


2019

North Central Louisiana Folklife Project Collection

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M-154 NORTH CENTRAL LOUISIANA FOLKLIFE PROJECT "GIFTS FROM THE HILLS" EXHIBITION, PHOTOGRAPHS AND RECORDS, 1983-1984

SCOPE AND CONTENT

Items from the North Central Louisiana Folk life Project and Susan Roach-Lankford; pictorial representations of contemporary North Louisiana folk-culture, arts and crafts, including mounted photographs, exhibit information, catalogs, and folk life survey forms. 12 boxes.

BOX	FOLDER	DESCRIPTION
001	001	"Gifts From the Hills- North Central Louisiana Folk Traditions," flyer announcing exhibit of the photographs; flyer announcing "A Celebration of Black Folk Tradition of North Louisiana."
	002	Survey form/questionnaire- Louisiana Folkways Society.
		BASKETRY
003		Willard Barham, Hico, shaves white-oak splint with pocket knife.
004		Willard Barham, Hico, tightens weave of white-oak basket; a tight basket weave is aesthetically valued.
005		Willard Barham, shows detail of a white-oak sapling.
006		Lonnie Gray, Bernice, shaves white-oak splint with draw knife.
007		Sidney Reed, Pine Hill, selects a white-oak sapling for splitting.
008		Sidney Reed, splits the white-oak.
009		Sidney Reed, Pine Hill, begins to weave basket bottom on ground.
010		Sidney Reed, Pine Hill, bends ribs to form sides.
011		Sidney Reed, Pine Hill, ties ribs together to form sides.
012		Azzie Rowland, begins white-oak split with wedge.
013		Azzie Rowland, Marion, works on his porch with basket materials.
014		Azzie Rowland, Marion, lays out the basket ribs.
015		Azzie Rowland, puts small block under the ribs to form a bowed center.

BASKETRY cont.

- 002 001** Jim Rowland, Marion, with white-oak hamper with hinged lid.
- 002** The late Rev. V.L. Westbrook, weaves basket side using form, an innovation of his own which has also been used by other basket makers.

BLACKSMITHING

- 003** Homer Eaves, Simsboro, starts fire in forge for blacksmith work.
- 004 Homer Eaves, hammers plow sweep on anvil to sharpen the edge.

BONNETS AND HATS

- 005** Mittie Weldon, Bernice, models two styles of bonnets; the one she wears is a dress bonnet, while the other is used more for everyday gardening.
- 006** Leola Simmons, Downsville, plaits corn shucks to make a hat.
- 007** Leola Simmons, sews the plaited corn shuck to fashion the hat crown.

BROOMS

- 008** Lucille Bayles, Point, sweeps her kitchen with a sedge brush broom.
- 009** Annie Rene Harris, sweeps the back stoop with brush broom; husband Walker Harris, who bottoms chairs with cowhide, rests on the porch.
- 010** May Owens, Point, sweeps away debris with brush broom.

CHAIRS AND CHAIRBOTTOMS

- 011** Jimmie Gray, Bernice, prepares hickory for making chair bottom.
- 012** Nonie Waters, Shady Grove, twills corn shucks into rope for bottoming a chair.
- 013** Nonie Waters selects corn shucks for making corn shuck rope.

014 Nonie Waters weaves chair bottom with cotton cord, a commercial alternative to homemade cord.

015 Mr. and Mrs. Ben Watson, Marsalis, sit in their swing on the porch of their bungalow, a favorite relaxation spot in the region.

GOURDS

003 001 Lonnie Gray, Bernice, prepares gourd martin house for hanging.

002 Jake Martin's gourds, Friendship, are grown on a dead tree; note the aluminum cans in the truck collected for recycling. A modern phenomena, can collecting follows the "waste not" philosophy practiced by area farmers.

003 Gourd birdhouses in Landscape (Union Parish).

004 Clem Wright, Gourds (not part of original exhibit)

NEEDLEWORK

005 Leola Simmons, Downsville, copies embroidery design with the traditional technique of placing cloth over the design to be copied and then.

006 Leola Simmons rubbing a snuff box over the cloth and design.

007 Ruth Dudley, Spearsville, tats lace edging.

008 Mittie Weldon, Bernice, tats lace.

009 Iska Walker, Farmerville, in a living room making hairpin lace.

010 Minnie Lee Graves, Hico, quilting "double wedding ring" quilt on frame suspended from ceiling.

011 Rosie Jackson, Chatham, on her front porch with some of her common quilts used for cover.

012 Opal Madden, Simsboro, adjusts clamps on her quilt frame which sits on horses, another way of setting up the frame.

013 Nova Mercer, Jonesboro, piecing "double wedding band" quilt.

014 Detail of piecing "double wedding band" quilt top.

015 Neil Roach draws quilting designs on her "dutch doll" quilt.

016 Jossie Sheldon, Haynesville, puts this star quilt together with a variation of the "drunkard's path" pattern.

NEEDLEWORK cont.

004 001 Rosie Whaley, Pin Hill, pieces an "around the world" quilt top from polyester knit.

002 Maybeth Wilson, Linville, quilts in her bedroom on frames suspended from the ceiling.

003 Leola Simmons, Downsville, crochets an afghan from a pattern copied from neighbors.

SOAPMAKING

004 Mary Gray, Bernice, stirs cracklings and lye together to make soap.

005 Annie Rene Harris, Homer, pours water through white-oak ashes in barrels to make lye for soap making.

006 Not Identified

WOODCRAFTS

007 David Allen, Homer, strips bark from hickory to make a walking stick.

008 David Allen carves a variety of spirals, clovers, and other designs on his canes.

009 David Allen varnishes the canes after the carving is finished.

010 David Allen has passed on his art to his neighbor Bennie Holyfield.

011 David Allen stands in his front yard with cane

012 Hugh McGee, Spearsville, a retired carpenter, whittles small objects to pass the time.

013 E. J. Ware, Haynesville, retired carpenter, builds martin houses to attract the mosquito-eating birds.

FARMING AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

- 014** Abbie Colvin unhitches horse from plow.
- 015** Abbie Colvin, Dubach (Lincoln), plows up potatoes while family members pick up the crop.
- 016** Sally Aulds, Ruston, uses a hoe to dig the remaining potatoes after the plow has gone down the bed four times.
- 017** Inez Sharp, Ruston, spreads potatoes out in a storage shed; lime may be sprinkled on them to keep them.

FARMING AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY cont.

- 005 001** Annie Rene Harris, Homer, uses sticks for running beans in her garden.
- 002** Harmon Martin, considered to be one of "the best plow hands in the country" gets the rows ready for setting out onions for a winter garden.
- 003** Mr. and Mrs. Clonie Otwell, Dubach, pull up the last of the snap bean vines to pick the last of the crop.
- 004** Victor Tabor, Spearsville, sorts through his wide variety of farming gear.
- 005** Victor Tabor, Spearsville, has built a number of barns on his farm. This one was disassembled and moved to his farm where he rebuilt it.
- 006-007** Victor Tabor, Spearsville, and his neighbors attempt to help a cow with calving difficulties. After trying to "pull" the calf with a rope tied to its feet and having no success, they had to resort to the skills of a veterinarian, which unfortunately came too late to save the calf.
- 008** Victor Tabor, Spearsville, uses his bullwhip to herd the cows to the barn for milking and feeding.
- 009-010** Victor Tabor, with help from his neighbors, harnesses his ponies for a Sunday afternoon ride, a traditional Sunday pastime.
- 011** Victor Tabor takes off in his homemade wagon.
- 012-013** The Sunday afternoon ride stops abruptly when the ponies, still being trained to pull the wagon, plunge into the ditch and

break the wagon tongue. Victor has to walk the ponies home and return for the wagon with the tractor.

- 014** Richard Bryant, Dubach, milks his cows in the barn.
- 015** Richard Bryant strains the milk after milking.
- 016** Richard Bryant raises a variety of chickens, ducks, guineas, and banties in his traditional homemade coops.
- 017** Richard Bryant and family relax on the front porch at twilight after the chores are done. The granddaughter takes care of the perpetual fly in a traditional fashion, a task usually assigned to children.

FARMING AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY cont.

- 006 001** Clonie Otwell, Dubach, cleans his donkey's hoof.
- 002** Clonie Otwell, Pearidge, tells a donkey's age by examining its teeth. The more slanted the teeth, the older the animal. Animal husbandry information such as this is learned growing up on a farm.

FISHING, HUNTING, TRAPPING

- 003** Gibson family, Homer; bank fish with cane poles and rod and reel on lake Claiborne, a traditional family activity.
- 004** Vessie Gibson, Homer, removes a "bream" from her hook. The fish will be taken home and fried.
- 005** Howard Henry, Wilhite, hangs his homemade hoop nets in a tree to dry out after a fishing trip. The nets, along with trammel nets and fishing.
- 006** Howard Henry, Wilhite, unpacks a trammel net.
- 007** Howard Henry, Wilhite, places his catch in a holding cage in his pond to keep them alive until they are sold.
- 008** Truett Moore, Ruston, smoothes cow horn with a rasp to make a blowing or hunting horn.
- 009** Squire Pearson, Litro, with his hunting dog Penny which he trained for squirrel hunting.

- 010** Roy Bayles, Point, scrapes a raccoon hide with a draw knife.
- 011** Roy Bayles takes his frozen hides from the freezer, where they are stored until marketing. Bayles, a buyer of hides-fur trader-gets his hides from farmers and hunters who trap as a sideline.
- 012** Clonie Otwell (Pearidge) and his grandson set a steel trap for trapping mink, coon, etc.
- 013** Sarah Albritton pulls corn from Jewel Davenport's garden which has purple hull peas planted in his field corn, a traditional practice.
- 014** Jewel Davenport, Grambling, loads okra in his truck along with cornstalks he will feed to his horse.
- 015-016** Hill country pastures of Murphy and Cooper families near Hico (Lincoln).

FISHING, HUNTING, TRAPPING cont.

- 007 001** Phil Robertson, Luna (Ouachita) calls ducks in the Union Parish swamp with his self-designed and patented Commander duck caller. Duck hunting has become a popular as well as traditional hunting sport. In the past, handmade callers were used, but decoys were not common to this area.
- 002** Lestar Martin coaxes his pet pig to beg for food; farm animals frequently become pets.
- 003** Harmon Martin plowing.

FOLK ARCHITECTURE

- 004** Obed Ware, Haynesville, rives boards from Cypress for roofing.
- 005** Obed Ware, Haynesville, puts new roof on his new well shed.
- 006** Log dog trot in Dubach, built ca. 1848, features square notching.
- 007** Sheet iron and sign covered barn (Simsboro) built by Homer Eaves in 1920's.
- 008** Single crib log barn built by Homer Eaves, Simsboro, in 1920's.

- 009** Hay barn built by Homer Eaves (Simsboro) in 1920's.
- 010** Rat proof barn (crib) built by Homer Eaves.
- 011** Traditional pig pen structure built by Mr. and Mrs. Walker Harris, Homer (Bethlehem Community).
- 012** Potato house (cellar) and Clay Colvin farm (Dubach).
- 013** Outdoor Toilet on Colvin farm (Dubach).
- 014** Clonie Otwell and his new jack beside his Grandfather Otwell's double pen log house with dove tail notching.
- 015** New Freedom Church of Faith, Ruston; Bungalow home adapted to church building.
- 016** Shotgun house at Pine Hill community.
- 017** May Owens, Point. Bungalow with screened porch note traditional yard with clean swept yard free of grass and random flower beds.

FOLK ARCHITECTURE cont.

- 008 001** Pyramid house near Calhoun.
- 002** W. R. Henry's general store in Marsalis.
- 003** Community members visit in Henry's store around wood stove.
- 004** Water well on back porch, Homer Eaves, Simsboro.
- 005** Bedstead gate for chicken yard, Victor Tabor, Spearsville.
- 006** Richard Bryant Chicken Coop.
- 007** Annie Rene Harris with her chicken house (used for penning chickens at night). Homer, La.
- 008** Homer Eaves, Simsboro, log blacksmith shop.

FOODWAYS

- 009** Sarah Albritton, Ruston, cooks dewberries in water to release juice for jelly.
- 010-011** Sarah Albritton strains the juice.
- 012** Sarah Albritton adds sugar to the juice.

- 013 Sarah Albritton checks to see if it has thickened before skimming off the foam.
- 014 Sarah Albritton wipes the jar rims to make the filled jars look pretty.
- 015 She processes the capped jars, a new step popularized by home extension service.
- 016 Inez Sharp, Ruston, tops filled jelly jars with melted paraffin to seal jelly, an alternative to sealing with new jar lids.
- 017 Mary Gray, Bernice, packs white-oak picnic basket with huckleberry pie, peas, and fried chicken for community dinner.

FOODWAYS cont.

- 009 001 Mary L. Gunn, Ruston, shells purple hull peas on back porch.
- 002 Mary Gunn (detail), shells peas.
- 003 Michael Greenfield, Litroe, uses net to skim fallen may haws from water.
- 004 James Robertson, Luna, and Grandson Jess gather may haws in the north Union Parish forests.
- 005 Detail of a may haw, a small red apple-like berry.
- 006 Michael Greenfield in the Ouachita River backwater shakes may haw tree to release berries into the water.
- 007 Phil Robertson and sons with friend Michael Greenfield wade in knee deep backwater to gather may haws floating.
- 008 Annie Rene Harris, Homer, in kitchen with milk which will be churned into butter.
- 009 Annie Harris, removes salted down ham from box in smokehouse.
- 010 Annie Rene Harris dips out lye soap from soap barrel.
- 011 Annie Rene Harris draws water from back yard well.
- 012 Water well shed of Walker and Annie Rene Harris.
- 013 Mattie Webb, Homer, snaps string beans.
- 014 Charlotte Houck, Hico, prepares biscuits (made by mother, Viola Houck), and sausage.
- 015 Alvia Houck, Hico, hangs ham for smoking in smokehouse.

016 Alvia Houck builds fire with hickory and sassafras for smoking hams and sausage.

FOODWAYS cont.

010 001 Alvia Houck and grandchildren outside smokehouse.

002 Pat Otwell, Pearidge Community, removes a bottle of pickled peppers from cupboard where other canned goods are stored.

003 Maxine Otwell, Pearidge Community, mixes dough for may haw cobbler, first she makes a well of flour and adds oil.

004 Maxine Otwell places biscuit on baking sheet.

005 Maxine Otwell rolls out dough to be cut into strips and placed over may haw juice.

006 Maxine Otwell places crust on may haw cobbler.

007 Truett Moore, Ruston, picks apples from tree with homemade apple picker (can on a stick), a traditional tool.

008 Leola Simmons, Downsville, with her string beans.

009 Elvie Lou Westbrook, Ruston, peels turnips.

010 Elvie Lou Westbrook cooks turnips and greens.

011 Elvie Lou Westbrook checks boiling pork back bone, a meat traditionally served with turnip greens.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

012 Colvin family members (Lincoln Parish) make a traditional Sunday afternoon visit to one of the small family cemeteries prevalent throughout the area.

013 Members of the Clay and Eva Colvin family gather around the table for Thanksgiving Day prayer.

014 Family members gather at home following a funeral for food and visiting.

015 Oil and gas well drillings are important community events which draw whole families to observe the activity.

- 016** The extended Colvin family, one of the largest clans in North La. gathers at their family pavilion at one of the Colvin Centers (Unionville) for their annual family reunion with "dinner on the grounds."
- 017** Older Pisgah Community (Union Parish) members calling their group "keenagers," have a monthly gathering to play music and share a meal featuring such traditional foods as purple-hull peas.
- 018** Purple-hull peas served at Keenagers meeting.

MUSIC

- 011 001** Jimmy and Jane Ball and son Bobby, Ruston, play old time country and gospel music in their home.
- 002** Fred Beavers (fiddle), Tracey Tyler (guitar), Lesley Raborn (mandolin), and Doc Chipman (rhythm guitar) gather at Beaver's home in Choudrant to play old-time country music.
- 003** Lawrence Rippertoe, Homer, plays harmonica with Johnny Beavers seconding on guitar.
- 004** Lawrence Rippertoe and Johnny Beavers play country music for family and friends.
- 005** Roy Beckham, Hico, old time country fiddle.
- 006** Charles Ellis Dawkins, Farmerville, plays harmonica blues, gospel, and country music on his front porch.
- 007** Henry Holde (piano) and Hugh McGee (guitar) and Lonnie Gray (fiddle) play gospel and country music at monthly community gatherings.
- 008** Clonnie Otwell, Dubach (Pearidge Community), plays harmonica and dances for his family.
- 009** Mitchell Sheldon, Haynesville, sings and plays blues on his electric guitar.
- 010** Mitchell Sheldon is joined by his wife Jossie for a gospel song.

- 011 O. A. Houck, Hico, and children Johnny, Rickey, and Cindy Hockenjos, is a favorite area family gospel quartet provide a song service for Saint Rest Church (Lincoln Parish).
- 012 Rev. Onez McCarty, Chatham, pastor of Shady Grove Baptist Church, delivers a "message in song" after his Sunday morning sermon.
- 013 The Shady Grove Children's Choir and pianist director Judith McConnel wait for Sunday service to begin.
- 014 Bluegrass musicians jam at the Vienna town hall. Many of the musicians such as "Pappy" Booth (guitar), "Pete" Brontley (fiddler), and Lesley Raborn (mandolin) also play old-time country and country-western music as well as bluegrass.
- 015 Bluegrass Festival at Quitman, Benefit for bluegrass musician.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

- 016 Oak Grove Primitive Baptist Church Building, Reidheimer (Natchitoches).
- 017 Primitive Baptist preacher, Hilton Mercer, Jonesboro (Pumpkin Center Community) behind Oak Grove Primitive Baptist service by leading the song.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES cont.

- 012 001 Hilton Mercer, after his sermon has begun paces back and forth in the pulpit which punctuates the rhythm of his speech.
- 002 Elder W. D. Godwin, Goldonna (Winn Parish) sermon at Oak Grove Primitive Baptist service.
- 003 Elders Mercer, and Godwin lead song before communion for which church members have gathered at the front of the building.
- 004 The elders break the communion bread.
- 005 Women members on the church begin the foot washing service which follows the communion. Each woman will "gird about the waist" a cloth and wash the next woman's feet, which will in turn, wash the next woman's feet.
- 006 The male members also wash each other's feet.

- 007** After the communion and foot washing the members conclude the service by singing a song and then walking out.
- 008** Following the service, members gather for "dinner on the grounds," with members and guests providing a wide variety of traditional foods.
- 009** Family and friends gather at Ruston Funeral Home chapel for a wake after a death in the community.
- 010** Mt. Moriah Baptist Church (Chatham), church doors with black mourning ribbon which marks the recent loss of their new pastor, Rev. Omez McCarty.
- 011** Mt. Moria pulpit and pastor's chair are also draped in mourning.
- 012** Johnny McCarty, Quitman, and his family give a special choral performance at the unveiling ceremony for Mt. Moriah Church.
- 013** Following a five month mourning period, an unveiling service is held to remove the mourning draping.
- 014** Wesley Chapel Church (Methodist), Claiborne Parish.
- 015** Tulip Methodist Church, rebuilt in 1872 is the location for the annual Tulip Memorial Day.
- 016** The interior of the church features traditional divided pews for men and women.

TRADITIONALLY INSPIRED ARTWORKS

- 017** DeCinter Farley, Vienna, who tells stories of her youth spent on a traditional North La. farm, illustrates her memories of this time in her painting of traditional farm activities.
- 018** Jake Martin, Friendship, with his own creation of yard art of found bottles, fans, light bulbs, and other objects. Yard art such as this might be said to follow traditional structures such as bottle trees.