




ART AND HERITAGE of the Missouri Bootheel:



A Resource Guide

Compiled and edited by C. Ray Brassieur and Deborah Bailey





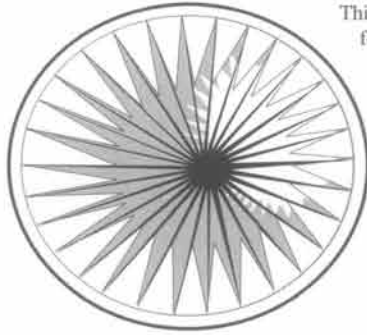
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STATE HISTORICAL
SOCIETY
OF MISSOURI





This design element is based on a variety of fish trap found in the Missouri Bootheel.

Cover photo by David Whitman. Abandoned sharecropper's house near Wardell on New Madrid County Rd. 296 on March 19, 1994.

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Foreword

At a time when Congress is moving closer to enact cuts in fiscal years 1995 and 1996 funding for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and possible elimination of a number of federally funded cultural agencies, Missouri's Bootheel Underserved Arts Communities Project serves as testimony for the important role the NEA and its state-affiliated agency, the Missouri Arts Council (MAC), play in the conservation and documentation of our cultural traditions. We are most grateful for the generous financial assistance of NEA and MAC, which provided funding for the Bootheel survey project, its accompanying traveling exhibition, and this resource publication. This project would simply not have been possible without their support.

Missouri folk artistic heritage is as complex, exciting and vital as its people are culturally diverse. The strength and stability of Missouri's many communities have provided the fertile ground necessary for the full flowering of artistic traditions which originated in the state or took root here after transplantation. As long as these communities persist and as long as cultural awareness and appreciation are promoted among the greater population of the state through special projects like the Bootheel survey, the folk arts will continue to flourish in Missouri, delighting the eye and refreshing the spirit of all who understand their special nature and significance.

As discussed in the following pages by the team of expert scholars and dedicated, hard-working project staff, the range of folk art forms which have contributed and continue to add to the diversity and complexity of Missouri's Bootheel region is broad, based firmly in the multiplicity of cultural groups which have been part of the region's history. Also, as a number of the illustrations in

this publication suggest, folk arts in the Bootheel have by no means remained static, unaffected by internal and external influences. In fact, their existence is dynamic and changing as a result of the creativity of artists working within the different traditions and the natural evolution of their community's aesthetic. As Thomas Rankin notes in his report, the results of this survey will not only raise the visibility of the folk arts in Missouri, but it will hopefully encourage other communities to develop and design similar locally focused projects.

The undertaking of such a project requires the generous support and participation of many people. I join Ray Brassieur, the survey's project coordinator, in thanking our colleagues and friends acknowledged in the introduction for their outstanding contributions to this project. Ray Brassieur deserves my most profound gratitude for his hard work, contributions to this booklet, and, most significantly, guidance of the survey to its conclusion. Deborah Bailey must be also acknowledged for her invaluable contribution to all facets of this project, from the arduous fieldwork to the publication and exhibition. A special thanks must also go to Dana Everts-Boehm who, since my departure from the Museum of Art and Archaeology and the Folk Arts Program, has overseen the various details of this project.

We extend our sincere thanks to the Missouri Arts Council and its executive director, Anthony Radich, for continued support of and assistance with this project. Finally, I am especially indebted to Jeanne Fiquet, (former assistant director) and Michael Hunt of the Missouri Arts Council, who first approached me in 1992 about the possibility of my undertaking of this survey as its project director, and with whom I collaborated on the grant application submitted to NEA.

*Morteza Sajadian
Project Director*

A NOTE ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

The text of this publication represents the thoughts and writings of many individuals whose efforts deserve recognition. Ray Brassieur organized and helped compile and edit this publication, and, in addition to his introductory essay, contributed at least some text to all of the sections in Part II. In addition to the fine essay that appears under his name, Sylvester Oliver provided significant contributions to the commentary presented under the subheading, "African-American Music: The Spirit Rules." Deborah Bailey, in addition to her work in compiling and editing, contributed writings which appear in the section titled "Art and Region," especially those parts

focusing upon the symbolic use of cotton and the foodway traditions of the Bootheel. She also wrote portions of "Anglo-American Music: Sacred and Secular Tones," and much of the section titled, "Verbal Art and Oral Tradition." The graduate student interns also contributed writings to this project: some of Jean Crandall's commentary appears in "African-American Music: The Spirit Rules; Jim Nelson's summarizations were put to good use in the "Anglo-American Music" section; Erica Mair's writings about Bootheel quilting appears in "Creating by Hand"; and Robin Fanslow provided written information about Billy Joe Ford and his tamales.



How to Use This Guide

We hope this guide will be interesting and useful to many: artists and arts programmers, scholars of local history and heritage, educators and tourism specialists, community leaders and anyone interested in the quality of life in the Bootheel. Part I consists of a series of short essays which summarize the philosophy, goals and activities of the Bootheel Underserved Arts Communities Project (hereafter referred to as the Bootheel Project). The authors of these essays feel that art and heritage are linked in very special ways, that creativity is part of everyday life, and that all community members contribute — whether as performers or audience members, creators or consumers — to the development and maintenance of local artistic standards and tastes. Read these essays for ideas you can put to work in your daily life.

Part II of this guide offers some observations regarding specific art forms we encountered in the Bootheel. We do not attempt to represent a comprehensive catalogue of regional artists or genres. Instead, these preliminary notes merely suggest the range, richness and diversity of Bootheel art. Some readers will appreciate the recognition awarded to certain artists and their creations. Others may be surprised by the attention granted to expressive forms that are typically ignored or taken for granted. Please remember that this is only a beginning. Many talented artists not mentioned truly deserve recognition. Perhaps this beginning will encourage others to expand upon these and other topics.

Four appendices have been attached for the convenience of local artists, arts programmers and scholars. Appendix A introduces readers to three very important public arts programs designed to support and encourage arts activities: the National Endowment for the Arts, the Missouri Arts Council and the Missouri Folk Arts Program. Please consult this section if you have ideas for arts-related projects, if you are searching for artists to participate in events, or if you know of artists who deserve public recognition and support.

Appendix B provides a list of national, regional, state and local organizations and institutions. Some provide grant support, others furnish information related to artists, art genres, artifacts, exhibitions, events production, etc. Local historical societies, museums and libraries are listed because they provide important information related to the understanding of local heritage and art, and they often have excellent locations for the presentation of events. University Extension offices serving the Bootheel are also noted because of their potential to offer valuable facilities, expertise and important human networks.

Appendix C, the Catalogue of Bootheel Project Audio Cassette Recordings, provides a list of individuals, groups and events recorded during the Bootheel Project, along with a subject description of these recordings. This audio material, which represents a considerable research collection pertaining to the art and heritage of the Bootheel, is housed and made available to the public by the Western Historical Manuscript Collection at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Original audio recordings, writings, photographs, and an assortment of ephemeral materials, along with indexes and catalogues of the Bootheel research material are also available for scholarly use.



Danni Everts-Boehm

The music of local rockabilly star Narvel Felts from Malden helps define the Bootheel.

Those interested in studies related to Bootheel art

and heritage will also want to consult the select bibliography provided in Appendix D. The first section of the bibliography is dedicated to sources which deal with the documentation and public presentation of traditional folk arts. This section cites a number of publications which could be useful in the planning of local public programs.



Sketch by Jerome Stuart

Sketch of project workers Deborah Bailey, Ray Brassieur and David Whitman preparing slide show prior to "Bootheel Art and Heritage Day, August 27, 1994.



Aims and Ideas: Encouraging Creativity in the Bootheel

THE BOOTHEEL PROJECT: AN INTRODUCTION

C. Ray Brassieur

Missouri's Bootheel is quite distinct from other parts of the state. As Erika Brady, professor of folklore at Western Kentucky University, points out in the following essay, the Bootheel is a region of incredibly complex and dynamic geographical, historical and social relationships. During the twentieth century alone, colossal public and private projects have transformed magnificent forested swamps into intricate drainage networks and choice farmland. Migrant farm workers moved into the Bootheel from Arkansas, Mississippi and Tennessee, developing the region into the northernmost land of cotton with a relatively large African-American population and a decidedly southern ambience.

But as geography, history and demography conspire to produce a distinctive regional culture in the Bootheel, marginalization contributes to that distinctiveness. Geopolitically, the area may be the southern "heel" of the Missouri "boot," but it also represents the northern apex of the Mississippi Delta. Cartographers often place the Bootheel into the Midwest, along with the rest of Missouri, while cultural landscape suggests that it belongs in the South. Bootheel residents tend to look to larger cities in Tennessee or Arkansas for goods, services and entertainment. Television viewers learn more about the local news and politics in Memphis than about happenings in their own town and state. The Bootheel is far from the state capitol in Jefferson City and from major museums, educational institutions and service agencies located in larger Missouri cities.

Marginalization affects arts communities in the Bootheel as well. In order for arts agencies to effectively serve their constituents, they must be familiar with the artists and arts resources in their areas. Likewise, artists must be informed about services available to them. Un-

fortunately, with public support for the arts stretched to the limit, this southernmost tip of Missouri has been generally underserved. And, of course, some arts communities in the Bootheel — those associated with minorities and/or unrecognized ethnic or folk communities, for example — are served even less than others.

The situation is compounded by the fact that many Bootheel artists, especially folk and ethnic artists, often do not think of themselves as artists. For this reason, and because they are most likely to be ignored by major arts and educational institutions, traditional artists are among the most needy in the region. Ironically, folk and ethnic artists, whose creativity is most closely linked with cultural and regional heritage, can have great impact upon local society. Their art is embodied in a range of expressive forms encountered daily by community members. Influenced by local traditions, their contributions affect the development of group and individual identity. And, as has been demonstrated in scores of heritage tourism projects throughout the country, the work of traditional

artists is often very attractive to outside visitors.

For these and related reasons, a documentary effort focusing on artists, arts communities and art forms — especially those intimately associated with region and heritage — was undertaken in southeastern Missouri in 1993 and 1994. This effort, called the Bootheel Underserved Arts Communities Project, was organized by the Missouri Folk Arts Program,

a unit of the Museum of Art and Archaeology at the University of Missouri-Columbia (MU), in cosponsorship with the State Historical Society of Missouri. The project received grant funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Missouri Arts Council.

The research team assembled to conduct the Bootheel Project reflects a strong interest in regional heritage, folk and ethnic art. Ray Brassieur (oral historian/folklorist for the State Historical Society of Missouri) served as project coordinator. Columbia residents Deborah Bailey (abd., folklore, University of Pennsylvania) and David



David Whitman

Abandoned sharecropper's house near Wardell on New Madrid County Rd. 296 on March 19, 1994.



Whitman (MU graduate student in geography) served as researchers along with community scholar and African-American storyteller Gladys Coggsell of Frankford, Mo. Columbia photographer Carole Patterson also joined in the documentary effort.

The project profited from the experience of four expert consultants: Thomas Rankin, author and folklorist, Center for the Study of Southern Culture, Oxford, Miss.; Erika Brady, folklorist and editor of *Southern Folklore*, professor, Western Kentucky University; Sylvester Oliver, ethnomusicologist and African-American music producer, Rust College, Holly Springs, Miss.; Sw. Anand Prahlad, folklore scholar of African-American oral tradition, assistant professor, University of Missouri-Columbia. Fortunately, each of these scholars has kindly summarized some of his or her important ideas in the essays which follow.

Missouri Folk Arts Program staff members, Morteza Sajadian (former director), Dana Everts-Boehm (current director), and Julie Youmans (program manager) also served as advisors for the Bootheel Project team. MU Museum of Art and Archaeology staff members provided administrative support. Considerable technical assistance from this staff was also furnished by Heather Stanley (graphic artist), who designed the layout of this book, and Greig Thompson (chief preparator and exhibition designer), who designed the 1995 traveling photo-documentary exhibition titled "Art and Heritage of the Missouri Bootheel."

Four graduate student interns admirably participated as field researchers: Erica Mair, Robin Fanslow and Jean Crandell, all 1994 students in the Department of Folk Studies, Western Kentucky University; and Jim Nelson, who was enrolled in a library science curriculum at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. All of these students were trained in folklore field techniques and methodology at WKU by Erika Brady. In addition, Jerome Stueart, artist and MU graduate student in creative writing, assisted as a volunteer researcher, as did ten of Anand Prahlad's MU folklore students.

Field coordination and operation of this project was greatly facilitated by University of Missouri Extension, which provided a field headquarters at their Delta Research Center, located in Portageville (Pemiscot County). Thanks to the support of J.D. McNutt, Southeast Regional Director of Extension, and Delta Center Superintendent Jake Fisher and his staff, and their administrative supervisors at MU, the Bootheel Project field team had access to office space and equipment, conference rooms, telephones and more. Delta Center staff members and other active and retired Bootheel Extension personnel, many of whom are longtime residents of the region, proved to be excellent "in-house" consultants.

On the weekend of March 5-6, 1994, an orientation session was conducted at the Portageville Delta Center. The research team gathered for a weekend of discussion and preparation. Interactive sessions focused on project goals, field strategies and methodologies, and administrative procedures. Dunklin County Museum Director Sandy Brown, of Kennett; Jake Fisher, superintendent of the center; and Bishop Armour and his Monument of Deliverance congregation in Hayti, helped introduce the research team to the rich culture and art of

the Bootheel. Our orientation was delightfully extended by a wonderful meal catered by Big Bob's Barbeque of Hayti Heights, and a splendid supper of fried catfish and white beans at the Levee Landing Fish House north of Hayti.

The largest period of field research was conducted March 12-20. During this time, graduate interns and other students were able to put in a substantial period of

continuous field research while not jeopardizing class work. During this session the field work team, including Anand Prahlad and his students, numbered as high as eighteen individuals. Subsequent visits to the field by Brassieur, Bailey, Whitman, Coggsell and Patterson took place in April, July and August. The research team conducted informal taped interviews with local artists and key community members who were encouraged to summarize their personal histories and self-evaluate



Deborah Bailey
Graduate Intern Jean Crandall points to Bootheel on Delta Center sign located in Portageville, March 14, 1994.



their work and experiences [please see Appendix C, "Catalogue of Bootheel Project Audio Cassette Recordings"]. Researchers also documented public and private performances, events and displays by audio-cassette recording, photography and field-notes. Ephemeral material (posters, flyers, restaurant menus, calling cards, etc.) were also collected during the survey.

The applied goals of the Bootheel Project aspire to encourage local creativity, elevate public awareness and promote appreciation for local and regional art. To such ends, a gathering of interested artists, local historians, scholars and citizens was organized in Portageville on August 27, 1994, for "Bootheel Art and Heritage Day." This event brought the research team together with locals to explore and celebrate homegrown creativity. During this meeting, Brassieur presented a slide and sound show which shared some of the project's initial findings; representatives from the National En-

dowment for the Arts, Missouri Arts Council and the Missouri Folk Arts Program shared information about programs available to artists; and a series of interactive roundtable discussions were chaired by project consultants. Highlights of the event included a performance by the Echoes of Joy, a female *a cappella* gospel quartet from Howardville, and some consummate barbeque (a Bootheel art of irrefutable distinction) from Chubby's in Hayti.

The voluminous documentary materials obtained from the project have been and will continue to be used to generate products, like this resource guide for example. A photo-documentary exhibition, titled "Art and Heritage of the Missouri Bootheel," employs materials collected by the research team. This exhibition is designed to travel throughout the region beginning during the summer of 1995.

These documentary materials constitute a research collection of scholarly interest. In 1994, the research team collected 135 audio-cassette recordings, approximately 2,000 individual black/white photographic images, more than 1,200 color slides, and a quantity of ephem-

eral materials. These research materials, including associated catalogues, databases, field-workers' notes and textual commentary are now being processed and will soon be publicly available as part of the Western Historical Manuscript Collection, located in Ellis Library on the University of Missouri campus in Columbia. Although this collection treats a wide range of subjects, it is particularly strong in areas pertaining to gospel music, religious oratory and belief, sewing and quilting traditions, hunting and fishing adaptations, drainage and agriculture, sharecroppers' conditions and housing, local foodways and folklife,

personal and family narratives, and a variety of verbal art. African-Americans, Jews, and Asians-Americans are well-represented in the collection along with members of the numerically dominant Anglo-American population, consisting mostly of upland Southerners representing a variety of ancestral origins.

Along with applied and scholarly goals, the Bootheel Project was successful in addressing the educational



Jim Nelson

C. Ray Brassieur addresses local residents during the "Bootheel Art and Heritage Day," August 27, 1994.

needs of students interested in gaining experience in qualitative field research. Graduate and undergraduate students involved in this project, whether working as professionals or volunteers, had the opportunity to develop or sharpen skills of the sort needed to conduct oral history, ethnography, and/or folklore fieldwork — skills which cannot be developed in the classroom. Two recent articles published in the *Missouri Folklore Society Journal* [Vols. 15–16, 1993–1994, released in May 1995], one by Jerome Stueart, and another by Sw. Anand Prahlad, who directed the work of undergraduates in the field, testify to the depth and quality of experience acquired by students participating in the Bootheel Project.

Publicly funded research related to regional, ethnic and folk art, such as the Bootheel Project, renders many benefits. This initiative has provided the opportunity for students to develop skills, for scholars to study the unexplored, and most importantly, for local folk to have their voices heard. Speaking for all of us who participated, I feel confident in saying that our personal experiences have been incredibly enriching. We certainly hope that our efforts successfully encourage locals and



outsiders to cultivate increasing respect and appreciation for the special aesthetic traditions of Missouri's

Bootheel — and that this project serves as a catalyst for the development of many future projects and presentations.

CREATIVITY ON THE MARGINS

Erika Brady

Folklorists have long agreed that communities which embody sharply defined differences, or whose customs, arts and view of the world contrast sharply with those of surrounding groups, often have a striking richness and emphasis in their forms of expression — almost as though the artistic individual must shout to be heard over competing voices. The Missouri Bootheel's serene fields of cotton and soybeans seen from Interstate 55 give no hint of the underlying crisscross of geological, historical and social networks and boundaries that have interlaced to create the cultural complexities of the region.

The Bootheel lies at a literal break in the earth's crust, the meeting point of two tectonic plates, making it geologically prone to seismic activity on a massive scale. The significance of the New Madrid Fault is no mere metaphor for the cultural complexities of the region: the great earthquake of 1811–12 drastically affected the early settlement of the region, and the attitude of outsiders toward it. Today, New Madrid merchants do a brisk business in earthquake souvenirs — T-shirts sporting jaunty slogans such as "New Madrid: It's Not Our Fault," and "Visit New Madrid — While It's Still There." The region continues to command national attention during periodic earthquake scares such as that of 1990.

During European settlement of North America, the Bootheel represented a kind of cultural fault line between Anglo interests to the east, and Spanish and French culture of the Mississippi Valley. In 1789, Revolutionary War patriot George Morgan attempted the first systematic scheme to attract Anglo settlers to the region, hoping to bypass the Spanish prohibition of Kentucky access to transport on the Mississippi by creating a kind of "buffer colony." New Madrid might well have mirrored the polyglot development of St. Louis and Ste. Genevieve to the north, had it survived the 'quake intact.

Even the political boundaries of the Bootheel have an unusually complex history: when wealthy landowner John Hardeman Walker discovered in 1818 that the proposed border of Missouri would not include his land,

he brought all his influence to bear, resulting in an extension of the land between the Mississippi and St. Francis Rivers south to the 36th parallel — creating a kind of political peninsula bordered by other states to the east, west and south. Sparsely populated during the Civil War, the Bootheel nonetheless played a key military role in the struggle of North and South for control of the Mississippi and the western front.

The internal cultural divisions existing even within the intimate social unit of the family in the post-War are portrayed vividly by Mark Twain in *Huckleberry Finn*. In a scene almost certainly located in the Bootheel, Huck encounters the Grangerfords, a family whose frontier prosperity and refinement dazzle him. His naively admiring description of their parlor is a brilliant example of close observation of cultural detail, making his horror at the tragic consequences of their involvement in a savage, senseless feud all the more striking.

Ironically, it was only in the years following the Civil War that the Bootheel began to take on some of the social, and especially racial, divisions characteristic of the deep South. Little by little, the land was being claimed from the swamps, freeing some of the richest alluvial soil in the world for cultivation in cotton. The invention of the dragline dredge at the turn of the century accelerated this process and encouraged the conception, in 1905, of the Little River Drainage System: an unprecedented feat of private engineering which, with other lesser systems, eventually secured more than 2,000,000 acres for farming. The newly prosperous region drew black agricultural workers from the Delta and other regions of the South to work the fields, while Irish railway workers arrived to build a land-transport system supplementing the river. Lacking an extensive antebellum history of slavery, the Bootheel nonetheless developed many of the social divisions and strains of the postbellum South — as well as a rich, if recent, strain of African-American regional culture.

If the Bootheel is unusually complex as a settled meeting-point of cultures of the East and West, North and South, black and white, it is also a region strongly marked by its history as a "port of call" — a region through which many pass, some leaving their mark on



the cultural landscape. This holds true even in the natural environment: the use of the Mississippi flyway by migratory birds was noted by natives and early Europeans as a striking feature of the area. Although there is evidence of considerable Native American settlement when De Soto traversed the area in the 1540s, by the time of the next wave of European explorers who arrived during the late seventeenth century, it was primarily a tribal waystation, bisected by two major north-south trails. Marquette's expedition and subsequent French parties passed through the region in their exploration; their reports and those of other European visitors ensured the status of the Mississippi as the major highway for furs, lead, iron and other resources of the frontier.

These natural and manmade highways through the region have traditionally served a strong symbolic as well as practical function. The Mississippi River remains one of the most potent mythical images on the continent. The Spanish colonial government firmed its hold on the territory symbolically as well as practically by establishing a Royal Road — El Camino Real — between St. Louis and New Madrid in 1789, offering a viable north-south land route for those unwilling to make the difficult upstream voyage on the Mississippi. The same route was later used for much of Missouri's portion of fabled Highway 61, extending into the Mississippi Delta, a highway that figures in the blues not only as a metaphor for restless movement, freedom and escape, but also for the

sorrows of rootlessness. In 1939, when farm workers demonstrated against the injustices of the sharecropping system, it was along Highway 61 that they gathered, providing a poignant and nationally visible image of individuals left both literally and figuratively "by the roadside." Today, I-55, part of Eisenhower's massive plan for interstate defense transport, is known among truckers as "the Double Nickel." The highway represents a major force in the cultural life of the region: it is no accident that the first step in the plan of Bishop Benjamin Armour, Sr., of Hayti Heights, to build a great evangelical monument in the Bootheel has been to erect a billboard alerting travelers on Interstate 55 to the project.

The placid, relatively featureless agricultural landscape of the Bootheel conceals intense cultural contrasts. Honkytonk and gospel are pursued within blocks of one another with equal fervor. A locally held belief claims for the region the highest number of millionaires per capita in the United States; the counties also include some of the poorest communities to be found in the nation. There is something almost apocalyptic in the sight of these seemingly drowsy fields, crossroads, and river towns — protected from swift reversion to swampland by a fragile man-made network of levees, diversion channels and drainage canals, and all of it resting on one of the least stable geological features on earth. Nevertheless, from this region of keen boundaries and well-defined oppositions spring, in rich diversity, remarkable expressions of creativity — Bootheel art.

HERITAGE AND ART: FOLK TRADITION IN THE BOOTHEEL

Sw. Anand Prahlad

We might make very different statements about the link between art and heritage depending on our definition of art. As we all know, the word "art" is usually applied to forms of expression such as paintings found in museums, dance that is choreographed and performed for an audience, and music such as classical or chamber. Even folklorists have customarily defined folklore by contrasting it to popular culture and "high art." From a Western perspective, artistic forms of expression are often judged positively according to how removed they are from a particular cultural or regional heritage. It is

this attitude toward art that makes a separate argument for the links between folk and formal art necessary.

In looking at folklore, we find that artistic expression reflects, celebrates and reaffirms the cultural heritages of those who practice it. One of the noted functions of folklore is the affirmation of cultural identity: it serves to establish and maintain a sense of "we-ness." The building of johnboats in the Bootheel area, for instance, is an example of a folk art tradition that is tied to culture and region. The way in which boat builders learn their craft and, for that matter, the very exposure to the craft indicates its link to a particular cultural tradition. Indications of cultural heritage can also be found in the aesthetics that guide builders in their art. The same can be said about such activities as the carving of hunting decoys and fishing lures and the stitching of quilts. There



are longstanding traditional elements that influence the creative designs and processes by which artists produce their works.

There are also verbal forms of expression that reflect the close relationship between heritage and art. The legend of the Farrenburg lights is an example of an oral tradition linked to this region. As the legend goes, the ghost of a man walks the railroad tracks with a lantern, searching for his head, severed many years ago in an accident. The wide distribution of such local legends across the country does not negate their importance to particular areas, nor their connection to the separate communities in which they are found. The narration of the story can also be considered a part of its art, and the aesthetics influencing the performance are tied to the heritages of the tellers.

We can say that art is linked to heritage in several ways. One way is in "form": the forms that expressions take are often reflective of regional and cultural influences. Although there are traditions of boat building, quilting, preaching, singing of sacred and secular song, instrument making, wood carving, cooking, storytelling, judgmental belief, etc., found widely among many American groups, the forms of each genre may vary greatly from one group or region to another. If we consider boat building a form, we can see that the johnboat is a particular kind of construction linked to a specific cultural heritage. In other regions, different kinds of boats are constructed. Even within the same geographical region, a variety of forms may be found among groups who have different cultural backgrounds. It is likely that Native Americans of this area once had traditions of boat building, husbandry, hunting, storytelling, etc., that would contrast sharply with the forms now common among European-American groups in the area. Contrast can be seen as well when looking at some of the different cultural groups that now comprise the Bootheel population. We would expect some variation in the forms of folklore found within these groups. Many Thais practice Bud-

dhism, for instance, giving rise to beliefs, customs and items of material culture that are not found among other groups in the Bootheel: chants, altar ornaments, incense burners, meditation stools, certain kinds of embroidery and hanging mobiles are possible examples. On the other hand, the quilting traditions that are prevalent within European-American and African-American communities are probably not important to Asian-Americans who are recent to the area. We would also expect to find distinct forms among the Jewish, Hispanic, and Chinese-American populations.

Another way in which art is related to heritage is reflected in "content." Such genres as storytelling, cooking and music are found universally among folk groups, but the content of these varies significantly. The legend of the Farrenburg lights is important among European-Americans in the Portageville area, but what legends

are vital among other groups? Especially in the realms of the supernatural and historical, heritage plays an essential role. One's heritage commonly determines one's mythological and religious beliefs, and these beliefs tend to influence the disposition toward the supernatural. Thus, the cultural disposition has an impact on what the content of supernatural legends might be and can affect the kind of



C. Ray Brassieur

Wayne Springer's wooden johnboat at Pierce Landing in Homersville, April 15, 1994.

ghosts or other phenomenon portrayed and the types of interactions that these have with human beings.

The historical realm is just as influential as the supernatural. Heritage is intricately linked to history; therefore, the historical has a major impact on the content of folklore. Almost all groups tell legends concerned with the history and survival of their groups. It is not surprising, then, to find so many stories about the floods, Depression and other events that have affected the lives of people in the Bootheel. But the historical realm is one in which we can see how dramatically different the content of forms can be from one group to another. Of course the historically based legends that each ethnic group in the Bootheel emphasizes are going to be divergent, for each has experienced history in different ways.



We might add that the content of forms includes not only verbal genres, but also material culture. The choices of materials used in the construction of boats, quilts, duck calls, houses, instruments, etc., are in large part influenced by the heritages of the artists in question. Thus in one tradition, birch bark may be used for making baskets, whereas in another, palm leaves may be used. One can easily see the point of this in ingredients used in cooking. Again, historical factors play a role in these aesthetic selections. In the most obvious way, aesthetics are linked to availability of material resources, ensuring the connection between geography and culture and, over time, between history and the content of expressions.

A final link between art and heritage concerns the manner in which expressions are communicated to an audience, what I will call here "channel." Beyond the form and content of folklore is the channel through which the creative expression is shared with others. It is entirely possible for folk artists to create items simply for their own use or personal satisfaction. Elderly woodcarvers, musicians, cooks and even proverb users and storytellers often share some of their artistic performances with others while enjoying many of them in private. But in order for a public performance to occur, there must be some channel established. The channel is, in fact, the factor that is often most disrupted when a group is displaced or emigrates from one country — or even community — to another. It

is also the factor most affected by American popular culture. In Africa, for instance, proverbs were not only a conversational form, but were used in arguing court cases, were carved onto objects such as stools and staffs, printed onto gold ornaments and "played" on talking drums. While the proverbial form is still prevalent among Africans brought to America, and at times the content may be similar, the channels have changed dramatically. The only channels available are oratorical, and the dominant verbal channels for communicating proverbs are everyday conversations and sermons. However, proverbs are now used in popular music, such as soul, blues and rap.

The link between art and heritage is a strong and significant one, consisting of numerous facets. It involves the most fundamental elements of human society and psychology; for example, history and identity. With only a short period of work in the Bootheel, we have noticed parts of this connection

and the richness and vitality that they have. As one moves down the highway between soft hills that give way to leeways and fields of planting or harvest, one cannot help but notice the sense of history. It is there in the stances of farmers, in the names on signposts, in the accents of storekeepers, and in the eyes of people who have lived a long time on this land. And with that history is the pride and strength of heritage, reflected in the arts found there.



Sketch by Jerome Stueart
Jake, a well-known local storyteller, at Billy Fisher's Restaurant and Lounge in Portageville, March 18, 1994.



Carole Patterson
Duck call carver Barry McFarland of Hornersville with his collection, August 15, 1994.



PROMOTING BOOTHEEL ARTS AND ARTISTS

Sylvester W. Oliver, Jr.

To most observers, the Bootheel is better known for agricultural research than for its arts communities. The reason is quite clear: state agencies and others in the private sector have made a concerted effort to empower and promote the region economically. It is more a model area for high-tech agribusiness than simply a farm region. Marketing and promotional strategies become important in how one sells and calls attention to a particular idea, product or place. The point here is that the same type of commitment is needed to preserve the artistic heritage of the Bootheel. The single most important strategy to increase support of arts communities and artists is promotion.

During the Bootheel Art and Heritage Day, held last August in Portageville, organizers hoped to take a serious look at Bootheel arts and artists and explore how to encourage and promote them in a development strategy. My task included leading a discussion on two issues: how to encourage and promote the works and talents of local artists, and what initiatives might boost public appreciation for arts among locals and visitors.

Conference participants were quick to point out that support and information for Bootheel arts communities and artists were generally lacking. They suggested several new initiatives to improve the situation. These include sharing information on local and regional artists, coordinating local cultural events, expanding efforts to involve all segments of the Bootheel community in the arts, increasing arts education in the schools, stimulating cultural activities and creative works among ethnic groups, providing technical assistance to arts communities and individuals, and coordinating the region's arts with social, educational and economic development efforts.

Achieving these goals will require special outreach efforts by local arts councils, museums, theaters, galleries and other cultural organizations. Some arts communities and artists in the region have already begun the process. However, a reflective look at the above initiatives could be helpful to planning. There is no single agency or organization with the resources needed to adequately encourage and promote Bootheel arts communities and artists. The means to achieve this end depends on a shared vision and a certain amount of risk-taking through public/private partnerships.



Jean Crandall

Gospel quartet Wings of Heaven practices at Mercy Seat Baptist Church in Charleston. From left are Frank Ware, Rev. Billy R. Williams, Willie Petty, Jr., Rev. Leroy Reed, and George DeMeyers, March 17, 1994.

As I travel around the country and work with cultural organizations, I am beginning to see the role of the arts becoming integrated into economic development programs. There is general agreement that the arts are key to economic development. The arts not only elevate the spirit; they help create jobs. Moreover, the arts are powerful tools for teaching moral values, personal responsibility and cultural sensitivity, and promoting qualities that make people productive citizens. Before arts communities and artists can become a vital part of a region's economy, they must be sensitive to the current economic, social and political realities of the region. This is necessary for maximum use of local initiative and private and public resources. Of course, a vision and a plan are necessary for this to succeed.

Another related concern raised at the conference had to do with how to involve more minority artists, specifically African-Americans. This group of artists in the Bootheel has not enjoyed widespread acceptance, particularly beyond ethnic boundaries. This is reflected in the limited number of public exhibitions and performances in which they are featured. In comparison to white performers, African-Americans are under-represented in public arts programs. They are usually not visible at arts events for reasons that are too complex to discuss here.

Nevertheless, there are many African-American artists who are willing to participate in local arts activities. They must be identified and given the opportunities to display their works and talents along with other artists. White audiences are beginning to understand that they need to be diverse and not exposed to an insulated cul-



ture different from the real world. The idea of presenting more diversified cultural events can challenge our sensibilities and positively effect how we respect and understand others in a multiracial society.

Everyone who lives in this small part of the state we call the Bootheel knows that it has a diverse ethnic mix. Three main sets of people inhabit the region: African-Americans, white Southerners and European immigrants (French, Spanish and German). Each of these groups has artists (visual and performing) who produce a variety of unique artistic works. Their works give concrete expression to the very essence of their communities. It is this diversity that needs to be incorporated into a well-designed arts-oriented program.

I am amazed at the number of popular festivals and cultural activities held throughout the year in the Bootheel. Unfortunately, few of these activities include people of color. These events provide communities with opportunities to increase their respect for cultural and racial differences

and understanding of each other's respective traditions.

Race is a significant factor in promoting a community-oriented festival. Addressing ways to bring together or unite people beyond their usually stereotypical settings is necessary and a challenge. We must educate audiences by adapting principles suited for working together while diminishing the stereotypes that divide them. We must carefully plan what is to happen. The

purpose, time, place, participants and the type of works on display are important to minority artists who need to know about the cultural event before they participate.

Finding workable strategies to promote Bootheel arts and artists depends on the commitment of public agencies, local communities and the leadership from each ethnic community involved. The single most important strategy is co-

operation and partnership. A concerted effort is required to develop and promote talent pools that will preserve the diverse cultural heritage of Bootheel arts communities.



David Whitman
Roundtable panelists (from left) Mort Sajadian, Gladys Coggsweil, Sw. Anand Prahlad, Tom Rankin, Sylvester Oliver, C. Ray Brassieur. "Bootheel Art and Heritage Day," Delta Center, Portageville, August 27, 1994.

TRADITIONAL ARTS AND COMMUNITY IN THE BOOTHEEL

Thomas A. Rankin

“If the word ‘community’ is to mean or to amount to anything,” writes Wendell Berry, “it must refer to place (in its natural integrity) and its people. It must refer to a placed people.”

Likewise, if we are to talk about the value and potential of showcasing traditional arts, we also must talk about them in the context of their communities, with serious regard for their place of origin and practice. The Bootheel region of Missouri is indeed a distinct place; within it we find a multiplicity of traditional artistic expressions. To acknowledge it, to share it, and to interpret its significance for a diversity of people requires a sound

understanding of its place within the community of its makers and within the lives of its practitioners.

There are numerous examples across America of successful community celebrations of the folk and traditional arts. Blues festivals in Mississippi, cowboy poetry gatherings in Nevada, and fiddle contests in North Carolina all share the common element of highlighting and presenting traditional arts to a wide gathering of people. Many of these events have grown to include audiences from “out of town,” tourists who come explicitly to witness the authenticity and power of indigenous music and art. While many of these festivals and gatherings have grown into regionally or nationally known events, all were initially responsive to the needs and desires of the local community. Beginning with a local focus, they expanded to attract audiences from outside. Successful



events based on traditional indigenous arts are, to paraphrase Wendell Berry, "placed" events, programs developed with an idea of the cultural traditions of that particular place.

The advantages of local programming of the folk arts are many-fold. But at the center of the success of any programming must be the goal to awaken and educate local citizens to the compelling nature of indigenous creativity. When a county library or small museum organizes a local quilt exhibit or a showcase of locally made commercial fishing gear, the traditional practices of the makers are validated and celebrated, seen as important and something worthy of careful presentation and public attention. In so doing, locally made objects and knowledge are given the same treatment that all well-made art deserves. When local musicians, who typically play their traditional tunes and songs in the confines of their homes or in intimate gatherings of friends and fellow music makers, are presented on a local or regional festival stage, they and their music are immediately placed on higher ground, seen in higher regard. This process nearly always validates local indigenous arts, fostering greater self-esteem and respect by individuals and by the community as a whole.

Many community leaders find the idea of attracting new dollars to a town through cultural tourism to be a major reason to support arts programming on the local level. And, indeed, traditional arts programming may well lead to additional tax revenues through tourism. But before a community or a region can successfully begin to foster cultural tourism agenda, it must first have a solid sense of local community needs and diversity. The Bootheel Underserved Arts Communities Project lays the foundation for such understanding. Rather than try to mimic the success of other communities or regions,

Bootheel communities would be wise to think of the uniqueness of their own place, devising ways to present and interpret their story to Bootheel residents through the experiences and traditions of artists and residents within the region. In this effort communities must be committed to discovering and showcasing the diversity and plurality of cultural traditions, including the range of ethnic, occupational and religious traditions.

As Bootheel organizations begin to think creatively about ways to program indigenous arts, it is extremely important to rethink previous definitions of "art." Some of the most important examples of traditional artists and art forms within the region may well be the work of people who do not label themselves as artists or their work as art. And,

likewise, many of those who view themselves as artists may not necessarily be the best examples of local, community-based artists. Duck call makers, net makers, quilt makers, and the like often have never seen themselves as "artists," but rather as craftspersons or makers of utilitarian objects. They are, however, soundly at the center of any good definition of art and need to be sought after and included. This often requires careful interpretation and communication, and can be best provided by someone with experience in presenting traditional arts to the public.

The Bootheel region offers a plethora of possibilities to raise the visibility of the folk arts. Projects that begin with a local focus and that are responsive to the character of local culture will no doubt increase the awareness, knowledge and understanding of community life. Likewise, projects that are designed carefully and "placed" locally will find in time that people from other regions will want to come and learn the uniqueness of expressive culture in the Bootheel.



Erica Mair

Quilter Charlotte Peck holds a "Virginia Reel" quilt made by her and daughter Joanne Burton, both of Kennett, March 16, 1994.



Wealth in Diversity: Creative Expression in the Bootheel

ART AND REGION

There is a relationship between art and regional identity: regional art helps create identity just as regional identity inspires creativity. Strong statements of regional identity are aesthetically expressed in the Bootheel. These statements may find expression in the selective use of symbols and emblematic motifs; the public display of signs and yard ornaments; the creation of crafts specifically associated with local environmental features; the participation in local food customs; the telling of local tales; and in many other ways. While some aesthetic expressions seem to emerge from the idiosyncratic whims of individuals, many are inspired by and help to create a sense of association with community and region. The following discussion identifies some examples of art which we feel help establish the Bootheel as a region. Some of these art forms are seldom considered "art" in conventional terms, but they all involve aesthetic choices that are made on a daily basis by local residents.

To begin with, where is this region known as the Bootheel? Though the term "bootheel" shows up on very few maps, it has great meaning in southeast Missouri. Locals tend to respond quickly and definitely when asked whether or not they reside in the Bootheel. But when asked, "Where is the Bootheel?," the response is quite varied. The more geographically astute maintain that the Bootheel is only that area of Missouri that lies between 36°00' and 36°30' north latitude — the very "heel" and nothing more. Some feel that the region's boundaries extend to include all of the southeastern alluvial lowlands, including the northern reaches of Crowley's Ridge, nearly to Cape Girardeau. Others see the Bootheel's boundaries as somehow corresponding with cotton-producing territory, or to the Mason-Dixon Line, which they believe separates North from South, or to the southern limits of German Catholic settlement,

or to the northern limits of southern hospitality, and so on. Curiously, the boundary for those in the southern portion of the "heel" tends to exclude anything north of Campbell or Point Pleasant, while their "northern" neighbors living around Dexter, New Madrid, Sikeston or Charleston, often see the Bootheel as much larger.

One way to get a feel for the geographic extent of the Bootheel region is to notice the distribution of roadside signs that incorporate the term "bootheel." Use of this term on a public sign, whether commercially motivated or not, constitutes an expression of regional identity.

Such signs also tend to influence the construction of regional identity among local residents who daily view them. To the extent that these signs serve as regional markers it is not surprising to find many of them ensconced in the more southerly sectors of the region. Thus we find signs for "Bootheel Sheet Metal," in Steele; "Bootheel Brokers," in Hayti; and an entire "Bootheel Plaza," in Kennett. A



David Whitman

Billboard on I-55 north of Portageville, advertising Bishop Armour's "World's Greatest Monument," April 18, 1994.

geographically larger sense of Bootheel region is suggested by the location of signs for a "Bootheel Educational Center," in Malden; a "Bootheel Flying Service," in Catron; a "Bootheel Petroleum, Inc.," in Dexter; a "Bootheel Counseling Services," in Sikeston; a "Bootheel Auto Upholstery," in Bernie; a "Bootheel Youth Camp," in Bloomfield; a "Bootheel Seed, Feed & Supply," north of East Prairie; and a "Bootheel Mental Health Center," in Charleston. Some locals would be surprised to see a "Bootheel Area Rapid Transportation" sign as far north as Cape Girardeau. The prevailing popularity of the term "bootheel," and its connection with a growing sense of regional identity, has created a bonanza for sign makers like, for example, the Bootheel Sign Company, nestled in the Ozark foothills of Poplar Bluff.

Regional identity is made apparent by public displays of many sorts. These are frequently placed in broad view in front yards. In early March 1994, as we entered the Bootheel from the west, along Hwy. 53 out of Poplar Bluff, we were amazed by the great array of life-sized



artificial rabbits, squirrels and especially deer, in private yards and around public buildings. Later that month we were given a copy of "Faces and Pages of the Past," an article published March 30, 1993, in *The Delta News*, which says the following about the early days of the town of Holcomb: "... it was not uncommon to see deer roaming the woods that surrounded the community or the downtown city streets during the day." Woodlands are no longer as prominent in and around Holcomb and nearby communities as they were a century ago, but many local residents choose to create a wilderness visage through selection of wildlife yard ornaments. In so doing, they reaffirm the identity of their region with the great wilderness it once was, and they firmly establish their own sense of belonging to this region.

For much of this century the Bootheel has been a great agricultural region as the material displays in front of many farm houses clearly affirm. We find mailboxes that look like barns or farm tractors; some of them are supported by old farm augers, wagon wheels, or mule-powered plows. Half-century-old tractors and/or vintage pickups are often prominently parked in front yards. These displays identify the Bootheel as farm country. Similarly, religious signs and symbols, calvaries, painted scriptural messages and even billboards publicly announce that the Bootheel

is a stronghold of the Bible Belt. Through the creative use of symbols, such public display helps define and create regionality.

Cotton is one of the most potent symbols in the Bootheel. Cotton agriculture boomed in the Bootheel during the 1920s as swamp land was drained, cleared and placed into production. As the local economy and population expanded, the daily lives and fortunes of farmers, farm workers, cotton ginners, day laborers and many others became tied to the annual cotton crop. A number of factors have curtailed the glory days of cotton in the Bootheel: major economic and social upheaval in the late 1930s; rapid farm mechanization, especially following John Deere's introduction, in 1950, of the first

self-propelled mechanical cotton picker and recent crop diversification. Although fewer people are currently involved in its production, cotton remains an important local product and a regional symbol as well.

For example, cotton is both a primary material and a central motif in sewing. Traditionally, sewing is passed down in families from one female generation to the next. In the Bootheel, this art has been reinforced by more than fifty years of Sew With Cotton Contests, which were originated by University of Missouri Extension Home Economics specialists to encourage young girls to develop their sewing skills while using an important local

agricultural product. Recently, the Missouri Cotton Ladies, a local women's organization whose membership includes many wives of cotton farmers, now assists in organizing and cosponsoring the event. Contestants are generally drawn from Home Economics classes in area schools, and today, both girls and boys participate. Articles of clothing entered into the competition are sewn from standard patterns and brought to a location where they are judged for competence and artistry in sewing. Seams, stitching, hems, zippers, piecing and fit are carefully examined, after which the modeled garments are judged for appearance, presentation and style. The only acceptable material is 100% "Made in USA" cotton.



David Whitman

A cotton bale footstool made by Sonny Walker of Wardell and found in many area homes and stores.

As a motif, cotton appears in numerous traditional and popular creations in the Bootheel. Becky Harris of Senath and Peggy Cannon of Kennett, active members of Missouri Cotton Ladies, and acknowledged seamstresses and clothes designers within their communities, often adorn sweatshirts, sweaters, skirts and jackets with prominent cotton boll appliqué. Mrs. Harris makes cotton boll quilts, pillows and needlepoint cotton bolls. In addition to clothing, Mrs. Cannon designs cotton boll jewelry and wreaths using raw cotton as a decorative material. African-American seamstress Irma Jones of Caruthersville incorporates the cotton boll form in her silk flower creations. Frances York of Senath paints the cotton boll on wooden tables and her daughter, Pam Small



designs cotton boll stained glass windows. Sonny Walker of Wardell takes raw cotton samples from the local gin and binds them into popular miniature (sixteen-inch-high) cotton bales recommended for use as footstools.

Local shops such as the Frame It Shop and the Tulip Tree, both located in Kennett, sell sweaters, sweatshirts, coffee mugs, pottery and prints decorated with cotton boll motifs. Some of this cotton art is produced as tourist souvenirs but it is also frequently found prominently displayed in homes of Bootheel residents and in public places. The number of business signs throughout the region which incorporate cotton references — Cotton Club, Cottonboll Inn, The Cotton Patch, Cotton Bole Lounge, Cotton Bole Group Home, Cotton Exchange Bank, and so on — further indicate that cotton has indeed become a motif of emblematic significance in the Bootheel.

FOODWAYS IN THE BOOTHEEL

Among the many sources of creativity which help to establish a sense of regional identity, foodways — that is traditional dishes and ways of preparing foods — are very important. Though influenced by national trends and local commercial ventures, food customs are typically passed down within families and communities and they tend to be long-lived. Distinctive foodway customs found in the kitchens at home, in local restaurants, and at large private and public gatherings throughout the Bootheel clearly mark this region as different from the rest of Missouri. Bootheel foodways are unquestionably southern. People there know how to prepare, serve, and enjoy grits, hominy, okra, black-eye peas and butterbeans, and like elsewhere in the South, the term “meat” most often means pork.

Much of this strong southern influence in food customs may be attributed to the large migration of southern farm workers to the Bootheel earlier this century, but the trend shows no signs of weakening. For example, the popularity of rice, which spread northward from Louisiana through Arkansas and into the Bootheel during this century, seems to be increasing. Along this corri-

dor has come an increasing appetite for gumbo, boiled crawfish, and dishes that rely upon Gulf of Mexico shrimp and other seafood. A Cajun restaurant named Boudreaux’s has recently opened in Hayti. Cajun specials are part of the menu at the River Bend Cafe in New Madrid, the Round House Restaurant in Caruthersville, and many other local restaurants. It is probably too early to know whether these newer southern food tastes will have long-term impact or whether they represent temporary trends.

Two traditional foods common to the Bootheel seem closely linked to regional identity: fried catfish and barbecue. Passion for these dishes are common to Anglo-American and African-American communities and are also linked to broader foodway traditions of the South. The Levee Landing, located a few miles north east of Hayti, is a favorite local restaurant specializing in fried catfish “suppers” (the southern term for early-evening meals). Originally opened by Pee Wee and June Hogan in 1979, the unpretentious facility consists of a mobile home grafted onto a renovated general store. The interior walls of this surprisingly spacious and comfortable eatery are covered with a combination of local art work, promotional signs and hundreds of business calling cards which attest to overwhelming local support and approval. The meal is simple and well-prepared: all the fried catfish steaks, white beans and slaw you can eat. Side orders of deep-fried pickle and/or jalapeño pepper slices are also available — all of this served, of course, with an extra helping of southern hospitality.

The James Bayou Cookers of East Prairie, specialize in another sort of large-scale public fish fry that grew out of a family tradition. In 1936, Ted Bennett, Sr., started selling catfish dinners in a simple building with a screened porch and a picnic table in Dorena. The whole

Bennett family was involved in this enterprise. The fish were caught by the family out of Reelfoot Lake in Tennessee and deep fried with lard in a huge black wash kettle. A number-three washtub was used for making the traditional accompaniments of coleslaw and potato salad. A catfish plate sold for \$1.50. The Bennett family also sold their catfish at the local dance hall.



C. Ray Brassieur

Wickers' BAR-B-Q Sauce plant located in Homersville, April 15, 1994.



Today, the nonprofit organization known as the James Bayou Cookers is run by Ted Bennett and Alfreda (Bennett) Miller, the son and daughter of Ted Bennett Sr. They cook for charity events, church events, family reunions, the Big Oak Tree State Park Living History Day, and where we found them at the Charleston Dogwood/Azalea festival in April 1994. The Bennett family works with a loyal regular crew of around ten people as well as other volunteers willing to contribute their culinary talents and labor. On the day we met them, they were in the process of cooking 860 pounds of farm-raised catfish. The recipe is the same one that Ted Bennett, Sr., used way back in 1936, although they are now frying in oil rather than lard. The secret, they told us, to making good deep-fried catfish is to heat the oil hot enough so that the fish does not soak up the oil, but not so hot that the oil burns and makes the fish too hard. The gas cooking equipment has been somewhat modernized and mounted on a trailer that can be wheeled to large public gatherings.

In addition to fried catfish, barbecue is a highly developed art form in the Bootheel. One of the local secrets is in the marinade and basting sauce. Wicker Sauce, a favorite throughout the upper Delta, is made in Hornersville. It is the legacy of Peck Wicker, a famous open-pit barbecue chef who began making the sauce at his Hornersville home in the 1940s. Wicker's is currently owned by three California residents who grew up together in Hornersville. Greg and Regina Thomas, who manage the Wicker's plant, claim that distribution of their product is spreading rapidly and that Wicker's is the choice of most champion cooks at barbecue competitions like the "Memphis in May" contest and the "Meat on the Mississippi" cook-off in Caruthersville. Company flyers claim that Wicker's Sauce continues to be made according to Peck's old recipe, which is safely locked away in a bank vault.

The number and quality of barbecue restaurants in the Bootheel is truly awesome. Many of them are built on family traditions. African-American Don Alford of Alford's BBQ in Kennett, carries on a barbecue tradition

started by his father in 1953. The business started in a little food stand located in a local park and, despite the typical norms of segregation, black and white customers came from all over Kennett to enjoy his culinary artistry. Today, Don Alford proudly carries on the traditions of his father, who passed away fifteen years ago. Scores of family photographs hanging prominently in his restaurant proudly attest to the strong link between Mr. Alford's art form and his family heritage.

Some typical southern foodways customs, like those involving barbecue and fried catfish, seem linked with the Bootheel, but there are less obvious culinary items tied to the region as well. For example, we were somewhat surprised to find that tamales have a long-time connection to southeast Missouri. Kennett resident Billy Joe Ford is a third-generation tamale vendor who sells from his van on Ward Avenue in Caruthersville. According to Mr. Ford, hot tamales were popular in the Bootheel even before his family began their business more than sixty years ago. Herman Blazier, Billy Joe's maternal grandfather, began the enterprise during the Depression after losing his sawmill job. Mr. Ford claims that his grandfather Blazier invested ten dollars to hire an elderly couple named Cleve-



Robin Fanslow

Billy J. Ford selling tamales from his van in Caruthersville, March 19, 1994.

land to teach him how to make tamales. After three days Blazier had mastered the technique and began to produce tamales himself. At one time Blazier had seven vendors on the streets of Missouri and Arkansas. Later, the family sold tamales at Ford's Cafe and Ford's Tamale & Chili establishments in Kennett, while also catering for private gatherings.

Ford's recipe for tamales calls for beef, corn meal, red pepper, chili powder, garlic and onion, though the old-time cornhusk wrappers have been replaced with stronger wrappers made of paper. Mr. Ford has sold his share in the production end of the business and now obtains tamales from his brother. Some customers are third generation hot tamale consumers. Displaced Bootheel residents returning home for a visit frequently stop by Mr. Ford's van to stock up on tamales before they leave the region.



Of course, many traditional foodways, especially those practiced during private family gatherings in the Bootheel, have no commercial aspects. For example, foodways often form the hub of activities at family reunions. They certainly do for the Coopers' annual family reunion, which has been held for more than 50 years on their farm near



Carole Patterson

Women serving food at a family reunion held at the Cooper family farm in rural Pemiscot County, August 13, 1994.

Hayti. Preparation starts long before the event. In the days immediately preceding the reunion, the Cooper men gather to prepare the meats; smokers and deep-fry rigs are set up in the old barn. Among the many dishes

found at this reunion are barbecue pork and chicken, fried rabbit and fish. Tables full of accompaniments, side dishes, cakes and pies are prepared on site or brought in dishes by the several hundred relatives and friends who gather each year. Food is only one element of this larger foodway custom. Food preparation and consumption provides focus

to a socializing ritual which includes narration of family stories, recitation of genealogy, celebration of newest and oldest family members, and general maintenance of family heritage.

BOOTHEEL MUSIC

AFRICAN-AMERICAN MUSIC: THE SPIRIT RULES

The history of African-American music in the Bootheel shares a special link with regional demographic developments. In 1907, an elaborate system of canals, levees and ditches, known as the Little River Drainage System, began draining a great wilderness swamp as timber interests and pioneer farmers sought to clear land. Southern cotton farmers, seeking to escape the insufferable boll weevil, soon began moving north. By 1920, cotton was king in the Bootheel, large-scale agriculture was established, and large numbers of field hands, including many African-Americans, emigrated north into the region from Arkansas, Tennessee and Mississippi.

Black farm workers involved in this early twentieth century Bootheel population boom generally shared the African-American experiences — southern agrarian background, hard work, poverty, migration and homelessness — from which great musical creativity was then emerging. It was during this momentous period that Memphis songwriter W. C. Handy published his famous "St. Louis Blues" (1914). A young Louis Armstrong trumpeted his artistry on the steamboat *Dixie Belle* between 1919 and 1922,

and Caruthersville was a regular stop. Both Memphis and St. Louis developed into flourishing hubs for blues and jazz while the Bootheel was being transformed into cotton land. Expansion of rail lines and interstate highways and the proliferation of automobiles surged along with the movement of southern black and white farm workers to the Bootheel.

Older Bootheel informants report music traditions such as blues (vocal, piano and guitar) and string bands (fiddle-banjo). During the 1920s, when there was at least one large sharecropping family located on every 40 acres, a well-populated agrarian society sustained these traditions. Local musical traditions were reinforced by regular visits from the top African-American entertainers of their day. Black poet Sterling Brown's poem, "Ma Rainey," in *Southern Roads* (1932), describes a visit to the Bootheel by the "Mother of the Blues":

When Ma Rainey
Comes to town,
Folks from anyplace
Miles aroun',
From Cape Girardeau,
Poplar Bluff,
Flocks in to hear
Ma do her stuff



Blues pianist Albert Luandrew, known as "Sunnyland Slim," played with Ma Rainey in Portageville during the mid-1920s, and travelled with bluesman Rufus Perryman, known as "Speckled Red," to picnics and "lively joints" in Caruthersville, Portageville, New Madrid and Sikeston (McKee and Chisenhall, 1981). Blues guitarist Johnny Shines tells a story about he and the legendary Robert Johnson singing and playing harmonica for coins while travelling north on Hwy. 61 from West Memphis during the mid-1930s — they earned enough money to buy guitars in Steele, Mo. (Palmer, 1981). During an interview on July 27, 1994, Alex Cooper of Hayti reminisced about visits from B. B. King, Bobbie Blue Bland, Ike and Tina Turner, and other top stars who performed frequently during the 1950s for picnics, baseball games and senior proms throughout the Bootheel. Sikeston guitarist James Dukes, in an interview of July 29, 1994, described how his remarkable talents developed in a very active bar scene of the 1960s.

But there is no longer a strong traditional blues, rhythm and blues, or jazz musical scene in the Bootheel. While African-American religious music traditions remain powerful in the region today, the contemporary secular music scene has all but disappeared, along with the venues needed for live performances. The scarcity of public outlets for nonreligious black music in the Bootheel may be due, in part, to some of the following complex realities: general population shift from farm communities to urban areas has weakened support for local traditional music; some outmigration of talent has occurred as better opportunities developed beyond the region; the recording industry, and mass media in general, principally promotes commercial trends and outside artists; a lack of venture capital to develop supportive venues and artistic programs; and general shortage of funds among potential customers and clientele.

Some older African-American musicians, such as Sonny Burgess of Caruthersville, who was once active in the secular music scene in the 1950s and 1960s, la-

ment over the fact that it is not safe for musicians to play at local clubs, mainly because of the increase in violence and drug-related crimes. Consequently, many older secular performers now sing or play in churches where they have no difficulty in molding their performance styles to suit religious music. Bootheel Project fieldworkers interviewed guitarists Eugene Jones of Homestown, George Dukes of Sikeston, and Jessie Newson of Howardville — all superb musicians who started as blues players but who now play only in church.

For the younger crowd, only a few African-American disco clubs exist. Most of these clubs feature record jockeys spinning popular recordings of rap and rhythm and blues hits, catering primarily to African-American teenagers and young adults. Mark Sallis, 24, of Hayti

Heights says he refuses to go to clubs for fear of violence. He only attends private weekend dances and social functions held either at a family member or friend's home or the local community center. Some people trek to places like Memphis and Dyersburg, Tenn., on weekends to see and hear their favorite popular recording artists. Others rely heavily on daily radio broadcasts from Memphis for their listening en-



David Whitman
"Slammin' Hip Hop Club" in Hayti Heights closed at the time this photo was taken, April 16, 1994

tertainment and are big consumers of cassette tapes.

But church music is powerful among the African-American community. The Bootheel is located at very heart of the Bible Belt and nearly all of the African-American religious community in the region is Christian. The most visible religious groups are the Baptists, Methodists and Pentecostal sects (full gospel, holiness and Church of God In Christ). Since the last third of the nineteenth century, the black church has been the center of the African-American religious community and remains so today.

Music is an important feature of African-American religiosity. The black church continues to be the mainstay institution for musical training and has influenced hundreds of musicians and singers. Older African-American religious music — including a variety of singing styles, Negro spirituals, jubilee songs, Dr. Watts and other shape-note hymns — derive from a blend of



African and Christian elements. Many of these traditions are carried forth today, modified and renewed, to provide a powerful expression of African-American religious attitudes and performance styles. Spiritually, they continue to offer prescriptive solutions that help believers face obstacles in their lives.

Gospel music, performed by soloists, choirs and quartets, is the most popular religious music heard today in the black church. It has had a continuous history of stylistic development among African-American singers throughout this century. As early as the 1910s, when gospel music first emerged, singers in the region were singing compositions by first-generation African-American songwriters such as C. A. Tindley, Lucie Campbell, W. Herbert Brewster and Thomas Dorsey. Since the 1930s, traveling religious singers journeying from places like New Orleans and Memphis to St. Louis and Chicago have stopped regularly at Bootheel churches to share their inspiring performances and new gospel songs.

Religious music represents a way for African-Americans to express themselves both socially and theologically. What the spirituals did in the nineteenth century, gospel music has done for much of the twentieth century. These and other religious songs provide listeners with music that has strong ritual and entertainment values which extend beyond the walls of the church. However, the best places to see or hear African-American religious music are African-American churches or community centers. Both young and old people fill the pews or seats to listen to their favorite choirs, quartets, soloists and other ensembles.

Choirs are popular at African-American churches throughout the Bootheel. A distinction is made between the various choirs by age, such as the adult, the young adult and the children's choirs. A combination of old and new songs makes up the repertoire of most choirs. These include gospel hymns, denominational hymns, new arrangements of spirituals and contemporary gospel songs. The manner of performance rather than the songs is usually what differs among choirs.

Choirs like that of Emmanuel Church of God in Christ in Sikeston, the Mercy Seat Baptist Church in Charleston, and the Emmanuel Full Gospel Mission in Caruthersville, continue to sing a broad range of classic to contemporary gospel songs with a colorful accompaniment, a tradition that occurs more often in African-American Baptist and Pentecostal churches. The instruments most often used in these churches include piano, organ, guitar, bass and drums. One can hear a notable difference in the performance style of conventional choirs, such as the Tabernacle of Love Church in Hayti, the House of Prayer Church of God in Malden, or the Lighthouse Church of Jesus Christ in Kennett. The singing style adopted in these churches is a more sedate hymn-singing style with or without piano or organ accompaniment.

Special Sunday afternoon music-oriented programs featuring African-American gospel performances by choirs and quartets are very popular. These programs are organized under the rubric of a church-sponsored organization, generally to raise needed operational funds. One such sing was witnessed at the Choir Day Program at Shiloh Baptist Church of Charleston, where the Rev. Rudolph Alexander is the minister. Several small but well-rehearsed choirs and soloists presented nearly three hours of spirit-filled singing to a packed church. Such gatherings occur nearly every Sunday at churches scattered through the region.

In more recent years, some churches are seeing an increase in the number of new members mainly because of the popularity of their gospel choirs. The Community Temple Church of God in Christ Fellowship in Kennett and the Mt. Olive Missionary Baptist Church in Hayti are good examples of church and community choirs which recruit new members.

In addition to choirs, gospel soloists abound in African-American churches in this region. One of the foremost local gospel soloists is Mildred Whitehorn of Kennett. A member of the Church of God in Christ, Ms. Whitehorn began singing solo in church at the age of six.



Carole Patterson
Rev. Willie Eadie, pastor of New Bethel Baptist Church in Portageville, sings with the choir, August 14, 1994.



The response was so enthusiastic that she exclaims, "I wanted to sing from *then* on! And I did!" With the exception of a ten year stint as a rhythm and blues artist for STAX records in Memphis, Ms. Whitehorn has devoted her impressive singing talents exclusively to gospel music. She and her equally gifted daughter, Jasmine, are currently participating as master and apprentice in the Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program.

Though the modern gospel choir is the most popular form of church music today, Rev. Willie Eadie of Portageville maintains that quartets in earlier decades were the sole providers of religious entertainment in many regional African-American communities. Most quartets existed as independent enterprises from the black church but depended heavily on church audiences for support and bookings. As African-Americans migrated from the region to find work in the nearby towns and larger northern cities, many community gospel quartets experienced both economic and personnel hardships. The results led to the decline in public interest and the end of many regional gospel quartets.

But it seems that gospel quartets are now enjoying a mild resurgence in the Bootheel. Many older and middle-aged gospel singers are now training their children in this tradition and are forming new quartets. Their repertoire includes classic gospel songs and hymns as recorded by traveling gospel quartets of early eras with some new arrangements. Though the number has dwindled considerably, there are several gospel groups still active in the Bootheel region. Among these are the Wandering Five, the Wings of Heaven, the Echoes of Joy, the Family Echoes, and the Bronner Brothers.

For years the Wandering Five of Portageville have been proving that gospel quartet music has substance as well as excitement and appeal with church audiences. Organized in 1949, the group is headed by Rev. Eadie, pastor of the First Missionary Baptist Church of Catron and New Bethel Baptist Church of Portageville. In addition he has a thirty-minute radio ministry on KMIS each

Sunday morning that features the music of the Wandering Five and the Family Echoes. Live performances by the Wandering Five are rare these days, but their musical legacy is kept alive through Rev. Eadie's Sunday morning program and several recordings they made.

The Echoes of Joy of Howardville is a female *a cappella* gospel group. Members of the group consist of a mother, daughter, cousin and neighbor. They sing classic gospel songs and hymns as recorded by traveling gospel quartets, plus a few of their own original songs. Though they do not regularly use instruments, the singing style does lend itself easily to instrumental accompaniment used by traditional gospel quartets. The group's popularity is growing; two or three singing programs are scheduled on most weekends at churches throughout the Bootheel region, western Kentucky and southern Illinois. This youthful group of singers is developing a well-balanced repertoire of old and new songs and should be encouraged

to continue to create their own style of gospel.

Perhaps the most popular gospel quartet in the region is the Bronner Brothers of Sikeston. The group is a family quartet and consists of two brothers, Flem and Samuel Bronner, and four nephews: Fred, Ralph, Flem, Jr., and Robert Hayes. The Bronner Brothers have gained national prominence both through their recordings for J & B Records of Jackson,

Miss., and their extensive touring. The group's leader, Rev. Flem E. Bronner, Sr., is the pastor of St. John's Missionary Baptist Church of Sikeston. They sing in a traditional gospel quartet style that uses four voices with guitar, bass, drums and sometimes keyboard. Though the members maintain regular jobs, they travel weekends throughout the Bootheel region and perform as far south as New Orleans and as far north as Detroit.

African-American preachers in the Bootheel play an important role in sustaining the religious music in the black church. They insist on the use of old and familiar songs in their services that carry meaning and messages of hope and understanding to their congregations. More



Jean Crandall

Gospel a cappella quartet Echoes of Joy practicing at the home of Melinda Reed in Howardville (l. to r.) Juanita Wigfall, Melinda Reed, LaQuanda Wigfall, Natalia Blackshure, March 17, 1994.



than once we witnessed excited preachers who would be carried away by their emotions and sing spontaneously during the service. Bishop B. A. Armour at the Monument of Deliverance Church of Hayti would beat a square-bass drum that emanated a low and penetrating sound to heighten the emotional impact of the singing in his services. As part of the worship service, Bishop Armour would include prayers and long repetitive singing segments with hand-clapping and the rhythmic playing of a guitar, bass, drums and clattering tambourine. This often served as a precursor to his testifying and healing ceremonies.

Radio broadcasts are another avenue that feature African-American religious and secular music. Since the early 1940s, radio broadcasts from outside the region have reached the African-American communities in the Bootheel. For example, "King Biscuit Time" featured blues that aired on KFFA of Helena, Ark., starting in 1941; gospel groups like the Spirit of Memphis, the Fairfield Four, the Dixie Hummingbirds and other were on WDIA of Memphis beginning in the late 1940s; and "John R" of WLAC in Nashville reached night listeners in the 1950s and 1960s with his promotions of African-American recordings of blues, gospel and folk sermons. Today, the bulk of African-American recorded religious music still comes from stations outside the region, mostly commercial stations from Memphis.

There are few radio stations in the region that carry African-American religious or secular music programming. KMIS, a 50,000-watt station in Portageville, is the most powerful station in the Bootheel. It features African-American religious

programming during a four-hour block on Sunday mornings. The other time is reserved for white religious music and church services. KSTG, a 5,000-watt station in Sikeston, airs a one-hour Sunday morning religious program called "The Gospel Show." It is hosted by Rev. Flem Bonner and features music, talk and church announcements. Funds for these programs come from local supportive businesses.

There still exists a need for more data and information to accurately describe the current situation and historical development of

African-American music in the Bootheel. What is clear, however, is that African-American religious music in the region is alive, thanks primarily to the black church and its supporting audiences. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for African-American secular music. Older secular singers and players have faded away, devoted their talent to sacred causes, or died out; the younger generation simply lacks the supporting audiences for their music. With the proper aspirations and opportunities, gospel guitarists of the caliber of James Dukes (Sikeston), Michael Covington (Portageville), and Dennis Armour (Hayti) could make an impact in the blues world. Unfortunately, they would have to leave the Bootheel to

find public venues. Some of the imbalance between religious and secular music traditions can be attributed to the shortage of reputable social institutions willing to support and promote secular music and artists in the African-American community. New cultural initiatives aimed specifically at the African-American community in the Bootheel will help remedy this situation.



David Whitman
Bishop Benjamin Armour playing drum and son Dennis Armour playing the guitar at Monument of Deliverance Church in Hayti, March 3, 1994.



C. Ray Brassieur
KMIS radio station broadcasts live gospel performances each Sunday from Portageville.



ANGLO-AMERICAN MUSIC: SACRED AND SECULAR TONES

The relationship between sacred and secular music is more balanced among the white population of the Bootheel in that night clubs and dance halls exist along with religious music. The context for white sacred music is provided by a large variety of denominational and nondenominational religious groups. The earliest Euro-American religious influences were associated with Catholicism and were brought into the area during the colonial period by French and other early pioneer settlers. Practicing Catholic descendants of these early settlers still reside in Bootheel towns such as New Madrid, Portageville and Caruthersville. Later migrations of Catholics, including Irish, German and Dutch laborers and their families, entered during the nineteenth century to take part in railroad building, logging or farming. A Dutch Catholic presence is still strong at St. Euchstacius parish in Portageville. The loss of non-English language competency has resulted in the erosion of both secular and sacred song traditions among these Catholics. In addition, Vatican II changes, which began in the early 1960s, have discouraged certain singing traditions based in Latin in favor of an English-language repertoire more similar to that of Protestants. Catholic choir and congregational singing, accompanied by organ and various other instruments, is nevertheless still heard in the Bootheel.

Beginning late during the eighteenth century, Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists and members of various other Protestant groups migrated into the Bootheel, especially to river towns such as New Madrid, Cape Girardeau and Caruthersville, as part of the Great Western Expansion. This trend continued throughout the nineteenth century into the early 1900s when the increased movement of farm workers from Tennessee, Arkansas and Mississippi brought a new influx of southern ways of worship into the newly developed cotton land of southeast Missouri.

Several processes have characterized the development of Anglo-American sacred communities during the twentieth century: 1) the splintering of groups, as seen, for example, among Baptist congregations — Southern Baptists, General Baptists, Missionary Baptists, Primitive Baptists, etc.; 2) the rise in popularity of scripturally based groups like the Church of Christ; and 3) the growing charismatic movement represented by Pentecostal congregations, Holiness Churches and other spiritual groups.

During an interview with Cory Kleinschmidt on March 5, 1994, Mr. Marshall Dial of Portageville suggested that the Depression affected the dynamic development of some religious communities in the Bootheel. He remembered a time when,

They would have meetings outside where they would build what they called a brush arbor. And they would use the smoke to get rid of the mosquitoes, and the preacher would preach for two hours, and they would become very emotional, very excited... They got something out of it, there was a certain peace there ... I guess, because they would look all around them and say there was no way out of this poverty, but when we go to heaven, we'll be out of it ... People turned to religion of some type and it really didn't make any difference what.... They knew they had nothing on earth but they might have something after life.

Mr. Dial also recalled powerful evangelists who would travel through the region, such as the famous Methodist preacher Billy Sunday.

Music and song differ considerably among white religious communities in the Bootheel. Most choirs sing a combination of traditional and modern hymns. They vary with regard to degree of formal organization, costume, gender and age make-up, musical background, and talent. Churches often appoint musical directors to help train the choir, to decide upon appropriate repertoire, and to facilitate congregational participation. Pastors and deacons often take significant roles with regard to music selection and performance. Gifted soloists from within the congregation are often encouraged to present their favorite gospel "specials," and travelling singing and musical groups perform as guests on special occasions.

Instrumental accompaniment for white gospel music varies greatly. For example, the relatively small choir of the Kinfolk Ridge Baptist Church, near Caruthersville, is musically supported by solitary pianist Ms. Betty Leek. With quite different effect, music at the First United Pentecostal Church of Kennett is provided by the McGruder Family Band, an elaborate ensemble which includes piano and electric keyboard, electric and electrified acoustic guitars, electric bass guitar, a full drum set, multiple soloists and lead singers, and a sound technician to balance the output. Some gospel groups, like the talented Pullen Family Singers who were heard performing at the Charleston Dogwood and Azalea Festival on April 17, 1994, rely upon instrumental cassette tapes for musical accompaniment.

A growing dependence upon cassette-taped accompaniment is developing among white congregations,



traveling gospel groups and soloists. The degree of dependence upon cassette tapes for background music varies significantly. For example, cassettes are used only for certain performances at the McGruder's First United Pentecostal Church and the Kinfolk Ridge Baptist Church—to add instrumental diversity to music programs that also feature live musicians. However, it is increasingly common for gospel groups and congregations to depend entirely upon cassette tapes for musical accompaniment. Thus live musicians are often com-

pletely replaced by an inexpensive sound system, a cassette player, and a few instrumental cassettes. A frequent argument for the use of cassette tapes holds that there are too few available musicians. Unfortunately, this argument has a certain self-fulfilling circularity: wide use and acceptance of cassette music programs provide little incentive for developing gospel musicians. Over time, cassette tapes have a tendency to homogenize gospel repertoires and singing styles and to inhibit whatever congregational and group distinctiveness that emerges from the musical creativity of individuals.

Some sacred societies in the Bootheel do not cherish individual musical creativity nor even tolerate musical instruments, for that matter. The Slicer Street Church of Christ in Kennett is an example of a scripturally oriented church whose members believe that musical instruments should not be used in the context of worship services. While Church of Christ congregations are independent and non-denominational in structure, they share the

prohibition against musical instruments. Slicer Street song leader Britt Burcham points to passages in the New Testament that suggest that instrumental music is “not authorized” in scripture. He said, “The instrument that is mentioned in the New Testament is the voice.”

As a result of this scriptural interpretation, Church of Christ congregational music takes the form of four-part *a cappella* singing. Slicer Street Church of Christ members sing from *Songs of the Church*, compiled by Alton H. Howard, a songbook written in both standard and shape note musical notation. Many of the older members continue to depend upon shape notes to guide their participation. The members are led by a song leader who directs and sings from the front of the congregation. There are no separate choirs or soloists; rather, the whole congregation sings together to recreate what they believe to be the intensely communal impulse of the early Christian community.

Although some religious individuals see a conflict between sacred music and dance music, white gospel music shares much in common with country music, stylistically, if not in world view. One example of this connection may be found in the guitar playing of Rev. Fred Frailey of Sikeston, who assists his wife, Sister Norma Frailey, in the spiritual leadership of the Living Water Tabernacle, a Pentecostal church in Blodgett. Rev. Frailey's superb thumb-pick style of playing places him in the tradition of country music guitar pickers Merle Travis and Chet Atkins. While he acknowledges the influence of these two



Deborah Bailey

Song leader Britt Burcham leads a cappella congregational singing during Sunday service at the Slicer Street Church of Christ in Kennett, March 13, 1994.



Jim Nelson

Gospel singer Rev. Norma Frailey and guitarist Rev. Fred Frailey at home in Sikeston, March 18, 1994.



guitar greats on his own playing, Rev. Frailey plays nothing but sacred music, firmly believing in the power of music to reach people in a manner that preaching sometimes cannot.

Conversely, gospel tunes are often mixed with old-time country tunes in performances outside of church. Although no longer having the mass appeal that it once held, old-time country music, including bluegrass and fiddling, can still be heard throughout the Bootheel. The setting for this music is more likely to be an informal jam session than a formal performance. Old-time country music performers also tend to be dedicated amateurs rather than professional entertainers. Bill and Frieda Riddle continue to play dance tunes and old-time country and gospel songs for their own amusement and occasionally for friends. Until recently they had "musicals," or music parties, in the shoe repair shop that Bill operated in Kennett.

In Sikeston, Paul's Jewelry and Pawn, owned by Paul Tolbert, is a favorite gathering place for local pickers and a likely place to hear all kinds of country and bluegrass music. Paul himself is an accomplished guitar player, singer and writer of country and gospel songs. Tony Wray, 20, a local banjo whiz, is a frequent participant in the afternoon music sessions as is Jerry Shropsure, a local bluegrass singer and guitar player.

Old-time fiddling at house parties and square dancing, once a widespread and popular form of entertainment throughout the Bootheel, has been superseded by more contemporary forms of country music. The Nashville country music scene, with its associated juke-box hits, radio and television programs, and recording industry, has long influenced local musical tastes. Performing artist Tammy Wynette has a park named after her in Malden. Contemporary country music can be heard today in public dance halls and taverns like the Cotton Club in Holcomb; the Club Zanza and the Idle Hour, two post-WWII Quonset-hut taverns in Hayti; the Night Cap Lounge in Gideon; and private American Legion, VFW, Eagles and other lodges and halls scattered throughout the Bootheel.

Local bands that play in such settings, such as those led by Bobby Burdin, Terry Ray Bradley, Bill Barnet and Belton Duncan, add popular commercial country tunes to their repertoires, which also include classic rock numbers, oldies, a few local favorites and, occasionally, original songs and instrumentals. Instrumentation typically includes electric guitar and bass, electric keyboard, full drum set and occasionally saxophone. These bands are unquestionably loaded with talent and dance hall experience. On the other hand, the creativity displayed in dance hall settings is somewhat muted by a perceived need to cater to the requests of patrons who are strongly influenced by commercial radio, recordings, and top-40 country charts. Homogenization of repertoire, instrumentation and style commonly results.

Rockabilly music, which appears to a greater or lesser degree in the repertoires of most Bootheel country/commercial bands, offers an alternative to contemporary top-40 pop/country. Joe Keene, a musician during the late 1950s, and now part-owner of Kennett Sound Studios, shared his recollections of the early days of rockabilly music with Jim Nelson on March 19, 1994:



Frieda and Bill Riddle, old-time country musicians from Kennett, March 15, 1994.

At that time now... we called ourselves the Jets. That was the time when Bill Haley had the Comets, and my friend Narvel Felts, who lives in Malden, he had the Rockets. It began with rock-and-roll type music — the things Elvis was doing, or Carl Perkins, or Jerry Lee Lewis, or, of course, Little Richard, Fats Domino and all that. It was a very interesting time in the late-'50s. The transition from the Big Band Era, and [from] the quite, reserved,...almost sweet music.... Then all of a sudden Bill Haley... he probably did the first

rockabilly-type thing.... They started using a pretty heavy drum beat, and heavy bass lines, and hot guitars, and all that. And, of course, "Rock Around the Clock" came along in 1954.... It was a very drastic change. It went from big bands to real small groups; three and four pieces.... It was a very transitional time. Almost anything went.

This forty-year-old musical trend continues to draw followers in the Bootheel. Regional interest in this music is sustained and stimulated by rockabilly tunes with special Bootheel references, such as Narvel Felt's "From



Memphis to Malden," and the Sandhill Gang's more recent "Night Cap Boogie," written about a Gideon lounge. Local fans continue to revere an aging Narvel Felts, although he now performs more frequently in Europe, where he is a sensation.

A minor but nationwide revival of old-time cowboy music, of the sort performed at one time by the Sons of the Western Pioneers, is also affecting the region. The Sons of the Western Bootheel is a local manifestation of this revival. Led by Kennett veterinarian T. Everett Mobely, this local western/pop revival quartet is highly influenced by the nationally popular Riders in the Sky. One of the tunes appearing on their first self-produced cassette tape is named "Blue Gumbo." Musically pat-

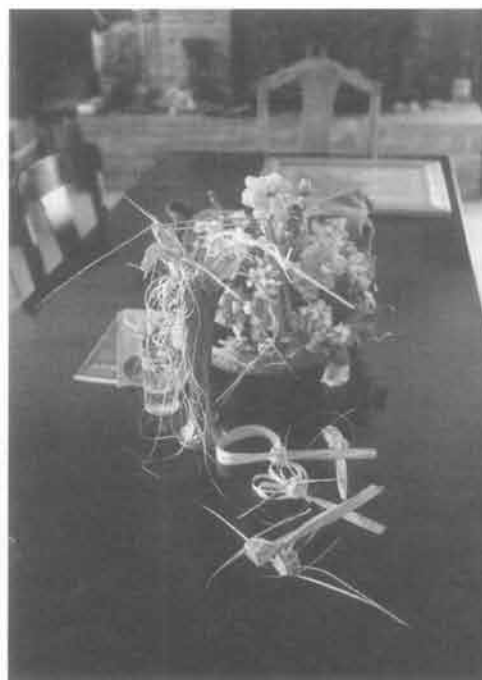
terned after the old cowboy song "Blue Water," it is a comic lament hilariously describing the difficulties of farming the heavy clay "gumbo" soil of the Bootheel.

In general, it may be difficult to pinpoint an Anglo-American (white) musical style or tradition that is unique to the Bootheel region, but as is the case throughout the Mid-South, various forms of country and gospel music have taken root firmly and continue to flourish in both formal and informal contexts. As with the African-American communities in the Bootheel, sacred music is strong and diverse in white communities. While there are few secular music outlets available to African-Americans, nonreligious public venues are more widely available to whites in the Bootheel.

CREATING BY HAND

Material expressions of art and heritage find inspiration in many different aspects of life. As we have seen with regard to music, religion can be a powerful influence. Sometimes inspiration flows from personal spiritual experience of the sort that compels Bishop Armour of Hayti to build models of a future delta-shaped "monument of deliverance." The needs of sacred communities encourage prolific seamstress Irma Jones of Caruthersville to produce beautiful choir robes. Family tradition and Catholic Palm Sunday custom combine to inspire the decorative palm sacramentals braided by Tom Galvin of New Madrid.

A person's occupation is another aspect of life that can inspire creativity. We have mentioned, for example, the popular cotton-bale footstools produced by Sonny Walker from Wardell. Walker's miniature cotton bales and his homemade baling equipment result from imagination applied to many years of cotton farming and first-hand experience with past and present cotton baling methods. F. M. Miller's bricolage of exhaust system parts used to advertise his Bootheel Muffler business located on Ward Avenue in Caruthersville, is another example of creativity linked with occupation. Twisting, pounding and torching the sheet metal parts of greasy automobile underbellies in the Bootheel heat can be exactly what the words scrawled on Mr. Miller's "Muffler Man" indicate — "Exhausting Work!" But muffler mechanics can be proud of their work and their creativity can transcend the normal requirements of their job.



David Whitman

Braided palm sacramentals made every year to mark Palm Sunday by Thomas Gallivan of New Madrid, April 16, 1994.

Family can also influence art. Recall, for example, the role of kinfolk in the foodway creations of Billy Joe Ford, third-generation tamale vendor from Kennett. Family also provides the channel through which the Westfall basketmaking tradition is transmitted. Ronald Westfall of New Madrid is a traditional white oak basketmaker. His father, Everette, and his grandfather, Louis, were both master split-oak basketmakers, but when it came time for Ronald to receive the knowledge



he needed to continue the tradition, they were both deceased. Ronald turned to his Aunt Marjorie Westfall Prewitt, his dad's sister, for the necessary coaching. He is now producing excellent baskets and, though the Missouri Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program (see Appendices), he is working with his son, Jason, to insure that the family tradition is carried forth.

Sometimes ethnicity inspires creative expression. A strong sense of belonging to a specific cultural group can influence artists of all sorts. For example, Eleanor Cooperman of Caruthersville is a Jewish painter who has had advanced formal training in art. She chooses to incorporate letters of the Hebrew alphabet in some of her abstract pieces. African-American coiffure, an ethnic art that is practiced on the folk level, is presently experiencing a great revival. Hair stylists like Pinky Dowell of Hayti are producing braided masterpieces of living hair. These Afro-braided coifs are ethnic statements; the social interaction that takes place within African-American home salons tends to reinforce community and ethnic identity.

It is also true that the production of certain art forms can be linked with gender. Many textile arts, like sewing, tatting, knitting, yarn spinning, needlepoint, crochet, macrame and quilting are most often practiced by women. Although sewing is important, quilting seems to be the most widely practiced textile art in the Bootheel. And, quilting is certainly not unique to the region, it justifies special attention because of its great popularity and prominence.

As an art form, quilting serves a variety of functions. To



F. M. Miller and his "Muffler Man" bricolage of exhaust system parts at his shop in Caruthersville, March 15, 1994. Robin Fanslow

begin with, we should not underestimate the importance of its primary utilitarian role of providing warmth. Within homes of the wealthy as well as the poor, handmade quilts are specially cherished for their aesthetic appeal and for the comfort they provide on chilly nights. However, for poorer and unemployed families, many of whom huddle around wood fires and tiny space heaters, a handmade quilt has a special primary meaning.

Economic aspects of quilting manifest in various ways. The products, which consist of finished quilts, quilt tops, and other quilted items, as well as the processes of quilting and quilt-top piecing, all have material value. Front yard signs which read "Handmade quilts for sale" are common throughout the Bootheel and some personal income is earned by individual and group quilters and quilt-top piecers. Some quilters produce, on consignment or commission, for retail outlets operating in larger towns

in southeast Missouri. Groups sometimes charge to perform the laborious task of quilting for individuals or retailers who provide the finished quilt tops. There is also some barter of quilts and/or quilting for goods and services. In other instances, the fund-raising potential of quilting is applied to larger community needs. Bootheel quilting groups and individuals often raffle or auction off their creations to raise large sums of money for charities. Quilts likewise serve as valuable social commodities that play a role in elaborate gift exchange customs operating between and among friends, neighbors and kinfolk.

On a personal basis, quilting also may provide peace of mind. All Bootheel quilters seem to agree



African-American woman with elaborate hairbraiding, Monument of Deliverance Church, March 6, 1994. David Whitman



that the amount of money received for quilting does not compensate for time spent. Something beyond economics motivates many quilters; perhaps it is the sense of accomplishment, the pleasure of creating beautiful things, or maybe the simple need to stay busy. By allowing women to remain vital and productive during their leisure time, quilting seems to provide positive psychological advantages. Lila Ruff, a quilter from Hayti Heights, commented, "I really would like to see more young women do it [quilt] When you think about putting all those little pieces together, well, the devil can't get in there because you've got your mind on those little pieces."

The communal aspects of quilting are very important and quilting in groups has a long tradition in the Bootheel. One quilt on display at the New Madrid Museum was made by Catholic women as a fund-raiser for their church in 1886. Another of approximately the same vintage, on display at the Dunklin County Museum in Kennett, has signatures of a great many quilters embroidered on the quilt top. Currently, quilting groups throughout the Bootheel meet weekly at churches, community centers, hospitals or private homes. Groups like the Quilting Ladies at the Campbell Nutrition Center, the First United Methodist Church Ecumenical Quilting Group of New Madrid and the Dexter Hospital Auxiliary Ladies Quilting Group meet each week for fellowship and, as many members said, to keep their hands busy helping others. Group quilters participate in and pass on values and traditions as they maintain community and fellowship.

Although quilters often follow traditional patterns and aesthetic principals, there is room for creativity and innovation. Shirley Fay DeJournett, a quilter from Parma, created a quilt pattern ("Sand Dollar Square") that she has never seen in a book or in another quilt. Lila Ruff created a pattern for a Chicago Bulls quilt which she makes as a gift for male family members. The tradition remains dynamic as quilters quickly pick up on innovations in materials, patterns and technique.

While similar materials and techniques are shared by quilters in the Bootheel, distinguishing features are found. One set of discerning characteristics seems to pertain to ethnic tradition. There are many excellent African-American quilters in the region and their work is often quite distinct. To begin with, aesthetic rules regarding color choice employed by black quilters often differ from those employed by white quilters. The choice of bright, non-primary shades and the combination of sharply contrasting colors is characteristic of African-American quilters like Lara Mae King of Portageville and Mary Frances Bell of Homestown. Many of the quilts of African-American artist Lucy Glover of Lilbourne, who turned 100 in 1994, incorporate patterns of narrow, linear strips pieced around the borders or elsewhere into her quilt tops. By comparison to most Anglo-American quilters, the arrangement of pieces in precise repetitive symmetry typically does not command as high a priority among African-American quilters. Instead of strictly following established patterns, more improvisation is found in the design of African-American quilts.

It is important to understand that these are general observations taken from samples we encountered during this project; other specific examples may not agree with these generalizations. Nevertheless, Bootheel quilters seem to be working within two distinct aesthetic traditions: African-American and Anglo-American. These distinctive traditions, equally valid and deserving of appreciation, produce some of the most important regional art in the Bootheel.

The natural environment of the Bootheel gives rise to a wide range of folk material. At the beginning of the

twentieth century, much of the region was covered by one of the last great wetland forests in North America. Deep swamp, seasonally inundated lowlands, and marginally cleared Mississippi levee cropland bordered the great river. A dozen miles to the west, the natural Little River drainage system flowed through swamp and lowland to the Missouri/Arkansas border where it discharged into



Lila Ruff of Hayti Heights works on her Chicago Bulls quilt a design of her own creation, March 16, 1994.

Erica Mair



Big Lake, a National Wildlife Refuge. Interspersed within the great cypress/tupelo swamp were long, low, north/south trending sand ridges, locally called "donnicks," which were covered with mixed hardwood, small meadows and game in abundance. At the turn of the twentieth century, trapping, hunting and fishing provided professional occupations for some and subsistence to many others. A wealth of crafts and skills were developed to exploit these wilderness resources. Although a massive man-made drainage system transformed most of the swamp into farmland during this century, an interest in hunting and fishing persists in the Bootheel and it continues to support a rich material culture.

The Great Mississippi Flyway, the superhighway for migratory waterfowl seasonally travelling between Canada and the Gulf Coast, has long drawn the attention of Bootheel hunters and folk artists. Ducks and geese have frequently used the ample southeast Missouri wetlands a convenient rest stop, and hunters have developed a clever assortment of devices to enliven their visit. Around the turn of the century, James T. Beckhart, a commercial hunter, fisherman and sportsmen's guide living in the Big Lake area south of Hornersville, carved his first duck calls. Mr. Beckhart's calls became so successful that other carvers in the area copied them and a Big Lake duck call tradition emerged.

Barry McFarland of Hornersville and Kent Freeman, originally from Kennett and now living in Cape Girardeau, are two superb artists who continue to carve in the Big Lake tradition. Mr. McFarland learned to carve from Joe Stone, whose father, Claude, a craftsman of renown himself, acquired J. T. Beckhart's carving tools after he died in 1922. Mr. Freeman learned to carve from Alan Bradley, Jr., a retired school teacher and avid hunter from Kennett, who continues to carve highly prized calls today.

All of these carvers produce walnut calls distinctively decorated with hand-checked teardrop fields—the hallmark of the Big Lake tradition. Both Mr. McFarland and Mr. Freeman are masters of this tradi-

tion, but they have also freely innovated with regard to decorative carving, wood selection and finish. Both carvers have won national competitions sponsored by the Callmakers & Collectors Association of America.

Waterfowl are lured within gunning range by familiar sights as well as sounds; they want to be among contented brethren. Earlier this century, roughly shaped wooden decoys helped hunters create an inviting scene for their quarry. Some hunters claim that waterfowl have become more wary as the century progressed and decoys had to be made increasingly more lifelike. Whether or not this is true, the decoys Kent Freeman carves would fool a duck's mother. But Kent would be the first to admit that his ducks, with their intricately carved feathers, authentic coloration and naturalistic poses, are made to attract collectors instead of ducks. In 1994, Mr. Freeman was selected to be a master folk artist in the Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program through which he is encouraging his son to develop skills in duck call and wildfowl carvings.



C. Ray Brassieur

Duck decoy carved by world champion decoy carver Kent Freeman, former Kennett resident, now residing in Cape Girardeau, April 14, 1994.

The successful waterfowl hunter also relies upon cleverly constructed blinds to conceal his or her presence. Hunters also typically need boats to carry them to and from their blinds. New Madrid craftsman Phil Pfuehler has a knack for designing solutions which meet both needs. One of Mr. Pfuehler's hunting boats is a twenty-foot aluminum johnboat upon which he has built an elaborate cabin/blind superstructure. Ideal for fowling along the Mississippi River, it is large enough to transport decoys and gear and powerful enough to negotiate big river waters. The innovative plywood superstructure serves as an enclosed, heated cabin under power and, when deployed with camouflage netting and natural reeds, a cozy blind to shoot from.

Mr. Pfuehler claims that a good hunter knows his prey so well that he can get into the waterfowl's head. Some of his innovations have taken that concept literally. For example, Mr. Pfuehler has designed and built an oversized goose decoy, which can be trailered into the field and is large enough to serve as a hunting blind



for two men and a dog. Another of his innovations began with the fiberglass hull of a speed boat which Mr. Pfuehler transformed into a fowling boat/blind. It has four rectangular covered deck-openings covered with oversized goose decoys under which hunters hide. The deck of this rig is painted dark brown to resemble the mud bars common along the Mississippi River. Perhaps his most interesting invention is his "bean-field coffin," a small boat which is set up between rows in a flooded soybean field. The vessel serves as a camouflaged blind for one hunter who hides in the prone position — as though laid to rest — and rises quickly to a seated position to fire at incoming fowl.

Fishermen need boats as well and they are often designed specifically according to need. L. D. Roseman of New Madrid builds what he calls a crappie boat. It is a small, shallow, flat-bottom boat built light enough for one man to carry. Mr. Roseman's plywood and cypress crappie boat, propelled by paddle, is designed specifically for the calm waters



C. Ray Brassieur
Wayne Springer with his handmade "log net" catfish trap in Homersville, April 17, 1994.

of the borrow canals along the Mississippi River levee.

Wayne Springer, a commercial fisherman from Homersville, builds a johnboat designed to navigate the large Little River Drainage System ditches that flow swiftly into Big Lake. Springer's outboard-motorized, thirteen-foot boat has the strength needed to haul fishing nets, ice coolers, gear and a sizeable catch. There are few wooden boats built today in the Bootheel, and the skills needed to construct them are rare.

Springer also builds what he calls "log nets," cylindrical catfish traps made of oak slats and reinforced with wooden hoops. Springer claims that the idea for these traps was brought to

Homersville by fishermen who moved there from Tennessee. These traps are baited with cheese and deployed so that catfish swimming upstream travel through a series of funnel-shaped flues into a holding compartment. The use of these traps is currently illegal in Missouri.

VERBAL ART AND ORAL TRADITION

While particular material and musical artistic forms such as gospel music and quilting are strong and easily identifiable in the Bootheel, more subtle and less immediately accessible forms of artistic expression are also found. Verbal arts expressed through a variety of narratives such as personal experience stories, family histories, local/oral history, legends, anecdotes and folktales abound in the region. These narratives are communicated within families and communities, and shared among members of ethnic or racial groups.

Often these stories are such an integral part of everyday life that they are not recognized as artistic expression. We recognize talented musicians, singers, quilters and boatbuilders as possessing a special something that sets

them apart from others, yet we often fail to consider the stories passed down to us by our grandparents in the same vein. Nonetheless, stories and the ability to communicate them to others is creative expression in its own right.

During our brief stay in the Bootheel, we visited individuals who are noted in their communities for their narrative talents. Examples include local historians W. F. James of Caruthersville; Maxwell Williams of Gideon; Marshall Dial of Portageville, a fine narrator who conducted oral history interviews of older Bootheel residents on his radio show "The Stories They Tell"; Alex Cooper, an oral historian and storyteller of events significant to the African-American community in the Bootheel; and Alex's older brother, Roy Cooper, Jr., who is the official "griot" (teller) of the family history.

The most pervasive types of stories found by the research group include narratives that had to do with



personal, family and local history. In his previous essay, Sw. Anand Prahlad eloquently points to the effect of historical influences on expressive art forms. A lively oral tradition exists about significant events in the Bootheel that have forever marked the landscape and affected residents' lives. For example, since families came to the Bootheel from other geographic locations, migration stories are commonly found both in white and African American communities. W. F. James tells the story of his grandparents' migration into the Bootheel from Kentucky to the Clarkton area over the Old Plank Road before the Civil War. Joseph DeLilse retains the story of his family's immigration from France to Canada during the colonial era, subsequent migration to New Madrid, and role as one of the founding families of what is now Portageville. Alex Cooper and Roy Cooper, Jr., also tell of their father's migration to the Bootheel in the 1940s, in hopes of acquiring land through a government program established after the collapse of the sharecropping system. The farm which Roy Cooper, Sr., obtained as a result of that migration remains within the family today and serves as the central gathering point for the annual family reunion.

Migration stories help people explain their place in a particular locale, how they became part of a particular geographic landscape. Other common types of historical narratives include stories about the Great New Madrid earthquake and its devastating effects; how the Bootheel became part of Missouri; family struggles, skirmishes, conflicts and outlaw activities that took place in the Bootheel during the Civil War; local occurrences such as shootings in Wardell and Clarkton; the last hanging in New Madrid; logging and draining of the swamps; sharecropping, cotton chopping and picking; floods and floods averted by the world's longest ditches; life during the Depression; and the sharecroppers' strike of 1939 and subsequent formation of Delmo Housing, to name a few. Some of these narratives reflect larger events that have affected all of the Bootheel, while others are particular to a town or specific locale. Narratives recall cer-

tain landmarks important to community memory, such as the Old Pole or Old Plank Road, and they express firsthand experience about often difficult times of economic and social change, upheaval and personal strife.

While the subjects of many narratives cross social, ethnic and racial boundaries, some express the history and perspectives of particular groups. The Jewish community in the Bootheel, for example, did not farm but became part of the mercantile establishment; stories are related about these experiences. In the African-American community, an oral tradition focuses on August 8, the day that news of the emancipation of slaves reached the Bootheel. August 8 also falls within a traditional period of rest known as "lay-by time," the time between cotton chopping



Alex Cooper telling stories at the Cooper family farm in rural Pemiscot County, August 13, 1994.

Carole Patterson

(hoeing for weeds) and harvest during which family and community gatherings would be held among African-Americans. Some African-American families also retain active storytelling traditions about their ancestors who were slaves, the struggles of their families after emancipation, tales about the Night Riders, morality tales and other narratives that mark the African-American experience.

Besides the multitude of stories about historical events, local legends are found, some of which bear a distinct supernatural element. For example, we recorded several versions of the story of the Farrenburg lights, which tells of a headless man walking the railroad tracks while swinging a lantern and searching for his head. What is supernatural to some is merely swamp gas to others, but quite a few residents have seen or have heard of people who have seen lights and the story remains alive. Another legend relates the story of a baby that fell off a bridge and drowned but whose cries can still be heard. Stories about possible haunted houses were also found in the region. Some of these narratives bear resemblance to other legends from other parts of the country, but the specifics reflect local elements and details. Another interesting category of narrative collected by our group involved stories about panthers said to have inhabited the region. One person recalled that while



working for University Extension in the 1940s, he was directed to go out and hunt a reported panther—which turned out to be nothing but a lost dog. Stories about panthers are also found in certain parts of Indiana, in the Ozarks, and elsewhere in the Mississippi Delta, suggesting a wider geographic distribution of such reportings than might be immediately apparent.

The range of topics described above is by no means exhaustive of the regional narrative repertoire. It is important to remember that artists and craftspeople of all types also tell narratives and anecdotes about their particular art form. Anyone who knows a quilter, has heard

stories about quilts that have been made and handed down in families. Thomas Gallivan, a resident of New Madrid and acknowledged cabinet maker and wood-carver, recited a rhyme told to him as a child by his Uncle Patrick, a woodchopper of legendary abilities. This rhyme entertains while it teaches about the various qualities of fire wood. It is an excellent example of the sort of oral tradition shared by people whose inspirations derive from an intimate relationship with, and great knowledge of, local environment. We could not resist closing with Mr. Gallivan's ditty:

Cypress flares up fast, burns too
bright, and will not last;

Poplar wood will make smoke, it'll
burn your eyes and make you choke;

Elm wood burns like a churchyard
mold, even the very flame is cold;

Gum wood burns bright and clear
if the wood is aged a year;

Oaken log, if dry and old, will keep
away the winter cold; but

Ash wood, wet or dry, that's the fire
to warm your ass by!



David Whitman

Elder Charlie Clayburn preaching at Monument of Deliverance Church in Hayti, March 3, 1994.

KEY SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Sometimes you just need to know who to call. The following Resources List for Artists and Arts Programmers is provided to help you find the assistance you need. The National Endowment for the Arts/Folk and Traditional Arts Program, which helped fund this Bootheel Project, is among the national organizations appearing on this list. Please contact these helpful folks with any comments, ideas or questions you have. However, if you are from Missouri, and you have arts project ideas or questions about potential support for arts projects, your best bet is to contact the skilled personnel at the Missouri Arts Council or the Missouri Folk Arts Program. The following brief introductions are provided to help you learn a little more about these key support programs.

Missouri Arts Council

In 1965, the Missouri General Assembly established the Missouri Arts Council to encourage and stimulate the growth, development and appreciation of the arts in Missouri. The council, the second oldest state-funded arts agency in the country, provides technical and financial assistance to Missouri artists and arts organizations. Through the Missouri General Assembly and the National Endowment for the Arts, the council allocates state and federal tax dollars to arts projects throughout Missouri.

The Missouri Arts Council provides funds and administrative support for the following programs: Missouri Folk Arts Program; Program Assistance (to arts organizations involved in dance, literature, media, multidiscipline, music, theater and the visual arts); Community Arts Program; Missouri Touring Program; Art Education Programs; and a variety of other programs and projects.

The Missouri Arts Council is located in downtown St. Louis. Anyone who wishes to discuss project ideas or who needs further information, may visit or call (314) 340-6845.

Missouri Arts Council
Wainwright State Office Complex
111 North Seventh Street, #105
St. Louis, MO 63101-2188



David Whitman
Elder Charlie Clayburn encouraging children to sing at Monument of Deliverance Church, Hayti March 3, 1994.

Missouri Folk Arts Program

The Missouri Folk Arts Program receives funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Missouri Arts Council to conserve and present the state's living folk arts and folklife. The program's objectives are to research and document Missouri's traditional arts; to identify folk artists across the state; to build appreciation for Missouri's folk heritage through a variety of public programs, publications, and special projects; to encourage folk artists to pass down their skills to community members; and to make the state's rich folk heritage more accessible to all Missourians.

Located in McReynolds Hall at the University of Missouri in Columbia, the Missouri Folk Arts Program is primarily comprised of two major

areas of activities: Traditional Arts Apprenticeships and Missouri Performing Traditions. The apprenticeship program elicits new applications in June from master folk artists who wish to share their knowledge with a dedicated apprentice. The applications are reviewed in the early fall by a panel of experts, and the selected teams work together for a period of eight to nine months. Missouri Performing Traditions works with cosponsors across the state to present an impressive array of the state's finest traditional performing artists at evening concerts, outdoor festivals and other events.

If you are interested in applying for an apprenticeship grant or in working with Missouri Performing Traditions, please contact Dana Everts-Boehm or Julie Youmans at (314) 882-6296.

Missouri Folk Arts Program
153-157 McReynolds Hall
University of Missouri-Columbia
Columbia, MO 65211

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150 East Rust Avenue
Holly Springs, MS 38635
(601) 252-8000, ext. 4560

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University, MS 38677
(601) 232-7812

Sw. Anand Prahlad
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University of Missouri-Columbia
107 Tate Hall
Columbia, MO 65211
(314) 882-0664

National Organizations

American Arts Alliance
1319 F Street, Suite 307
Washington, DC 20004
(202) 289-1818

American Folklife Center
The Library of Congress
Washington DC 20540
(202) 707-6590

Institute of Museum Services
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20506
(202) 786-0536

American Association of Museums
1225 Eye Street, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 289-1818

Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural
Studies
Smithsonian Institution
955 L'Enfant Plaza
Washington, DC 20560
(202) 287-3424

National Assembly of Local Arts Agencies
1420 K Street, NW, Suite 204
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 371-2830

American Assoc. of State and Local History
530 Church Street, Suite 600
Nashville, TN 37219
(625) 255-2971

Council on Foundations
1828 L Street, NW
Suite 1200
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 466-6512

National Assembly of State Arts Agencies
1010 Vermont Avenue, NW, Suite 920
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 347-6352

American Council for the Arts
1 East 53rd Street
New York, NY 10022
(212) 245-4510

Dance/USA
777 Fourteenth Street, Suite 540
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 628-0144

National Council for the Traditional Arts
806 Fifteenth Street, NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 639-8370

American Crafts Council
40 West 53rd Street
New York, NY 10019
(212) 956-3535

Fund for Folk Culture
P.O. Box 1566
Sante Fe, NM 87508
(314) 984-2534

National Endowment for the Arts
Folk and Traditional Arts Program
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Room 710
Washington, DC 20506
(202) 682-5449

National Endowment for the Arts
Nancy Hanks Center
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20506
(202) 682-5400

National Endowment for the Humanities
806 Fifteenth Street
Washington, DC 20506
(202) 724-0386
[NEH Humanities Projects in Museums and
Historical Organizations, (202) 606-8284]

North American Folk Music and Dance Alliance
P.O. Box 5010
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
(919) 962-3397

Office of Museum Programs
Smithsonian Institution
Washington, DC 20560
(202) 357-3101

Regional and Neighboring State Organizations

Arkansas Arts Council
Mr. Bill Puppione, Executive Director
1500 Tower Building
323 Center Street
Little Rock, AR 72201
(501) 324-9766
(501) 324-9154 Fax

Center for Southern Folklore
Dr. Judy Peiser
152 Beale Street
Memphis, TN 38101-0226
(901) 525-3655

Center for the Study of Southern Culture
Dr. Bill Ferris, Director
University of Mississippi
University, MS 38766
(601) 232-7812

Delta Cultural Center
95 Missouri Street
Helena, AR 72342
(501) 338-8919

Illinois Arts Council
Folk and Ethnic Arts Program
State of Illinois Center
100 West Randolph, Suite 10-500
Chicago, IL 60601
(312) 814-6750

Kentucky Folklife Program
P.O. Box H
Frankfort, KY 40602-3016
(502) 564-3016
(502) 564-4701 Fax

Living Blues Magazine
Mr. David Nelson, Editor
Center for the Study of Southern Culture
University of Mississippi
University, MS 38766
(601) 232-5518

Mid-America Arts Alliance
912 Baltimore Avenue, Suite 700
Kansas City, MO 64105
(816) 421-1388
(816) 421-3918 Fax

Mississippi Arts Commission
Folk Arts Program
Dr. Deborah Boykin, Director
239 North Lamar Street
Jackson, MS 39201
(601) 359-6030

Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience
P.O. Box 16528
Jackson, MS 39236-0528
(601) 362-5518

Ozark Folk Center
Dr. William K. McNeil
Mountain View, AR 72569
(501) 269-8102

Southern Arts Federation
Dr. Peggy Bulger
181 Fourteenth Street, NE, Suite 400
Atlanta, GA 30309
(404) 874-7244
(404) 873-2148 Fax

Texarkana Reg. Arts/Humanities Council
Dr. Charles Rogers, Executive Director
P.O. Box 1171
Texarkana, TX 75504-1171
(903) 792-8681

Missouri State Organizations

African American Cultural Initiative
Ms. Brenda Jones, Executive Director
1750 South Brentwood Boulevard, Suite 501
St. Louis, MO 63144
(314) 962-1880

Center for Ozark Studies
Mr. Robert Flanders
Southwest Missouri State University
Box 134
900 South National
Springfield, MO 65804
(417) 836-5755

Center for Regional History
Dr. Frank Nickell, Director
Southeast Missouri State University
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
(314) 651-2555
(314) 651-2180 (History Dept.)

Department of Rural Sociology
Dr. Sandy Rikoon
University of Missouri-Columbia
Sociology Building, Room 105
Columbia, MO 65211
(314) 882-0861

Division of State Parks
Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176
(314) 751-2479

Missouri Alliance for Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 895
Jefferson City, MO 65102
(314) 635-6877

Missouri Arts Council
Ms. Diana J. Cherryholmes
Program Administrator
111 North Seventh Street, Suite 105
St. Louis, MO 63101-2188
(314) 340-6845

Missouri Association of Community Arts Agencies
Ms. Nola Ruth, Director
1507 East Broadway
Columbia, MO 65201
(314) 875-1811

Missouri Citizens for the Arts
#20-117 Plaza Square
St. Louis, MO 63103
(314) 436-0403

Missouri Folklore Society
Dr. Adolph and Mrs. Rebecca Schroeder
P.O. Box 1757
Columbia, MO 65205
(314) 449-0795

Missouri Humanities Council
911 Washington Avenue, Suite 215
St. Louis, MO 63101-1208
(314) 621-7705
(314) 621-5850 Fax

Missouri Museums Association
c/o Missouri Historical Society
P.O. Box 11940
St. Louis, MO 63112-0040

Missouri State Genealogical Association
P.O. Box 833
Columbia, MO 65205-0833
[Archives-Mid Continent Library]

Missouri State Museum
State Capital Building
Room B-2
Jefferson City, MO 65101
(314) 751-4523

State Historic Preservation Program
Missouri Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176
(314) 751-5365

State Historical Society of Missouri
1020 Lowry Street
Columbia, MO 65201
(314) 882-7083

Western Historical Manuscript Collection
Ms. Nancy Lankford, Associate Director
23 Ellis Library
University of Missouri-Columbia
Columbia, MO 65201
(314) 882-6028

University Extension Offices Serving the Bootheel

Bollinger Co. University Extension Office
Mr. Roger L. Eakins, Program Director
Courthouse, P.O. Box 5
Marble Hill, MO 63764
(314) 243-3581
(314) 238-2420 Fax
Internet: eakinsr@ext.missouri.edu

Bootheel Initiative Office
Ms. Emma Walker, Coordinator
Lincoln University Extension
P.O. Box 150
Lilbourn, MO 63862
(314) 688-2420
(314) 688-2834 Fax

Butler Co. University Extension Office
Ms. Phyllis A. Flanigan, Program Director
Courthouse Basement
Poplar Bluff, MO 63901
(314) 686-8064
Internet: flanagap@ext.missouri.edu

Cape Girardeau Co. University Extension Office
Mr. Gerald G. Bryan, Program Director
815 Hwy 25 South
P.O. Box 408
Jackson, MO 63755
(314) 243-3581

Consumer and Family Economics
Ms. Linda Murphy, Regional Specialist
University Extension
600-C Main Street
New Madrid, MO 63869
(314) 748-5531
Internet: murphyl@ext.missouri.edu

Delta Center
Mr. Jake Fisher, Superintendent
P.O. Box 160
Portageville, MO 63873
(314) 379-5431

Dunklin Co. University Extension Office
Dr. Micheal R. Milam, Program Director
Courthouse Annex
P.O. Box 160
Kennett, MO 63857
(314) 888-4722

Human Development
Ms. Mary Engram, Regional Specialist
University Extension
109 First Street
Charleston, MO 63834
(314) 683-6129
Internet: engramm@ext.missouri.edu

Mississippi Co. University Extension Office
Mr. C. Tim Schnakenberg, Program Director
109 North First Street
Charleston, MO 63834
(314) 683-6129
Internet: schnakec@ext.missouri.edu

New Madrid Co. University Extension Office
Mr. Kenneth D. Shields, Program Director
600-C Main Street
New Madrid, MO 63869
(314) 748-5531
[Organizer—"Sew With Cotton"]

Nutrition
Ms. Glynda Hensley, Regional Specialist
University Extension
103 West Seventh Street
P.O. Box 1001
Caruthersville, MO 63830
(314) 333-0258
Internet: hensleyg@ext.missouri.edu

Pemiscot Co. University Extension Office
Mr. Raymond A. Nabors, Program Director
P.O. Box 1001
103 West Seventh Street
Caruthersville, MO 63830
(314) 333-0258
Internet: naborsr@ext.missouri.edu

Scott Co. University Extension Office
Ms. Janet L. Kline, Program Director
P.O. Box 187
Benton, MO 63736
(314) 545-3516
Internet: klinej@ext.missouri.edu

Southeast Region University Extension Office
Dr. J. D. McNutt, Director
Delta Center
P.O. Box 160
Portageville, MO 63873
(314) 379-5431

Stoddard Co. University Extension Office
Mr. Robert Taylor, Program Director
Northeast Corner, Courthouse Square
P.O. Box F
Bloomfield, MO 63825
(314) 568-3344

Local Organizations

Beta Sigma Phi Craft Show
Ms. Deanna Maclin
P.O. Drawer 139
Caruthersville, MO 63830
(314) 333-0878

Big Oak Tree State Park
Mr. Rubin Templeton, Superintendent
Route 2, Box 343
East Prairie, MO 63845
(314) 649-3149
[Ms. Sylvie Barker, Living History Day coordinator]

Bollinger County Historical Society
Ms. Jeanie Troy, Correspondent
P.O. Box 430
Marble Hill, MO 63764
(314) 238-4374
[Historic home—Massey House]

Bollinger Mill State Historic Site
Mr. Jack Smoot, Administrator
P.O. Box 248
Bufordville, MO 63739
(314) 243-4591

Bootheel Educational Center
Dr. Robert E. Ritschel, Director
700 North Douglass
Malden, MO 63863
(314) 276-4577
Internet:
C366GRB@SEMOVM.SEMO.EDU

Bootheel Youth Musuem
Dr. Ray Vandiver, Director
P.O. Box 182
Malden, MO 63863
(314) 276-3600

Bulter County Historical Society
Ms. Thelma Sanders, President
951 Cynthia Street
Poplar Bluff, MO 63901
[Archives, Historic school/homes]

Campbell Area Genealogical & Historical Society
Mr. Hal V. Miller, Secretary
P.O. Box 401
Campbell, MO 63933-0401
(314) 246-2208

Cape Girardeau Co. Genealogical Society
Ms. Alice Spillman, Correspondent
P.O. Box 389
Jackson, MO 63755

Cape Girardeau Co. Historical Society
Mr. Ed Schilling, President
2219 Whitney Jean
Jackson, MO 63755
(314) 243-5887

Cape River Heritage Museum
Ms. Martha Bender
1707 Broodwood Drive
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
(314) 334-0405

Dixie Arts Council
Ms. Marian Bock
P.O. Box 96
New Madrid, MO 63869
(314) 748-2866
(314) 748-5402 Fax

Dunklin Co. Genealogical Society
Ms. Lois Farmer, President
226 North Main Street
Kennett, MO 63857
(314) 888-3561

Dunklin County Museum
Mrs. Sandy Brown, Director
122 College
Kennett, MO 63857
(314) 888-6620

Friends of Music
Mr. Jules Mercier, President
317 North Jackson
Kennett, MO 63857
(314) 888-6396

Genealogical Society of Butler County
Ms. Mary Sue Beis, President
P.O. Box 426
Poplar Bluff, MO 63902

Historical Society of Greater Cape Girardeau, Inc.
325-R South Spanish
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
(314) 334-1177
[Historic homes/archives]

Hunter-Dawson State Historic Site
Route 1, Box 4a
New Madrid, MO 63869
(314) 748-5340.

Jackson Heritage Association
Ms. Dorothy Palisch, President
P.O. Box 352
Jackson, MO 63755
[Historic home—Oliver House]

KMIS Radio Station
Mr. Ray Taylor, Program Manager
P.O. Box 250
Portageville, MO 63873
(314) 379-5436
(314) 379-2233 Fax

Kennett Sound Studio
Mr. Joe Keane, Owner
2000 South Bypass
Kennett, MO 63857
(314) 888-2995

Malden Arts Council
Mrs. Pat Morehead, Director
505 North Beckwith
Malden, MO 63863

Malden Community Concert Association
Mr. Robert Ritschel
c/o Bootheel Education Center
700 North Douglass
Malden, MO 63863
(314) 276-4577

Malden Historical Museum
Mrs. Betty Arnold, Secretary
Box 142
201 North Beckwith
Malden, MO 63863
(314) 276-5008

Mark Jordan Productions
Mr. Mark Jordan, President
211 North Walnut
Kennett, MO 62857
(314) 888-6377

Mississippi Co. Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 5
Charleston, MO 63834

Mississippi Co. Historical Society
Ms. Martha Ellen Lankheit, President
P.O. Box 278
Charleston, MO 63834
(314) 683-3837
[Musuem/Archives—The Moore House]

Mississippi Flyway Weavers Guild
Ms. Nellice Gillespie
Route 1, Box 78
Glen-Allen, MO 63751
(314) 495-2249

Missouri Cotton Ladies
Mrs. Becky Harris
Rt. 2, Box 137
Senath, MO 63876
(314) 738-2972
[“Sew With Cotton” sponsor/organizer]

New Madrid Historical Museum
Ms. Malissa D. Hunter, President
No. 1 Main Street
New Madrid, MO 63869
(314)-748-5944
[Historic home—Stepp/Hart House]

Otter Slough Wildlife Area
Route 3
Dexter, MO 63841
(314) 624-5851

Ozark Foothills Spinners
Ms. Debbie Baker
12370 HWY TT
Festus, MO 63028
(314) 937-3697

Pemiscot County Historical Society
Mr. W. F. James, President
P.O. Box 604
Caruthersville, MO 63830
(314) 333-2126
[Archives, local/oral history, audio tapes]

Poplar Bluff MOARK Regional Railroad
Museum
Ms. Lena McPheeters, President
303 Moran Street
Poplar Bluff, MO 63901
(314) 785-4539

River Heritage Association
Great River Road Interpretive Center
66 South Main
Ste. Genevieve, MO 63670
(314) 883-7097
[Local contacts: Ms. Marian Bock, New
Madrid, (314) 748-2866; Ms. Leslie
Brunner, Kennett, (314) 882-3809]

SEMO Council on the Arts
Mrs. Beverly Strohmeier, Director
P.O. Box 901
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
(314)-334-9233

SEMO Little Theater
Mr. Barney Greenway, Director
807 West North
Kennett, MO 63857
(314) 888-1333

Scott Co. Historical Society
Pat Hampton, Secretary
405 Ashley Drive
Sikeston, MO 63801

Sikeston Art League
Mr. Aaron Horrell
Route 1, Box 689
Chaffee, MO 63740
(314) 887-3540

Sikeston Arts and Education Council
Ms. Janice Matthews
P.O. Box 1561
Sikeston, MO 63801
(314) 471-0723

Stoddard County Fair Board
Mr. Henry Kestner, President
Route 1
Dudley, MO 63936
(314) 624-5581

Stoddard County Historical Society
Mr. Grant Thorn, President
Route 2, Box 170
Bloomfield, MO 63825
(314) 586-2489

Stoddard County Museum
400 Center Street
Bloomfield, MO 63825

Three Rivers Community College
Dr. Mary Phyfer
2080 Three Rivers Blvd.
Poplar Bluff, MO 63901
(314) 840-9600

"Time for Talk" Radio Show
Mr. and Mrs. Russell and Rosemary Burcham
Slicer Street Church of Christ
209 Slicer
Kennett, MO 63857
(314) 888-5974
[Local history videotape collection]

Trail of Tears State Park
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
(314) 334-1711

Tri-County Human Development Corporation
Mr. James McNeal, Executive Director
P.O. Drawer 1158
Caruthersville, MO 63830
(314) 333-2260

Wednesday Federated Music Club
Ms. Marla Roberts
1612 West Washington
Kennett, MO 63857
(314) 888-4391

Wolf Bayou Conservation Area
Caruthersville, MO 63830
(314) 748-5134

Local Libraries

Bloomfield Public Library
Ms. Virginia Hampton, Librarian
P.O. Box 23
Bloomfield, MO 63825
(314) 568-3626

Bollinger County Library
Ms. Velma Polen, Director
P.O. Box 53
Marble Hill, MO 63764
(314) 238-2713

Campbell Branch Library
Ms. Alice Whitehead, Librarian
104 South Ash Street
Campbell, MO 63933-1550
(314) 246-2112
[Genealogical Section]

Cape Girardeau Public Library
Ms. Elizabeth Adler, Director
711 North Clark
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
(314) 334-5279

Cardwell Library Branch
Ms. Donna Parker, Librarian
110 North Main Street
Cardwell, MO 63829
(314) 654-3366

Caruthersville Public Library
Ms. Linda McClanahan, Librarian
1002 Ward Avenue
Caruthersville, MO 63830
(314) 333-2480

Chaffee Public Library
Mary Frances Rister, Librarian
202 Wright Avenue
Chaffee, MO 63740
(314) 887-3298

Clarkton Branch Library
Clarkton, MO 63837
(314) 448-3803

Conran Public Library
Ms. Hazel Poe, Librarian
302-E Main Street
Hayti, MO 63851
(314) 359-0599

Dexter Public Library
Ms. Loyce L. Reed, Librarian
34 South Elm Street
Dexter, MO 63841
(314) 624-3764

Dunklin County Library
Mr. Benny D. Freeman, Director
226 North Main
Kennett, MO 63857
(314) 888-3561
[Genealogical Society Collection]

Kent Library
Southeast Missouri State University
900 Normal
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
(314) 651-2235
(314) 651-2235 Fax
Internet: C785LIB@SEMOVM.SEMO.EDU

Holcomb Public Library
Main Street
Holcomb, MO 63852
(314) 792-3268

Hornersville Branch Library
Ms. Mildred Langdon, Librarian
213 Mound Street
P.O. Box 37
Hornersville, MO 63855-0037
(314) 737-2728

Jackson City Library
225 South High
Jackson, MO 63755
[Cape Co. Historical Society Collection]

First Baptist Church Library
Mr. and Mrs. David and Sara LaGore
300 St. Francis Street
Kennett, MO 63857
(314) 888-4689

Lilbourn Memorial Library
Ms. Myrtle Smith, Librarian
Lewis Avenue P.O. Box 282
Lilbourn, MO 63862
(314) 688-2622

Malden Branch Library
Ms. Helen Clingsmith, Librarian
113 North Madison
Malden, MO 63863
(314) 276-3674

Mississippi County Library
Joseph Dark, Director
P.O. Box 160
Charleston, MO 63834
(314) 683-6748

Mitchell Memorial Library
Mrs. Wyolodene Walker, Librarian
204 East Washington Street
East Prairie, MO 63845
(314) 649-2131

New Madrid Co. Library
Portageville Branch
Ms. Laura Massie
221 East Main
Portageville, MO 63873
(314) 379-3538
[Marshall Dial Oral History Collection]

New Madrid Memorial Library
Ms. Martha Hunter
431 Mill Street
New Madrid, MO 63869
(314) 748-2378
[Photographic history]

Poplar Bluff Library
Mr. DeWayne Beckemeier, Director
318 North Main
Poplar Bluff, MO 63902
[Genealogical Records]
(314) 686-8639

Riverside Regional Library
201 South Union Avenue
P.O. Box 389
Jackson, MO 63755
[Cape Girardeau Genealogical Society]

Rutland Library
Three Rivers Community College
2080 Three Rivers Boulevard
Poplar Bluff, MO 63901
(314) 840-9654
(314) 840-9659 Fax
[Black history, Civil War, Missouri History]

Senath Branch Library
Mrs. Jesse Fernbuck, Librarian
110-112 North Main
Senath, MO 63876
(314) 738-2363

Sikeston Public Library
Ms. Alice Jackson, Director
221 North Kingshighway
P.O. Box 1279
Sikeston, MO 63801
(314) 471-4140
(314) 471-6048 Fax

Steele Public Library
Ms. Myrna McKay, Director
117 South Walnut Street
Steele, MO 63877
(314) 695-3561

CATALOGUE OF BOOTHEEL PROJECT AUDIO CASSETTE RECORDINGS

A Note About the Accession Number System

The 135 cassette tapes listed in the following catalogue are part of the Bootheel Project research materials which are located at the Western Historical Manuscript Collection, Ellis Library, University of Missouri-Columbia. These cassette recordings are made available for the use of researchers. Each cassette has been assigned an accession number so it may be recalled when needed. The first part of this number, which appears in the catalogue as "AC1, AC2, AC3...", refers to "Audio Cassette 1, Audio Cassette 2..." of the Bootheel Project.

The second part of the accession number consists of a three-part system used by researchers in the field. It encodes additional information about each cassette. Here is an example of a field accession number:

BH94-RB2-CT2

This number has three parts: (1) "BH94" (2) "RB2" and (3) "CT2."

(1) "BH94" designates a project code (referring to Bootheel) and the year of the interview (1994).

(2) "RB2" contains the initials of the field worker/recordist (Ray Brassieur) and the cardinal number (ie. 1,2,3) of the interview recorded by that field worker (RB) during the specified year.

(3) "CT2" refers to the format of the recording (cassette tape, in this case) and the ordinal number (i.e. first, second, third...) of the cassette recorded during each interview. For example, this is the second cassette recorded during this interview.

The initials of the following interviewers/recordists appear in this catalogue:

CK — Cory Kleinschmidt
DB — Deborah Bailey
DW — David Whitman
EM — Erica Mair
GC — Gladys Coggswell
JB — Jessica Bloomquist
JC — Jean Crandall
JD — Josh Douglas
JG — Janice Grojean
JL — John Lockhead
JN — Jim Nelson
JS — Jerome Stueart
KK — Kendall King
LC — Lynn Cunningham
RB — Ray Brassieur
RF — Robin Fanslow
SR — Stephanie Rolfs



Sketch by Jerome Stueart

Fieldworker Deborah Bailey and Jack Cooperman during a storytelling session at the Roundhouse Restaurant, Caruthersville, March 17, 1994.

Catalogue of Bootheel Project Audio Cassette Recordings

Accession No.	Length	Location	Date	Informant(s)/ Event	Subjects/Topics
AC 1 BH94-CK01-CT1	60 min.	Home of Marshall Dial; Portageville, Mo.	3/5/94	Interview with Marshall Dial	Dial's narratives about New Madrid Earthquake, drainage of swamps, clearing of land, sharecropping; Dial's radio and oral history interviewing experiences; Dial's narratives about slavery, Dizzy Dean, local politicians, foodways; importance of county library
AC 2 BH94-CK01-CT2	15 min.	Home of Marshall Dial; Portageville, Mo.	3/5/94	Interview with Marshall Dial	Religion and entertainment in Bootheel; craftspeople in Bootheel
AC 3 BH94-DB01-CT1	60 min	Delta Center; Portageville, Mo.	3/11/94	Interview with Alex Cooper	Bootheel African-American community history; migration to Bootheel; sharecropping system; 1939 roadside demonstration; Delmo Housing Corporation.
AC 4 BH94-DB01-CT2	30 min.	Delta Center; Portageville, Mo.	3/11/94	Interview with Alex Cooper	Negative effects of racial integration on African-American traditions; black churches and schools before integration; importance of oral traditions; local dances; entertainment; spirituals, blues and gospel in Bootheel
AC 5 BH94-DB02-CT1	60 min.	Slicer Street Church of Christ; Kennett, Mo.	3/13/94	Sunday worship service	Sunday worship service; four-part <i>a capella</i> shape note singing; music director Britt Burcham; scripture reading; prayer; preaching
AC 6 BH94-DB03-CT1	90 min.	Slicer Street Church of Christ; Kennett, Mo	3/13/94	Interview with Britt Burcham	Church of Christ history and beliefs; scriptural basis of non-instrumental music; primacy of Word over music; songleading; transmission of repertoire and style
AC 7 BH94-DB04-CT1	60 min.	D & H Restaurant; Caruthersville, Mo.	3/14/94	Interview with W. F. James	James family history and narratives; migration across Pole Road; farming; Civil War; willow chair making; University Extension work; hunting; logging mudsleds; riverboats; S. P. Reynolds Park, Caruthersville
AC 8 BH94-DB04-CT2	20 min.	D & H Restaurant; Caruthersville, Mo.	3/14/94	Interview with W. F. James	James' work and life on Mississippi plantation in 1920s; Bootheel sharecropping system; sharecroppers strike; formation of "sharecropping camps"; influence of government programs; mechanization of cotton picking
AC 9 BH94-DB05-CT1	20 min.	D & H Restaurant; Caruthersville, Mo.	3/14/94	Interview with Harold Jones and W. F. James	Jones' personal history; deforestation and drainage of swamps; entertainments, Chataqua's, fairs; music in 1920s; James' family narrative about Old Pole Road
AC 10 BH94-DB06-CT1	90 min.	Round House Restaurant; Caruthersville, Mo.	3/17/94	Interview with Si McColloch	McColloch's personal history and reminiscences; farm life; entertainment; picking cotton; hunting narratives
AC 11 BH94-DB07-CT1	80 min.	Office of Farm Home Administration; Caruthersville, Mo.	3/17/94	Interview with Roy Cooper, Jr.	Cooper family history and narratives; slavery; Knight Riders; Cooper migration to Bootheel; value and transmission of family narratives; influence of Roy Cooper, Sr.; blacks in Bootheel today; social problems
AC 12 BH94-DB08-CT1	60 min.	Home of Daisy Hobbs; Portageville, Mo.	3/18/94	Interview with Daisy Hobbs	Hobbs' family history; Hobbs' woodcarving and painting techniques and materials; aesthetics; hunting; gunstock checkering techniques; Germans in Bootheel
AC 13 BH94-DB09-CT1	60 min.	Home of Tina Brown; Kennett, Mo.	3/21/94	Interview with Tina Brown	Missouri Cotton Ladies activities; fashion shows; promotion of 100% "Made in USA" cotton; Univ. Extension and individual participation in and purpose of "Sew With Cotton" contests
AC 14 BH94-DB10-CT1	90 min.	First General Baptist Church; Malden, Mo.	3/31/94	Easter Pageant Drama	First General Baptist's Easter Pageant Drama; local production and costumes
AC 15 BH94-DB11-CT1	60 min.	Cooper family farm; rural Pemiscot County	8/13/94	Interview with Alex Cooper	Bootheel history; draining of swamp; land clearing; establishment of cotton culture; sharecropping system; 1939 roadside demonstration; influence of Roosevelt's federal programs on Bootheel; how the Cooper family obtained their farm; racial integration; Hayti Heritage Week

Accession No.	Length	Location	Date	Informant(s)/ Event	Subjects/Topics
AC 16 BH94-DB11-CT2	20 min.	Cooper family farm; rural Pemiscot County	8/13/94	Interview with Alex Cooper	Cooper family farm life; crops; picking and chopping cotton; livestock; origins of family reunion, "lay-by time"
AC 17 BH94-DB12-CT1	60 min.	New Bethel Baptist Church; Portageville, Mo.	8/14/94	Sunday worship service	African-American gospel music; Rev. Wille Eadie; guitarist Mathew Ames; New Bethel mixed choir and soloists; congregational singing; slow unison, lined-out hymns; preaching and oratory; chanting and praying
AC 18 BH94-DB13-CT1	90 min.	Hayti Heights Multipurpose Building	8/12/94	Cooper family reunion	Cooper and Perteet families; reunion program; family history; genealogy, including slave ancestors; verbal art, including poetry, oral essay, singing, prayer, presentation of family scholarship, introduction of eldest Perteet, oratory concerning family values
AC 19 BH94-DW01-CT1	90 min.	Monument of Deliverance Church; Hayti, Mo.	3/4/94	Friday evening worship service	True Gospel Holiness Church worship; Bishop Benjamin Armour, Sr.; Mother Osie Armour; blues guitar work of Dennis Armour; music director Cathy Bell; Elder Charlie and Sister Vera Clayburn; congregational choir singing; preaching; praying; individual testifying
AC 20 BH94-DW01-CT2	90 min.	Monument of Deliverance Church; Hayti, Mo.	3/4/94	Friday evening worship service	True Gospel Holiness Church worship service at Bishop Benjamin Armour's Monument of Deliverance Church in Hayti, continued from previous tape
AC 21 BH94-DW02-CT1	90 min.	Delta Research Center; Portageville, Mo.	3/5/94	Bootheel Project orientation meeting	Moderator Ray Brassieur; introductions of sponsors, participants, local experts; introductory discussion of Bootheel culture, religion, geography, art, etc.; Bootheel research methods and goals discussed by consultants Sylvester Oliver and Thomas Rankin
AC 22 BH94-DW02-CT2	90 min.	Delta Research Center; Portageville, Mo.	3/5/94	Bootheel Project orientation meeting	Bootheel research methods and goals discussed by moderator Ray Brassieur and consultants Thomas Rankin, Erika Brady, and Sw. Anand Prahlad; presentations of local experts Thomas E. "Jake" Fisher of Hayward, Mo., and Sandy Brown of Kennett
AC 23 BH94-DW02-CT3	10 min.	Delta Research Center; Portageville, Mo.	3/5/94	Bootheel Project orientation meeting	Discussion concerning African-American conditions in the Bootheel led by Sandy Brown; end of Saturday sessions of orientation meeting at Delta Center
AC 24 BH94-DW03-CT1	50 min.	Monument of Deliverance Church; Hayti, Mo.	3/6/94	Sunday worship services	Preaching and healing performed by Bishop Armour; oration concerning development of the World's Greatest Monument in Hayti; Bootheel Project team sings "Amazing Grace"
AC25 BH94-DW04-CT1	45 min.	Home of Alma Nolen; Hayti, Mo.	7/27/94	Interview with Alma Nolen [conducted by Gladys Coggswell]	Alma Nolen's personal history; experiences as music teacher; art in segregated African-American Bootheel schools; rabbit hunting with a stick; panther tales; country chores; August 8 celebration organized by T.J. Smith; African-American Freemasonry; discussion of Alma Nolen's rhythm and blues singing [late '50s] and singing at St. John's Missionary Baptist Church, Pascola
AC 26 BH94-DW05-CT1	60 min.	Drury Inn; Hayti, Mo.	7/27/94	Interview with Alex Cooper [conducted by Gladys Coggswell]	Alex Cooper's historical and cultural views; Hayti Heights Heritage Week [August 8 celebration]; cotton culture and "lay-by time"; Freemasonry among blacks; post-integration decline of African-American art; top black musical talent in Bootheel before 1960s exodus; sharecropping; 1939 roadside demonstration; Delmo Housing Corporation; Cooper family
AC 27 BH94-DW05-CT2	25 min.	Drury Inn; Hayti, Mo.	7/27/94	Interview with Alex Cooper [conducted by Gladys Coggswell]	Alex Cooper's education and teaching experience; complainant in first desegregation case under Missouri Commission of Human Rights [Rives School District, 1964]; loss of African-American men's crafts; local African-American morality tales: "The Lazy Man," "Visit of the Death Angel," "The Three Cattle Rustlers," "The Good Team Driver"

Accession No.	Length	Location	Date	Informant(s)/ Event	Subjects/Topics
AC 28 BH94-DW06-CT1	25 min.	City Hall; Homestown, Mo.	7/29/94	Interview and singing with Eugene Jones [conducted by Gladys Coggswell]	Jones' personal history; music career as blues musician in Mobile; "Rock Steady" [stage name]; sideman for B. B. King and Bobby Blue Bland; Jones' old band, the Nighthawks; now sings and plays only in church; Jones sings spirituals "I Want to be at the Meeting" and "Jesus in on the Main Line"
AC 29 BH94-DW07-CT1	70 min.	Drury Inn; Sikeston, Mo.	7/29/94	Interview and music with James Dukes [conducted by Gladys Coggswell]	African-American guitarist Dukes' personal and musical background; sneaking out at fourteen to play blues; Dukes' call to sacred music; Traveller's Rest Missionary Baptist Church, Sikeston; secular versus sacred music; guitar performances of secular blues, traditional and original spirituals; Dukes' friend, Cris Wiggins
AC 30 BH94-DW08-CT1	20 min.	Delta Center; Portageville; Mo.	8/27/94	Echoes of Joy Gospel music at Bootheel Art and Heritage Day	African-American women's <i>a capella</i> quartet singing; Laquanda Wigfall, lead, tenor, baritone; Natalia Blackshure, fill, tenor, baritone, lead; Melinda Reed fill, tenor, baritone, lead, composer of "Holy Ghost"; Juanita Wigfall, lead, tenor, baritone, manager; all quartet members belong to First Baptist Church, Howardville except N. Blackshure, a member of First Baptist Church, Catron, Mo.
AC 31 BH94-DW09-CT1	60 min.	Delta Center; Portageville; Mo.	8/27/94	Roundtable discussions at Bootheel Art and Heritage Day	Roundtable I, Sw. Anand Prahlad: "What is the link between art and heritage?"; meaning of "Bootheel art"; Roundtable II, Gladys Coggswell: "In which ways can Bootheel art help bridge social, racial and regional boundaries?"; comments by NEA site visitor Bill Kornrich; quilt aesthetics
AC 32 BH94-DW09-CT2	60 min.	Delta Center; Portageville; Mo.	8/27/94	Roundtable discussions at Bootheel Art and Heritage Day	Roundtable III, Sylvester Oliver, "How can we promote Bootheel art and artists?"; some artists' art perhaps not linked to heritage; Roundtable IV, "... alliance between art and heritage, community development, cultural tourism..."; local suggestions regarding future strategies
AC 33 BH94-DW09-CT3	25 min.	Delta Center; Portageville; Mo.	8/27/94	Roundtable discussions at Bootheel Art and Heritage Day	Local suggestions regarding future strategies; Morteza Sajadian, "The next steps in the Bootheel Project"; Brassieur's closing remarks; end of Bootheel Art and Heritage Day
AC 34 BH94-EM03-CT1	40 min.	First United Methodist Church; New Madrid, Mo.	3/14/94	Interview with Niva Spivey	First United Methodist Ecumenical Quilting Group history; quilting techniques and materials; Spivey's quilting aesthetics and patterns; other quilting guilds
AC 35 BH94-EM04-CT1	40 min.	First United Methodist Church; New Madrid, Mo.	3/14/94	Interview with Nadine Townsend	First United Methodist Ecumenical Quilting Group; history, quilting techniques, aesthetics; Townsend family quilting traditions; transmission of family quilting traditions; New Madrid community life
AC 36 BH94-EM05-CT1	30 min.	First United Methodist Church; New Madrid, Mo.	3/14/94	Interview with Hattie Boyer	Hattie Boyer's family traditions; quilting techniques and family transmission of quilting tradition; use of quilts; Boyer family history; participation in First United Methodist Ecumenical Quilting Group
AC 37 BH94-EM06-CT1	45 min.	Home of Lucy Glover; Lilbourn, Mo.	3/14/94	Interview with Lucy Glover	African-American quilting; Glover's quilting techniques, aesthetics; passing down of quilting in African-American community; cotton-picking narratives; Glover's folk remedies.
AC 38 BH94-EM07-CT1	45 min.	Home of Almeda Watson; Kennett, Mo.	3/15/94	Interview with Almeda Watson	Watson's knitting techniques; aesthetics, materials, community transmission; Watson family traditions
AC 39 BH94-EM08-CT1	45 min.	Priscilla Brumley's residential beauty salon; Kennett, Mo.	3/15/94	Interview with Priscilla Brumley	Brumley's knitting techniques, patterns, materials, community transmission, Bootheel community life
AC 40 BH94-EM09-CT1	60 min.	Home of Charlotte Peck; Kennett, Mo.	3/15/94	Interview with Charlotte Peck	Peck's quilting techniques, patterns, aesthetics, use, materials; handing down family quilting traditions; Peck family traditions, Bootheel community life

Accession No.	Length	Location	Date	Informant(s)/ Event	Subjects/Topics
AC 41 BH94-EM10-CT1	45 min.	Home of Lila Ruff; Hayti Heights, Mo.	3/16/94	Interview with Lila Ruff	African-American quilting, Ruff's quilting techniques, aesthetics, materials, patterns, use; handing down family quilting traditions; quilting by males
AC 42 BH94-EM11-CT1	40 min.	Home of Gertie Nowell; Portageville, Mo.	3/16/94	Interview with Gertie Nowell	Nowell's quilting techniques, aesthetics, patterns, use; handing down family quilting traditions; Nowell family traditions
AC 43 BH94-EM12-CT1	45 min.	Home of Martha Buchanan; Caruthersville, Mo.	3/16/94	Interview with Martha Buchanan	Buchanan's upholstering techniques, materials, aesthetics, patterns; handing down tradition; Caruthersville community activities
AC 44 BH94-EM13-CT1	40 min.	Home of Lara Mae King; Portageville, Mo.	3/17/94	Interview with Lara Mae King	African-American quilting; King's quilting techniques, materials, aesthetics, use; handing down quilting traditions to family members, including son; King family history; Bootheel community
AC 45 BH94-EM14-CT1	60 min.	Home of Mildred Henry; New Madrid, Mo.	3/17/94	Interview with Mildred Henry	Henry's participation in First United Methodist Ecumenical Quilting Group; Henry's quilting techniques, materials, aesthetics, use; handing down family quilting traditions; farm life
AC 46 BH94-EM14-CT2	60 min.	Home of Mildred Henry; New Madrid, Mo.	3/17/94	Interview with Mildred Henry	Henry's quilting techniques; quilt patterns; quilt materials; machine and hand pieced quilts; quilt shows in Paducah, Ky., and Branson, Mo.
AC 47 BH94-EM15-CT1	45 min.	Home of Shirley Fay DeJournett; Parma, Mo.	3/18/94	Interview with Shirley Fay DeJournett	DeJournett's quilting techniques and aesthetics; quilt materials, patterns and use; invention of "Sandollar Square"; Bootheel community life
AC 48 BH94-EM16-CT1	30 min.	Campbell Nutrition Center; Campbell, Mo.	3/18/94	Interview with Georgia Hickson	Hickson describes Campbell Nutrition Center quilting group; group history; quilting techniques and use; Bootheel community life; Hickson family history and traditions.
AC 49 BH94-EM17-CT1	70 min.	Home of Margaret Garner; Dexter, Mo.	3/18/94	Interview with Ruby Watson, Edna Harper, Margaret Garner	Watson's, Harper's and Garner's quilting techniques, materials, patterns, aesthetics and use; family quilting traditions; participation in Dexter Hospital Auxilliary Quilting Group; Bootheel community life
AC 50 BH94-EM18-CT1	30 min.	Home of Bessie Thelma Hagar; Holcomb, Mo.	3/18/94	Interview with Bessie Thelma Hager	Hagar's quilting techniques, materials, patterns, aesthetics and use; handing down of quilting traditions
AC 51 BH94-EM19-CT1	60 min.	Home of Glenda Pauline Rollins; Kennett, Mo.	3/19/94	Interview with Glenda Pauline Rollins	Rollins' quilting, knitting, spinning activities; Rollins' quilting techniques, materials, patterns, aesthetics, and use; handing down of quilting traditions
AC 52 BH94-GC01-CT1	50 min.	Home of Irma Jones; Caruthersville, Mo.	7/28/94	Interview with Irma Jones	Jones' personal history; family sewing beginning at thirteen; current seamstress work; choir and ministers' robes; wedding dresses; costumes for holiday parades; silk flowers and other crafts; African-American bead dolls; Rose Garden Flower Club; Beta Mu Zeta Sorority
AC 53 BH94-JB01-CT1	60 min.	Citizen Gin, Inc.; Wardell, Mo.	3/14/94	Interview with Glen Owen Peterson and Betty Jo Curtis	Peterson's family history; history of family cotton gin business; WPA influence on Wardell; Bootheel origin narrative, local legends, cotton planting sayings; traditional cotton bagging
AC 54 BH94-JB01-CT2	30 min.	Citizen Gin, Inc.; Wardell, Mo.	3/14/94	Tour of cotton gin	Glen Owen Peterson describes pictorial collection located in Citizen Gin office; tour of old and new gins
AC 55 BH94-JC01-CT1	90 min.	Monument of Deliverance Church; Hayti, Mo.	3/13/94	Gospel Deliverance Music Festival	African-American gospel singing; Monument of Deliverance congregation, adult choir and male choir, The Voices of Deliverance; Traveling Sons; True Holiness Full Gospel Choir; Full Gospel Evangelist Choir; East Side Spiritual Church Choir; New Breath of Life Singers; Michael Covington; other soloists

Accession No.	Length	Location	Date	Informant(s)/ Event	Subjects/Topics
AC 56 BH94-JC01-CT2	37 min.	Monument of Deliverance Church; Hayti, Mo.	3/13/94	Gospel Deliverance Music Festival	African-American gospel singing; Monument of Deliverance junior choir; congregational singing and "shouting"; Traveling Sons; Michael Covington; prayer
AC 57 BH94-JC02-CT1	60 min.	Home of Mildred and James Whitehorn; Kennett, Mo.	3/15/94	Interview with Mildred and James Whitehorn	African-American gospel singing; Mildred Whitehorn's singing aesthetics, repertoire, and transmission of family singing tradition; role of church and gospel music; Whitehorn family traditions, foodways, and reunions; race relations; integration in Bootheel
AC 58 BH94-JC03-CT1	68 min.	Home of Trinita Peel; Hayti, Mo.	3/15/94	Interview with Trinita Peel	Peel's description of life in Bootheel; role of church in Peel's life; Full Gospel Evangelistic Church's history; African-American gospel repertoire, function, and ways of learning of music; singing examples.
AC 59 BH94-JC04-CT1	60 min.	Full Gospel Evangelist Church; Hayti Heights, Mo.	3/15/94	Gospel choir rehearsal	African-American gospel choir rehearsal at Full Gospel Evangelist Church; Sunbeams choir, Full Gospel Mixed choir; soloists JoAnn Peel, Trinita Peel and Micheal Covington; instrumental accompaniment
AC 60 BH94-JC04-CT2	10 min.	Full Gospel Evangelist Church; Hayti Heights, Mo.	3/15/94	Gospel choir rehearsal	African-American gospel choir rehearsal; conclusion of; instrumental musical rehearsal; introduction of project fieldworkers; concluding prayers
AC 61 BH94-JC05-CT1	60 min.	St. John Missionary Baptist Church; Sikeston, Mo.	3/16/94	Interview with Flem E. Bronner	Bronner's life history; "fourth rent" farming and early life; history of Bronner Brothers' gospel group; Bronner's call to ministry; history of St. John's Missionary Baptist; early brush arbor churches
AC 62 BH94-JC05-CT2	20 min.	St. John Missionary Baptist Church; Sikeston, Mo.	3/16/94	Interview with Flem E. Bronner	Distinctiveness of Bootheel; gospel history in Bootheel; Bronner Brothers' role in gospel development; Rev. Eadie and the Wandering Five; improvisational oratory
AC 63 BH94-JC06-CT1	60 min.	Eastside Spiritual Church; Hayti Heights, Mo.	3/16/94	Gospel choir rehearsal	African-American gospel choir rehearsal, Eastside Spiritual Church; congregational and choir singing; instrumental music; oratory; choir discussions about songs
AC 64 BH94-JC06-CT2	20 min.	Eastside Spiritual Church; Hayti Heights, Mo.	3/16/94	Gospel choir rehearsal	African-American gospel choir rehearsal at Eastside Spiritual Church; choir singing; instrumental music; choir discussion about songs.
AC 65 BH94-JC07-CT1	60 min.	Home of Jesse Newson; Lilbourn, Mo.	3/17/94	Interview with Jesse Newson	Newson's personal history; history of gospel group the Wandering Five; experience and importance of singing gospel music; Newson's switch from blues to spiritual singing; singing style and sound of Wandering Five; taped examples of Wandering Five
AC 66 BH94-JC07-CT2	15 min.	Home of Jesse Newson; Lilbourn, Mo.	3/17/94	Interview with Jesse Newson	Newson comments while playing his private collection of recorded examples of the Wandering Five Gospel Quartet
AC 67 BH94-JC08-CT1	28 min.	Home of Mildred and James Whitehorn; Kennett, Mo.	3/18/94	Interview with Kellie and Jasmine Whitehorn	African-American gospel repertoire, stylistics, transmission of gospel singing tradition in family; brief singing examples
AC 68 BH94-JC09-CT1	90 min.	Full Gospel True Holiness Ch.; Cottonwood Point, Mo.	3/18/94	Church youth rally	African-American congregational gospel singing; Sister Vera Clayburn; Sunbeam Choir from Full Gospel Evangelist Church, Hayti Heights; anti-drug song; soloist Kyra Wilson; Brother Ricky; preaching and recitations
AC 69 BH94-JC09-CT2	60 min.	Full Gospel True Holiness Ch.; Cottonwood Point, Mo.	3/18/94	Church youth rally	African-American gospel singing and oratory; Sister Vera Clayburn; Christian Brotherhood Choir; oratory and prayers by Brother William Lockwood and Brother Buchanan; testifying by congregation

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AC 70 BH94-JC09-CT3	35 min.	Full Gospel True Holiness Ch.; Cottonwood Point, Mo.	3/18/94	Church youth rally	African-American oratory; closing remarks by Elder Selvy and Elder Jones; prayer
AC 71 BH94-JC10-CT1	90 min.	North Sixth Street Church of God in Christ; Hayti, Mo.	3/19/94	Gospel choir rehearsal	African-American gospel singing; teaching and learning; soloist Mildred Whitehorn sings "I Will Be Done With the Troubles of This World"; Jurisdictional Choir rehearses "My Soul Says Yes"
AC 72 BH94-JC10-CT2	60 min.	North Sixth Street Church of God in Christ; Hayti, Mo.	3/19/94	Gospel choir rehearsal	Continuation of Jurisdictional Choir rehearsal; "Your Grace and Mercy", "I'm So Glad", "I've Been Learning From Jesus", "I Feel Like Going On", "The Lord Will Make a Way"
AC 73 BH94-JC11-CT1	60 min.	Monument of Deliverance Church; Hayti, Mo.	3/20/94	Sunday worship service	African-American gospel singing, congregation and children's choir (Kathy Bell, directing) soloist Mother Paige; Dennis Armour, guitar; Bishop Benjamin Armour, preaching; testifying
AC 74 BH94-JC11-CT2	45 min.	Monument of Deliverance Church; Hayti, Mo.	3/20/94	Sunday worship service	African-American gospel singing by congregation; Benjamin Armour, preaching/tonal chanting; Dennis Armour, guitar; testifying; healing; prayer
AC 75 BH94-JD01-CT1	60 min.	New Madrid Historical Museum; New Madrid, Mo.	3/12/94	Interview with Lorene Higgerson	New Madrid Museum artifacts, furniture, clothing, Native American, Confederate; narratives concerning escaped slave, Farrenberg Light, ghost sighting; Higgerson's personal history
AC 76 BH94-JD01-CT2	30 min.	New Madrid Historical Musuem; New Madrid, Mo.	3/12/94	Interview with Lorene Higgerson	Higgerson's family history; cotton picking narrative; folk remedies
AC 77 BH94-JG01-CT1	30 min.	Home of Sonny Walker; Wardell, Mo.	3/15/94	Interview with Sonny Walker	Walker's historical reminiscences; Walker's narratives concerning "Panther leap farm"; Bootheel origins; cotton farming; local legends
AC 78 BH94-JG01-CT2	60 min.	Home of Sonny Walker; Wardell, Mo.	3/15/94	Interview with Sonny Walker	Walker's family narrative; cotton picking; Mexican cotton pickers; Walker's cotton baling process; Walker's WPA house
AC 79 BH94-JL01-CT1	60 min.	Craft Fair at Malden Community Center; Malden, Mo.	3/19/94	Interview with Helen Kinder, Gordan Gawes, Sheila Clark, Sandra Skidmore	Kinder's family history; quilting; Clark's description of clock-making process; Gawes' cermaic figurine-making process; Skidmore's family history; Skidmore's crocheting techniques
AC 80 BH94-JL01-CT2	10 min.	Craft Fair at Malden Community Center; Malden, Mo.	3/19/94	Interview with Sandra Skidmore, Bernice Daniels	Conclusion of Skidmore interview; crocheting techniques; Daniels' crocheting business and techniques
AC 81 BH94-JN01-CT1	90 min.	Home of Ed Roddy; Kennett, Mo.	3/12/94	Interview and music with Ed Roddy	Rhoddy's family history; American Dairy Assoc.; old-time music; harmonica playing; church songs; fiddle repair; musician Virgil McElyea; Primitive Baptist Church
AC 82 BH94-JN02-CT1	90 min.	First United Pentecostal Church; Kennett, Mo.	3/13/94	Sunday afternoon worship service	Pastor Carrol McGruder and wife Priscilla lead in worship; testifying; healing; old-time preaching; gospel music and song; live and taped musical accompaniment; Pentecostal humor; congregational participation
AC 83 BH94-JN03-CT1	90 min.	First United Pentecostal Church; Kennett, Mo.	3/13/94	Sunday night musical worship	Spencer Family Singers [J. B., leader; Barbara, wife; Wade, son] and Carrol McGruder Family Band [see below]; gospel music and song with live and taped musical accompaniment; old-time preaching
AC 84 BH94-JN03-CT2	90 min.	First United Pentecostal Church; Kennett, Mo.	3/13/94	Sunday night musical worship	Pastor Carrol and Mrs. Priscilla McGruder [song leaders]; guitarist David Creech; pianist Denny Autrey; drummer Eric McGruder; organist Sharon Garish; guitarist Mark Dollins; bassist Greg Long

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AC 85 BH94-JN04-CT1	60 min.	St. John Missionary Baptist Church; Sikeston, Mo.	3/14/94	African-American religious revival	Rev. Flem Bronner; religious oratory; revival preaching and prayer; old-time African-American lined-out hymns [<i>a capella</i> choir]; gospel showmanship
AC 86 BH94-JN04-CT2	30 min.	St. John Missionary Baptist Church; Sikeston, Mo.	3/14/94	African-American religious revival	Rev. Flem Bronner; religious oratory; revival preaching and prayer; old-time African-American spirituals [<i>a capella</i> choir]; gospel showmanship; offering; Pastor Robinson
AC 87 BH94-JN05-CT1	90 min.	Home of Bill and Frieda Riddle; Kennett, Mo.	3/15/94	Interview and music with Bill and Frieda Riddle	Personal and family history; shoe repair, fiddling; Bill's composition "Riddle's Fiddle"; alternate fiddle tunings; Bill and Frieda's old-time music repertoire; Frieda Riddle's quilting and quilt patterns; sassafras tea
AC 88 BH94-JN06-CT1	60 min.	Home of Ermer Garner; Bloomfield, Mo.	3/16/94	Interview and music with Ermer J. Garner	Garner's personal and family history and musical background; Garner's old-time fiddle repertoire, square dancing; musicians Curley Fox and Dale Potter; conflict between religion and dance music
AC 89 BH94-JN07-CT1	60 min.	Living Water Tabernacle; Blodgett, Mo.	3/16/94	Wednesday night Pentecostal worship service	Prayer and preaching of Sister Norma Frailey; live music accompanying country gospel singing; Fred Frailey's Merle Travis-style guitar playing; personal prayer requests; congregational prayer; testimony includes version of "vanishing hitchhiker" contemporary legend
AC 90 BH94-JN07-CT2	45 min.	Living Water Tabernacle; Blodgett, Mo.	3/16/94	Wednesday night Pentecostal worship service	Church members' personal testimonies to God's miracles; live music accompanying country gospel singing; preaching and singing of Sister Norma Frailey; Fred Frailey's Merle Travis-style guitar playing
AC 91 BH94-JN08-CT1	60 min.	Juanita Wigfall's home; Howardville, Mo.	3/17/94	Interview and singing at Echoes of Joy rehearsal session	Echoes of Joy, African-American female <i>a capella</i> gospel quartet [Juanita Wigfall, Laquanda Wigfall, Beatrice Wigfall, Natalia Blackshure, Melinda Reed]; group history; repertoire development; original composition by Melinda Reed, "Holy Ghost"
AC 92 BH94-JN09-CT1	60 min.	Paul's Jewelry and Pawn; Sikeston, Mo.	3/18/94	Bluegrass and country music jam session	Tony Wray [banjo and guitar], Jerry Shropsure [guitar, bass, and some singing], Paul Tolbert [guitar and singing]; Wray's past performances with Ezell Family [bluegrass]; Tolbert's gospel performances
AC 93 BH94-JN10-CT1	90 min.	Home of Fred and Norma Frailey near Sikeston, Mo.	3/18/94	Interview, music and singing with Fred and Norma Frailey	The Fraileys' family history and musical background; Merle Travis thumb-pick guitar style; music and worship; gospel versus country music; live gospel music versus taped music; founding and leadership of Living Waters Tabernacle [Pentecostal] in Blodgett, Mo.
AC 94 BH94-JN11-CT1	60 min.	Kennett Sound Studios; Kennett, Mo.	3/19/94	Interview with Joe Keene	Joe Keene's career as singer, songwriter, producer; KBOA radio station; Kennett Sound Studio; Bootheel music history; rockabilly; Narvell Felts; past and current music business and recording industry
AC 95 BH94-JN12-CT1	60 min.	Home of T. Everette Mobely; Kennett, Mo.	3/19/94	Interview with T. Everett Mobely	Sons of the Western Bootheel, old-time western-pop revival quartet [T. Everett Mobely, Mathew Mobely, Ron Roberts, Scott Andrews]; Friends of Music Club; Federated Music Club; Wednesday Music Club; SEMO Little Theater; Kennett public school music programs
AC 96 BH94-JS01-CT1	60 min.	Two distinct auto trips between Portageville and Poplar Bluff; recorded en route	Trip #1 3/4/94 Trip #2 3/14/94	Windshield survey: Trip #1: Jerome Stueart and Ray Brassieur; Trip #2: Jerome Stueart and Jim Nelson	Trip #1: SE from Poplar Bluff on HWY 53, E on HWY 162 at Campbell, through Clarkton and Gideon to Portageville; Trip #2: N from Portageville on HWY 62 to Marston; W on HWY 62 through Risco to Malden, N on HWY 25 through Townley to Bernie, E on HWY U/CC to Broseley, N on HWY 51 to Ash Hill, W on Hwy B to Portageville; observations and discussions of yard art; signs; cottage industries; clubs and taverns; landscape

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AC 97 BH94-JS02-CT1	60 min.	Home of J. D. Hudgens; Caruthersville, Mo.	3/17/94	Interview with J. D. Hudgens and family	Hudgens' personal and family history; sharecropper lifestyle; picking and chopping cotton; changes in farming; construction and cement business; poverty; being "saved" in the Southern Baptist tradition
AC 98 BH94-KK01-CT1	30 min.	Kathryn's Ceramics; Portageville, Mo.	3/12/94	Interview with Kathryn Johnson	Johnson's family history; Johnson's ceramic-making techniques, glazing techniques and aesthetics.
AC 99 BH94-LC01-CT1	60 min.	Monument of Deliverance Church; Hayti, Mo.	3/13/94	Sunday evening musical	Gospel singing; prayer and testimony; musical devotion service; Monumental Deliverance Choir; visiting ministers, singers, musicians
AC 100 BH94-LC01-CT2	60 min.	Monument of Deliverance Church; Hayti, Mo.	3/13/94	Sunday evening musical	Gospel singing; prayer and testimony; musical devotion service; Monumental Deliverance Choir; visiting ministers, singers, musicians
AC 101 BH94-LC02-CT1	60 min.	Farm Home Administration Office; Caruthersville, Mo.	3/14/94	Interview with Roy Cooper, Jr.	Cooper's reminiscences about early Bootheel farm life; education; Roovevelt-era agricultural changes; 1939 sharecropper highway demonstration; land ownership through FHA; Delmo Housing Corporation; farm mechanization; unemployment and welfare; decline of traditional art; sharecroppers' annual cycle; slavery tales
AC 102 BH94-LC03-CT1	90 min.	Brady Commons, University of Missouri; Columbia, Mo.	3/28/94	Interview with Songsiri Chanvitayapongs	Sonsiri, 18, relates experiences of a Thai girl growing up with her family in Caruthersville; high school life; language learning; religion; customs; playing the kim [musical instrument]
AC 103 BH94-RB01-CT1	90 min.	Kinfolk Ridge Baptist Church; Caruthersville, Mo.	3/13/94	Sunday worship service	Pastor Preston Baker; Southern Baptist "hell and damnation" oratory; choir singing; soloist Jerome Stueart; pianist Betty Leek; taped musical accompaniment
AC 104 BH94-RB02-CT1	60 min.	Law office of H. Riley Bock; Portageville, Mo.	3/15/94	Interview with H. Riley Bock	Bock family narrative and commentary on Bootheel changes in environment, economy and demography; Little River Drainage System; E. B. Gee, Sr., and Jr.; Willie Eadie's Wandering Five gospel quartet; quilters Laura Mae King and Mildred Henry
AC 105 BH94-RB03-CT1	90 min.	Full Gospel Evangelistic Church; Hayti Heights, Mo.	3/15/94	Tuesday night choir practice	African-American gospel singing; Full Gospel Evangelistic Church Mixed Choir and Sunbeam Youth Choir; music director Trinita Peel; guitarist Michael Covington
AC 106 BH94-RB04-CT1	90 min.	Maxwell William's office at Anderson and Son's; Gideon, Mo.	3/16/94	Interview with Maxwell Williams	Maxwell Williams' family saga; Little River Drainage System and Board; Bootheel development from forested swamp to cotton agriculture; large farm management in Bragg City and Gideon; race and class relationships; Clarkton to Point Pleasant plank road
AC 107 BH94-RB04-CT2	60 min.	Maxwell William's office at Anderson and Son's; Gideon, Mo.	3/16/94	Interview with Maxwell Williams	Maxwell Williams' description of 1927 and 1937 floods and effects on Little River Drainage System; plight of sharecroppers during 1939 labor unrest; race relations; mule buying; dramatic changes in agriculture; design and construction of sharecroppers dwellings and barns
AC 108 BH94-RB05-CT1	60 min.	Delta Research Extension Center; Portageville, Mo.	3/16/94	Interview with Ray Nabors	County Extension Agent Nabors discusses relationships between Bootheel soils and human settlement, agriculture and the Little River System; Paul Brands' War [humorous narrative]
AC 109 BH94-RB06-CT1	60 min.	Mercy Seat Baptist Church; Charleston, Mo.	3/17/94	Thursday night gospel music practice session	African-American gospel music; Wings of Heaven Quartet [Rev. Leroy Reed, Frank Ware, George DeMeyers, Teresa Jones]; Willy Petty Mass Choir; soloist Rosetta Bradley; Rev. Billy Ray Williams
AC 110 BH94-RB07-CT1	45 min.	Delisle Funeral Home; Portageville, Mo.	3/19/94	Interview with Joseph DeLisle	DeLisle's family history and immigration narrative; Portageville history; St. Francis Levee District; Alphonse DeLisle Mercantile; DeLisle Funeral Home; French language and custom [loss of]

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AC 111 BH94-RB08-CT1	90 min.	Cotton Club; Holcomb, Mo.	3/19/94	Saturday night dance	Bobby Burdin [vocals, bass, sax] and High Cotton [country/rock dance band] musical performance; guitarist Jerry Ray; drummer Dave McGrew
AC 112 BH94-RB09-CT1	60 min.	KMIS Radio Station; Portageville, Mo.	3/20/94	Sunday live gospel music for radio broadcast	KMIS radio broadcast; New Bethel Gospel Choir live performance (Portageville, Mo.); oratory, prayer and announcements by Rev. Willie Eadie and Brother Charles Williams; guitarist Mathew Arnold
AC 113 BH94-RB10-CT1	60 min.	Delta Research Extension Center; Portageville, Mo.	3/20/94	Interview with Thomas E. "Jake" Fisher	Superintendent Fisher's life and family narrative; Hayward, Mo.; agricultural changes; personal experience stories about mules, cotton picking, teen life in 1960s
AC 114 BH94-RB11-CT1	60 min.	Home of Kent Freeman; Cape Girardeau, Mo.	4/14/94	Interview with Kent Freeman	Duck call carver Freeman's personal and family life history; "donnick" (low ridge) ecology; duck call materials and methods; call-making history; Bootheel carvers J. T. Beckhart and Alan Bradley; Illinois River, Reelfoot Lake and Louisiana duck calls
AC 115 BH94-RB11-CT2	45 min.	Home of Kent Freeman; Cape Girardeau, Mo.	4/14/94	Interview with Kent Freeman (cont.)	Freeman's duck call and decoy competition carving; 1991-93 ribbons at world competition; 1992-93 CMAA national champion duck call maker; innovations; competition calling versus calling ducks; wooden boats; professional carver's life
AC 116 BH94-RB12-CT1	60 min.	Home of Phil Pfuehler; New Madrid, Mo.	4/16/94	Interview with Phil Pfuehler	Pfuehler's life story; waterfowling and boatbuilding; New Madrid-area duck and goose habitats; giant goose decoy; "coffin," "mudbar," and larger combination hunting boats/blinds; taxidermy; jug and line fishing for catfish; pleasure fishing
AC 117 BH94-RB13-CT1	60 min.	Barry McFarland's office at Amoco Ford Oil & LP Gas Co.; Homersville, Mo.	4/16/94	Interview with Barry McFarland	Duck call carver McFarland's life story; Big Lake call-making history; Homersville local history; Beckhart; Stone family; Springer family; boat building; "log net" catfish traps; frog and fish gigs; fishing customs; Masonic narratives; cotton picking
AC 118 BH94-RB14-CT1	60 min.	Home of Wayne Springer; Homersville, Mo.	4/17/94	Interview with Wayne Springer	Springer's life story; Beckhart, Stone and McFarland duck calls; Hershal Springer; Big Lake commercial duck and turtle hunting and fishing; boatbuilding details [johnboat; Springer's Louisiana fishing experiences; "log net" catfish trap
AC 119 BH94-RF01-CT1	90 min.	Home of Carol Treece; Bowling Green, Ky.	3/10/94	Interview with Carole Treece	Regional identity; family history; cotton culture; foodways; religion; Deering, Mo.
AC 120 BH94-RF02-CT1	90 min.	Home of Noah and Geraldine Barkowitz; Hayti, Mo.	3/12/94	Interview with Noah and Geraldine Barkovitz; Lynn Parshall [daughter]	Regional identity; family and regional history; Jewish community in the Bootheel; retention of culture and traditions; Temple Israel; family business and local economy; foodways; ritual; Hayti and Hayti Heights, Mo.
AC 121 BH94-RF03-CT1	90 min.	Home of Bishop Benjamin and Osie Armour; Hayti Heights, Mo.	3/16/94	Interview with Bishop Benjamin and Mrs. Osie Armour	Bishop and Mrs. Armour's personal and family history narratives; Bootheel regional identity; sharecropping experiences; Bishop Armour's early quartet singing with Armour Brothers and Four Kings of Harmony; Professor Fred Paine and the Dixie Harmonizers; gospel repertoire; the Bishop's congregational drum
AC 122 BH94-RF03-CT2	90 min.	Home of Bishop Benjamin and Osie Armour; Hayti Heights, Mo.	3/16/94	Interview with Bishop Benjamin and Mrs. Osie Armour	Monument of Deliverance church history and current membership; structure of typical worship service; healing; Holy Spirit possession; "World's Greatest Monument" story; profound spiritual experience narrative
AC 123 BH94-RF03-CT3	30 min.	Armour family home; Hayti Heights, Mo.	3/16/94	Interview with Bishop Benjamin and Mrs. Osie Armour	Spiritual vision; fund-raising campaign to establish monument in Hayti; miniature models of the "World's Greatest Monument"

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AC 124 BH94-RF04-CT1	60 min.	Home of Eleanor and Jack Cooperman; Caruthersville, Mo.	3/17/94	Interview with Eleanor and Jack Cooperman	Regional identity; ethnicity; Jewish community in Bootheel; family and local history; Mrs. Cooperman's painting/artwork; Caruthersville, Mo.; Temple Israel
AC 125 BH94-RF04-CT2	60 min.	Home of Eleanor and Jack Cooperman; Caruthersville, Mo.	3/17/94	Interview with Eleanor and Jack Cooperman	Regional identity; cultural identity; Jewish community in Bootheel; family and local history; Mrs. Cooperman's painting/artwork; Caruthersville, Mo.; Temple Israel
AC 126 BH94-RF05-CT1	60 min.	Home of Beryl Driskill; Braggadocio, Mo.	3/17/94	Interview with Beryl and Linda Driskill	Regional identity; family and local history; cotton culture; regional economy; hunting; knife-making; Braggadocio, Mo.
AC 127 BH94-RF05-CT2	60 min.	Home of Beryl Driskill; Braggadocio, Mo.	3/17/94	Interview with Beryl and Linda Driskill	Regional identity; family and local history; cotton culture; regional economy; hunting; knife-making; Braggadocio, Mo.
AC 128 BH94-RF05-CT3	60 min.	Home of Beryl Driskill; Braggadocio, Mo.	3/17/94	Interview with Beryl and Linda Driskill	Regional identity; family and local history; cotton culture; regional economy; hunting; knife-making; Braggadocio, Mo.
AC 129 BH94-RF06-CT1	90 min.	Oscar Fendler's office; Blytheville, Ark.	3/18/94	Interview with Oscar Fendler	Regional identity; ethnicity; family and local history; Bootheel Jewish community; Fendler's career as an attorney; Temple Israel; Blytheville, Ark.
AC 130 BH94-RF07-CT1	90 min.	Temple Israel; Blytheville, Ark.	3/18/94	Interview with Richard Falkoff	Regional identity; ethnicity; family and local history; family business; Bootheel Jewish community; Temple Israel; Blytheville, Ark.
AC 131 BH94-RF08-CT1	90 min.	First part: Ford's streetside tamale van; Caruthersville, Mo. Second part: Ford's home; Kennett, Mo.	3/19/94 3/21/94	Interview with Billy J. Ford and Carrie Ford	Bootheel community diversity; Billy Joe Ford's family history; family tamale business; 90 years of hot tamales in the Bootheel; streetside vending during the Depression; cafe business
AC 132 BH94-RF09-CT1	90 min.	James Kahn Department Store; Kennett, Mo.	3/20/94	Interview with Sol Astrachan	Bootheel regional identity; family and business history; Bootheel Jewish community; Temple Israel; Astrachan's political career as mayor of Kennett
AC 133 BH94-SR01-CT1	90 min.	Home of Rose Cheetam; home of Mildred Henry; New Madrid, Mo.; New Madrid Library [three locations]	3/14/94	Interview with Martha Hunter, Rose Cheetam, Mildred Henry [three interviews]	Hunter's research on New Madrid pictorial history; Cheetam's description of life in New Madrid; Henry's family history; flu epidemic of 1918; flood of 1937; recipes; Henry's quilting, participation in quilting club
AC 134 BH94-SR02-CT1	90 min.	Home of Mildred Henry; New Madrid, Mo.; New Madrid Library [two locations]	3/14/94	Interview with Mildred Henry and Martha Hunter [two interviews]	Henry's family history; narratives about floods of 1953 and 1973; reminiscences about husband, Whitson Henry; Henry's quilting techniques; Hunter's family history, Hunter's life on the river.
AC 135 BH94-SR03-CT1	90 min.	New Madrid Library; home of Mildred Henry; New Madrid, Mo. [two locations]	3/15/94	Interview with Martha Hunter, Mildred and Bud Henry	Hunter's family history and geneology; family traditions; foodways; quilting; religious life; Hunter's pictorial history collection; Hunter Dawson House ghost narratives; Farrenberg Lights narrative; New Madrid's last public hanging; Mildred and Bud Henry's family history; mules; farm life; land and heritage

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