



Sid Hemphill (quills) and Lucius Smith (banjo) in Senatobia, Mississippi, October 1959, two of the musicians recorded by Alan Lomax whose music is being preserved under the Save America's Treasures grant. *Photo by Alan Lomax, Courtesy of the Alan Lomax Archives*

Save America's Treasures

The National Endowment for the Arts works with other agencies to protect the nation's threatened cultural resources. The program was launched in 1998 by the White House Millennium Council, National Park Service, National Trust for Historic Preservation, National Endowment for the Humanities, Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the NEA. In FY 2002, the NEA funded 12 grants to nonprofit organizations for the preservation or conservation of nationally significant collections of cultural artifacts—such as historical documents, works of art, maps, and journals—that illuminate the history and culture of the United States.

NEA Assists Preservation of Alan Lomax Archives, Documenting American's Cultural Heritage

The son of folklorist John A. Lomax, Alan Lomax pioneered field recordings of American and world folk music in the 20th century, documenting the interweaving currents of history and evolving national life that created the rich cultural legacies of Appalachia, the Mississippi Delta, Cajun country, the Southwest, and other distinct areas of this country. In addition, he traveled the world and was often the first to record the folk and traditional music of these foreign lands, such as Indonesia, Spain, and Italy. For his contributions to the culture and music of America, Lomax received a National Medal of Arts in 1986.

When he died in 2002, Lomax left a substantial archive of writings, photographs, and audio and video recordings of folk music and dance from many parts of the United States and the world that he had collected over 60 years. In FY 2002, the Association for Cultural Equity in New York City received a Save America's Treasures grant of \$250,000 to assist in the preservation of the Alan Lomax Archives.

The archive focuses on core aesthetic styles and traditions nurtured in the backwoods, farms, and urban neighborhoods of this country, and on the known and unknown folk masters as well as on the elders who are the embodiment and primary sources of these traditions. The bulk of Lomax's taped field recordings were made between 1947 and 1962, on paper, acetate, and plastic backings, totaling approximately 1,200 reels of tape recorded by Lomax himself and an additional 4,000 reels made by his colleagues. Hundreds of hours of materials now stored on fragile and deteriorating media will be copied using the highest possible quality analog-to-digital methods.

Thus far, 600 hours of field recordings have been preserved and copied and an audio conservator is assessing the restoration and preservation needs of another large body of recordings. Copies of the remastered footage will be housed at the New York Public Library and regional repositories as well as at the Alan Lomax Archives, thereby ensuring the greatest possible access to scholars and the public.

FISCAL YEAR 2002 FACTS AND FIGURES Save America's Treasures

In FY 2002, NEA funding for Save America's Treasures totaled \$1,614,004.