

**TENNESSEE BANJO INSTITUTE (1988)
COLLECTION**

88-026

Physical description:

7 Digital audio tape cassettes (TCD-0076 - TCD-0080)
9 3/4" video tape cassettes (VCT-0076 - VCT-0079)
Handbook. Program. ca. 216 black and white negatives and
contact prints.

Dates:

10-12 November 1988 [ca.1930-1988]

Provenance:

The audio and video tapes were produced by Paul Wells, Bruce Nemerov and David Bassett of the Center for Popular Music and Pat Jackson of Middle Tennessee State University Television Services. Interview log sheets were completed by David Bassett; the "Banjo Meltdown" log sheet was done by Bruce Nemerov. The handbook and Banjo Meltdown program were produced by the Institute. The photographs were taken by Paul Wells.

Agency history:

Bobby Fulcher, director of the Tennessee State Parks Folklife Project (a division of the Tennessee Department of Conservation) organized the Tennessee Banjo Institute as a program of the folklife project. Wayne Ingram served as director of the Institute, which was funded in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Other sponsors included the American Banjo Fraternity, **Banjo Newsletter**, the Center for Popular Music, the Country Music Foundation, Gibson Guitar Company, the Old-Time Music and Dance Foundation, Stelling Banjo Works, and Uncle Dave Macon Days, Inc.

The Institute, which was held 10-12 November 1988 at Cedars of Lebanon state park, included workshops and tutorials by a 43-member faculty, a student concert on 10 November at the park, and a concert, the "Banjo Meltdown", by Institute faculty at the Tucker Theater, Middle Tennessee State University on 11 November.

A complete schedule of events and lists of faculty, sponsors and students are included in the Institute handbook described below.

Scope and content:

The collection consists of digital audio and video

tapes of interviews with four Institute faculty (Omer Forster, Will Keys, Alan Munde and the Thompson Family); digital audio tapes of the "Banjo Meltdown"; an Institute handbook; a program from the "Banjo Meltdown" concert; and ca. 216 black and white negatives and contact prints, primarily of the "Banjo Meltdown".

A synopsis of each interview, a description of the handbook, program and photographs, tape logs of the interviews and the concert, and a list of the photographs follow.

Location:

The audio and video tapes are filed by tape number with other archival audio visual materials. The program and handbook are filed by accession number with manuscript collections. The negatives and contact prints are filed under "Tennessee Banjo Institute" in the subject photograph file.

Related materials:

Reference audio and video cassette copies of the interviews with Omer Forster, Will Keys, Alan Munde and the Thompson family are filed with commercial audio and video cassettes.

Series Description:

Omer Forster Interview
TCD-0076. VCT-0076.

Interview, 11 November 1988, with Omer Forster (b. 1901) of McEwen, Humphries County, Tennessee, and his son Lee by Paul Wells, director of the Center for Popular Music. Topics include family history; early life and learning influences; early performances including dances; banjo and fiddle contests; and his professional career including work with the Dixie Liners, on radio station WDOD (Chattanooga, TN) and his 1977 album **Flowery Girl**. Tunes include Mean Mama Blues and Sally Goodin.

Will Keys Interview
TCD-0077. VCT-0077A-C.

Interview, 11 November 1988, with Will Keys (b. 1923) of Gray Station, Washington County, Tennessee, by Paul Wells, director of the Center for Popular Music. Topics include influences on Keys' banjo style, especially Bob Crawford and Clyde Dykes; banjo tunes, tuning, chording and styles, especially 2-finger and bluegrass; Keys' early history, home life and family; and farming, hunting, bartering, and other jobs held. Among the tunes discussed/played were Buck Dance, Coal Creek March, The Dead March, Sycamore Shoals, Cricket on the Hearth, Mississippi Sawyer, Little Brown Jug, 8th of January, Little Rainbow and Silver Bells.

Alan Munde Interview
TCD-0078. VCT-0078A-C.

Interview, 11 November 1988, with Alan Munde (b. 1947) of Levelland, Texas, by Hub Nitchie, editor/publisher of **Banjo Newsletter**. Topics include early influences on Munde's playing, especially Earl Scruggs and Doug Dillard; his work on the faculty of South Plains College and with the band Country Gazette; his albums, touring and festival appearances; and the bluegrass industry and its future. The interview also includes discussion and demonstration of Munde's own style and technique including the tunes Uncle Cluny Played The Banjo But Mostly Out of Time, Darcy Farrell and Dear Old Dixie.

Series description (continued):

Thompson Family Interview
TCD-0079. VCT-0079A-B

Interview with Joe (b. 1918) and Odell Thompson (b. 1911) and their cousin Nate (b. 1917) Thompson, black musicians born in Orange County, North Carolina, by Paul Wells, director of the Center for Popular Music. Each family member discusses his history, including service in World War II; their performances at local dances and frolics; and the impact of World War II and rock music. Included in the interview are an example of frolic "sketches" [square dance calls] and the stories behind/learning of songs including Hook and Line, Black Annie, Corn Liquor and Soldier's Joy.

"Banjo Meltdown" Concert
TCD-0080A-C.

Digital audio tapes of concert 11 November 1988 by Institute faculty at Tucker Theater, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, Tennessee. The concert included narration describing the history and evolution of the banjo, styles of banjo music and of banjo playing and leading banjo stylists, past and present, as well as solo and ensemble performances in a variety of styles and time periods.

The tape logs which follow contain a complete list of performers and songs. A copy of the program is filed with manuscripts.

Handbook. Program.
1 folder.

Tennessee Banjo Institute Handbook including schedule, biographies of Institute faculty, brief descriptions of Institute sponsors and a list of students with addresses. "Banjo Meltdown" program with brief history of the banjo and banjo music in America and a list of Institute sponsors.

Photographs.

ca. 16 black and white negatives and contact prints, Institute faculty. ca. 200 black and white negatives and contact prints, Banjo Meltdown concert. Filed in subject photograph file under "Tennessee Banjo Institute".