



# *AFC Board Newsletter*

Board Newsletter of the American Folklife Center  
Betsy Peterson, Director

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## Lyons and Stewart Attend Society of American Archivists in New Orleans



AFC Folklife Specialist Bert Lyons poses with various archivists from around the country as they assess New Orleans City Park Archive sites.

AFC archivists Bertram Lyons and Kate Stewart traveled to New Orleans, Louisiana, in August to attend and participate in the annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists. Bert attended various organizational meetings for groups of which he is a part (Membership Committee, Oral History Section, Recorded Sound Roundtable) and he delivered a presentation titled "The Stories We Keep: the StoryCorps collection at the American Folklife Center" as part of a panel of archivists discussing the management of digital oral history collections

(<http://www2.archivists.org/2013/schedule#.UhzUUqyOft8>). Kate attended a

symposium on women's archives at Tulane University's Newcomb Institute, the Oral History Section meeting, and panels on oral history and ethics, audiovisual processing and civil rights movement collections in labor archives.



While in town, Bert and Kate participated in a service project to support the New Orleans City Park Archives (CPA). Kate helped with a project to scan the pages of disbound minute books from the collection of the CPA. Bert lead a team of archivists to plan and perform an inventory of CPA's historical records that had been damaged since Hurricane Katrina hit in 2005. The service project was performed under the auspices of Archivists without Borders and with the support of the Society of American Archivists.

AFC Cataloger/Archivist Kate Stewart assists Helen Thomas, student at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, in scanning historical documents from the New Orleans City Park Archives.

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## AFC Busy with Public Programs in August



The Brotherhood Singers, R&B and Gospel from Kentucky. Photo Credit: Steve Winick.

Late summer is usually a quiet time for AFC public programming, but not this year! Several great traditional music groups, a dynamic speaker, and a compressed Federal budget cycle combined to create an unusually busy season for AFC public programming staff. Following on the heels of an equally busy July, AFC August activities started in August with a memorable Homegrown Concert by The Northern Kentucky Brotherhood, the renowned jubilee-style *capella* gospel music quintet from Convington, Kentucky. Leading exponents for this style of traditional African American quartet music, The Brotherhood has a long-standing relationship with the AFC, most recently touring Russia in 2012 as part of *American Seasons*, a special cultural

initiative of the U.S.-Russia Presidential Bilateral Commission, which was co-sponsored by the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, The American Folklife Center, and CEC ArtsLink. AFC staff member Theadocia Austen,

who had traveled with The Brotherhood for the Russian tour, helped Kentucky-based folklorist Brent Björkman present the group to a large and enthusiastic audience in the Library's Coolidge Auditorium.

The following day, on August 8th, the Benjamin A. Botkin 2013 Lecture Series continued with a talk by New York-based folklorist Elena Martínez entitled "I'd Still Be Puerto Rican, Even if Born on the Moon: Documenting Puerto Rican Migration and Community Through the Arts." Martínez, who is on the staffs of both the Manhattan-based organization City Lore: The Center for Urban Traditional Culture and the Bronx Musical Heritage Center, is an expert on Puerto Rican and Nuyorican culture (people of Puerto Rican heritage born and raised in the New York metropolitan area). Her example-packed talk provided an excellent overview of topics and cultural areas in which AFC archivists would like to increase and strengthen our holdings with future acquisitions.



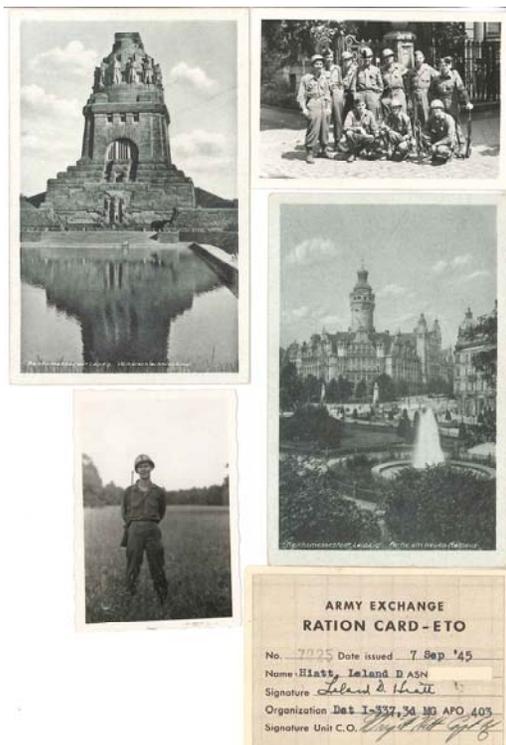
The Homegrown Concerts continued on August 14th with an outstanding performance of traditional Indian Kuchipudi Dance by the Kalanidhi Dance Company. Directed by Anuradha Nehru, this Maryland-based ensemble performed choreographed examples of Kuchipudi dance, an intricate South Indian classical dance style that requires years of formal training. Impressively, all six of Ms. Nehru's excellent dancers were still teenagers, the youngest being only twelve years old.

Members of the Kalanidhi Dance troupe, traditional Kuchipudi dance from Maryland. Photo Credit: Steve Winick

September will be equally busy for AFC staff, with two Homegrown Concerts and two Botkin Lectures, a major symposium, the NEA Heritage Awards ceremony and dinner, and various other obligations. Audience turn out continues to be substantially higher than in the past and we look forward to the challenges of the coming months.

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## Veterans History Project Expands Midwestern Participants



Recently donated collection materials comprising the wartime service of Leland Hiatt Leipzig, whose oral history was recorded at the Nebraska VHP events.

On August 5 and 6, Representatives Jeff Fortenberry (NE-1) and Lee Terry (NE-2) co-hosted community preservation efforts at the Lincoln, Nebraska, Cornhusker Ballroom and Eastern Nebraska Veterans Home in Bellevue. As an ambassador of the Veterans History Project (VHP) at the Library of Congress American Folklife Center, VHP Director Bob Patrick encouraged Nebraskans to add their recollections of military service to a growing archive of over 87,000 individual collections. During consecutive oral history recording sessions, volunteer interviewers ensured the posterity of over seventy-five individual narratives through audio recordings and collected materials. Adding to these Midwestern outreach efforts, Bob Patrick met with both active and proposed VHP contributing participants, to include the Western Durham Heritage Museum, as well as the Nebraska Education Telecommunications (NET), a local PBS affiliate. Coinciding with the current semi-centennial commemoration of the Vietnam War, these relationships expand VHP's capacity to document and circulate the wartime experiences of Vietnam Veterans.

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## The Civil Rights History Project Goes Live!

An unexpected opportunity has allowed AFC to place portions of several interviews from the Civil Rights History Project online for the public to see. These first interviews, along with civil-rights-related materials from other collections, went online on the LC blog platform on August 4. They are the first such set of materials available to the public, but will not be the last; AFC had already planned to release the first fifty-six CRHP interviews in Fall 2013 as part of the Library's "Project One" Web environment, which promises a new way to present the Library's assets to our patrons.

A month ago, the Librarian's office contacted us to enlist our support for the LC photographic exhibit entitled, "[\*A Day Like No Other: Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington.\*](#)" Kate Stewart, CRHP processing Archivist and Guha Shankar, Folklife Specialist, wrote a series of blog posts, "[\*Inside the March on Washington,\*](#)" that showcases video excerpts with individuals in AFC collections testifying about their experiences. Some of the notables we have featured or will feature from the CRHP collection include Courtland Cox, the Ladner sisters, and Clarence Jones – he wrote portions of the "Dream" speech that Dr. King delivered on the Lincoln Memorial steps in 1963. Interviews with the Reverend Joseph Lowery and Constance Baker Motley, documented for the National Visionary Leadership Project collection, are the subjects of one blog post. The exhibit opened on Wednesday, August 28<sup>th</sup>, and featured opening remarks by Representative John Lewis, Civil Rights freedom fighter.

We are quite proud and excited about having our collections featured in this way on the LC site and in other venues. For folks interested in reading about the occasion and hearing directly from eyewitnesses to that memorable day, copy the following post into your web browser:

<http://blogs.loc.gov/loc/?s=%22inside+the+march+on+washington%22&loclr=blogloc>

The Civil Rights History Project is a Congressionally mandated initiative to gather interviews with important participants in the Civil Rights Movement. AFC's partner, the Smithsonian Museum of African American History and Culture, is continuing to record new interviews for the collection. We plan to continue adding interviews to the Library's website to illuminate extraordinary stories of struggle and success in this crucial American movement.

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**Reminder: September 12, 2013, AFC Board Phone Conference,  
1:30-3:00pm.**

