Mary Catherine (Dasher) Wisenbaker, age 87

Pendleton Little
313 Park Ave. VLD
descendent of Christian Herman Dasher

Faye and Reginald Wisenbaker (old contact from first Project Change Multicultural conference 1997); attend St. Augustine Church of Christ (St. Augustine Rd.), 4241 Johnston Rd, Valdosta, 31606, 559-7618, live on their homeplace, quilts, catfish, mayhaw

Notes from Reba Wisenbaker Paine's 1994 book Christopher and His Children, Edwin Dasher, son of Christian Herman Dasher, moved to Lowndes Co. in 1844. Book doesn't say why he left and came to Lowndes Co. According to Albert Pendleton (in conversation at Lowndes Co. Historical Museum), Christian Herman Dasher and his wife are buried at Sunset Hill cemetery in Valdosta.

The general sense I have is that Dashers settled in Valdosta, Wisenbakers in southern part of county. This may be simplistic, but there are two strains of Salzburger descendants in the area. Hinley (Heinle) is another Salzburger name, but there are none of that surname in the area currently, according to Mrs. Thompson. She has a cousin in Orlando who carries on the name. There are two historic Churches of Christ in the County: Dasher, and Central Avenue in Valdosta. According to Charles White, the Dasher Church is the second oldest Ch. of Christ in GA (the oldest is Oak Grove?? in Effingham Co.--confirm).

The Dasher community has remained small and tightly knit, with much intermarriage of families with surnames like McLeod (Scotch), Wisenbaker (Salzburger) and Copeland (the latter a more recent arrival: 20th century I believe, but I need to check. Colson Printing family, for example.).

Salzburger reunions used to take place at 4-H Club camp, through ca. late 1960s according to G. Thompson. She has photos. Salzburger presence in the community still, but no more reunions. The Wisenbaker reunion discussed by G. Thompson, which would include Anita Armstrong, is a pretty recent thing, within the last 5 years or so.

From the beginning the community has centered around the church. The school, founded in 1914 as Dasher Bible School, has also been a focal institution, closely allied with the church. For a period of time it was a boarding school with many students esp. from AL and FL although have had from across the country and some foreign countries.

WOFSY Women's Organization for Serving Youth is a support/fundraising org. for the school. org. summer of 1964 "For the purpose of uniting the women of South GA and N. FL in a genuine, worthwhile fellowship while working for the young people of our time, through the channel of GA Christian School." (from Cooking with WOFSY, 1991-92). Org. not connected with the church. First cookbook 1965, bought this one to see if any recipes looked traditional or German. First cookbook published 1965 titled Foods for Favorite Folks. Look for copy. WOFSY used to have a quilting group but no more. There are some ladies who quilt associated with the church--not clear yet if this is a group or not. Contact for this is Christine McLeod, 242-2027. Mother Grace McFeron (sp.?) now deceased was an award winning quilter. WOFSY fall festival with traditional chicken dinner. I talked by phone with a GCS teacher Paula Carpenter, GSC alumna, first grade teacher, member of WOFSY. Current president, also a teacher, is Stacy Allbright. Paula told me WOFSY activities include community calendar, bake sale, cookbooks, Christmas sale, dinners, auctions.

WOFSY cookbook: foodways various versions of Poppyseed chicken (casserole); check into this. Poppyseed a possible cue of German origin foodways?

Church of Christ uses 7-shape hymnal. 4 part harmony, no instruments, or "mechanical instruments" as Chas. White called it. Church is very literal with Bible and sees no reference to instruments in worship in the New Testament. Chas. White said nothing in Dasher church singing is unique: this is trad. of Churches of Christ. The four-part harmony, 7-shape system, learned by ear, basically carries over into the chorus at school. For some reason they don't use the term choir--check. The tradition at the school is to sing the Alma Mater a cappella, 4 part harmony, just at the end of halftime in the boys game. Is this the tune we sang my first year in Choral Guild? with lyrics adapted to GA Christian. Lyrics printed on Homecoming program. Tune is not unique to GCS. Get more info. I recorded it at Homecoming, with all the current and former chorus members standing at mid-court conducted by Marty Broome. Usually, in a regular game, he is leading from the stands and the entire home crowd sings. 4th Sunday nights are hymn sings, with different song leaders, Dasher Church of Christ, 6 p.m. Marty Broome says they hold "Labs for Leaders" at the church Jan. through April at 5:00 every Sunday. Pupils get individual attention in song leading. Apparently no formal singing schools, tradition learned in chorus in school or aurally/informally in church.

church formerly did baptisms in Loch Laurel; with construction of new brick church across from school (now called GA Christian), they no longer use lake. Churches of Christ believe in adult baptism, total immersion

Preliminary list of traditions

- Salzburger reunion (through ca. 1960s)
- family reunions
- 7-shape singing (no singing of note names) in Ch. of Christ, esp. 4th Sunday sings at 6 p.m.
- quilting (formerly WOFSY, now some ladies in church)
- foodways (still checking: poppyseed chicken??)
- school personal experience narratives, esp. of dormitory period
- Homecoming (school)
- WOFSY (women's organization, cookbook, fundraisers including fall chicken dinner)
- **beekeeping (exhibit at Lowndes Co. Historical Museum says beekeeping introduced by early Dutch and Salzburger settlers)
- cemetery: check for unusual gravestone types. Monument to GA Salzburgers dedicated in Dasher cemetery on Friday, May 1, 1987 according to clipping in LC Historical Society VF. Anita Armstrong's late father, Frank Wisenbaker, took care of cemetery for years. Original plot part of church land donated by Richard Herman Wisenbaker.
- Labor Day picnic community center
- GA Salzburger Society meeting/celebration Labor Day weekend in Ebenezer
- Dasher Church of Christ second oldest Ch. of Christ in GA

I attended the Homecoming here after making initial inquiries into the Salzburger community in Lowndes Co. by phone over the last couple weeks. I arrived about 10:20 on Sat. morning, to a cloudy day which warmed up into the high 50s and stayed dry. By 2:00 the sun was trying to peek through but it never made it. The school campus is just west of old 41 in Dasher. I came in on the sandy road through the old campus past the dormitories: I believe the name is Christian Lane? (check). Many of the buildings appear to date to the early 20th century (after 1914)--I took a photo of the Administration Bldg. which had a date in the early 1920s (check photo), but I was surprised at the size of the campus. The buildings are all white, the older ones painted stucco. Current school K-3 through 12 has 234 students. Judging from the crowd at Homecoming, it is overwhelmingly white, although I did see maybe 10 African Americans (or less). 40 acre campus, various (7?) buildings. New gymnasium dedicated today at Homecoming. Said to be oldest private school in the state of GA, according to conversation with Anita Armstrong. Boarding school period ca. 1930s-1950s (check dates). Boarding school buildings (dormitories) still there, but basically empty today. Someone told me at the reunion that there was a Mexican couple living in one of them.

I checked out the power outlet situation in the gymnasium and then when to the cafeteria where the chorus was sponsoring the alumni luncheon from 11-12:30. Different groups do the luncheon every year as fundraiser for different aspects of school. School secretary Beverly Broome (married to chorus director Marty Broome) was taking donations at the door for lunch and also selling the chorus' two CDs. The newest is just out: the Lord Bless You and Keep you. The older is "My God and I" Both close with the alma mater., written by Audie Fowler, a teacher from GCS. It is traditionally sung at the halftime of all boys BB games. The new CD was playing on a boom box as I walked in. There were risers set up in the corner of the room. A serving line was just beyond where you entered, and cafeteria tables had photocopies of old school articles from different time periods. One table was reserved for yearbooks and other school memorabilia.

The menu was catered by a woman in the community Gail Litsey (spelling, from Dasher): a basic BBQ plate: BBQ, baked beans, potato salad, garlic bread, and homemade cakes. Donna McLeod's so-called 7-layer cake caught my eye (white with chocolate frosting-- she told me she uses 13 pans; it was certainly 13 layers). Tea, water, possibly soft drinks.

Sometime between 11:15 and 11:30 the chorus came in: they were mostly wearing jeans or casual pants with matching black T-shirts which said Georgia Christian chorus. About 2/3 girls, 1/3 boys. The chorus was about half their usual size since a # of members were in the homecoming court. They say 4 selections from their CD including Come Spirit Come, Amazing Grace, and the Alma Mater (the closing). Evidently they visit a lot of churches and Amazing Grace is one of their most popular selections. The emphasis here is on good blend and the 4-part harmony. Marty Broome conducts, but they perform from memory. They work with 7-shape music. I recorded the chorus with the DAT walkman and the stereo Audio technica mike. I also tried to record some room sound. Some of this was with the shotgun, but only one channel. Most of the crowd was older, maybe 50s and up.

I sat down next to Jack Exum, class of '46, who had come up to the chorus and told them he had sung in the chorus 59 years ago. I introduced myself to him and his wife Ann. He is a Ch. of Christ preacher from Lake City, originally from Miami/Hialeah if I remember right. He was full of personal experience narratives about his wild times bending the rules at the school in 1945-46. He was nearly expelled for swearing at a teacher, among other things. He described the school environment as very rigid and moralistic. They couldn't hold hands, for example. At the time we were talking I didn't realize he had become a preacher in the same denomination. Churches of Christ evidently each are autonomous with their individual elders in charge, but they all are literal when it comes to the Bible as their guide, focusing on the New Testament for the source of such beliefs as no mechanical instruments in church, adult baptism by immersion, etc. I got Exum's card.

I was introduced by school administrator Barbara (Wisenbaker) Colson to a table of women in their 60s/70s, including Geraldine Thompson and her two sisters in law (last name McLeod, married Geraldine's brothers). Mrs. Thompson, a graduate of the school, former teacher, and author of history of Churches of Christ in FL, has a great interest in history and had brought her scrapbooks on Salzburgers and Dasher School. She now

lives in Jacksonville--not sure when she left Dasher. She promptly went out to the car and brought them in to show me. Much of this was photocopies from various sources, not all attributed by date, but she generously gave me copies. I think she understood that my project was more about history rather than folklore. She is certainly more interested in history herself, and much of her scrapbook had to do with the Salzburgers on the coast. I recorded her showing me her scrapbook, using the shotgun mike on the DAT Walkman. Paraphrased from conversation with G. Thompson: Richard Herman Wisenbaker left Ebenezer settlement came inland looking for land. Had large holding in Lowndes county, from FL line to Valdosta. Donated land for first Church of Christ. Mrs. Thompson doesn't have information about why Lowndes Co., why they left at that particular time. Also how Dasher got its name (a store owned by a man named Dasher). This might be useful for radio. Otherwise, it was near the end of the tape, last 15-20 minutes when I did an artist data sheet and talked with her in more of an interview. She gave me references to a # of books about the Salzburgers. I tried talking with her about foodways, but this doesn't appear to be of much interest to her. Of particular interest was her copy of *Ye Old Salzburger Cookbook: A Book of Recipes and Remedies used by the early Salzburgers* (no date, yellow paperback). Glancing through it there were clearly some German names, a number of dried meats, as well as typical southern recipes. My impression is that this was quite different from the latest WOFSY cookbook I purchased. Mrs. Thompson said she'd send a photocopy of the book. Her own book had a recipe for Scripture cake and home remedies used by her grandmother, Annie Burkhalter (Swiss derivation) McLeod, who was also a quilter and made the clabber biscuits mentioned in the old Salzburger cookbook.

I spent until about 2:00 with Mrs. Thompson, so we missed the dedication of the new gymnasium and the Homecoming court. I dropped and damaged the DAT walkman while packing up. By the time we got over to the gym a number of people were gathering in the entry area with the concession stand and tables. Here I met Anita Armstrong who introduced me to various people, including Charles White. This area had memorabilia including a trophy case for the 1949 class C boys BB championship. There were also items of memorabilia, T-shirt and afghan sales, more CD sales, and the latest WOFSY cookbook on sale. The girls BB game (Lady Generals) started at 3:00; the boys at 4:30. I stayed through halftime of the boys game to record the alma mater singing. Kerry Morris, the school public relations person, was selling pieces of the old gym floor as a fundraiser.

The Generals mascot looks like a Confederate general with a grey uniform and white whiskers and beard brandishing a pistol in each hand. The colors are blue (royal blue) and white. Many folks of course were wearing variants of the school colors. The general mascot is on the wall (is this from the old gym floor?) and at center court. There is no band or dance team (religious beliefs? certainly yes with the band); there were a few cheerleaders. The opponents were the Randolph Southern Patriots, in red and white. Going into this game the boys were #1 in their division. I recorded a little bit of the introductions of the team in the shotgun in one channel on the Tascam, but this was probably overrecorded. I set up the Tascam with two Sennhausers at the side of the home stands, running on battery, and did record some of the crowd noise before the end of the first half. I also got some of the little girl cheerleader cheers, as they came out dressed in

blue and white outfits with matching pompoms at halftime. Then there was the auction of a cake, lead by an auctioneer (didn't get his name), as the cake was showed off by a young man (Name?) grad of school who was a veteran of the Iraq war. After spirited bidding, it went for \$200 (to benefit the school). Then Marty Broome invited all the present and past chorus members to join him on the court for the alma mater. The beginning was a little shaky on the choruses part (soft, and not together), but I got a good recording. Many of the home crowd members did not sing, which is unusual. I had Marty listen afterward; he was somewhat critical of the blend (not used to singing together) and the rocky start. After this I packed up and went home (5:45) as the boys game, which had been well in hand for the Generals, was getting close, with 5 minutes to go, but they pulled it out and had a convincing 67-50 win. The Lady Generals also won.

Field Notes Feb. 10, 2004
George Harrington
802 Habersham Rd.
Valdosta, GA 31602
h-244-7791

Mr. Harrington (born 1932) called me on Feb. 4 after hearing from Donald Davis at the Lowndes Co. Historical Museum that I might be interested in some photos he has of the Greenwood Turpentine Camp in Stockton. I went over to interview him at his home, but when I got there he had some reservations about signing a consent form. He said a handshake was good enough for him. I explained the policy, and he is thinking about whether or not he wants to be recorded. In the meantime we talked for over an hour and a half, and I took notes. He had lost his wife to congestive heart failure a year ago yesterday, and I think was lonely and enjoyed the company. He asked me to join him for lunch. The Harringtons have two children and about 5 or 6 grandkids. We talked at his kitchen table. He is a fit man, with snow white hair. Says he goes to the YMCA three mornings a week. I did not take a photo.

**He mentions that Mrs. Powell, of the Powell turpentine camp in Homerville, lives in Valdosta. Could get me her name and number through a neighbor.

His father Jake (JL) Harrington Sr. was raised on a farm in Ludowici surrounded by turpentine lands. He worked in turpentine from the 1920s until 1960 (died 1987), getting out then because he couldn't find reliable labor. The family lived in various turpentine camps, some before George (GW) was born, so the bulk of the interview revolved around the period 1941-1960 at the Greenwood Camp, owned by Southern Resin and Chemical Co. of Philadelphia, which the elder Harrington managed. There was a 16,000 acre tract of land which adjoined Langdale lands. GW worked in naval stores in various jobs from 1943-1950. In 1951 he went into the service. He also spent a year in professional baseball minor leagues as a outfielder, the old GA-FL League.

When GW as a baby, the family lived at 8 mile Still outside Homerville. His earliest memories are of the Fodie Camp outside Morven, 1935-37, named for a turpentine still. They lived in company housing and GW went to kindergarten in Morven (2 miles). His father operated the still. The crew was black, both for stilling and working in the woods.

Beginning in 1941, JL managed the Greenwood camp. GW has some photos of the camp, taken by his brother-in-law Joseph O. Rodgers, Jr., including one of the inside of the commissary from the early '40s. I think it is unusual for a family to have such photos. Some of GW's most interest memories involve the commissary, which his mother ran. His father did the ordering, but his mother would have "grocery time" or "grocery night" for the hands. The commissary stocked non perishables and pay was cash only, except for those long-time workers deemed reliable, who could run up a tab. There were several sources for the store stock: T & R Factors of Valdosta (Turpentine and Rosin) on Cypress Street at RR Track (old building still there) for most commissary food, medicinal, and clothing goods and animal feed; Lerio Corporation (tins for trees, hacks, dip buckets, nails). They would take a pickup truck weekly to load up. Things like the gum barrels came from the still in Glen St. Mary's FL, which would pick up fulls and bring back empties. Blue Whistler was the name of the original barrel; later standardization resulted in three quarter barrel size. At one time, the pay was \$2.50 for a barrel (Blue Whistler) of dipped gum. Hands were also paid by the thousand for chipping trees.

Ice blocks delivered on a truck from Homerville

Items GW remembers

Horse feed, chicken scratch feed (all hands raised chickens)

Canned milk (used a lot of that, no fresh milk readily at hand); flour in bags (also used flour sacks for other things), lard, dried peas in cans (had to be careful of rats), sugar, cornmeal (made cornbread and biscuits to take to woods), grits, cans of corned beef, tripe, sardines (very popular), pork and beans (a big staple, "sold real well"), saltine crackers, a barrel of cheese, canned fruit, 5 cent cakes from Tip Top Bakery, rice, ketchup, cane syrup in bottles and cans, fat back, canned oysters. Some hands would have box of Royal Crown cola but it wasn't sold at the store.

Dad butchered hogs and made his own sausage for sale. Mother would make pies to sell at the commissary, esp. lemon and chocolate cream pies. At Christmastime, she made fruitcakes for sale.

Tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, cigarettes, Iodine for cuts, baking soda for heartburn, Ipana and Pepsident toothpaste, Vaseline, BQR (for colds), castor oil (for colds), Black draught (colds, congestion), (note turpentine also used for cuts, scrapes, sore throat)
 **His dad would take hands to the doctor in town.

Work clothing such as rubber boots, Wolverine shoes and gloves, overalls

A rolling store (Guess Co. in Valdosta) would come through every Sat. morning from Valdosta. This is when hands got paid. This offered fresh produce, fish, smoked meats. Other stores visited the camp, esp. Slocum Furniture in Valdosta. His dad didn't like this, because it would get hands in debt. Sometimes trucks would come selling wearing apparel.

Additional food came from hunting and fishing. Company had fish ponds on the property.

Dinner was taken out to the woods in lunch buckets made out of gallon cans with lids sealed on to keep out ants, stored in the shade. Hands would take out sausage, or cooked raccoon, rabbit, squirrel, fat back. Sardines and grits were popular. They were heavy into rice, pork and beans, biscuits, cornbread. They would carry water in jugs and bury the jugs to keep it cool.

The day would start at 4:30 am when his dad rang the camp bell to raise the hands.

There were three hot meals a day in the camp, prepared by the women. "Mama believed in a hot meal." Here is what GW remembers his mother fixing for the family:

Breakfast, 5-5:30 am. Grits, fried eggs, bacon, oatmeal

Dinner (11:00 a.m.): "Something that would stick with you" fried chicken, rice, speckled butter beans, cornbread, corn, okra, new potatoes, sliced tomatoes. Biscuits, some kind of dessert. He remembers his mother's pies and homemade bread pudding.

Supper 5 p.m.: leftovers from dinner or country sausage. Usually had fried fish every Friday, esp. mullet which would get at downtown fish market in Valdosta.

His dad would be in bed by 8:30/8:45 each evening.

On Saturday nights, the hands would often get a hold of alcohol. Some hands had guitars. On weekends you could hear them. There was a church in Stockton, not on the premises.

In the quarters, GW remembers the "smell of soul food cooking—I'll never forget." Various kinds of greens, cornbread, peas, corn, cabbage, squash, sweet potatoes from rolling store, biscuits every day made from flour and lard.

Women, both black and white, did housework and fixed meals. Some of the black women helped GW's mother in the home with laundry, clean house, change beds (they used to "sun" the mattresses). There was one other white family (woods rider), although for a period there was a black woods rider, Leonard Hollingsworth. There were some 12-15 black families at Greenwood. The white woods rider lived next door. All housing was company housing. Company provided housing free of charge. GW has a photo of his family home there which had a screened in front porch and looked quite substantial. The quarters originally were "old shanties, never had a coat of paint." Located right near family home. Later they built new block houses just up the road. Very nice for the time. 2 bedrooms, kitchen, living quarters. Outdoor plumbing. Wood stove and wood fireplaces for heating. When the Harringtons moved in they initially used kerosene lamps. Dad had a generator installed. In 1945 REA came in, and also in the mid-1940s the Harringtons got indoor plumbing.

Black boys would work in the woods as soon as they were able; schooling was not a priority, according to GW. The girls rarely worked in the woods, and were more likely to go to school on a regular basis. On rare occasions, women worked to help the family finish an assigned crop.

GW remembers playing with the children of the black hands: ball games like baseball and catch, horseshoes (played with real horseshoes), hide and seek, tag, rover, over the house (throw ball), pop the whip.

Dad had two good-size farm gardens: butter beans, tomatoes, okra, English peas, corn, for the family's own use. His mother put up food from the garden. The hands had their own small gardens, collard, turnip, and mustard greens, cucumbers, squash, crops that didn't need a lot of land. The black women would can some, too.

The camp had 2 scuppernong grapevines, fig and plum tree, sycamore trees, pecan tree, sweet gum, blackberries "galore" around the fence (mother put up jelly), wild blueberries. There were about 12 houses for the hands, a building adjoining the Harrington house for a fire truck, a wagon shed for saddles and wagons, barn for horses and mules, a gas pump, the bell pole, commissary, cattle gaps to keep cattle from coming into yard, fenced pasture for cattle (dad would butcher meat), chicken coops.

The family never took a full vacation because JL felt responsible for the whole acreage and was constantly worried about forest fires. Coal burning trains would set the woods on fire. There was a forester/timber cruiser who managed the timber for fence posts, pulpwood, and poles. JL managed naval stores. The family did take 2-3 day trips to Jacksonville Beach, Cherry Lake, Twin Lakes Pavilion (with its swimming area and dancing during WWII).

Every year around July 4, the company had a picnic for the hands. Dad would pick up BBQ pork and beef from Jimbos in Homerville. His mother would do the rest: homemade lemonade in a barrel, potato salad, beans. They would play games like horseshoe and pitch the ball around. At Christmastime they would give each family a bag: the company would provide nuts, fruit, and a little toy for the kids.

His mother would fix a special thank-you meal and serve it at the back door of the house for someone who had done something special or extra for the family.

His sisters helped with housework chores. At age 10-12 George started dipping. Didn't ever do much chipping and pulling. Later he rode woods. Dad and GW took care of horses and mules. Dr. Joe Crane, vet of Valdosta, used to come out to camp and shoe the horses. GW also worked as a tally man. All the hands had a calling name when they would work. They'd "holler out their call" and he'd put a dot by their name. He recalls that the also "loved to sing." They sang all the time, humming and singing. "It was motivating to them."

GW was George's nickname. Other hands had nicknames, one he remembers is "Mutt."

It was 11 miles across the property. Truck would drop hands off at different locations. They usually worked with someone else. They would haul the dipped gum to barrel stands, set up near an area with the # of trees necessary to fill a barrel. The wagon driver would go pick up the barrels.

During the cool weather, after the season was over and gum stopped flowing, they would do "control burning", clearing around the trees. At the end of the season they would gather the "scrape" and put it in the turpentine drums. They would also turn the terra cotta cups upside down so they wouldn't burst in a freeze. Sulphuric acid came in about '46-'47. It would eat up your clothes and was a pain to use. If hands weren't careful, it would get on shrubs and get on clothes. But it saved time, less streaking time.

During WWI, there were plans to use German POWs to work turpentine. They had modified trucks with benches and locked doors to transport the men daily from Moody Air Force Base, but then the company changed its mind. Thought it wouldn't be productive, POWs would be a problem.

At the end, labor got to be a problem. Couldn't keep dependable help on a regular basis. He described his father as fair with workmen, treated them right.

Lebanese Easter, home of Roberta and Noel George, Valdosta, GA
April 11, 2004

Roberta George, in her role as consultant to the Lebanese documentation part of the NEA radio grant, graciously invited my husband Dave and me to Easter dinner at their home so I could document that last phase of the ka'ak. We arrived around 1 p.m. Easter Sunday. When we arrived there was a plate of the cookies on the coffee table in the living room, and Roberta, Noel, their two daughters, Jodie and Vickie (with their families), and Roberta's sister "Blue" were at the house. Roberta, Jodie, and Vickie were finishing getting together the Easter meal, which Roberta described as a combination of "American" and Lebanese. The American part was Boston butt, roast turkey, turkey gravy, BBQ sauce for the Boston butt, baked sweet potatoes, white rolls green salad. The Lebanese part was raw kibbee served with raw onions (the family members ate this on "Arabic bread" which really I think was a large flour tortilla—ask Roberta—the kibbee had a large cross marked in it, Lebanese potatoes (peeled, cut up and baked with lemon juice and mint), lavan (spelling?) which was yogurt, cucumbers, and mint, cooked vegetable of green beans, tomatoes and mint. Attire was very informal. The family said grace (Noel) holding hands and then served themselves from a buffet table. The adults were at one table and the kids and Blue (who has some sort of mental challenge) at another.

They had colored 4 dozen hard boiled Easter eggs on Sat. The two sons-in-law hid them in the front yard for the three grandchildren to find. There was a designated golden egg—the finder of this was to get money. It took them a while to find the golden egg, but then

Noel—to keep the peace—gave a roll of quarters (\$10 worth) to each girl. After the eggs were collected in the Easter basket the family did the fe-est (something Noel said he had done as a child) as described below. In contrast to the account below, the golden egg was not the winner of the fe-est but to whoever found it in the egg hunt. There was a plate of Easter cookies on the front steps as folks were peeling and eating their Easter eggs. The families took eggs and cookies home with them. I seemed to be the only one eating cookies with the egg. Maybe everyone else had had their fill of cookies earlier?

Tape:

Sounds of room, family talking, women getting food out

I ask Roberta to tell me what foods are being served
(no recording during dinner)

Easter egg hunt in front yard, including ear-piercing shriek as middle grand-daughter fell backwards in some briars while searching for the golden egg. Youngest shrieking that she found the golden egg.

The fe-est on the front steps. Tried to get sound of eggs cracking together.

**I did not get anyone to explain this on the tape at this time—perhaps a mistake. May need to get it later.

Excerpt from relevant portion of Roberta George interview, Feb. 12, 04

“On Easter, the eggs are boiled with the Christian tradition of boiled eggs which I don’t know where that comes from. I don’t know where that comes from but I think there is a reason, renewal and that sort of thing. There is nothing as good as kiak and boiled eggs. And you wait and you do not eat the kiak during Lent. You wait with all this delicious smell in the house to eat them on Easter Sunday. Of course the big traditional meal is prepared with the raw meat, the kibbee, with the stuffed cabbage leaves and stuffed squash and stuffed grape leaves. (To class) Have any of you ever gone to a Lebanese restaurant ever? Its kind of an acquired taste like any food that you’ve not been raised with. The stuffed vegetables. And then they make this –the real Arabic bread is not the pita bread that you see now , the thick kind of yeasty bread. Its more like a tortilla, an unleavened bread. I have a story about that too.

28:12 Sophie Thomas, she made the bread. She would flap the dough just like almost like you do pizza crust. Instead of waving it around your head she would flap it over her arms like this until its very thin. She had a big stove in her back yard that she would cook it on. Its thin papery unleavened bread.

28:44 LKS So the boiled eggs and kiak would be part of this big Easter—

RG Yes that would be dessert. Would be the kiak.

LKS That was done with a large extended family or—

RG Well, a large extended family of aunts and uncles. Whoever's turn it was to have—they play a game with the boiled Easter eggs. It's called fe-est –don't ask me how to spell that. I'm the wrong person to be talking about this. Although, I have to say this, having a writers eye, and having written about it and really thinking a lot about it, and I wasn't steeped in that culture....They take the boiled egg and you offer it to somebody to fe-est. And what they do, you hold your egg like this, kind of firmly, they take their egg and clunk it. And if they break your egg they get your egg. And if you break their egg, you get their egg. So that was a little game that was played. And finally when the strongest egg mastered all the others, that was called the golden egg or the best egg. “

May 24, 2004

Contacted song leader Marty Broome and made arrangements to record the 4th Sunday hymn singings (need to check with Marty or Charles White on what they call it). The singing takes place from 6 to 7 p.m. at the Dasher Church of Christ (new building) across from GA Christian School. They are breaking ground for an expansion next door. Chas. White told me they don't call the worship space a “sanctuary.” Human beings are the sanctuary for God. I think they use the term “assembly.” Check. Also, they use the term preacher or minister, not pastor. The congregation was seated in pews by family groups rather than by parts. The exception to this was the song leaders, all male, who sat at the front right as you faced the front of the church. One of the song leaders told me there was a scriptural basis for the song leaders being male. All of the usher work, readings, prayer, etc. was by men as well. There was also a house PA system, with mikes in front of the song leader, who lead from the pulpit on a raised dais at the front of the church, and another mike on the floor in front of the dais for prayer and the serving of communion. The church had high ceilings, reddish plush carpeting. There was some room rumble and hiss which I tried to correct with the mixer but couldn't eliminate.

I brought my mixer and the Tascam DAT, the shotgun mike, and the Shur SM 58s. Marty suggested that I place two mikes at the front, facing the congregation. It took me a while to adjust the settings to eliminate distortion. I started out trying the shotgun on the song leader, but there was already a lot of pick-up of the song leader from the two mikes, esp. when the stronger singers sang. This was most noticeable with Marty Broome, who has a big voice. Eventually I put the limiter and PAD setting on, and moved the mikes forward a bit. On the side in front of the song leaders it may have been heavy on their voices, but I couldn't really do anything about that. Next time I might try using 4 mikes, and putting two more on the sides, and using a single mike stand in front center with the mikes head to head. I tried on some of the selections to use the stereo pan effect also.

At the front right, in front of the area where the song leaders sat, there was a white erase board with hymn request numbers. As they were sung, they were erased by a young boy. I'm not sure how the other hymns were selected by the various song leaders. There were 6 leaders, of varying abilities and voice quality. Those who knew how also conducted. There were at least three who did so, including Larry Stokes, who I photographed as he led.

Participants dressed more casually in pants and some in suits and dresses. Almost all appeared Caucasian. Church was full except for back few rows, maybe 100 people?

Chas. White gave me a hymnal for the collection. The Ch. Of Christ, based in Tennessee, uses 7-shape a cappella singing; this is not unique to Dasher. The hymnal is Praise for the Lord, copyright 1992/1997 by Song Supplements, Inc. , ed. By John P. Wiegand, and published by Praise Press of Nashville, TN, Mark M. McInteer, publisher. The Foreword contains the following information: "Singing praise to God occupies an important place in the lives of Christians. Each generation, using as a guide the instruction to sing 'psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs,' has combined texts which reflect Biblical truth the tunes that effectively carry the text inward to the heart, outward to others, and upward to God. Our aim in compiling Praise for the Lord has been to collect the enduring hymns from the past and add a variety of new quality material. Praise for the Lord retains the traditional format in the presentation of the individual songs. At the top of each page, selections are identified by their commonly used titles. Information concerning texts is placed in the left margin. This includes authors, years of authorship, poetic meter of hymn texts, and titles of gospel song texts, when the proper title differs from the commonly used title. Information concerning music is placed at the right margin. This includes composers, years of composition and names of hymn tunes. Copyright information is located at the bottom of the page."

There are no rudiments included and the congregation does not sing the note names. Usually verses 1 and 3 were sung.

The order of the service is as follows:

Welcome, announcement: Marty Broome (he mentioned who I was and said I was recording for a study on a cappella hymn singing).

Scripture reading

Prayer

1st leader, Marty Broome:

486, Oh Lord, Our Lord

343, Ivory Palaces

836 The Great Redeemer

821 Hide Me Rock of Ages (added PAD and moved mike forward: too much Marty)

2nd leader:

515 "On Zion's Glorious Summit"

837 "The New Song"

3rd Leader; Chas. White (uses pitch pipe)

802 Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory

69 Beautiful Isle Somewhere

267 I Believe in Jesus

4th Leader, Larry Stokes:

194 Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah
222 He Will Pilot Me
282 I Know that My Redeemer Lives
5th Leader (does not conduct, younger)
272 I have Decided to Follow Jesus
627 The Gloryland Way
642 The Lord's My Shepherd
982 We Shall Assemble
6th leader:
717 Victory in Jesus

Preacher David Nelson, short remarks
"sing the hymns that remind us of heaven"
50 Are you Washed in the Blood (all stand)
742 When I Survey the Wondrous Cross: Prayer, Lord's Supper Served to those who
didn't receive in morning service
Prayer after Communion,
Offering
Announcements

400, Living By Faith (all stand)

August 22 and 29, 2004

Practice sessions for quinceanera of cousins Mayra and Karina (Corinna? Not sure of
spelling) Guerrero, Home of Antonio and Evelia Guerrero (parents of Corina)

Contacts:

Oscar Rosas (speaks English, but not well)
PO Box 7
Ambrose, GA 31512
Phone 912-393-7845 (home phone of his uncles Roberto and Mario Rosas)

Ana
Pearson, GA
912-422-7705 (makes quince cakes in her home, age early 30s?, speaks English and
Spanish)

Antonio and Evelia Guererro (parents of Corina)
186 Trace Circle
Douglas, GA 31535

Javier and Maria de Jesus Guerrero (parents of Mayra)

Fuego Norte de San Luis Potosi ---norteno style, 4-piece band from Douglas
912-393-1847 (electric bass, accordion, bajo sexton, drum set), have a CD

Olga Contreras Perez:: planner for quince mass of Mayra Guerrero, her mother's goddaughter
Sam Martinez (DJ), spouse of Olga

Through Olga, who was my student 4 years ago, I made contact with these families in Douglas who are planning a joint quince celebration for their daughters on Sept. 18 with a mass at St. Paul Catholic Church in Douglas and a reception in the National Guard hall in Douglas. On August 22 I went with Olga, Sam, and Olga's youngest brother, David (who is escort for Mayra) to one of the practices for the choreographed dances the quinces, and their attendants will do at the fiesta after the mass. Olga is involved at the request of her mother (Mayra's godmother), who felt that the mass and its religious significance was getting lost in the face of all the secular planning for the party/fiesta. I know from conversations with Olga in the past that she is a staunch Catholic and is not happy with the number of Mexicans who have embraced evangelical Protestant churches, especially if in times of crisis, such as a funeral, they are still coming to Father Dan at St. Paul's for a funeral mass, etc.

The practices, which started two months before the event, are held in the front lawn of Antonio and Evelia on a dirt road outside Douglas. Both sets of parents were born in Guanajuato; Antonio and Javier are brothers. The daughters were born in the U.S.: Mayra in Ocilla, Corina in Sacramento. Their attendants (traditionally called damas and chambelanes) are mostly relatives, some friends. Together they are having 14 attendant pairs, rather than each having 14 on their own. Corina is escorted by her brother.

The practices seems to be a social event for the area. In addition to the 32 young people who practice their dance steps on the large lawn in front of Antonio and Evelia's home, there are various siblings, parents, and even just people driving up in pick-up trucks to hang out. The Guerreros served cold soft drinks. People sat and socialized while the young people practiced. Afterwards, at least on the 22nd, Some young people danced on the porch to the boom box. Last night, the 29th, there was a soccer ball when I came outside from interviewing Evelia and the two girls. Last week we were told the practice would start at 5:30. Nothing much happened until 7 or so. This week we were told the practice started at 6:00. We got there about 6:45 and things were just about ready to start. It was a warm, humid, August night below the gnat line. Sun was setting, with large thunderheads on the horizon on the 22nd. The 29th no rain, clouds. Peaceful rural setting with cropland across the street, no visible neighbors, fringe of pine trees along the sandy road. As the practice started it was still light, but dusk fell and by 8:30 or so, they ended each night. Large home, two story stucco painted a soft apricot with red tile roof, large covered porch where the young people danced afterward. The porch, which served as a Mexican courtyard and southern front porch both, had a high ceiling painted red and white. Inside the living room (looks out on the porch), where we sat to interview Evelia and the girls, there was an enormous entertainment center on one wall with large screen TV, huge speakers, shiny black tile floor, ceiling finished off with a sparkly material that looked like it had some blue in it. The outside of the house looked very Mexican; this inside room had the appearance of a working class family who had purchased some very expensive consumer goods as a sign of their upward mobility. Both Evelia and Antonio work at Gold Kist in Douglas. They came to Douglas 17 (check tape) years ago; had

family members here. Indeed, at least for this family, there appear to be family members all over the country and some are coming a good distance for this event. I recall Evelia mentioned California and Ohio. The other set of parents work in seasonal/migrant agriculture. Javier is a crew leader and Maria de Jesus works in the fields.

Several changes seem to have occurred even in the time I have been in GA. I think the # of locally based bands serving the community has increased. Of course, these groups come and go, but, for example, there is now a mariachi based in Valdosta (small) that plays fairly regularly at the Rodeo Restaurant. They are contracted to play at the mass and for 1 hour at the reception. Then there will be a dance band at the reception. Fuego Norte de San Luis Potosi plays for a lot of weddings and quinces, but the Guerreros wanted something different. Evelia first mentioned her brother, who has a band in Ohio. Apparently they can't come, so now it is a band from North Carolina that they contacted by getting referrals from the local Spanish language radio station. Sam is doing sound and is serving as DJ (although there may be another DJ). At the practices he was running the boom box with the music for the choreography. This music is picked out by the families and then the choreographer works with it. This music, then, will be recorded and is picked from recording artists. The Entrada/marcha is an instrumental keyboard piece by Richard Clayderman (need to get title of tune). The waltz/vals is Tiempo de Vals by the PR singer, Chayanne. The cumbia-rap is Ya No se que hacer by Flakiss. Flakiss, born in Guadalajara, moved to LA, and now in Sacramento. First album, Liberate, released Feb. 2004, combines Latin hip hop with regional Mexican and tropical. Something of a feminist in her lyrics, deals with abuse of women. Then the presentation of the doll by the parents will be La Ultima Muneca (music by **Los Baron De Apodaca?**) (the doll symbolizing the last gift she will receive as a girl.) This is a dance done with the father. Evidently, the doll is then tossed, like a bouquet in a wedding, symbolizing her passage into young womanhood). Tiempo de Vals is a popular selection right now on Internet chat. La Ultima Muneca is mentioned as one for dancing with dad.

The man in charge of teaching the dances to the attendants is Oscar Rosas. Apparently he announced to everyone that he is gay (I didn't see this part); Olga says he is a cross dresser and does a show for Mexicans at a club in Baxley imitating pop figures like Madonna (and two Latino stars whose names I didn't recognize). I spoke with Oscar on tape last night: his English is somewhat convoluted and hard to understand, but I understood he was born in Mexico, has lived in Atlanta, TN?, as well as Ambrose in S GA, has done this sort of thing for 15 years. He said the hardest thing is working with new styles of dance all the time, like the cumbia rap for this one. I understood from conversation afterward that the cumbia choreography is called "una sorpresa" surprise. Sometimes the attendants do more than one dance for the sorpresa, but this time there will be only one. He described the inclusion of the vals as an old tradition of his great great grandparents time which has been handed down. He mentioned the tradition of crowning the young woman with a tiara (replacing the corona of the mass) and giving her a scepter at the reception. Her shoes are also replaced with high heels. The website Quinceanera Boutique (based in Ft. Myers, FL www.quinceanera-boutique.com) which Olga has consulted, says the scepter is an emblem of authority and responsibility now given to the young woman for her passage

through adulthood. The girls are to give a thank-you speech either at this point, or when presented with the doll—can't recall which.

The theme of the quince will be pachuco/zoot suit. I noticed this is discussed as a theme on Internet chat sites. Olga had a photo album from another quince held August 14 where the guys were all wearing black cowboy hats and the theme was rancho. The theme affects the attire of the chambelanes.

Normally, all the family members and padrinos would be announced during the entrada, but Evelia says there will be too many this time, so they won't do it. There are tons of padrinos, since there are two girls. Evelia didn't know how many, just "muchos." Things such as the invitations, cake, music, Bible, rosary, flowers, toast, guest registry book, photos, video, gift pillows (do kneel on at church), tiara, scepter, earrings, cross, bracelet or ring, mementos for guests from mass, from reception, food (apparently there will be boxed Chinese food for this one—not everyone is happy with this and it doesn't appear to be typical). The two quinces are wearing light blue dresses. The attendants got their dresses at a shop in Douglas. The cake is being made locally.

Unlike in Michigan, most of the stuff for this is being bought. Olga says they get stuff from Atlanta or over the Internet; there are a few stores here starting to stock this kind of thing. Olga suggests that because both parents work and there often aren't the grandmothers here in GA, that things like dresses and favors that might be handmade elsewhere are being bought here. There isn't much folk art or craft of this nature here. Apparently there are piñata makers, but that doesn't apply to a quince. Olga also observed that this is a tradition that has gradually been growing. When she came to GA there weren't that many families here. There were a lot of single men. There weren't then the community resources to hold an event like this. Now the population is growing, there are more families. Working class Mexicans settled here and living here year round want to give their daughters something they usually didn't have themselves in Mexico. The padrino system makes it possible to afford a very involved and expensive event by spreading the cost around among friends/family. The young people involved here are bilingual while the parents speak mostly Spanish. Oscar gives his coaching and instruction in Spanish.

Tape recording for radio, August 29, Tascam portable DAT with Sennheiser shotgun

Recorded the practice; wanted to get Oscar counting out time, shouting instructions, and giving feedback. This is all in Spanish. The kids talk to each other mostly in Spanish, giggling, comments like "Hey, I messed up" etc. Backdrop of recorded music

Olga: her role, what is a quince, how quinces have become more common lately and why, role of padrinos and how they can afford to do this, why they do it

Oscar: role of dance, how he became involved: this may not be too usable, since his English is not too good, but we got started with English and he wanted to continue

Evelia, Mayra, and Corina, on why import to have a quince (Evelia, because I love her); girls were shy when I asked what they were most looking forward to. Corina is particularly shy and soft-spoken. Not much here. Recorded inside with sound of CD of group from NC who is supposed to play at the fiesta in background. Olga was translating, Sam was in room. I recorded some of the conversation afterwards with all of them. They were shy with just me and tape recorder.

Evelia told me I could come record when the girls are getting dressed and doing their make-up. The parents have supported the radio idea; they want people to know "more about our traditions."

Field Notes, October 8-9, 2004

Chesser Homestead Open House, ONWR, Folkston

Arrived at the Homestead around 1:15 p.m. Friday as planned to record preparation for Saturday's annual Chesser Homestead open house. In 1998 or 1999 I had previously recorded the open house, and come the week before when Bernice Roddenberry and daughters Judy Drury, Debbie Todd, and some of their children, plus Nell Snowden, also a Chesser descendent, were making palmetto brooms. I did a piece for Wiregrass Ways on palmetto brooms and hollering. This time, I had in mind doing a piece for the Changing Sounds of S. GA radio series looking at swamper culture and dedicating the piece to Bernice Chesser Roddenberry and Roxie Chesser Renshaw Crawford, both of whom died in the past year, and both of whom were included on the Harper recordings. I had contacted the ONWR earlier in the week and reached Judy Drury, who said they would be cooking at the homestead on Friday. I got a special use permit for the recording.

I was pleasantly surprised at the reception I received, having not seen some of these folks for 5 or 6 years. Others had been to the All-Day Sing periodically since then. Although they joked about the tape recorder being on, and being annoyed (as Miss Bernice had done), they seemed pleased that I was there, pleased to see me, and cooperative. We did have a number of jokes, esp. on Friday, about saying things that shouldn't be recorded. It was especially humorous that whenever that seemed to happen, Russell, a refuge employee would jack up his chainsaw out back, cutting more wood for the wood stove. I met again Jack Roddenberry's wife, Dorothy, and her sister Macie Todd (no relation to Debbie's husband). Their maiden name was Drury (as in Judy's husband), and their father, Bill Drury, worked guiding on Suwannee Canal. The family grew up on the edge of the swamp at Kingfisher Landing. Macie told me some stories about moonshining and gator poaching to make extra food for the family.

In 1998 Nell Snowden, then a refuge employee, had a prominent role in the cooking prep. I'll have to check my notes from then, but I seem to remember that she said the choice of foods to cook on the wood stove were what was simple and easy to do, as opposed to anything necessarily typical of what swamper families would have eaten, although I'm sure there is some overlap. This time I didn't see Nell there at all; she has been retired

for several years. Instead, the cooking was spearheaded by the Roddenberry “girls” and their in-laws, and their brother Jack. It was a family time, and a time for them to feel the spirit of their late mother, and her loss. At various points during the weekend one or other of the girls would get teary-eyed as a memory overwhelmed them. Judy commented on how hard it was, since so much of the prep in the past she had done with Bernice. I tried not to intrude on this with my tape recorder, or to document it. I especially noticed it Sat. during the singing.

Judy and Debbie had gotten to the homestead early Friday morning to start the soup. It was basically a vegetable soup with black eyed peas, canned tomato puree, and ham hocks for flavoring the stock. By the time I arrived the soup stock was simmering. Later, cut up vegetables were added, and the canned tomato and black eyed peas. The soup sat over night so the flavor was better. Also on Friday they cut up sweet potatoes, sausage (from Wainwrights in Hickox), bacon, and ham in pieces for frying on Sat. All during this time there was fussing, bantering, exchanging stories and memories. At various points they would go out to the front porch and relax, sit on the porch swing or rocker.

Of greatest interest to the radio piece and to family folklore were two food traditions: the pumpkin pie and the biscuits. The pie filling was made on Friday, and I documented Sheila Carter, the youngest of the sisters, making the filling, with Debbie and Jack serving as tasters “What does it need?” Sheila makes cakes, caters, and also serves as a guide for Outdoor Adventures, the concession in the refuge at Suwannee Canal. She seemed to have a flair for baking. The pumpkin pie recipe came from her grandma Neetie Ryder Chesser (wife to Harry). Older sisters Doris and Latrelle Roddenberry had gone over to Neetie’s house to get the recipe from her, and they taught it to the other siblings. On Saturday, I interviewed Latrelle and Doris about this as they sat on the front porch at the quilt frame. On Friday, I had Sheila narrate as she had mixed the big bowl. They had baked the pumpkins (the light-skinned kind), let them cook to make it easier to remove the rind. Then the pieces were cut up and cooked on the stovetop until soft. The excess liquid was drained off and the pumpkin mashed. The filling was made with sugar, condensed milk, lemon flavoring (no cinnamon or nutmeg), and some flour. It may be that the squash pies of this area traditionally used lemon, or at least no cinnamon and spices of that kind. The pies were baked in large cookie sheets for the open house, over a bottom crust and cut in small pieces to serve with the soup, and fried sweet potato, bacon or ham, sausage, and a homemade biscuit.

The biscuits were made the way Miss Bernice had made them. I didn’t catch all of this, but the liquid was placed in a punched out depression in the middle of the flour. They used buttermilk or sour milk. The key was also in how the biscuits were rolled in the hand. I’m not sure how I could describe it, but there was lots of laughter and tears of remembrance as Sheila tried to show Betty how to do it.

On Friday, as the family worked, occasionally Jack and Judy, and perhaps someone else, were “hollering” at each other. At one point I was off a bit trying to get natural sounds from the surrounding swamp, and I think I caught the hollering in the distance. It sounded eerily like the Harper recordings of the Chessers coming in from the distance.

The other traditional art I wanted to get for the radio series was the four-note singing. The Roddenberrys do this at Elderhostels for Don Berryhill's programs, and at the Open House every year. It reflects the family roots, something their grandfather, Harry, and mother Bernice both loved. Harry's favorite was Amazing Grace. In previous years, and when I recorded them in 1998, they would practice out back ahead of time, and end with Amazing Grace. This year, Judy said, they didn't have time to practice, and they ended with some more gospelly numbers and then God Bless America. Three of the sisters had a gospel trio at one point—Latrell, Doris?, and Kathryn? Need to confirm who. They said they learned repertoire from books and from gospel quartets and taught it to the rest of the family. Also, they frequently sang in Philadelphia Freewill Baptist Church, which was the family church after it left Sardis PB Church, just up the road. [Miss Bernice, who died April 17, 2004, was buried in the Sardis cemetery in the Chesser plot, however, as was Miss Roxie. At her graveside David Lee and a small group of s/h singers sang Amazing Grace, Not Made with Hands (571), and The Rock That is Higher Than I (340T).] One of the sisters is the pianist at Philadelphia. At any rate, it was a nice example of "old and new" repertoire. Then later, Latrelle's daughter, Noelle, sang a duet with Latrelle (need to get the title, but it was a more contemporary song), and then at popular request by the audience, sang the national anthem unaccompanied. When I asked, they told me that some of the younger generation was starting to show an interest in sacred harp. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to record Noelle singing and get the "third generation" as her mother put it. The Roddenberrys sing the top three parts of the s/h harmonization: Kathryn, Betty, Judy, and Sheila soprano; Latrelle tenor; Debbie and Doris, alto. Although they have started coming to the Hoboken sings, they are not steeped in this tradition, and their sound is more reminiscent of gospel harmonies than s/h, in sound quality, and also without the bass. I remember Miss Bernice fussing at her daughters in 1998 that they were singing too fast. I have in the collection a CD made of the family singing, by the way. Still, this annual singing, and the fact that the girls are continuing it, is a tribute to the family's roots and I wanted to record it for the radio piece.

Regarding the Roddenberry's singing, it just didn't seem to me that there were many people there for it. Certainly the bluegrass seemed to attract more visitors. They stood in front of the mikes and didn't use the PA. I got a good recording, but they wouldn't have sounded nearly as loud throughout the site as the bluegrass. And of course, a cappella singing isn't as appealing to many people. I thought it was too bad, though. The band did try to make links in their commentary to the Chessers and the open house. They played bluegrass standards and some original songs about the environment, and one that Sue, the member born in Folkston, wrote about her hometown. I didn't record these, however.

In chatting with Jack, I learned that the "ballad" his sisters mentioned that he sang during a conversation back in 1998-99, and had sung as the family took a canoe trip into the swamp, was "Knoxville Girl" which he learned off the radio in a recording by Lou Monroe. This year's canoe trip will be the first week in November and Debbie invited me to go along! This kind of trip is a new tradition, but as a family growing up they would take trips into the swamp. Their father esp. took the boys in hunting and fishing.

At one point Jack mentioned that they frequently took fatback and biscuits (?) into the swamp on hunting or fishing trips.

On Saturday, they closed off the swamp road to the homestead at 9 a.m. and you had to take a bus from the visitor's center. I don't think there were as many locals and family members here as what I remember from 5-6 years ago. This could be due to age/death, but also someone commented that the locals didn't like to take the bus out. I think this may have affected numbers. There were still family members, however. Debbie's son, Kevin, and his family, drove down from Tennessee, for example. Joe Lester Chesser, now in Folkston, Forestry degree from UGA, worked for Langdales at one time, came out with his wife. Sheila was getting info. From him about how the yard used to be planted (he is one of Ivey and Tom Chesser's children). Had stories about the house; I asked him about origin of the festival, and he said he was gone for many years and might get it wrong, so he'd rather not be recorded. I think I could get info from him in an interview, however. I ran into Flora Petty, Miss Roxie's youngest daughter, who had been out at the Open House. She seemed pleased to see me, said she wondered if "we'd ever see you again after Mama died." She tries to come out to Open House every year. I mentioned sending her copies of the interviews I had with Miss Roxie, and getting permission from the family to include Roxie singing on Harper recordings in the radio series. She said to use her as contact. Sounds like there are some sibling rivalry issues in her family. They all grew up in the swamp; possible interviews there. And of course, Vannie Chesser Clark came, and eventually sat and held court on the front porch. The Roddenberrys sang her Amazing Grace specially, since she arrived after their singing at 1:00. Vannie had wanted one that was sang at Roxie's graveside, but neither she nor anyone else knew what they were. I told them Land of Beulah (Angel Band) was in the old JL White book, not the Cooper book, and they didn't know it by heart. Judy said her memory (Vannie's) seemed fine. I recall Miss Roxie saying it wasn't good. Hmmm...

Judy Drury commented about the elders and their stories—now increasingly they are the elders and she doesn't think they tell the stories as well.

Regarding the festival:

Some features from the past—such as storytelling by Zelton Connor—were absent. The band emcee mentioned something about Vannie Chesser Clark singing the alphabet song when she arrived (he was mistaken, that was Miss Roxie, her late sister) Some of the Roddenberry younger generation, who had been involved in the other demonstrations, such as battlin' stick (Victoria Carter?) were teenagers now, or older, and "too old" or not interested. The bluegrass group out of Florida was the same. The female in the group is originally from Folkston. They were the house band—others sat in or dropped by. This time I didn't pay much attention to what else was happening and focused on the radio recording. I did check about the chair caner—he was from Jacksonville, used purchased bamboo, and learned from his son who had learned from a man in Alabama, or something like that. Palmetto brooms—Judy and Debbie had made some for sale in late Sept., I was told, but I didn't stop to see who was selling them at the booth.

When the Roddenberry's weren't singing they were cooking, so there wasn't much socializing there, except with people who came back into the kitchen to find them. I left about 3:15 with Sheila, who had to leave to deliver her wedding cake. She drove me and all the equipment back to my car parked at the visitor center.

TURPENTINE: The one thing I did do was stop at the turpentine display where brothers EB and Robert Jones had old tools on a table. They are from Valdosta. Robert Jones told me he thinks he is one of the few people who chipped boxes to put himself through college. His father worked his own land in Lowndes county in late 40s early 50s. Jones told me that he doesn't worry about talking too much about the tools here, since most people seem familiar with it, unlike when they went up to Atlanta. Jones' volunteer at the refuge. Robert Jones mentioned that the black cemetery I had heard about in Lowndes Co. was near Mineola, Earl Coleman had a camp and still there. He said he thinks Bessie Kincaid Smith [African American] was raised there; her daddy and brothers worked for Coleman. This may be the woman who Donald Davis mentioned? Check for interview. Follow up with Mr. Jones for this contact.

Alton Carter was there briefly; he had bottles of one of his medicinal turpentine products which he gave me. There is also a salve which is supposed to work on skin cancer. Sheila says none of the kids are really interested in this project, however. He has his good days and bad days health-wise.

Tape 1 Index

Chesser Homestead Open House preparation, Friday, October 8, 2004

Laurie Sommers, fieldworker and sound recording engineer

Technical notes: not sure I got enough room sound. I recorded initially with the Sennhauser shotgun with the PAD on, as this seems to do best with “sounds” although it is very live. The room—kitchen—was noisy with multiple activities: food prep, wood stove, washing dishes in the adjoining enclosed porch, radio/walkie talkie transmissions, chainsaw outside, an occasional visitor walking through the homestead, family banter. Present were several volunteers, Judy Drury, Debbie Todd, Jack and Dorothy Roddenberry, Macie Todd, Sheila Carter, Betty ? (last name).

Sounds/segments recorded in order;

- Sheila gathering cut wood for wood stove
 - Jack splitting wood
 - Cutting sweet potatoes into slices, putting them into cooler with ice
 - Sound of wood burning stove
 - Debbie, Jack, Sheila, and Judy cut up ham and sausage, put in zip lock bags. { Talk about the festival, the homestead, singing? Check }
- [switch to Sennhauser M421s)
- Dorothy and Macie (nee Drury) talk about Kingfisher Landing. Story about moonshine, alligator hides. Have verbal permission from Macie to include.
 - Talk on porch about meaning of this place, why they do it. Jack—used to have family reunions here, played ball. Only older siblings remember this. Story of William Tennyson Chesser coming to the swamp. (I think maybe Miss Roxie told me this as well?) Ivey and Tom Chesser moved out in 1958. House became part of refuge in 1977. Debbie Todd reads plaque text on porch wall. Judy does most of talking. Note: Okefinokee Album talks about origin of the festival. Judy explained to a volunteer when tape not on about family photos in living room, and how she considers this “my swamp.” Volunteer asks about any negative feelings toward government for taking the house, taking over the swamp. She said, yes there were on the part of some family members, and some still feel that way. Some have lit into her for being a refuge employee, and she tells them, I had nothing to do with that. It happened before I was born or when I was very young (I’m not sure which she said). The refuge is a source of livelihood to me just like it was for my ancestors.
 - Sheila Carter talking about Grandma Neetie’s recipe
 - “Swamp” sounds on trail outside homestead, including mosquito buzzing around mike. Sounds of hollering in the distance.

- Making pumpkin pie filling, mixing and pouring (sounds), Debbie and Jack serving as tasters.

Tape 2 Index

Chesser Homestead Open House, Saturday, October 8, 2004

Laurie Sommers, fieldworker and sound recording engineer
(recorded with Sennhauser M421s)

Latrell and Doris on front porch quilting, memories of Chesser Homestead, Granny Chesser's pumpkin pie (she eventually learned it was easier just to buy crust!)

Mama's biscuits (Bernice Roddenberry); Sheila tries to teach Betty home to roll as Bernice did. Noisy.

40:00 4-note singing: Wander To and Fro, Going Home to Die, Not Made with Hands, Tribulation, Amazing Grace (battery runs out in middle, picks up with "The Lord has promised good to me" verse), Feeling Fine (gospel), Joshua (gospel), God Bless America

Special singing of Amazing Grace again for Vannie Chesser Clark, their oldest remaining great-aunt, as she sits on the front porch

Judy Drury on memories of swamp and her father, and on singing

Field Notes, Recording for Changing Sounds of South GA Radio Series

Sunday, October 24, 2004

Rome Primitive Baptist Church Big Meeting (final day), Dixie Union, GA (north of Waycross)

Rome is one of 8 churches in the Alabama River Primitive Baptist Association. Each church has an annual meeting once a year (referred to in the Association minutes as yearly Sabbath meeting), to which other members of the association attend. Big Meeting is also communion time. Rome Church holds theirs on the 4th weekend in October each year. This group of churches is in the "Bennettite" faction of southeastern GA Primitive Baptists. They split from the most conservative Crawfordite faction in the 1870s. This church is very small, only 5 members I was told, all women. I photographed two of them outside the church: Ethel Dryden and Dorothy Jordan (dressed in brown). They consequently had a lot of help from other association members in terms of food and set-up, clean-up. I counted about 60 in the meetinghouse at one point, so they served at least that many at dinner.

I had previously visited several other churches in the association: Big Creek, New Hope, Mars Hill. Some folks remembered me from these; others recognized me from sacred harp sings. The pastor at Rome, Alvin Johnson, and his wife, Betty, both attend the s/h sings. I called Mr. Johnson to get permission to record and was allowed to record everything. He apparently mentioned it to everyone at the beginning of the annual meeting on Thursday or during the day Friday? He told me to call back the Friday before,

which I did, just to confirm. Alvin was brought up at High Bluff in a Crawfordite Church. Betty was raised Missionary Baptist.

Rome was constituted in 1884. The church is about 11 miles north of Waycross just off Hwy. 1 at Dixie Union, on the dirt Twyman Smith Road. It is closer to the main paved road than many PB churches, only a quarter mile or less. The church is painted white on the outside, and now has electricity and indoor plumbing, as is the case with Bennettite churches, but it is still close to its Primitive roots. Racks with pegs for hats hang suspended from the ceiling. There are fluorescent lights, ceiling fans, electric heaters, and lime green carpeting over the pine wood floors. The varnished ceiling is still wood, although the walls have been painted. There is a simple wooden communion table with a lace tablecloth in front of the altar, a bench for the elders to sit on behind the altar, which is simple wood, too. On the table was a plastic water dispenser, and small plastic cups for singers to wet their throats. Also a cut glass dish of peppermints for the same purpose, although I didn't see anyone use it. An autumn arrangement of artificial flowers and cattails. I was surprised to see a clock mounted on the wall above the altar, and two framed prints, one of Jesus and one of the Last Supper. Otherwise the walls were bare. The straight-backed wooden pews are arranged around the room, men to the left facing the altar, women to the left, mixed gender in the middle. This is typical of Crawfordite and Bennettite churches I have visited. There were some homemade foam cushions to make the hard wooden pews more comfortable.

I arrived about 9:30 and folks were already setting up in the cement slab screened in covered eating area, with its benches ringing the sides, and its two long tables for placing dishes to pass in the middle. Women often brought several items to pass, keeping with the tremendous ethic of hospitality I've seen in the Primitive Baptist dinners I've attended. I set up my two Sennhauser MD 421 mikes and the Tascam DAT on the corner of the front row on the women's side, in front of the communion table. I had the mikes placed on a foam cushion on the bench next to me, using a table stand, not floor stands so I wouldn't be so conspicuous.

As people began to gather in the meeting house between 9:30 and 10:00, and on until the service started, everyone would greet one another with hand shakes or embraces. Many greeted me this way. It has always struck me as a very warm and welcoming tradition, and one Clarke Lee continues at s/h sings in his role as greeter. Clarke is now elder at Big Creek. About 10:10 they began to sing out of Lloyd's Primitive hymns. People would request a number, and Elder Johnson would call out the number for all to sing from a list he kept. He was seated at the communion table. Various deacons would lead the hymn, but none were lined at this point. From where I was seated the mikes were facing the men, which dominated the sound, but women were definitely singing. I tried to move the mikes eventually to get more of a stereo effect, with one facing the women's side and one the men.

Attire: Tollie still suspenders but Johnnie and Clarke now suitcoat and tie. I noticed many men not wearing ties, however.

Crowley, p. 178, on communion, "Traditionally, two cups of homemade wine were handed about the congregation by the deacons... The communion bread consists of large unleavened disks prepared by the deacons' wives, known as deaconesses. The more conservative churches still exchange formal correspondence at "Big Meeting," or communion time, although some have discarded the practice."

Crowley, p. 179 "Many Primitive preachers till chant their sermons in the style of their Separate forebears. Virtually all ministers among the black churches and the more conservative white churches still do so and never dream of preparing a sermon beforehand. These churches and ministers believe that the changed delivery is indicative of divine inspiration, and they entertain some suspicion of polished, well-organized sermons as being mere human contrivances, destitute of sacred authority. ... "Elder John Harris of the Old Line Suwannee River Association said that rather than his taking a text, the text took him, and some Primitive preachers described entering an almost trancelike state while preaching."

Crowley, p. 178: "Services and preaching have changed little among the Primitive Baptists from the days of their Separate Baptist ancestors. Exception for the Progressives, most of them still sing ancient hymns from the Great Awakening in a slow minor-sounding style, which either captivates or repels those who hear it. A few churches still lineout some of the hymns...."

Tape Index

Rome Primitive Baptist Church Big Meeting, Sunday, October 24, 2004

**I did try to insert ID marks at various sections of the service

Sounds of greeting, room ambience (note, one fluorescent light was making a loud buzz, not audible during group singing or loud preaching, but definitely audible otherwise)

#375 (note greetings are taking place during all this initial 45 minutes or so of hymn singing)

#456

#122 (adjust mike)

#133 (angle left channel mike more toward women)

#559

#130

#2 (mikes fall over)

#663 (nice, this is Indumea from Cooper book)

#685 (a more gospelly selection, some foot tapping in rhythm during this and other more lively tempo hymns)

#379 (moved mike at beginning onto more foam)

#38 a nice one, good blend, possibility for radio

#45 Tollie leads, not everyone seems to know this one

#591, a few verses

Alvin Johnson makes a few opening and welcoming remarks, Tollie Lee and Clarke Lee, elders who will preach, move to bench behind altar

#591, opening hymn, all stand. I thought these were usually lined, two lines at a time, and then the congregation sang the verse. Tollie instead lines the whole text, and then goes back and lines just the first two lines of the first verse. Congregation not sure when/how to come in it seems.

Prayer: chanted by Tollie, kneeling and facing away from the mikes. Most PB members, as is their custom, kneel facing back toward the pews, as is their custom.

Tollie Lee preaches, guns of love metaphor, garden metaphor

End of Tape 1 as Tollie nears end of his message

Tape 2

End of Tollie Lee's preaching

Clarke Lee preaches, lines #477, all stand

Alvin Johnson preaches

Alvin dismisses everyone for a 10 minute intermission as communion table is prepared and buckets, basins, towels brought in for foot washing

#261

J Y McCormick gives introductory remarks about communion, and prayer

Silence as communion bread broken into small pieces by McCormick and Elder Boyett, distribution

Wine poured into to glasses. Prayer by Elder Boyett, Distribution.

Footwashing

During footwashing sing #253 and #333 (Mercy Seat), #241, #395, #258 (which deals with footwashing), #687

The two men who have pulled up chairs facing the communion table and who serve also are involved in distributing the basins of water, and in disposing of the water through a funnel placed in a hole in the wood floor under the communion table.

Alvin Johnson remarks

#600 dismissal hymn, all stand

Dismissal prayer by Brother Arnold

After service is over a group, including Clarke and Tollie, start singing #206 and possibly others. I leave the tape running and go to the building to record preparations for the dinner on the ground.

End of tape (tape was allowed to run out)

January 6, 2005

Acline Melton Field Notes

Acline Melton

3934 Hwy 187 E, Dupont, Ga

242-4398

I learned of Mr. Melton, currently age 85, through his grandson Billy Rowe, who works at D & A Camera in Valdosta. I have chatted with Billy about various S. GA topics since arriving in Valdosta. I first became aware of Billy's connections to a lot of topics of interest when I took the Harper photos into D & A to be scanned, and Billy recognized folks as relatives. Mr. Melton was a beekeeper and worked in the woods sawmilling, turpentineing, and hewing cross-ties for most of his life. He began working in the woods at age 8 dipping with his grandfather, Moses "Moke" Washington Melton, but soon shifted to working with his father, Ezra (Izra?) Green Melton, known as "I.G.". After his father became too ill to work, I think Melton worked with his brother, but we didn't get a good chronology on that. The Melton's are related to Obadiah Barber and hold reunions at Obadiah's Okefenok. Acline remembers what the house was like, and told the guy

restoring it that some of the things he didn't do right or left out. Obadiah's daughter, Angeline, was married to Moses Melton. She was apparently a gifted healer and made her own salves. This skill was passed on to Acline's father, but not to him. He recalled going with his father to visit a chipper who had been bitten by a snake. The woodsman or bossman had called him in. Note: Melton used the term woodsman, not woods rider. Ezra Melton also believed in the signs of the moon and the stars, the zodiac, something Acline also believes in. He gave some weather lore about predicting weather by the rising and setting of the moon. Also something about the zodiac and health, like when you should have surgery, when the sign is in the knees or something like that.

Melton's parents were members of Wayfare PB Church. He said his father was in the church until he entered the army in WWI. During a furlough he skipped out and spent 18 months "laid out" down in the woods and swamps here. He felt that after he had done this he should be taken off the church rolls. Acline is not a church go-er.

Acline lives in a modest frame house which he built? Or at least has lived in for over 50 years in the little town of Fruitland, east of Rt. 129 on Rt. 187. It is between Dupont and Statenville. When I drove up he was seated on his front porch on a battered wooden rocking chair, wearing a Alaska RR hat over his thick white hair. Billy says he is in failing health, but he was still walking on his own, the wheelchair his family had gotten him recently folded up against the wall. We talked at the kitchen table. In the living room, he showed me his family photo gallery. I tried to take pictures of his grandparents, Moses and Angie, and his father Ezra. There was also a picture of his parents with him as a baby. He was one of 9, all lived to adulthood. He and his wife Dolly Mae Chauncey had 6 children, 3 girls and then 3 boys. He said he had wanted 12 kids.

Across the hwy. from Melton's house was a large field of cabbage, collards, etc. which he put in with Tim (some sort of relative). Family lives in the nearby houses.

Fruitland is one of those interesting little towns with a surprising history. It is right along the GA Southern RR line, in fact was a station stop. Much of Melton's memory of place is shaped by the RR, station stops and places that seemingly no longer exist on a map, like Thelma (sp?), where he was born. Fruitland was a planned town that never got built; Melton said he had or had seen the map. There were houses, a town square, a park. He has pictures of the hotel that was once there (it burned), and a boarding house. He said they were going to put in a sweet potato packing plant at one point. The drive over from Valdosta, on Howell Road through Howell and Mayday to Fruitland, takes you through some of these small little dying communities, once identified with turpentine camps or stills and the RR. Fruitland had a turpentine still at one time. The land in the area at one time was leased by a Mr. Dukes from the Langdales.

I had a hard time keeping Mr. Melton on a coherent track of topics, so eventually the conversation just flowed as he seemed to direct it. At times I think he may have merged two questions in one story, such as the story of his forbearers escaping VA, then going back for their land deed.

I tried to question him particularly on turpentining in the Okefenokee (which he it turns out, didn't do). He did go coon hunting with his father in the swamp, walking in, supposedly going 12 miles in and out in a day. He did say he worked from Charlton Co. back to Echols. I also tried to question him on Indians working in the woods. He had never worked with any, but thought he'd see some on some "squads" --at least folks who didn't look black. He made a comment that a brother-in-law, who was supposed to be part Indian, looked more Irish than Indian to him. Squad was different from crew. I think I got the sense that a squad could be made up of several crews. I believe this was discussed in reference to working in the winter, where one man may have scraped, another raised the cup, etc. (Maybe 4-5 men to a crew).

I had not really ever questioned anyone about stories about Indians. He remembered things passed on by his grandfather, who he said remembered the Indian wars. Obviously, it must have been oral tradition to his grandfather, too, but Melton told a quite interesting account of one of the "massacres" during the Indian wars, which he said took place over near Waycross or Racepond. I asked if it was the Wilde family, and he said yes, but I might have led him on this. Recall that at Okefenokee Swamp Park the Wilde pioneer cabin has accounts of this "massacre" and that the Wilde family holds reunions there. I met a member of the Wilde family, I think during the Okefenokee music survey. Melton's was a fairly detailed account. He also had a story about Indian's leaving rifles somewhere, and about Billy Bowlegs. He thought that some Indians had come back to try to take back Billy's Island, but didn't recall names. There was no Indian background in his family, but apparently in his wife's? Billy has mentioned this.

Melton mentioned terms for the stages of working a tree: virgin, yearling, snatch boxes (3rd year), and puller. He never worked pullers. He mentioned that it was too hard, too much work. 32 streaks until you raise the cup. 10,500 trees= a crop. He recalled still seeing cut boxes (was this the term he used?) in his youth, where men dipped right out of the cavity cut in the tree. I tried to see if he had any explanation why box method went out (conventional wisdom written up is that it weakened the tree, caused disease, etc.). He seemed to tie it more to economics, that you couldn't work your way up the tree, as you could with the cup method. As for the end of turpentining, he didn't really know, thought it had to do with Hercules coming up with a way to make turpentine through their processing. He last saw turpentining around Fruitland 15 years ago or so, but didn't know who it was. Says he still finds catfaces out in the woods occasionally. They have torn down, taken out most of the stills.

His experience was one living in rented shanties, houses, but these were separate from the "colored quarters." They lived under the commissary system, and he described the credit system some: sounded like a ticket of sorts with different amounts to mark off on it. I didn't get a lot of detail on this. But he did say that a man wanted to take off \$6 a month for rent, and that's when he got/built the place he is in now. Couldn't see paying \$6/month for rent. Growing up his father always had a garden for food.

I tried to get more on local knowledge, weather, navigating in the woods. He basically said he just "knew" how to get around. One older turpentine got them lost at one point, but Acline knew where they had come in so he was never really lost. The most

interesting story in terms of environment came on the second tape, when he talks about looking for bee trees in the woods with his father when out turpentineing. They would use water sweetened with syrup to attract bees, who would then swarm and lead them to the bee tree. Honey was used for sweetener and to supplement income.

As we sat on his porch we saw some of the robins who come through this time of year. He says he used to shoot, dress, and fry up robins. Also doves.

Field Notes, Jan. 10, 2005

Syrup Boiling, Cane Grinding at R & J Donkey Farm

Ricky Register, fireman

Janet Register, branch manager, Hahira Public Library, storyteller interested in bluegrass, folklore

5064 Val Del Rd.
Hahira, Ga 36132
794-3258

Learned about this event through Bud Zorn and Mike Daugherty, who were to play music for it. Turns out Mr. Zorn didn't show up. I had thought I might get a music recording for the Zorn radio piece, but I didn't record after all. It was really a pick-up bluegrass group organized by Mike. Instead I took pictures, but unfortunately lost my first roll of slide film on site.

This was the third year of this event for the Registers, which struck me as a lovely nod to old-time community harvest-related events. Ricky evidently loves old things, and keeps donkeys and is involved in mule days type events. They had a mule pulling the sweep and were grinding the cane the old-fashioned way. Later in the morning, just as the potluck dinner was being served, some of the guys were out plowing a field by mule. Janice told me the event was for family, friends, neighbors, and an excuse for Rickey's mule buddies to get together. They have a large piece of land with a pond, hayfield, barn, lots of old equipment, esp. stuff that involved mules, and have built themselves a new "old-style" house with a wrap around porch. The syrup house has two modern kettles. Ricky was presiding over the syrup boiling. They were selling 2004 syrup, however, since this year's was sour, apparently due to the weather with cold turning into unusually warm for this time of year.

Those in attendance were all apparently white, but represented young and old. Ricky had purchased a hog from a neighbor and had it butchered at the abattoir in Sparks. The sausage was purchased from Sunrise/Sunshine? Farms in Valdosta. When I arrived Robert Jefferson and Walter Fanning were pressing the fat out of the cracklings in a lard press. Others had been cooking the cracklings in an iron kettle, also boiling some peanuts. There were biscuits, syrup, and sausage available. Some women, Janice Spradley and Dottie Baker, were making crackling cornbread in an iron skillet on the

stove in the syrup house. Folks were out watching the mules pull the sweep. I got there about 10:00 and left at 12:40. People increasingly arrived during this time, many bringing dishes to pass.

The skimmings from the syrup kettle were put in a special keg, and let settle for buck, what one participant jokingly referred to as "light red wine." They told me it is a powerful laxative on the next day after drinking. There was some discussion of candy pulling once the kettle was emptied, but no one really knew how to do it. Some folks got a toothpick and scraped off some of the caramelized syrup.

Two men later made chittlings, dipping the hog intestines in flower and then frying them in lard in the iron kettles. There was some discussion of the smell, which was pretty nasty, with some of those in attendance swearing off chittlings, and others swearing by them. Baking soda is supposed to kill the smell, but it doesn't seem to work.

Potluck: outside around noon

Sweet tea
Baked beans
Cole slaw
Potato salad
Deviled eggs
Baked sweet potatoes
Brunswick stew
Pork loin
Cracklings
Chittlins
Mexican corn bread
Corn bread
Corn casserole
Black eyed peas
Coconut pie
Brownies

I REALLY enjoyed this event, just had a nice neighborly, down-home feel, and good to see folks interested in continuing these traditions, seeing kids there, everyone enjoying themselves. Promised to send the Registers photos.

Field Notes, Funeral of Elvera Dowling Lee, March 28, 2005, Mars Hill PB Church
b. Sept. 28, 1913, died March 26, 2005

David I. Lee had called me Sunday morning to let me know of Miss Elvera's passing and the funeral arrangements. I remember when her husband, Silas, passed away in 1997, I believe. He was a long-time singing school teacher in the area, as was Elvera's father, Martin Dowling. Tollie Lee had called me to let me know about the funeral, and I was surprised, since I didn't really feel like I knew everyone that well at the time. This time, I knew I would go. I talked with David about arrangements, and offered through him, to

record the services, if that was something the family would like. Tollie replied through David that he would, if it wasn't too much trouble and could be as inconspicuous as I was at Sardis that time. So I took my Son Pro Walkman, analog cassette player, and ran it on batteries, from my seat just to the right of the pulpit at the very front of the church next to the wall.

I arrived about 1:40 for a 2:00 service and the church was already full. Half the church was reserved for family. In the pews on either side of the pulpit were the pallbearers (many grandsons), and the singers. Amy Steuver was at the door with the guest registry. If I hadn't been recording, I would have had to sit in the social hall, where many were seated. I would guess there were easily 200 people there. There had been a dinner for the family at noon at Mars Hill. The body of Miss Elvera rested in her casket, surrounded by many flowers, at the front of the church. I was told after I entered and signed the guest registry that I could view the body and then take my seat.

I was seated just next to alto singer Mary Summerlin, who you can hear on the recordings. Because I was in a women's section, you can hear the upper voices more in the singing that is usual, when men tend to dominate.

Guests were given a simple "In Remembrance" program provided by the Pearson-Treadwell Funeral Home in Blackshear which gave Elvera Lee's birth and death dates, and the poem "God Saw."

All of the family members came in as a group, the procession I believe David called it, and took their seats, taking up fully half the sanctuary.

Elder Tollie Lee, her son, conducted the service. He stood at the pulpit, behind him a number of other elders, seated there to make room for more people to sit. Tollie said at the beginning that this was one of the hardest things he had ever done, and he desired our prayers. Tollie began the service by reading her birth and death dates, and then acknowledging each of her children, often with family or personal anecdotes. He said it would be a singing funeral, a funeral of love. A couple things stuck with me: Tollie's story about his sister Janice, who became deaf at age three after an illness, who after hearing of her mother's death, spoke the words "I love my mama!" in a little 3-year-old girl voice, the first words she had spoken in many years. Tollie, watching his mother's final breaths, noticed that she had 11 wrinkles, one for each child. After she died, it was like someone took a warm washcloth and wiped her face clean, all the wrinkles gone. She had been carrying us, all those years, Tollie said. A good part of his remarks was chanted in Primitive Baptist style.

The songs were selected by her children. We sang from Lloyd's Mercy Seat (#), 206 (The Christians of old), others (I'll need to listen to the tape). Tollie lined the first couple lines. Three S/H songs were sung together, 518 Love at Home (Miss Elvera's favorite, I believe), 367 Dear Name! The Rock on Which I Stand, and 381 Never Turn Back. I'm not sure how common it is to actually sing S/H during a funeral. I think it is more common to do it at graveside. But singing was so important to Miss Elvera. At the end

son Marty sang a solo and everyone joined in on the chorus. I'm not sure the name: chorus "sweet Beulahland". This was followed by one final song from Lloyd's, 305, as people filed up to pay their final respects to Miss Elvera's body. I noticed that about half the family members I could see weren't singing, although Tollie at least once encouraged people to sing. They may not have had the hymn books, although they were passed out to those who wanted them. The S/H songs were photocopied and passed out. The family groups who came up to say goodbye to Miss Elvera had tender, tearful at times, moments gazing at her body, some kissing her one last time.

There was a long procession of cars driving to High Bluff, where Miss Elvera was buried next to Silas. The singers were gathered together facing the tent with the family seated under it. Tollie invited everyone to sing. The selection was When I am Gone, 339, which was photocopied and handed out. Then Land of Beulah (Angel Band) was then sung from memory. I recorded this too, although it was pretty breezy so there may have been wind noise. During all the singing, daughter Janice's own daughter signed the words. The funeral directors invited anyone who wished to come for one last viewing of the body.

Miss Elvera was much loved. You could feel it. She had been virtually bedridden of late, but of sound mind. It was time.

Notes on Passover Seder at Temple Israel, April 5, 2005

I attended the Seder and sat with Annette Adler and her two children and Joyce and George Aigen. With Rabbi Elbaz's permission, I had the tape running during the celebration until it ran out, which it did. The Seder lasted from about 7:10 to 9:30. I had one Sennhauser mike placed on top of a shelving unit facing the seated guests, and another facing the head table to pick up the Rabbi and his wife, Jacki. Rabbi Elbaz had a wireless mike, so at times he was in front of the mikes. Not sure how much of the initial reading from the Haggadah was picked up and how well. The Haggadah used was referred to by Jacki as "Haggadah light" or some thing to that effect. She explained that this Haggadah suited the congregation at Temple Israel, with English translations and a shorter format. It had text in Hebrew and English, and the Hebrew also transliterated in to alphabet letters. Much of this observance seems to be "official" religious culture, but there may be some comments about the matzah that will be useful, perhaps the initial welcome.

Rabbi Elbaz and his wife Jacki sat at the head table facing everyone else. The women who had prepared the meal sat with their spouses at a long table near the kitchen. The exception was the Schmiers, who were at their own table to the side of the Rabbi (perhaps as president of the Congregation?). All of the utensils would be specific to Passover. Rabbi had everyone stand up and introduce themselves before things got started. I was surprised that there were a number of others for whom this was their first Passover. There was one family that had come down from Moultrie. Men all wore Yarmulkes. Some folks were dressed more casually that I would have expected.

I had really wanted to record the songs. There are no tunes in the Haggadah, only text. Most are sung in Hebrew, but there was one—Go Down Moses—the spiritual—which is sung in English. It sounded as if few people really knew the tunes. The Rabbi was audible throughout because he had on the mike. The song that will probably work best for the radio piece is “Dahyenu” (it would have been enough for us), as described in the website Judaism 101 (<http://www.jewfaq.org/holidaya.htm>) “This is one of the most popular tunes of the Seder, a very up-beat song about the many favors that G-d bestowed upon us when He brought us out of Egypt. The song appears in the haggadah after the telling of the story of the exodus, just before the explanation of Pesach, Matzah and Maror.” More people seemed to know this tune and sing it.

On the tables were fresh flowers, a bottle of sweet red wine (grape juice was also available), several squares of matzah, and at each place small plates of fresh raw vegetables (carrots, celery, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers). There was also a plate of parsley and celery, with salt water for the karpas. Robbie Schmier, chef at the Country Club, had arranged for servers from the Country Club to assist. Various dishes were added as the ritual meal progressed. Also charoset made from chopped walnuts, apples, honey, and wine, horseradish for maror, chopped hardboiled egg (not sure what this is for). The main meal was served and everyone just chatted and ate. Chicken and matzah ball soup, (served separately and first), followed by a plate of Roast chicken, honey glazed carrots, potato kugel light. Then desserts were offered in two sets: a sample of cookies, kugels, and Instead of Tsimmes (the sweet stew of vegetables and prunes, often orange in color), they had dried prunes and apricots served with the first plate of sweets and encouraged us to eat it to counteract the binding effect of the matzah. A second dessert was served of Carreen Shapiro’s lemon cake, with lemon curd on top, served with a garnish of fresh strawberries. At the end more songs were sung. The children were supposed to hunt for the afikomen, but if it happened I missed it.

The rabbi seemed concerned about getting us off on time, so we ended pretty much at 9:30.

Hoboken All-Say Sing
Saturday, March 18, 2006

Recorded Hoboken All-Day Sing with two Sennhauser mikes in corner of altos and basses, facing trebles and tenors. Treble sounded weak in the headphones. The notable aspects of this year’s sing were that Riley Lee, Clarke’s son; and Bryant Lee, David’s son, sat by and stood by their fathers in leading the first songs. To me it was a visual and community statement of the “succession” of the tradition. Also, in the memorial lesson before the lunch break, David had all the young people from the area come up and stand with him, acknowledging not only those who had passed on the tradition to them, but also those who would carry it on into the future. Most of those standing were part of the extended Lee family. Bryant and Amy Lee had a baby girl the week before—still in the hospital but coming home tomorrow. Bailey? And Rachel was there at lunchtime showing off young Gavin.

I helped the women with the set up of the lunch this time, as Julie Lee had hurt her back. Everyone gathers around 11:30. We cut cake and took covers off dishes, brought hot dishes out of the warming ovens. They hire the local school cafeteria help to assist with set up and with clean up. As always, a group of local men BBQ chicken, but local women still bring an astounding quantity of food. I took what seemed like a pitiful dish of cut up fresh strawberries, compared with Delorese Lee, who brought mac and cheese, pork rice, chicken and dumplings (check my notes) a chocolate and a caramel layer cake, and a couple chocolate cream pies. Probably more. Laura Densmore and I chatted briefly—she is staying with Johnny and Delorese. She said its quite competitive (at least between Tollie and New Hope and the Mars Hill crowd, like Johnny and Delorese) whose church you go to on Sunday, but she solves it by going to the church of her host. She wondered out loud whether or not the all-day sing had lost its luster and become a burden, with so much expense and so much work going into the food and preparations. We agreed they would probably never say if this was so, but I commented that for those brought up PB, there is a long tradition of feeding the families who travel by those who live closest to the church. And there were always sings associated with the Sat. night of annual meeting. At least in the past several years, they don't meet at a family home or even a restaurant on Sunday, but rather invite people to a local PB service, this year Big Creek and New Hope, with maps provided. I didn't go, but there is dinner on the grounds, of course, and then more singing afterward.

April 8, 2006, Georgia Agrirama, Tifton

Went to the Agrirama Folk Life Festival and saw the Fiddler's Jamboree and the tail end of the turpentine still firing (discharge of rosin). At fiddler jamboree saw Frank Maloy and gave my sympathies over the death of his brother, Joe (last Oct.?). The jamboree was in his memory. Just saw the first 20 minutes or so, when all the fiddlers play a tune, this time "Boil them cabbage down," and the first few fiddlers to play solo numbers. Several of them also came with students. At the store I purchased a copy of Paxtuent Records CD-065, Time Will Tell, with the Maloy Brothers (swing classics). There is a nice bio of them in the liner notes. Frank and Joe were behind a # of S. GA fiddlers being inducted into the Atlanta Country Music Hall of Fame. Joe is a compendium of S. Ga fiddle tunes. I never have interviewed them/him, I guess because they did more swing and popular dances, but this in retrospect was a bad decision. Pete Hatfield of Warner Robbins, at the Jamboree, has a # of field recordings of Frank and Joe at his house which he's transferred to CD. He said he could sent them on. Frank mentioned his uncle (Name?) from Tellfair County who played some old fiddle tunes like One-Eyed Gopher. One of this name was played by Jack Mizell in the Harper recordings of 1944. The Maloys were born in Milan, GA.

Another recording I picked up at the Agrirama: Bluejeans and Lace, Family & Friends, featuring Stanley Bailey, Sr, a champion fiddle player from the 1930s. It was put together by his son, Stan Bailey, incidentally engaged to Bud Zorn's daughter, Glenda. Stan is a guitar player, who runs Stan Bailey Music in Nashville:

Stan Bailey Music
202 Tifton Road
Nashville, Ga 31639
229-686-3272
stanbaileymusic@alltell.net

The senior Bailey is a fiddler mentioned in Joyce Cauthen's book. He was the one who taught Henry Rutland Albany Reel and Garfield, I believe. This is a self-produced CD based on a 1988 recording with 3 generations of the Bailey family.

TURPENTINE FIELD NOTES, MARCH-APRIL 2006

Footnote to interview recorded with Linda Bruton in the car, March 31, 2006.

I later learned when chatting with her cousin and brother back at her house that most folks of age mid-50s and older in Pineview and Wilcox County were involved in turpentine. When Linda is describing feeding a crew the noon meal, her brother clarified that they would go to the house closest to the work site.

April 8, 2006 Georgia Agrirama

At the turpentine still firing I ran into Alan Hodges of the UF IFAS who mentioned that someone in central Florida is looking into starting some naval stores production again. I also met again William "Bubba" Greene of Madison, FL who recognized me from a few years ago. He and his father were involved in turpentine in Madison Co, from about the 1920s through the late 1960s. His father had 8500 to 9000 acres. Bubba has a number of artifacts from the industry that he has taken to local community festivals. He mentioned the farmer ethic of making do, and how everybody had their own version of common tools of the trade, many of them home-made. He has a box for carrying tin cut out of a lard can, with a vine handle (check), for example. His daddy had a store by the road, and he sold a lot to sawmill workers. He said they always called in the store, not a commissary. Some of their workers would go out for the week and stay in some lean-tos by the work site in the woods, made out of tin. Father's name was Harvey Greene, came from Pavo GA to FL after WWI.

Sid Taylor of Inverness, FL was taking pictures for the Agrirama. She does naval stores programs at Tillis Hill in Withlacoochee State Forest (?). She mentioned an older black woman who interprets at Barberville that grew up in a turpentine camp. See email regarding this. Also, taking photos was Dr. Linda Bannister of the English Dept. at Loyola Marymount and her colleague actor James Hurd. James' grandfather, who raised him, was a Florida turpentine worker, and their play, "Turpentine Jake" is based largely on stories told by the grandfather, amplified by research and other interviews. They are setting the play in 1937. Some scenes were done by Linda and James in a reader's theater format. I thought they were quite powerful. A lot of folklore in them.

