

Remarks by Senator Morgan
Folk Festival
October 4, 1978

It is a privilege to be here
today and have a small role to play
in this festival.

I think we should all be grateful
to those who are responsible for
staging this exhibit of native culture.

Americans, I feel, treasure the
past and appreciate those who have

contributed to our cultural pursuits.

In my own state of North Carolina we have long regarded with honor those practitioners who have flavored our lives with music, with art, with prose and poetry.

My state was the first to have a state-supported symphony, which some of you may have heard last year when it performed at the Kennedy Center.

Perhaps not the first, but we have a fine museum of art in our capital city.

Let me talk for a moment about what one state has done. North Carolina has made its contribution in many ways:

1. The first event to be called a folk festival in the United States was the Asheville folk festival begun in 1927-28 by the noted lawyer, folk singer

and collector of folk songs, Bascom Lamar Lunsford, a native of the Asheville area. Mr. Lunsford's recordings of North Carolina music comprise a massive collection in the Library of Congress Archive of Folk Song and his commercially issued recordings are available throughout the English speaking world.

2. North Carolina this year has

established its own State-sponsored
folklife festival administered by the
state Department of Cultural Resources.

This program was initiated by George
Holt, grandson of Smithsonian Regent,
George Mahon. In 1973, when George Holt
was a college student, he worked on the
Smithsonian Folklife Festival one
summer as an intern. Based on this
experience, he began a modest program

on his college campus at Chapel Hill.

The next year this led to the newly established state program which was a marked success last summer in Durham.

3. North Carolina traditional

pottery is known throughout the United States. Jugtown Pottery is found in the Smithsonian Museum of History and Technology's collections as an example of a tradition which originated in

Colonial times and which continues as a living, vital force today. The dozen or so pottery families in the Jugtown area of the North Carolina Piedmont represent a nucleus of craftsmen whose roots go back to the 18th Century English pottery traditions which settlers brought to this nation in the pre-Revolutionary War period.

4. Ballad singer and guitarist,

Doc Watson, born and raised in Watauga County in the Western part of North Carolina was born blind, educated at the Raleigh School for the Blind, and has grown to become an international artist of great stature. He has brought traditional American music to Africa, Asia and Europe on State Department sponsored tours and stands as a symbol of the enduring cultural values of

American grassroots culture. His appearances at the Smithsonian in the early years of his career and the early years of the Festival helped to bring him to the attention of critics, scholars and the American public.

5. Playwright Paul Green, winner of a Pulitzer prize for the best American play, has stayed close to his North Carolina heritage dealing with

the grassroots traditions and culture of the American people. Using some of the same themes which unify the Smithsonian Festival, Paul Green has reached an international audience with a message about grassroots America.

This is the message and importance of an event like this Festival - the greatness of our regional, family and workaday culture.

Today, all of the 50 states can
join in the celebration of this
national festival, and I am happy to
be here where the various cultures
have come together.