

## Documenting Appalachia

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**\*\*\*Note: Figures may be missing from this format of the document**

“Documenting Appalachia”  
<http://contentdm.library.appstate.edu/index.html>  
Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina  
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“Documenting Appalachia” is a digital project produced by Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina. The purpose of the project is “to provide off-site access to valuable research materials related to the Appalachian region and Appalachian State University.” This project documents the history of the Appalachian region through four collections: the W. Amos Abrams Folksong Collection, the I.G. Greer Folksong Collection, the Appalachian State University Historical Photographs, and the Appalachian Ethnicity Resources. It was developed in collaboration with Appalachian State University’s Center for Appalachian Studies, Appalachian Cultural Museum and the *Appalachian Journal*.

The Web site is well designed, uncluttered and easy to navigate with links clearly indicated for serious scholars as well as casual users. Advanced search functions are available for researchers. The text is very easy to read, and the use of color is restrained. There are six navigation buttons: “Home,” “About,” “Collections,” “Geographic,” “Classroom” and “New Addition.” They are located at the top, which makes navigation from one section of the Web site to another very easy. The “Home” page welcomes the viewer, introduces the digital library and lists the contributors who assisted with the creation of the project. The current four collections highlighted in the project are listed in the sidebar. The scope, content and purpose of the project

are located on the “About” page. This page also contains copyright information as well as a list of collaborators with links to each of their home pages. The “Collections” page provides links to the four collections digitized for the project and a “Search all collections” box with an advanced search option is available.

I searched several location names to see how easy it would be to get results, and it was very easy to use. The Web site uses the CONTENTdm content management system to display images and metadata for each item in the digital library. The user can zoom in and out on each image, and the accompanying metadata for each image is more than adequate.

The four featured collections in “Documenting Appalachia” are: the W. Amos Abrams Folksong Collection, the I.G. Greer Folksong Collection, the Appalachian State University Historical Photographs, and the Appalachian Ethnicity Resources. The W. Amos Abrams Collection contains over seven hundred digitized folksongs, including traditional children’s ballads, nineteenth-century popular music and works from local composers. These items were collected by William Amos “Doc” Abrams (1905-1991) who was chair of the English Department at Appalachian State Teacher’s College from 1932 to 1946, and editor of the North Carolina Education Association publications from 1946 to 1970. The I.G. Greer Folksong Collection contains over one thousand manuscripts and typescript documents of nineteenth-century popular music, local musical compositions and traditional children’s ballads. This material was collected by Isaac Garfield (I.G. or “Ike”) Greer (1881-1967). From 1910 to 1932, Greer was a history and government professor at Appalachian State Teacher’s College. He collected folk songs with texts mainly from Ashe, Wilkes and Watauga counties. The Appalachian State University Historical Photographs Collection is comprised of over 2,700 images covering the entire history of Appalachian State University since its founding in 1899.

Subjects include administrators, academic department, alumni, buildings, events, local history, and student activities. The photographs are represented by thumbnails, which can be enlarged for easier viewing. Each image is accompanied by title, date of the photograph, subject and a detailed description. Appalachian Ethnicity Resources contains over seventy-five images of booklets, brochures, bulletins, handbills, letters, postcards, and student papers relating to people of various ethnicities in the Appalachian region. The items are again represented by thumbnail images, which are easily enlarged for and identified by title, date, subject and description.

One minor problem with this Web site is the lack of explanation for pages under construction, such as the “Geographic,” “Classroom,” and “New Addition” Web pages. Another is the lack of links from the featured collections to their finding aids. Researchers would find such links very useful if they wanted to conduct more in-depth research.

“Documenting Appalachia” is an outstanding digital project and should appeal to both the serious researcher and casual Web surfer. The Web site is well designed, well written, easy to navigate, and contains fascinating material relating to the Appalachian region. I look forward to future additions to this Web site.

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