

ATP Final Report

The New River's North Fork: Voices from the Headwaters

**Appalachian State University
Dr. Edelma Huntley, Dean
Chief Research Officer
287 Rivers Street, Suite 232
Boone, NC 28608
828-262-2130**

**ATP Project date
August 25, 2011 – March 1, 2012**

**Today's date
April 25, 2012**

**Project Director:
Patricia D. Beaver
Director
Center for Appalachian Studies
Appalachian State University
ASU Box 32018
Boone, NC 28608
828-262-4089
Beaverpd@appstate.edu**

Final Report Narrative

Name of Project: The New River's North Fork: Voices from the Headwaters

Grant Period: February 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012

Grantee Name: Appalachian State University Project Director: Dr. Patricia D. Beaver

Description of Project:

Fall semester 2011 students in ANT 5120 worked with the Elk Knob Community Heritage Organization (EKCHO) to develop a scholarly monograph edition of interviews, stories, and historic photographs from materials collected through the Appalachian Teaching Project during the past 11 years. The monograph, titled *The New River's North Fork: Voices from the Headwaters*, will include an introductory essay about the project, genealogical notes, and an extensive index.

Prof. Beaver proposed this project to the EKCHO board during the summer 2011, and got their overwhelming approval and support for the project. The board then formed a subcommittee which reviewed Beaver's list of over 80 interviews, conducted through the ATP project 2000-2010, and suggested parameters for inclusion in the monograph: the book should only include people within the "stop sign to stop sign" boundaries of EKCHO (highway 194 intersection with Meat Camp Road in Watuaga County, NC, to Sutherland Road's intersection with highway 88 in Ashe County).

The eleven ANT 5120 students in fall 2011 each selected or were assigned an archived interview to review, including checking the original sound recording for accuracy of transcription, re-editing and revising the interview to omit interviewers' questions, developing sub-headings, an introduction and an index, identifying photographs, adding genealogical notes, and where possible, contacting the subject or their surviving relatives for review and approval of publication of the revised interview. Students were then assigned a new interview to conduct, based largely on suggestions of the EKCHO board. Each student conducted a new interview, transcribed, edited, collected or took photographs, developed an introduction, index, genealogical notes, and got final approval for the interview. Students were required to submit short sound bites from each of the interviews for the development of a CD to accompany the final book. By the end of the semester, 22 interviews were assembled.

For the March EKCHO 2012 board meeting, Beaver took the list of completed interviews and two sample interviews for board review. The Board was pleased to see the progress on the book manuscript, and asked for the addition of five new interviews. Beaver agree to develop those interviews with the assistance of community members, who volunteered to facilitate. Three board members agreed to serve as readers and will be asked to review sensitive subjects, review data for errors, verify photo captions, and assist with genealogical information

Dr. Sandra Ballard, editor, *Appalachian Journal*, is serving as project editorial consultant. During Spring 2012, graduate student Kathryn Engle, who was in the class, is organizing and formatting the manuscript, conducting library research, fact checking, and proofreading, copyediting, and indexing.

We will continue work on preparation and publication of the manuscript, including conducting the five additional interviews, over the summer, 2012. Another graduate student will assist in that work, and Dr. Ballard will oversee its publication. We are working with Mark Freed on a CD to accompany the monograph with sound bites and music.

Activities:

- (see attached syllabus) Class met regularly for academic discussion, lectures, training in field research methods, study and analysis of assigned readings, writing and research assignments, and discussion of community work.
- Students participated in Elk Knob Community Day, September 10 including managing equipment, talking with community members, scanning photos, conducting short interviews, and talking with them about the photos that were on exhibit boards that we had prepared from previous years' collecting. Students also helped EKCHO and Elk Knob State Park rangers in setting up and tearing down (moving tables, hundreds of chairs, tents and tarps.)
- (see details above) Students reviewed previously collected interviews and photographs with EKCHO board members, who helped organize and select materials to be included.
- (see details above) Students edited 11 interviews (one each), verifying transcriptions, re-editing as a continuous narrative to remove Q&A, developing new headings, introduction, index, genealogical notes, photos, and where possible, getting new permissions.
- (see details above) Students conduct 11 additional interviews as directed by EKCHO advisors to complete the manuscript.
- Students prepared an index for each of their edited interviews.
- Students compiled edited interviews, genealogical data, and indexes for review by EKCHO and summary information for presentation to the ATP meeting in Washington.

Project Outcomes:

- Development of leadership and civic-capacity among the students engaged in the project.
- Opportunities for students to experience various parts of the region and the work of the Commission in Washington, D.C.
- Opportunities for students to share their research activities in the broader professional community of Appalachian Studies scholars and activists in the Appalachian Studies Association.
- Improved working relationships among ASU, EKCHO, and the Appalachian Regional Commission.
- Enhancement of student and community awareness of the work of the ARC at all levels.
- A significant contribution to the community's documentation goals.

These outcomes were demonstrated through

- Development of a scholarly monograph in collaboration with EKCHO.

- Presentation of student work at the ATP Conference in Washington, D.C., December 1-3, 2011.
- Creation of a poster for presentation at the conference in Washington, D.C.
- Student participation in the Appalachian Studies Association annual meeting in March 25, 2012, through a poster session.
- Effective research partnership between ASU and EKCHO.
- Research that is consistent with the goals of the ARC strategic plan.
- Research which capitalizes on the assets which EKCHO has identified and thus contributes to community sustainability.

Problems Encountered:

The progress of moving this monograph toward publication was slowed by the community's request that we add an additional set of interviews to the monograph, difficulties of working with some of the older computer files and sound recordings, unavailability of people for interviews due to illness, work, and family emergencies which delayed students' ability to complete their work, and uneven quality of the work that students presented (some work was outstanding, other work was spare, a few photos are still missing). However, this is in the nature of work with volunteer based community organizations, with community people, both elders and people managing multiple jobs, and with students, especially within the constraints of a semester.

Program Continuation and Sustainability:

Our community partner EKCHO operates successfully with an all-volunteer board; the relationship with ASU's Appalachian Studies program is long-term, built on over a decade of relationships and trust, and is productive. Each cohort of new students is welcomed to the annual September Elk Knob State Park Community Day as old friends returning, and community people take them aside to tell them about the community which they may be visiting for the first time. We have all shared a poor economy and shrinking state budgets (for ASU and Elk Knob State Park), as neighbors and community partners.

I came to learn this year that just as I and my students were new to old-timers in the community, EKCHO brought together people from opposite sides of the mountain who also didn't know each other; these events and activities in which we are a part strengthen the larger dimensions of community. We have seen the cultivation and emergence of community leaders, and our (ASU's) participation in the formation of EKCHO and in the celebration of the park as a community-based event has strengthened this process. All of us, neighbors and park and university, value our collaboration, the opportunities for student learning about community engagement and community empowerment, and the opportunities for invention and implementation of sustainable community practices. I believe our collaboration is making a difference.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

I noted last year that students' collaborations with community were fruitful, affirming trust and confidence in the process, while students learned much about the workings of communities. The challenge is transforming their work into tangible products that benefit the community. The community would like a museum facility or other community center. In developing the first ATP class, preparatory library research uncovered a Civil War memoir which I used in several

year's classes. Then in 2007 the Center for Appalachian Studies published this memoir of William Wilson in a monograph called *Neighbor to Neighbor*. We see this monograph as a gift to the community and it has been highly prized in the community. Last year we presented our ATP 2010 video documentary to EKCHO, and last summer the park used it in a park presentation, with people featured in the film present to answer questions. Everyone was pleased: park, community people, and visitors. Rarely does one visit a state park and get to meet the neighbors. The monograph we are currently producing should be a valued addition to the community. The community art pieces proposed for 2012 should contribute to strengthening participation in community as well.

Attachments

ANT 5120 Syllabus

List of interviews for inclusion in the monograph

Sample interview: Council Main