



Pete Seeger

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AFC Board Newsletter

Board Newsletter of the American Folklife Center
Betsy Peterson, Director

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The Civil Rights History Project Set to Unveil!

In its final year, the CRHP is moving full steam ahead. In mid-February, the first 55 interviews will be available on the Library of Congress website (the link is not live yet but will be www.loc.gov/collections/civil-rights-history-project/). Some of the interviewees included in this first batch are Robert L. Carter, Lawrence Guyot, C.T. Vivian, the sisters Joyce and Doris Ladner, Courtland Cox, Ruby Sales, Junius Williams, Freeman Hrabowski and a great friend of the Center, the late Pete Seeger. In the interview, Pete talks about how he debuted the civil rights anthem, “We Shall Overcome,” over fifty years to an audience of civil rights activists including Reverend Martin Luther King. By the beginning of summer, we will add fifty additional interviews to the site, along with interactive features such as a timeline and map, and celebrate the completion of the interview portion of the project with a public launch of the website at the Library.

From February to September, the Civil Rights History Project will sponsor a lecture and concert series, titled “Many Paths to Freedom: Looking Back, Looking Ahead at the Long Civil Rights Movement.” The American Folklife Center plans to host one public event per month in various spaces at the Library. The series kicks off on February 27, with a screening of filmmaker Glen Percy’s 2011 documentary about the civil rights movement in Albany, Georgia called “One More River to Cross.” Percy donated his original film footage from the 1960s from this project and another documentary about Cesar Chavez and farmworkers in California to the American Folklife Center in 2012. Stay tuned for more exciting events focusing on the Civil Rights Movement throughout the year.

VHP Presents Collection Material to Joint Chiefs of Staff



Members of the Joint Chiefs pose with Bob Patrick and various Library of Congress staff members.

On January 15, 2014, the Library of Congress welcomed the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) to a special exhibit of military-themed collections. Led by Chairman General Martin E. Dempsey, senior commanders from each branch of the armed forces reviewed the diverse materials on display, including a portion of the Veterans History Project's (VHP) 90,000 collections. Evoking the human experience of war, the collections comprised a range of conflicts, military occupational specialties and preservation mediums, including narratives such as Japanese-

American WWII service, families of Missing-in-Action personnel and personal struggles with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Though only a fraction of the overall collection, this eclectic sample demonstrated VHP's potential to preserve the unique, and often overlooked narratives of military service.

Nearly every member of the JCS who visited the VHP exhibit booth seemed to be drawn to the poignant story of Rhona Marie Knox Prescott, who served in country with the Army Nurse Corps during the Vietnam War. On display were photographs of a smiling Prescott in uniform near palm trees and beautiful scenery—in deep contrast to an emotional letter she wrote to her friend Eleanor, some 23 years after Eleanor died while serving in Prescott's place on an emergency surgical team deployed to a battle zone.

Prescott's words gave pause to everyone who read them. "You crashed into a mountain deep in v.c. territory. There were bullet holes in the fuselage. Days later, after the monsoon rain let up and the area was secured, your body was recovered. At least you weren't taken prisoner. Did you die instantly? Were you in pain? What did you think?"

Copy and paste this link, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/story/loc.natlib.afc2001001.01146/>, to read the full text of the letter, view photographs and listen to Prescott's VHP interview.

Intern News at the AFC



New AFC intern Matt Hotez, above, is also a professional trombonist.

With so much in the news about Pete Seeger this week, who was AFC's first intern, we thought it would be nice to introduce some of our current interns – who they are and what they are doing for the AFC. This past winter Hannah Santino has been working with archive staff to process the New York Pinewoods Folk Music Club collection and create audio logs for the Jean Ritchie and George Pickow collection. Hannah's name may seem familiar to some of you, she is the daughter of folklorists Lucy Long (another former AFC intern) and Jack Santino. She is originally from Bowling Green, Ohio, and plans to study folklore in graduate school. She magnificently played the role of St. George in AFC's **Mummer's Play** which was performed several times at LC during the holiday season. We're pleased to

welcome new intern, Matt Hotez, who will be here through the spring. He has been helping to process monographs in the George Korson collection and will also be assisting with logging audio in the Ritchie and Pickow collection. He hails from Rockville, Maryland, and plans to pursue library science and ethnomusicology in graduate school. He is a professional musician and tours with a number of bands. You can watch a clip of one of those bands, an Eastern European/Funk-influenced band called **Black Masala** playing at the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage in 2012, that's him on the trombone: http://www.kennedy-center.org/explorer/artists/?entity_id=89032&source_type=B.

A Tribute to Pete Seeger

References to Pete Seeger appear throughout this newsletter issue. He was a longtime friend and supporter of the AFC and a giant in the folk music world. He will be missed. Please visit the AFC blog, *Foklife Today* at <http://blogs.loc.gov/foklife/> for a personal appreciation of Pete written by Steve Winick.

Upcoming Events at the AFC!

February 13 – Archive Forum – Kimberly Christen-Withey: “Opening Collections: Indigenous Cultural Materials and the Ethics of Access.” 2:00 p.m. Mumford Room, Madison Building

February 19 – *Homegrown Concert Series* – Ukrainian Traditional Music. 12:00 p.m. Coolidge Auditorium, Jefferson Building

February 27 – Civil Rights History Project Lecture and Screening – Clips from “One More River to Cross.” 12:00 p.m. Mumford Room, Madison Building

March 12 – *Homegrown Concert Series* – Turkish and Bulgarian Traditional Music. 12:00 p.m. Coolidge Auditorium, Jefferson Building

March 31 – *Open Mic: David Bromberg* – Interview discussion with David Bromberg. 12:00 p.m. Whittall Pavilion, Jefferson Building