



Community History Matters

a newsletter of Humanities Tennessee's Community History Development Fund

Welcome to the August 2013 issue of Humanities Tennessee's quarterly newsletter dedicated to the work and interests of our Community History Development Fund (CHDF) partners. This issue highlights a fascinating new project in which our Campbell County partner revisits an exhibit supported by the CHDF in 2008. Plus, our new traveling poster exhibit will hit the road for the first time, heading west.

Did you know that August 10-17, 2013 is "Invite Congress to your Museum Week"? We encourage you to contact your congresspersons while they are on recess in their home districts, and share all of the marvelous work you do in your communities. As you know, Humanities Tennessee receives the bulk of its funding in federal dollars from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). Shortly before the congressional recess, those dollars were threatened with a 49% cut, which would seriously compromise our support of museums and projects across Tennessee. Check out [these tips](#) from the American Alliance of Museums for involving congress in the valuable work you do at the local level.

Have a question about a community history matter? An idea? A resource? Please send it in to us and we'll see if we can share it in our next issue of Community History Matters. Happy reading!

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Not to Be Missed

Bittersweet Harvest Exhibit to Open this Fall in Humboldt

by Melissa Davis, Humanities Tennessee

The Tom & OE Stigall Museum is the first CHDF partner to sign on for Humanities Tennessee's new statewide touring exhibit, *Bittersweet Harvest: The Bracero Program, 1942-1964*, which highlights both the opportunity and exploitation of this monumental migration of guest workers under the auspices of the US and Mexican governments.



The first of six bilingual panels of our touring exhibit.

The exhibit opens November 4, 2013 for a six week run, and will include a public, scholar-led discussion about our Southern border and the future of farmworkers in Tennessee. We are delighted that the dedicated volunteers at the Humboldt museum see the project as a valuable opportunity to engage and educate their community.

The exhibition consists of six, bilingual poster panels of oral history excerpts and National Archive photos. Intersecting important events in our nation's agricultural, labor and immigration history, the exhibit provides opportunities for CHDF partners to explore these topics at the local level, attract new visitors, and share quality programming at no cost.

Bookings are still available so please [contact](#) us to secure your slot on the tour today!



The Blue Valley Boys perform at Tennessee Jamboree

Partner Projects: Sharing Stories across the State

"Brighten the Corner" Exhibit Renewed with New Research
By Jo Anne Myer, Campbell Culture Coalition, LaFollette, TN
and Bradley Hansen, Brown University

Coal miners, loggers, farmers, factory workers, iron workers and railroaders have all been making music in the shadows of the East Tennessee Cumberland Mountains

for decades. They gather to write, to sing and to play the songs of their lives. They have enriched and brightened the corners of the place each has called home.

Many mountain stories have been told through music by ordinary people over the years. Much of this history has been recognized. There is, however, one story which has yet to be fully told. It is the story of Campbell County's mid-twentieth century Barn Dance musicians who brought entertainment to their friends and neighbors while reflecting the public culture of the area. For more than two decades, from 1953 to 1978, a live radio show called, "Tennessee Jamboree," featured local musicians who connected with a faithful audience weekly to share life through live barn dance music on the community's radio station, WLAJ.

Much of this unique radio barn dance story can now be told thanks to newly discovered film footage from events featuring notable barn dance musicians from the Jamboree. The footage, along with audio recording of the events, are being edited into digital multi-media formats in order for this significant musical history to be both shared and preserved.

Additionally, there are some forty-plus broadcast quality interviews with former musicians more recently conducted and over twice as many broadcast era photos collected of the musicians, events and related subjects which are being edited into multi-media formats as well.

Interpretative, contextual multi-media including both the radio barn dance style of music and the oral history clips and images of the musicians from the Tennessee Jamboree will be featured in the Campbell Culture Coalition's "Brighten the Corner" roots music exhibition in the spring of 2014.

The long-enduring radio barn dance musicians will be given their place within the significant musical history of Tennessee and the nation, thanks to CHDF support from Humanities Tennessee. This support allows us to involve musicologist Bradley A. Hansen, a Cumberland music scholar, in the preparation of the exhibit.

Advice & Answers: A Consultant's Two Cents

Sharing Your Work: A Primer for Annual Reports
by Alexis Stevens, Humanities Tennessee

Annual reports are a valuable communication and promotional tool for nonprofit organizations. While not required of nonprofits by law, these reports are a great way to demonstrate your organization's accomplishments and breadth of programming to board members, donors, potential funders, and other stakeholders. Annual reports do not need to be fancy or lengthy—they just need to summarize key information to help people better understand your organization's strengths.

Content

- Focus on your organization's accomplishments. What were the main qualitative and quantitative results of your organization's efforts last year? How do those accomplishments further your organization's mission? Help people understand why and how you do the things you do and why they should care.
- Keep the financial information simple. What came in and from where, and what went out and to where? Two pie charts ("Revenue" and "Expenses") are sufficient.
- Acknowledge your donors. Organize donor lists by giving level, alphabetic order, or any other way that makes sense for your organization. Most donors enjoy recognition, but have way for donors to "opt-out" by contacting you if they do not wish to have their name listed. Make this option readily available to new donors moving forward.

Format

- Don't reinvent the wheel. Look at other nonprofits' annual reports for formatting ideas and adjust to your own needs. Word processing and publishing programs also offer report and newsletter templates that you can manipulate to fit your organization's needs. No need to hire a graphic designer.
- Save time next year. Be sure to save a copy in an editable format so that next year you can simply plug new information into the existing format rather than having to create a new report from scratch.

Timeline

- Patience is a virtue. You'll want to use audited financial information, which requires waiting—sometimes well into the next fiscal year—for your organization's audit to be complete before releasing your annual report. This is industry standard, so don't worry if feels like an eternity has passed between the time your fiscal year ended and your report is ready.

When your annual report is ready, make it available on your organization's website, send it out to your email lists, and make print copies for your key stakeholders. Then do it all over again next year!



News of Note

The *Conversations Bureau* is part of our latest initiative that explores the impact and legacy of divisive issues over the past 150 years.

Conversations Bureau Scholar Receives Guggenheim Fellowship

Hosting a program from our new Conversations Bureau is a great way to offer your community an engaging, educational experience at no cost to your organization. Now that includes the added prestige of a visit with a Guggenheim Fellow. Daniel Sharfstein, professor of law at Vanderbilt, is the middle Tennessee scholar/facilitator for two of our Conversations, and a 2013 recipient of a coveted Guggenheim Fellowship. Fellows are among the most promising and respected thinkers in the country, so we urge you to invite him to engage your community in an insightful, enlightening discussion without further delay!

The Bureau is a selection of ninety-minute discussion programs, each compelling participants to consider issues of race and equality since the United States Civil War—from the Emancipation Proclamation to *Brown v. Board* to James Baldwin and more. Each conversation begins with participants reading a page of excerpts followed by a scholar-facilitated discussion. Find out more about the [Conversations Bureau](#).

Support for Your Organization's Civil War Programs

Is your organization planning a project related to the Civil War in Tennessee? A source of support to consider is the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area (TCWNHA), which seeks to interpret stories of national importance in a congressionally designated region--in the case the entire state of Tennessee. The TCWNHA has partnered with folks across the state to preserve and present stories of the Civil War and Reconstruction eras in Tennessee. Visit their [web site](#) for more information about the TCWNHA and what it supports.

Building Tennessee's Civil War Collection, One Town at a Time

Events to mark the sesquicentennial of the Civil War are well underway across the state, and, indeed, the nation. The Tennessee State Library and Archives (TSLA) is offering a unique opportunities for Tennesseans to contribute to a growing collection of Civil War materials. Through *Looking Back: The Civil War in Tennessee* the TSLA invites you to one in a series of scanning events in order to digitize local material related to the Civil War. Visit the [TSLA website](#) for more information and to find an event near you.

Help spread the word. Take a minute to forward this newsletter to your board, volunteers, or members who are interested in preserving and strengthening community life in our state.

We created a brief video that illustrates the ways in which two partners used the CHDF resources, and the growth each enjoyed as a result. Click [here](#) to see the CHDF in action!

The smallest gift from an individual can make a big difference to community life in Tennessee. Please consider including the CHDF in your giving by making a [secure donation](#) to Humanites Tennessee.

Humanities Tennessee

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