

Adirondack Experience Library

Rte. 28N and 30

P.O. Box 99

Blue Mountain Lake, NY 12812

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Guide to the “Living Traditions in the Adirondacks” Oral History Collection, 1993-1996

Descriptive Summary

Creator: Carroll, Tom;
Adirondack Museum;
Roselli, Bart;
Title: Living Traditions in the Adirondacks oral history collection
Collection Number: MS 21-010
Accession Number: 2018.036
Extent: 2 boxes [.8 linear feet]
Inclusive Dates: 1993-1996

Abstract: Collection of oral history interviews and accompanying documents, slides, photographs and ephemera assembled by folklorist Tom Carroll and submitted to the museum as the “Living Traditions in the Adirondacks” project in 1996. The collection aims to “chronicle and preserve living memories of continuity and change, work and culture in Adirondack forests, with special emphasis on the lives and experiences of women.”

Historical Note

This project originated from a Folk Arts Program Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) that became the “Living Traditions” project under folklorist Karen Taussig-Lux in 1995. Folklorist Dr. Tom Carroll, initially brought on as a consultant, assumed responsibility for the research phase of the project and, along with Adirondack Museum educator Bart Roselli, created a plan to interview Adirondack residents in the western section of the Adirondack Park, beginning his preliminary fieldwork and making contacts in various Adirondack hamlets in February of 1996. After modifying the research aims to focus on “woods/the wood” and “women’s lives and experiences in the Adirondacks,” Carroll returned to the Adirondacks and conducted the recorded interviews that became the oral histories and took the photographs present in the slide collection in June and July of 1996. For all interviews the “framework was biographical, and proceeded from discussion of the informant’s life experience, to an effort to connect the life with place or locale, and finally to an assessment of the current situation and its significance for the informant and their community.” Selection criteria included a longtime association with the Adirondacks and birth dates ranging from the 1910s to 1930s and a particular interest of Carroll’s was “learning how women’s lives have been affected by contact with the Adirondack locale.” Of his 18 interview subjects, 12 interviewees

were women who grew up on and ran family farms; who hunted, fished, guided and drove teams of horses pulling wagons; who skidded logs or cooked at logging camps; and who worked at hotels and in the service industry. Six interviewees were men who worked in the logging and lumber industries and in a local paper mill. Carroll concludes “that the Adirondacks, while posing challenges to survival, also provided a great deal of personal freedom” including “the everyday opportunity for involvement in the woods” for all residents of the Adirondacks, but offering a unique experience for women.

Scope and Content

This collection contains oral history interviews as well as documents – including a grant application, mission statements and reports, meeting minutes, memos and news clippings – related to the “Living Traditions in the Adirondacks” project beginning in 1993 and ending with their submission to the museum by folklorist Tom Carroll in 1996. It also contains tape logs describing the topics discussed in each interview, slides of photographs taken by Carroll when conducting the interviews accompanied by a photo log describing them as well as photographs and ephemera relating to the interview subjects and topics discussed. The Adirondack Experience will be referred to by its name at the time of creation, the Adirondack Museum, but both names refer to the same entity.

System of Arrangement

The collection is arranged into 8 series:

Series 1: Project Documentation

Series 2: News Clippings

Series 3: Tape Logs

Series 4: Partial Transcripts and Manuscripts

Series 5: Photo Logs

Series 6: Slides and Photographs

Series 7: Ephemera

Series 8: Interview Recordings

Series Description

Series 1: Project Documentation, 1993-1996.

This series contains official documentation of the “Living Traditions in the Adirondacks” oral history collection, including an NEA grant application, mission statements and meeting minutes, release forms, memos and Carroll’s final report.

Series 2: News Clippings, August 1996.

Series contains a press release from the Adirondack Museum announcing programming related to Carroll's "Living Traditions in the Adirondacks" project and three news clippings from area papers.

Series 3: Tape Logs.

Carroll's tape logs summarizing the recorded information of each oral history interview arranged by interview subject.

Series 4: Partial Transcripts and Manuscripts.

This series contains a floppy disk containing partial transcripts of selected interviews (all are also available at Z:\Master Files by Object Name\Audio\Oral Histories) and two handwritten manuscripts from interview subjects.

Series 5: Photo Logs.

Carroll's logs describing the slides containing pictures of interview subjects and their homes and towns he took when conducting his interviews.

Series 6: Photographs and Slides.

This series consists of 267 slides containing pictures of interview subjects and their homes and towns he took when conducting his interviews, 4 slides of interview subject Ed Carpenter's interview at the Adirondack Museum and two photographs of interview subjects at the Adirondack Museum.

Series 7: Ephemera.

Related ephemera, including brochures, post cards and a price list, likely gathered by Carroll from his interview subjects.

Series 8: Interview Recordings

Recordings of the interviews conducted by Carroll in June and July of 1996, available on the original cassettes and in digital recordings.

Access Points

Allen, Daisy, Rev.
Blanchard, Ann
Bourdeau, Irene
Carpenter, Ed
Chiasson, Rita
Dechene, Bob
Dymond, Ruth
Lalonde, Marcel
Martin, Wanda

Miller, Mavis
Morcy, Edith
Novosel, Emelia
Novosel, Tom
Pommerville, Ed
Roberts, Dorothy
Roberts, Ovilla
Thompson, Evelyn
Virkler, Hilda Y.

Adirondack Mountains (N.Y.)--Biography--Anecdotes.
Adirondack Mountains (N.Y.)--History, Local.
Adirondack Mountains (N.Y.)--History--Anecdotes, facetiae, satire, etc.
Adirondack Mountains (N.Y.)--History--Anecdotes.
Adirondack Mountains (N.Y.)--Social life and customs--Anecdotes, facetiae, satire, etc.
Adirondack Mountains (N.Y.)--Social life and customs.
Adirondack Park (N.Y.)--History.
Bakers Mills (N.Y.)
Big Moose (N.Y.)
Blue Mountain Lake (N.Y.)
Community life--New York (State)
Company towns
Cooking--New York (State)--Adirondack Mountains.
Crafts.
Farm life--New York (State)--Adirondack Mountains Region.
Farmers--New York (State)--Biography.
Fourth Lake (N.Y.)
Hunting -- New York (State) -- Adirondack Mountains.
Hunting camps
Loggers--New York (State)--Adirondack Mountains Region.
Logging camps
Logging--Equipment and supplies
Logging--Machinery.
Logging--New York (State)--Adirondack Mountains Region.
Newton Falls (N.Y.)
Newton Falls (N.Y.)
Newton Falls Paper Company.
Oral histories
Paper mills--New York (State)
Raquette Lake (N.Y.)
Ski resorts--New York (State)--Adirondack Mountains.
Sodom (N.Y.)
Trapping.
Warrensburg (N.Y.)

Administrative Information

Custodial History:

This collection was received at the Adirondack Museum from Tom Carroll in October 1996.

Container List

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|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | <u>Series 1: Project Documentation</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NEA Folk Arts Program Grant Application from the Adirondack Museum [FY 1993 and 1994]• Packet containing a 1995 draft of "NEA Project Mission Statement and Work Plan, Working Title: Living Traditions in the Adirondacks," a timeline for project implantation, a schedule and summary of notes from a 1995 meeting with consultants, including Tom Carroll, to discuss the project and a related memo. [September/October 1995]• Release Agreements signed by all interview subjects [June/July 1996]• Invoice from Carroll to the Adirondack Museum for 10 days of fieldwork [July 3, 1996]• "Addendum/Outline of Slide Lecture given...at the Museum" [August 24, 1996]• Memo "Re: Final 'Living Traditions' report" from Rosselli to Carroll describing parameters for Carroll's final report [August 26, 1996]• "'Living Traditions in the Adirondacks' final report" by Tom Carroll (2 copies) [September 6, 1996]• Memo "Re: Slides to Alice G." from Rosselli listing slides lent to Alice Gilborn [October 2, 1996]• Memo "Re: NEA 'Living Traditions' project" from Rosselli reporting the official depositing of all collected materials at the Adirondack Museum [October 4, 1996] |
| 1 | 2 | <u>Series 2: News Clippings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• News Release from the Adirondack Museum promoting Carroll's project and his presentation of it and a series of public interviews with the oral history interview subjects held at the Adirondack Museum. [August 14, 1996]• Three articles sharing much of the same language in their promotion of the above events appearing in the Hamilton County News, Evening Times from Little Falls, N.Y., and Advertiser from Averill Park, N.Y. [August 1996] |
| 1 | 3 | <u>Series 3: Tape Logs</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summaries of oral history interviews, all conducted in June and July of 1996: |

- Tapes 01 and 02: Rita Chiasson, Tupper Lake
genre/topic: lumber camps/cooking
- Tapes 03 and 04: Hilda Y. Virkler, Castorland
genre/topic: family hunting camp; hunting; farming
- Tapes 05/06: Bob Dechene, Long Lake
genre/topic: logging
- Tapes 07, 08 and 09: Ed Pommerville, Newton Falls
genre/topic: work in the paper mill; life in company town; hunting
- Tapes 10 and 11: Marcel Lalonde, Newton Falls
genre/topic: work in local paper mill; town life; sports; unionizing the paper mill; local sports
- Tape 12: Emelia Novosel, Lake Pleasant
genre/topic: logging camps; cooking
- Tapes 13 and 14: Emelia and Tom Novosel, Lake Pleasant
genre/topic: logging camps; logging; ski resort business
- Tapes 15 and 16: Mavis Miller, Sodom/North Creek
genre/topic: her mother, Kate Harrington; life in the area; mother's work/hunting camp
- Tapes 17 and 18: Rev. Daisy Allen, Sodom/North Creek
genre/topic: local life; farm life; local history
- Tapes 19, 20 and 21: Ed Carpenter, Warrensburg
genre/topic: lumbering; models of logging equipment; craftsmanship
- Tapes 22 and 23: Edith Morcy, Fourth Lake
genre/topic: outdoor activities/life; informant's biography
- Tapes 24 and 25: Wanda Martin, Big Moose
genre/topic: the Waldheim
- Tapes 26 and 27: Ovilla and Dorothy Roberts, Tupper Lake
genre/topic: logging camps; subsequent work done by informants
- Tapes 28 and 29: Ruth Dymond and Irene Bordeau
genre/topic: life in Raquette Lake and Blue Mountain Lake
- Tape 30: Ann Blanchard
genre/topic: personal history; work on large estate
- Tapes 31 and 32: Evelyn Thompson, Blue Mountain Lake
genre/topic: growing up locally; local life, work and community; personal life and work history

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Series 4: Partial Transcripts and Manuscripts

- Floppy disk containing partial transcripts of several selected interviews made in March of 2002 (all transcripts are available locally at Z:\Master Files by Object Name\Audio\Oral Histories):
 - Ann Blanchard, "Adirondack Hill Farm"
 - Bob Dechene, "Logging with Horses"
 - Edith Morcy, "Getting to School"
 - Rita Chiasson, "Routine of a Lumber Camp Cook"
 - Evelyn Thompson, "Her Father and Trapping"

- Manuscript written by Dorothy Roberts about husband Ovilla and self
 - Manuscript written by Edith Morcy containing personal biography
- 1 5 Series 5: Photo Log
- Log of 267 slides containing photographs of subjects, their homes and communities taken by Tom Carroll during his fieldwork/interviews:
 - Roll 01: Rita Chiasson, Hilda Y. Virkler, Windfall, Cook's Pond, Newton Falls, Tom and Emelia Novosel, Lake Pleasant
 - Roll 02: Kate Harrington, Bakers Mills, Mavis Miller
 - Roll 03: Rev. Daisy Allen, Crane Mountain, Sodom
 - Roll 04: Ed Carpenter
 - Roll 05: Edith Morcy, Silver Bells Ski Resort, Wells, Tom and Emelia Novosel, Virginia Farr
 - Roll 06: Virginia Farr, Long Lake, Edith Morcy, Fourth Lake
 - Roll 07: Big Moose, Waldheim, Nancy Martin, Germaine Paro
 - Roll 08: Newton Falls, Germaine Paro, Newton Falls Paper Mill, Windfall, Cook's Pond
- 1 6 Series 6: Slides and Photographs
- 263 slides containing photographs of subjects, their homes and communities taken by Tom Carroll as corresponding with the logs in series/folder 5.
 - Roll 01 is missing slides 01, 02, 03
 - Roll 06 is missing slide 09
 - 4 slides showing Ed Carpenter's presentation at the Adirondack Museum on August 29, 1996
 - Photograph of Emelia and Tom Novosel at the Adirondack Museum
 - Photograph of Ed Carpenter at the Adirondack Museum
- 1 7 Series 7: Ephemera
- Brochure pamphlet promoting Wells, N.Y. featuring Silver Bells Ski Center
 - Three color photograph postcards from Silver Bell Ski Center
 - Welcome brochure pamphlet from Newton Falls Paper Mill, Inc.
 - Brochure pamphlet promoting Carpenter's Creations in Warrensburg, Ed Carpenter's wooden toy collectibles business
 - Flier from 1996 listing prices for "limited edition custom cab collectibles" from Carpenter Creations
 - Flier listing "Adirondack wooden toy collectibles" and their prices from Carpenter Creations
- 2 1 Series 8: Interview Recordings
- 32 cassette tapes of oral history interviews. Also available in digital files.
 - (Object ID: Interview Subject, Tape Number, Date of Interview)
 - 2018.036.0001: Rita Chiasson, T.LT.TC.01-02, 6/19/1996
 - 2018.036.0002: Hilda Y. Virkler, T.LT.TC.03-04, 6/20/1996
 - 2018.036.0003: Bob Dechene, T.LT.TC.05-06, 6/20/1996
 - 2018.036.0004: Ed Pommerville, T.LT.TC.07-09, 6/27/1996
 - 2018.036.0005: Marcel Lalonde, T.LT.TC.10-11, 6/27/1996
 - 2018.036.0006: Emelia and Tom Novosel, T.LT.TC.12-14, 6/28/1996

- 2018.036.0007: Mavis Miller, T.LT.TC.15-16, 6/29/1996
- 2018.036.0008: Reverend Daisy Allen, T.LT.TC.17-18, 07/01/1996
- 2018.036.0009: Ed Carpenter, T.LT.TC.19-21, 07/02/1996
- 2018.036.0010: Edith Morcy, T.LT.TC.22-23, 07/08/1996
- 2018.036.0011: Wanda Martin, T.LT.TC.24-25, 07/08/1996
- 2018.036.0012: Ovilla and Dorothy Roberts, T.LT.TC.26-27, 07/09/1996
- 2018.036.0013: Ruth Dymond & Irene Bourdeau, T.LT.TC.28-29, 07/10/1996
- 2018.036.0014: Ann Blanchard, T.LT.TC.30, 07/11/1996
- 2018.036.0015: Evelyn Thompson, T.LT.TC.31-32, 07/11/1996