

**Appalachian Music Fellowship
Final Activity Report
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With a limited background in music, I began this project with the idea of exploring a wide range of traditional Appalachian music. My goal was to increase my knowledge base and gain an appreciation for the music of the Appalachian region. At the outset I hoped to learn enough about Appalachian music to introduce the subject to students in the TEC 213-Appalachian Crafts class.

Singers

I spent the first two weeks listening to various artists and styles of traditional music. I began by listening to ballad and folk singers such as Jean Ritchie, Betty Smith and Lily May Ledford. Initially, I had a difficult time listening to some of the unaccompanied vocals and did not select any of these for my music library. At mid-point in this study things changed and I had acquired an appreciation for this style of singing and decided to include a cappella songs in my selection list. I have decided that listening to Jean Ritchie sing her version of "Amazing Grace" is like listening to Bob Dylan sing "Blowing In the Wind." To really appreciate their talents both artists seem to require a certain amount of listening time.

Instrumental Music

Next I decided to explore the various instruments used in traditional music. This included the dulcimer, banjo and fiddle. I started with the dulcimer since it was one of the earliest of the Appalachian instruments. I selected recordings of Edna Ritchie and Gerry Milnes for my library. Next I listened to banjo music and decided that Virgil Anderson was a good source for this style of music. Finally, Emma Lee Dickerson and Jim Bowles provided a full selection of traditional fiddle music for my collection.

String Bands

After listening to individual vocalist and instrumentalist, I decided to explore some of the early bands of traditional music. I knew of the Coon Creek Girls, so I had the sound archives searched and some of their early Renfro Valley Radio recordings were discovered. The music was great and so were the commercials. Following the Coon Creek Girls, I explored the music of Homer Ledford and his group the Cabin Creek Band. The musicianship of the band was incredible and Homer's saw playing ability was remarkable.

African American Traditional Music

The last area that I examined was African American Traditional music. The information on the Special Collections web site was very helpful in deciding which artists to include in my collection. This style of music was truly amazing. I was instantly drawn to the blues sounds of

Etta Baker's guitar. I spent much time in this genre and along with Etta, included the music of Robert Garrett, Moses Rascoe, Sparky Rucker and the Foddrel Brothers.

Teaching Applications

Once all of the CD's were burned, I loaded them into an i-tunes library on my laptop and then transferring them onto an i-pod. These tunes will be used in the TEC 213-Appalachian Crafts class as background music when students are working on their crafts. This library contains a broad sampling of music and artists and hopefully will spark some student interest in traditional Appalachian music. At the very least it will create an atmosphere conducive to working on Appalachian Crafts.

As I worked on this project I became keenly aware of how the art of music and photography are interconnected. As I listened to the music, the lyrics and traditional tunes conjured up visual images of mountain life and the natural landscape of Appalachia. To capture this experience, I decided to create a slide show using the Appalachian photographs of Doris Ulmann and the dulcimer music of Edna Ritchie. After the completion of this slide show I decided to produce a second one pairing some of my photographs of Appalachia with Jean Ritchie's song "High Hills and Mountains."

During this project I assembled a large quantity of traditional music and information about the artists. In order to organize the sounds and background information into a concise lesson for students, I decided that a Power Point presentation would be the best vehicle for delivery. This method was chosen because it allowed me to combine sound, photographs and printed information to create an effective teaching tool. This lesson will be used in the TEC 213-Appalachina Crafts class to introduce students to traditional Appalachian music.

This Fellowship has been a very positive experience for me. The Special Collection's staff has been extremely helpful and has guided me faithfully along the journey. During the process I have learned much about Appalachian music but more importantly I have gained a new appreciation for the artists and their music. I believe the slide shows, music library and Power Point presentation will be very beneficial to students and hopefully will stimulate interest in this special form of music.