

AMERICAN FOLKLIFE CENTER
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folklife center news

Winter 1989

Volume XI, Number 1

THE ORIGIN OF POLISH SATURDAY SCHOOLS IN CHICAGO

By Margy McClain

The following article is taken from "Ethnic Heritage and Language Schools in America," a new book from the American Folklife Center." Information on how to order appears on pages 3 and 4.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, when great waves of immigration brought thousands of Poles to the Chicago area, Poland did not exist as a nation. Poland had been partitioned in 1795, into areas controlled by Russia, Prussia, and Austria, and ethnic Poles referred to themselves as "Russian Poles" or "Austrian Poles." Language and the Roman Catholic religion, rather than nationality, marked the Polish people.

Early Polish immigrants to the United States defined themselves in much the same way, by language, ethnicity, regional origin, and religion. They were mostly peasants with little formal education. They came for eco-

Continued on page 2

Jozef Żurczak, principal of the Pulaski School in Chicago, Illinois, at the time of the Folklife Center's 1982 Ethnic Heritage and Language Schools Project. Mr. Żurczak is shown here as a guest teacher for the combined first and second grade class. (ES82-AF88416-1-35A) Photo by Margy McClain



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POLISH SATURDAY SCHOOLS

Continued from page 1

conomic reasons and worked hard so that their children might make it up the ladder of success in America. Education was an important rung on that ladder, and education for many of the children began in Roman Catholic parochial schools.

Polish immigrants sought to establish Catholic parishes that were Polish in character. They built many churches and established schools along with them. Most of the students in the parish schools came from Polish-speaking homes, and the teaching nuns also spoke Polish. Since each school was free to determine its own use of the Polish language, the curricula varied greatly; depending on the school, or even the individual teacher, students might study either religious subjects or most of the curriculum in Polish. The Polish instruction in the parish schools of Chicago, therefore, seems to have arisen more from the fact that teachers and students shared a common language than from an explicit desire to impart to students a mastery of the Polish language or a need to instill values related to the traditions of Poland.

Language instruction in Chicago's Polish parochial schools began to decline in the 1930s, although some instruction continued for another twenty years. During the Depression, pressures from the Archdiocese (historically dominated by Irish and German clerics hostile to parishes that clung to an ethnic interpretation of Catholicism) to rid the parishes of "foreign" associations, combined with a general pressure on immigrants to assimilate, contributed to the decline in language use.

Polish immigration to the United States came to a halt in the 1920s, due to restrictive immigration laws. Thirty years passed before another significant wave of immigration occurred. Isolated from Poland, the Polish community evolved distinctive Polish-American traditions. A unique "Chicago Polish" dialect arose as American-born children learned to speak the Polish language based on the various regional

dialects spoken by their parents and teachers. Immigrants arriving after World War II were surprised to find many archaic words and grammatical constructions preserved in the speech of the established Polish-American community.

After World War II, thousands of new immigrants flooded the country from the refugee camps of Europe. The new arrivals were to have a profound effect on the nature of Chicago's Polish-American community. Coming from a Poland briefly reunited between the world wars, they had been raised with a strong sense of Polish national identity. Now they were refugees who could not return to Communist Poland. Their strong love of country, fueled by a sense of being disinherited, gave rise to a deep need to keep alive things Polish and to pass on to their children raised in the United States a pride and knowledge of what it means to be Polish.

Chicago's Polish schools have their roots in the upheavals of World War II. The founders of the Polish Teachers Association in America, Inc. (PTAA) and a great many of the teachers and parents currently active in the Polish schools were adults or young children in Poland during World War II. After the war, many Poles found themselves in either Displaced Persons camps (also known as DP or refugee camps) in Germany or in temporary camps in England for those associated with the Polish Army.

Friendships made in the camps were often long-lasting, carrying over to the immigrants' new homes. Polish teachers who set up schools in the camps later helped establish Polish Saturday schools in the countries where they finally settled: the United States, England, and Canada. And Polish teachers' organizations that formed in the camps were models for later groups.

Thousands of Polish refugees came to the United States in the late 1940s and 1950s under the Displaced Persons Act. Existing Polish-American institutions met many needs of the new arrivals, but the parochial schools, where the heritage of Poland's turn-of-the-century rural traditions predominated, could not. For Poles educated in a united Poland between

ETHNIC HERITAGE AND LANGUAGE SCHOOLS PROJECT REPORT PUBLISHED



The eighth grade Sunday school class at the Hellenic Orthodox Church in Buffalo, New York, with teacher, Betty Pavlakis. The Greek School at the church is described in a new collection of reports from the Center's ethnic schools project. (ES82-197823-5-36) Photo by Lydia Fish

the two world wars, knowledge of the contemporary, standard Polish language was an important attribute of being Polish. They wanted their children to speak the language well and to learn Polish history and national traditions in a more structured way than the home could provide. The parochial schools could neither teach modern Polish nor instill a contemporary sense of Polish national identity.

So, while many new immigrants sent their children to parochial schools for their regular education, they also began to create special Polish schools. In the 1950s, as Polish cultural education in parochial schools declined, the Polish Saturday schools emerged. □

The Library of Congress has just published *Ethnic Heritage and Language Schools in America*, the report of a project conducted by the American Folklife Center in 1982. The collection of articles on thirteen different schools from around the country, illustrated with photographs, was developed by project director Elena Bradunas and edited by Brett Topping. Such topics as history, school administration, parents, teachers, classes and curriculum, and the purposes of the school are discussed in each article.

"Ethnic schools" may be a mystifying classification for most Americans. Yet nearly everyone knows of afternoon, weekend, or all-day programs called "Hebrew School," "Lithuanian School," "Polish School," "Japanese School," or the like. Such schools are organized by ethnic com-

munities as a supplement to the standard educational requirements met by public and private schools, and especially to preserve and perpetuate ethnic culture and traditions. There are probably more than five thousand ethnic schools around the country, but virtually no awareness of them as a national phenomenon.

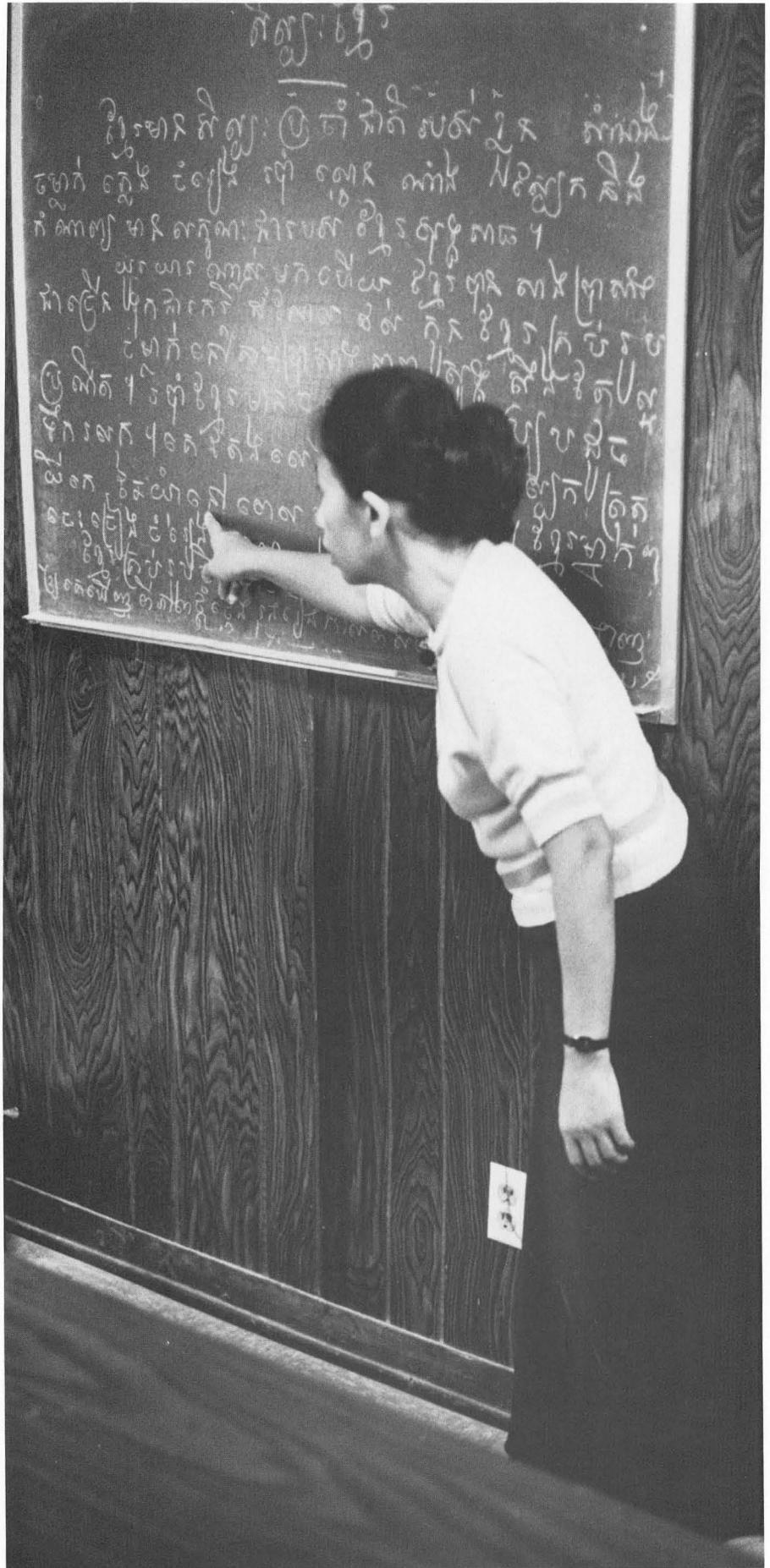
Over the past two decades, as educationists and the public were drawn into a long, fractious, and still unresolved debate about bilingual education, no one referred to the widespread and longstanding use of ethnic schools by hundreds of American ethnic communities, and there has been little scholarly investigation of the subject. In 1982, the American Folklife Center launched the Ethnic Heritage and Language Schools Project to begin to remedy that inat-

tention. The project secured the services of a number of researchers around the country to visit, document, and analyze an ethnic school in their vicinity. Twenty research locations were chosen to give a diverse sampling: different ethnic groups, different regions of the country, and different kinds of schools.

The thirteen schools described in the published report are: The Cambodian School, Houston, Texas; The Islamic School of Seattle, Seattle, Washington; The Official Portuguese School of the Taunton Sports Club, Taunton, Massachusetts; The First Korean School, Silver Spring, Maryland; Ataturk School, New York, New York; Polish Saturday School, Chicago, Illinois; The Senshin Gakuin and the Dharma School of the Senshin Buddhist Church of Los Angeles, Los Angeles, California; German-Russian Ethnic Studies at Emmons Central High School, Strasburg, North Dakota; Lebanese Arabic School at St. Elias Maronite Catholic Church and Greek School at Holy Trinity-Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Cathedral, Birmingham, Alabama; The Greek School at the Hellenic Orthodox Church of the Annunciation, Buffalo, New York; West End Synagogue School, Nashville, Tennessee; Hupa Indian Language Schools, Hoopa Valley, California; and Czech School, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Ethnic Heritage and Language Schools in America is available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402. Cite stock number when ordering by mail: S/N 030-001-00124-5. The price is \$16, including postage and handling. Check or money order payable to the Superintendent of Documents must accompany order. □

Madorom Huot at the blackboard of the Khmer Village School in Houston, Texas. (ES82-197001-9-35)
Photo by Frank Proschan, from "The Cambodian School."



GOOD YULE: THE PAGAN ROOTS OF NORDIC CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS



by Richard H. Hulan

On December 15, 1988, the Folklife Center presented a winter workshop on the craft of Nordic Christmas decorations. Jytte Hambric demonstrated the art of Danish folded paper; Maiju Wilson and Lena Becker demonstrated Finnish tied straw; and Barbara Freeman demonstrated Swedish woven wheat. Also on display were examples of Norwegian painted wood (rosemaling) by Christina Keune and Icelandic enameled dough by Edith Warner. Richard Hulan introduced the demonstrations with the following remarks, which identified the origins of a number of the decorations presented.

The midwinter holidays and their associated customs have a long history in the Nordic countries of Northern Europe: Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Iceland. Many details of the modern celebrations may be traced to the pre-Christian era—some eight to twelve hundred years ago. For example, there is the widespread use of the word *Yule*, which is spelled in various ways in the Scandinavian languages and Finnish but generally used instead of *Christmas*. But the origin of the Yule celebration is older than, and has very little to do with, the Lutheran Christianity gener-

ally practiced in the five Nordic countries.

Following the lecture and crafts demonstrations, Kirstin Nordh entertained the winter workshop audience with traditional Swedish music. *Photo by John Gibbs*

Lutherans are certainly not encouraged to worship Thor, make food offerings to household deities, or strive through every means including magic to assure the return of the sun from its winter hiding place. Clergymen of the state churches in these countries have historically disapproved even of the saints' images that adorn the sanctuary walls and ceilings in so many of their own parishes, which were uniformly Catholic before they became uniformly Lutheran.

In spite of all contrary pressures from the church and the present religious belief system (or lack thereof), Thor is alive and well in the Northland during the Christmas season. The goat that pulls his chariot, the sun, stands beside—or, in miniature, hangs from—a hundred thousand Christmas trees. The word *Yule* is believed to refer to the wheels of that chariot; a "good yule" is one that brings the sun back to the North. Lesser household deities and imps such as the Icelandic Christmas men, the *Nissen* and *Tomten*, emerge from their hideouts to adorn the tree and the mantle. Only grudgingly do they yield pride of place to that Mediterranean latecomer, St. Nicholas of Myra (Santa Claus). Now that he has a permanent home and mailing address in Rovaniemi, Finland, Santa Claus himself may gradually become more like his little helpers. After all, they were there first.



Maiju Wilson and Lena Becker thread and tie together delicate pieces of straw to create *himmeli*, traditional Finnish geometric constructions. Photo by John Gibbs

The inoffensive nature of the old Norse gods, nowadays, may have some bearing upon the apparent health of the pagan customs, and more particularly the artifacts associated with Christmas in the North. These customs and artifacts are old, traditional, and in many ways beautiful; but they no longer carry any theological or even superstitious baggage. They blend easily with a modern, and fundamentally secular, worldview.

This blending may be simply a marriage of convenience; but if convenience were the only selling point in favor of Nordic paganism, any other paganism would suit as well. They would not necessarily call the season Yuletide; feature straw or wooden goats in their decorations; put out bowls of porridge for the imps that visit by night and sheaves of grain for the birds that visit by day. These and other details of the midwinter festivi-

ties in northern Europe are much older than Christianity is there. Some Yule customs that we do not much practice in America, such as the bonfires, are undoubtedly older than Christianity is anywhere.

Jesus is not quite two thousand years old; and the Christmas story is younger still, by at least half a century. Ten thousand years earlier, in most of the Nordic countries, some ancestors of the present population had begun to filter in, closely following the retreat of the continental ice shelf. Agriculture and permanent settlement seem to have taken several thousand years to develop, but were clearly in place around 3,000 B.C. That is to say, there have been Nordic people, loosely defined, for about five thousand years.

These people of the North, for at least fifty centuries, have raised grain; they have missed the sun in the winter;

and they have had some notion of supernatural powers, inhabiting more or less natural forms—totemic animals, little people, and sacred woods. Even if we knew nothing from rock and cave art, archaeology, and ancient writings, we could reasonably assume that their ritual life in the winter included some sort of grain offerings. They must have held some joyful celebration around the time of the winter solstice; this celebration was about darkness and light and, therefore, given their technology, involved fire. And there were, periodically, ceremonies at especially important places (such as springs and hearths), intended to honor the good or to appease the evil side of the locally active supernatural powers.

We Americans share with northern Europe the timetable, if not quite the severity, of a midwinter Christmas. Our celebration takes place in a cold season, with long nights, when not



Jytte Hambric demonstrates the Danish art of folding paper to make Christmas tree decorations. Photo by John Gibbs

much seems to be happening on the farm. And it is here in the seasonal cycle, especially as it affects agriculture, that we find some of the strong affinities between the older Nordic paganism, and more recent European Christianity. It is these natural and seasonal affinities that make their annual marriage of convenience work. Both belief systems focus, at this time every year, upon a group of interrelated topics, including the return of light, the revelation of invisible life, the renewal of the family hearth, and associated feelings of joy and happiness. These feelings are often induced, or at least accompanied, by an increased consumption of cholesterol, sugar, and alcohol.

In the Christian case, this mid-winter celebration purports to be about the baby Jesus in particular, with a lot of attention paid to babies in general. There are associations also with baby sheep, baby goats, and even baby angels. It becomes less apparent,

as we are ever less an agrarian people, that such baby-celebrations fall under the general heading of fertility, broadly interpreted.

But Christmas is both more, and less, than an ancient Near Eastern fertility rite. I only mention its parallels with that sort of cultic observance to help explain the obvious ease with which the Nordic Yule has incorporated old Norse symbols and behaviors that have nothing to do with Christianity. If a good Lutheran pastor suspected that one iota of belief lay behind these rituals and symbols, he would have to condemn them as heathenish and demonic.

What could be more innocent, for example, than the lighting of the Yule log from a piece of wood saved from the previous year's log. The Norwegians in Poulsbo, Washington, do this every year; they even bring their new Yule log over from Norway. More typically, people who want to observe this pagan rite just put away

an unburnt piece of the log, when they are packing up their other decorations.

Many other practices and artifacts have been adopted from earlier times and customs, and I want to begin with one that is little discussed in the literature. That is the Finnish geometrical construction of straw called *himmeli*, a word not found in my Finnish dictionary. There is reason to believe it has something to do with *heaven*, and is thus a loan-word from some non-Finnish language, probably German or Swedish.

Be that as it may, the making of *himmeli* was already traditional in Finland early in the nineteenth century. Whether it was then an old tradition, or a new one, I cannot say. These objects must be made from specially selected and prepared straw. Like a lot of the older customs, this requires advance planning and some seasonal activity that takes place well before the actual Christmas season. The straw used to make them has to be straight, clean, and unblemished, requirements that may have to do only with esthetics and structural soundness: if you are going to all this trouble, the materials ought to be pretty, and you hope it will be strong enough to keep from year to year. The nicest *himmeli* are in fact kept—sometimes for several generations—typically being hung from rafters in the attic between Christmases.

But, apart from concerns for beauty and durability, the list of requirements sounds very much like those for offerings to the gods, such as first-fruits, sacrificial lambs, and the virgins thrown into volcanoes. From that perspective, using straight, clean, and unblemished products of the field is most likely to invoke a kind of charm, one worked to renew the fertility of that field. There is no particular reason, other than geography, to associate this kind of charm with the Norse gods; the Israelites, Egyptians, and many others have made grain offerings of some kind.

When we move from *himmeli* to the woven and braided artifacts of straw, there is a bit more information available. For the angels and stars, I refer you to the familiar second chapter of the Gospel according to Luke. But I would like to say a few words here



Barbara Freeman, a practitioner of the art of Swedish woven wheat, describes the angel, stars, and dancing figures held by the Folklife Center's workshop coordinator, Magdalena Gilinsky. On the table are the figures of two goats, seemingly un-Christmas-like creatures that are traditional fixtures at Nordic Christmas celebrations. Photo by John Gibbs.

about goats. It is widely asserted that the *julbock*, very loosely meaning Christmas goat, is a holdover from the old Norse cult of Thor. Traditionally this goat is made of straw, although other materials are sometimes used.

Leaving aside questions of a sun-chariot, there seems to be some consensus that the goat was the draft animal of the god Thor. Whether his goat-cart was normally drawn across the sky, over the ground, or somewhere beneath it seems more problematic. Any problem with the sun-chariot theory would cast its shadow on the Norse etymology for the word *Yule*. It can be true that *jul* means *wheel* in Old Norse, without its necessarily being significant. Or, its significance might lie elsewhere; one very plausible suggestion is that a mid-winter festival called "Wheel" signifies the revolving of the seasons themselves, rather than a particular

wheel on the chariot of this, or some other, Norse god.

If elements of myth, legend, and pure speculation form a lumpy stew in regard to the *julbock*, when we turn to Santa Claus we find a veritable alphabet soup. In each Nordic land there is at least one ancient character, upon whom the modern role as the deliverer of Christmas gifts has devolved. He is usually described as a gnome or an elf: in Sweden he is the *Jultomten*. The physical appearance of the *Tomten* has been attributed to the commercial art of Jenny Nyström around the turn of this century. His jollity and generosity seem to have developed fairly recently also, under the influence of the published writings of Viktor Rydberg. A very similar little person is called *Nissen* in Denmark and Norway.

Iceland has the greatest abundance of Old Norse literature, and from this

literature it is possible to identify more than thirty different Christmas men or *Jolasveinar*, each with a proper name indicative of the particular misery he inflicts upon the farming community during the winter. Christmas men are sort of tall gnomes who come down from the mountains once a year in a predictable sequence and for a set period of two weeks. They do not bring presents, but are uniformly trouble-makers, most of them thieves of one kind or another.

Literary sources since the eighteenth century have reduced the number of Christmas men, usually to thirteen; and their roles, I am sorry to report, are getting less demonic all the time. In conversation with a few Icelandic-American moms, I have sensed a reluctance to tell their children about the Christmas men at all. The rationale is that kids in the United States see so much propaganda about Santa Claus, the additional and contradictory information would confuse them. Anyway, the personification of a list of socially unacceptable behaviors is one ancient and effective means of teaching children how to behave. This does not explain the origin of Christmas men, but it is one of their functions that is still valid.

Finland has just one Father Christmas, except in the Swedish-speaking areas where they also have to blend the *Jultomten* into the image. Father Christmas has helpers, and other specifically named elves get into the act in their own characteristic ways. One is the first cousin of Santa Claus, Nestor the elf. His image is the symbol for the 1989 winter games in Lahti, Finland.

Jolly old Saint Nicholas himself, a fourth-century bishop whom we might now describe as a Turkish citizen of Syrian Orthodox persuasion, would not have recognized a reindeer if he saw one. And indeed, he has little in common with his Nordic counterparts. He began his career, so to speak, as the patron saint of children; and one thing led to another. Clearly, the original St. Nicholas had little need for a heavy red coat trimmed in fur to shield him from the balmy sea breezes of Myra and neither would he have had much use for a sleigh. □

PONCA INDIAN SONG COLLECTION PRESENTED TO FOLK ARCHIVE

by Judith A. Gray

“These are songs that the old chiefs [probably sang] when they came here [to Washington, D.C., as visiting tribal delegations]. . . . They’re probably recorded somewhere in one of these buildings. . . . I’m not the first one; the old people have been here before and they’ve done this. . . . This is where I want all the stuff you guys are working on . . . I want it here where it’s gonna be safe.”

Harry Buffalohead,
November 1986

On November 10, 1988, Earl C. Fenner of Terre Haute, Indiana, and Jonathan B. Orens of Baltimore, Maryland, presented to the Library of Congress’s Archive of Folk Culture thirty hours of recordings and accompanying information on more than six hundred texted Ponca songs, thus fulfilling a commitment made to their Ponca collaborator, Harry Buffalohead, one of the most knowledgeable of the old generation of Ponca singers. The collection is the product of many years of interest and approximately three years of direct collaboration with

Buffalohead. It is among the most detailed explorations of the songs of one tribe and of one person’s repertory in the Archive’s collections.

Earl Fenner, an air-traffic controller, and Jonathan Orens, a physician, were introduced to Indian culture when they were Boy Scouts, approximately thirty and fifteen years ago, respectively. Both subsequently became serious students of Indian songs and earned undergraduate degrees in anthropology.

In 1970, Fenner and his family developed a close relationship with Al-



Earl Fenner; Judith Gray, ethnomusicologist for the Center’s Federal Cylinder Project; Jonathan Orens; Center director Alan Jabbour; and Marsha McGuire, archivist at the Archive of Folk Culture. A picture of Harry Buffalohead is shown in the briefcase with his tapes. *Photo by Reid Baker*



Harry Buffalohead, one of the most knowledgeable of the old generation of Ponca singers, is pictured at the drum (center) in this 1940s photograph, when he was fifteen years old. Others around the drum (clockwise from Buffalohead) are Russell Rush, John Elk (white straw hat), McKinley Eagle, Bill Kemble, Francis Eagle, Charlie Waters (in round-top hat), Tim Little Voice, Logan DeLodge (in baseball cap), Lamont Brown (not in picture), Sylvester Warrior, Joe Rush, Lawrence DeLodge, and Leonard Smith. The women at the back of the photograph are (left to right): Madeline Eagle, Marline Eagle, Rose Marie Eagle, Annabelle Eagle, Angeline DeLodge, Mary Ann Crazy Bear, Agnes Howe, Carrie Little Voice Tyndall, Delphine White Star Little Voice, and Leona Rough Face. *Photo by Garruth Mutchmore, courtesy of Earl Fenner*

ford and Victoria Waters, a Ponca and Osage/Quapaw couple living in Chicago, and were introduced as family to the Waters' Oklahoma relatives. This experience opened the way for Fenner to record some of the best Ponca singers. He was also privileged to have a seat at the Ponca Hethushka drum bought for him by an Otoe woman, Agnes Pipestem. Orens meanwhile began singing at age thirteen, and was first exposed to Ponca music a few years later when he was allowed to sit by Ponca head singer Albert Waters at a powwow in Oklahoma. (The Ponca tribe, originally from Nebraska, is now based in Oklahoma.)

Fenner and Orens first met at a

1975 powwow in Danville, Illinois, where they both came out to the drum to sing with Albert Waters. Hearing each other sing, they realized a common interest and soon were exchanging visits. Each had already started recording powwow groups and individual singers. Word of their interest spread and other people began to send them tapes or brought out old family recordings for them to copy. As Orens expresses it, "the more we found, the more we found." Together they now have approximately eight hundred tapes, primarily of Oklahoma Indian music.

Throughout the years spent participating in powwows and in learning the songs, they have tried to practice

the Indian ways of showing respect for tradition as expressed by Sylvester Warrior, one of the old generation of singers: "You must go to the old people. You must be humble and sincere. Information costs you dearly. Groceries, blankets, money. Whatever you can acquire you must pay. Just like when a white man wants to learn. It costs him dearly to go to college. Indian is the same way. It costs dearly to learn these things from the old people." This was a time when young Poncas were more often interested in Northern-Plains-style singing than in their specifically Ponca heritage, and Fenner and Orens found that the elders were pleased by their interest, doors were always open, and seats

were usually made available for them at the drum.

As the collection of recordings grew and as they saw many of the old singers pass on, they increasingly felt the need to document the Ponca songs. In 1985, therefore, they asked Harry Buffalohead if he were interested in recording his knowledge of Ponca repertory, and he agreed. Born in 1926, Buffalohead was one of the last of the old generation. His knowledge came largely from the great-grandfather who raised him after he was orphaned as a child. First invited to be head singer at a drum when he was only seven, he had sung for many years with the most accomplished Ponca singers—Sylvester Warrior, Joe Rush, Lamont Brown, Charlie Waters, Bob Littledance, Francis Eagle, McKinley Eagle, Sterling White Star, Louie Yellowhorse, and many others. Buffalohead has devoted his life to learning the music of the Ponca



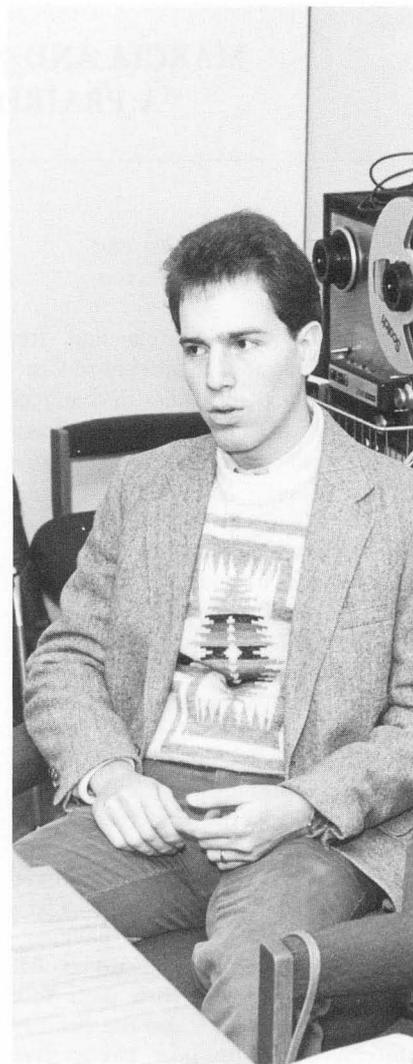
Earl Fenner. Photo by Reid Baker

tribe and now regards this collection as his legacy to be preserved and held in trust for the younger Ponca singers. Fenner recalls Buffalohead's words: "I want that material preserved in that museum in Washington. I'm giving it to you guys; it's up to you to get it there."

Fenner and Orens chose to focus on the texted Ponca songs, those with meaningful words as well as vocables (syllables such as "hey" and "ho"). Texted songs in a very real way constitute the history of the tribe. For those who speak the Ponca language, each text recalls the personal or group experience that prompted the song's composition. When singers died without passing on their songs or when young people have not become fluent in Ponca, a part of the tribal history has been lost to the younger generations. The collectors' procedure, therefore, has been to extract all texted Ponca songs from their tapes, to play a portion of a song for Buffalohead to fix it in his mind, then to record him singing the song. They translate the text both as it is sung in a condensed or abbreviated fashion and as such a text would be spoken, and explain the source, context, and significance of the song.

Orens had recorded Buffalohead in the latter's home at White Eagle, Oklahoma, in 1982. But the recording project really began in 1985 when Orens worked for a month as a medical student at the Ponca health clinic and spent evenings recording Buffalohead, a practice repeated during September 1988 when Orens returned to the clinic as a doctor. Fenner and Orens also brought Buffalohead to Baltimore for two weeks in 1986 and have made other brief visits to Oklahoma. Buffalohead's eagerness to teach is evidenced by the intensity with which the three worked; they recorded over one hundred songs in one day during the 1986 visit. Fenner then took on the task of transcribing each of the tapes verbatim, entering the material into a computer data base and using his lunchtimes and periods of inactivity during overnight shifts to push the project ahead.

Still growing, the collection now consists of Ponca Hethuska, peyote, individual, love, scalp, soldier dance,



Jonathan Orens. Photo by Reid Baker

wolf dance, pipe dance, and hand game songs, as well as Christian hymns. Among them are also the "Osage songs," most of which were composed by the Ponca singers hired by the neighboring Osage people for the June Inlonshka ceremonies. The tapes document almost one complete generation of singers, representing both individuals and groups.

At a memorial dance in White Eagle last September, Orens saw a young Ponca man in a car listening to and learning songs from a cassette—it was one of the cassettes of war dance songs that the three had recorded in Baltimore. The project of three dedicated men has thus come full circle. It is their hope that the process will continue. □

MARCIA AND JON PANKAKE PRESENT PROGRAM BASED ON "A PRAIRIE HOME COMPANION FOLK SONG BOOK"

by James Hardin and
Joseph C. Hickerson

On January 10, Marcia and Jon Pankake delighted a Library of Congress audience of adults and school children with songs and stories from their recent compilation, *A Prairie Home Companion Folk Song Book*, published by Viking Press with a foreword by Garrison Keillor. Michael Jacobs, vice president for marketing at Viking was on hand to present two autographed copies to Judy McDermott, chief of the Library's Exchange and Gift Division. A portion of the royalties from the sale of the book will be donated to the Friends of the Folk Archive Fund, and for the Pankakes, this designation and the visit represent a chance to repay the Folk Archive for the service it has rendered them over the years.

Marcia and Jon Pankake have collected American folksongs and recordings and have sung with their folk band, "Uncle Willie and the Brandy Snifters," for the past twenty-five years. They have always been interested in original and authentic versions of the songs, and have regularly ordered tape copies of field recordings from the Archive.

The Pankakes both hold doctorate degrees from the University of Minnesota, he in American studies and she in library science, and it was there they met Garrison Keillor, the well-known host of the popular "A Prairie Home Companion" program on Minnesota Public Radio. Keillor was public affairs director at the university radio station, KUOM, and recorded the Pankakes for his program of folk music. Later, the Pankakes made regular appearances on "A Prairie Home Companion," and Jon performed on the show as the mysterious "Masked Folksinger."

In 1983, when, as Keillor puts it, the program "still didn't know what to do with itself, it seemed exactly right to put out the call for folk songs and



At a special program in the Library's Whittall Pavilion, Marcia and Jon Pankake, compilers of the recently published *A Prairie Home Companion Folk Song Book*, entertain an appreciative audience from the Capitol Hill Day School. Photo by Reid Baker

carve out a ten-minute segment after the Lake Wobegon story called the Department of Folk Song." There were two requirements: the songs had to be "ones you have heard from someone else" and ones "to which

you remember the words mostly." The department received thirty or forty letters a week, from which eight or ten songs were selected to be sung on the air, and nearly eighteen hundred songs came in over a period

“CHAD GADYA” COLLECTION PRESENTED TO FOLK ARCHIVE



Ursula Schwadron (right) discusses the work of her late husband, Dr. Abraham A. Schwadron, professor of music at the University of California at Los Angeles, who, for ten years, studied the Jewish Passover song “Chad Gadya” (“One Kid”). Mrs. Schwadron and her son, Steven C. Schwadron (second from right), administrative assistant to Massachusetts Representative Gerry E. Studds, visited the Archive of Folk Culture on November 14, 1988, to present her husband’s collection of recordings, publications, and manuscripts to (from left to right) Archive head Joseph C. Hickerson, Exchange & Gift Division chief Judy McDermott, and Center director Alan Jabbour. The collection includes recordings and transcriptions of hundreds of versions of the “Chad Gadya” from Jewish communities around the world. *Photo by Reid Baker*

of three years. (Interestingly, this call for songs echoes a similar effort by Robert Gordon, first head of the Library’s Archive of American Folk-Song. Gordon had a column in *Adventure* magazine in the twenties, “Old Songs That Men Have Sung,” and he issued an invitation to readers to send in “all the old songs of every variety.” It was part of his plan to collect every American folksong.)

From the songs sent in to “Prairie Home’s” Department of Folk Song, the Pankakes selected about three hundred for *A Prairie Home Companion Folk Song Book*, funny, irreverent songs, parodies, nonsense rhymes, and old favorites. And from this idiosyncratic grab bag, they made a program that delighted the January audience at the Library of Congress, and particularly the second-grade class

from the Capitol Hill Day School seated before them in the front row. The more “gross” and irreverent song (“Greasy Grimy Gopher Guts,” “I Shot My Teacher”), the more gleeful was the response of the class, which readily joined in with the singing and offered additional verses—amply demonstrating that one mark of the true folksong is that we embrace it as our own. □

Exhibition Honors 150th Anniversary of the Invention of Photography

"Documenting America: 1935-1943: Photographs from the Farm Security Administration-Office of War Information Collection at the Library of Congress," the inaugural event in a nationwide celebration of the 150th anniversary of the invention of photography, opened at the Library of Congress on December 15, 1988. The exhibition, which runs through May 14, 1989, also celebrates the 50th anniversary of the FSA-OWI photographic section, which produced the famous collection of photographs now housed at the Library of Congress. The curators for the exhibition were Carl Fleischhauer of the American Folklife Center and Beverly W. Brannan of the Library's Prints and Photographs Division.

Between 1935 and 1943, a group of photographers working for the federal government documented America in pictures. The photographers were members of a photographic section that moved from one government agency to another and then to a third during its eight-year existence. Headed by Roy Emerson Stryker, the section was first established in the Resettlement Administration (RA) in 1935, became part of the Farm Security Administration (FSA) in 1937, and was transferred to the Domestic Operations Branch of the Office of War Information (OWI) in 1942. In 1943 Congress eliminated the domestic branch, and Stryker and several of the section's photographers left the government.

The photographs presented in the exhibition depict the nation as it recovered from the Great Depression and entered World War II. Selected from the approximately 77,000 images produced by Stryker's section, they may be seen as vignettes documenting life in the United States between 1935 and 1943. As each group (or series) of photographs was selected from an individual photographer's coverage of a single subject, they also show the photographers at work.



At first, the section focused on rural and small-town America, but as World War II neared, and especially after Pearl Harbor, it began covering urban and industrial subjects. The Resettlement Administration, Farm Security Administration, and Office of War Information used the section's photographs in their day-to-day communications, but the project did not end there. Stryker foresaw the long-term value of the photographs, and he assembled an encyclopedic pictorial file as a historical record of the era.

Although not every photographer is included, the exhibition represents the

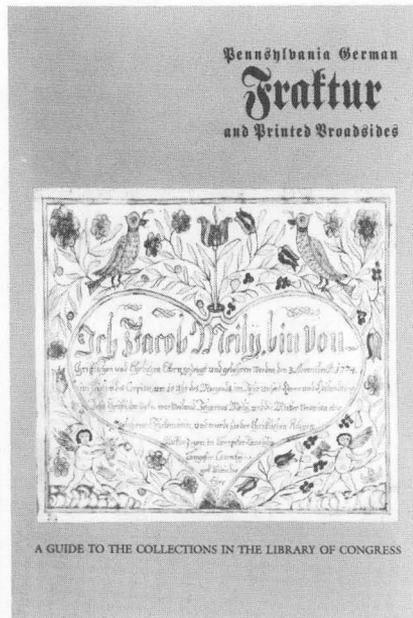
section's changing roster. Twenty or more photographers worked with Stryker for varying lengths of time, and twelve of them are represented: Esther Bubley, John Collier, Jr., Marjory Collins, Jack Delano, Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange, Russell Lee, Gordon Parks, Marion Post Wolcott, Arthur Rothstein, Ben Shahn, and John Vachon.

A book to accompany the exhibition was published by the University of California Press in cooperation with the Library of Congress. It is available at bookstores throughout the country. □

Folklife Center Publishes Fraktur Guide and Best Folk Recordings List

Among the many magnificent collections of the Library of Congress is a small but significant collection of fraktur and printed broadsides, the folk art of illuminated manuscripts frequently associated with Pennsylvania German communities during the late eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. The Library's collection of hand-painted and printed manuscripts is housed primarily in the Prints and Photographs Division, but there are several fine examples in the Rare Book and Special Collections Division and the Performing Arts Library.

In 1986 the American Folklife Center invited Professor Don Yoder of the University of Pennsylvania to speak on the subject of fraktur and Paul Connor to present a workshop, and from this program came the plan to produce a guide to the Library's collection. *Pennsylvania German Fraktur and Printed Broadside: A Guide to the Collections in the Library of Congress*, compiled by Paul Connor and Jill Roberts, with an introduction by Don Yoder, is now available from the Library of



Congress. The 48-page guide lists 168 manuscripts and prints, and includes black-and-white and color illustrations. Professor Yoder's interpretive introduction describes the history, subject matter, and function of fraktur in Pennsylvania-German communities, and explains the way it was displayed and regarded by the people who produced it.

Pennsylvania German Fraktur is available from the Library of Congress, Sales Shop, Washington, D.C. 20540. The price is \$9.95, plus \$2 for postage and handling. □

FOLKLIFE CENTER NEWS

James Hardin, *Editor*
Don Shomette, *Design Consultant*

Folklife Center News is a quarterly report on the programs and activities of the American Folklife Center, available free of charge from the Library of Congress, American Folklife Center, Washington, D.C. 20540. *Folklife Center News* does not publish announcements from other institutions or reviews of books from publishers other than the Library of Congress. Readers who would like to comment on Center activities or newsletter articles may address their remarks to the editor.



The American Folklife Center has recently released *American Folk Music and Folklore Recordings 1987: A Selected List*. The Center has been compiling and issuing yearly lists since 1983 to help promote the best recordings of American folk music and folklore from various companies and organizations during the previous year.

Although many of these recordings elude mainstream distribution networks and seldom appear in record shops and catalogs, they have been instrumental in preserving America's heritage and encouraging performers in local communities. The recordings are also valuable resources for students, teachers, and libraries.

To be eligible for consideration, a recording must feature cultural traditions found within the United States; emphasize "root traditions" over popular adaptations of traditional materials; be conveniently available to American purchasers; and include well-annotated liner notes or accompanying booklets relating the recordings to the performers, their communities, genres, and styles.

The 16-page, illustrated pamphlet is free of charge from the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20540. □

FOLKLINE

For timely information on the field of folklore and folklife, including training and professional opportunities and news items of national interest, a taped announcement is available around the clock, except during the hours of 9 A.M. until noon (eastern time) each Monday, when it is updated. Folkline is a joint project of the American Folklife Center and the American Folklore Society. Dial:

202 707-2000



At the First Korean School in Silver Spring, Maryland, a martial arts class is instructed by Mr. Myung Chul Choi, April 17, 1982. A new report on maintaining cultural traditions through ethnic schools is described on page 3. (ES82-193186-1-17A) Photo by Lucy Long

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