



AFRICAN FOLK ART IN DUPLIN - Chuck Davis appeared in three Duplin elementary schools last week. Davis has studied African folk art in sixteen countries and is a graduate of Howard University. He is currently working as part of the American Dance Festival out-reach program as an artist-in-residence. The Duplin County Arts Council

sponsored Davis as part of the out-reach program and according to DCAC director Merle Creech, Davis will return for two more days of African folk art presentations during November. Pictured above, students at Wallace Elementary School ask Davis questions about African folk art.

citizens. Davis suggested togetherness workshops, in which several classes participate and teach each other different art projects.

"Arts benefit children because the arts are a tool to help foster a respect for learning," Davis said. "Arts are not used just to make an artist but to assist in the development of the person." The discipline students learn from participation in arts activities, such as dance, drama, music or handicrafts carries over into the study of basic courses in the classroom, Davis explained. Davis is a graduate of Howard University majoring in dance and theatre. The Chuck Davis Dance Company is the dance company in residence at the Bronx Community College in New York and has performed world-wide as part of the International Communication Agency of the United States Government. Davis is a native of North Carolina.

The Duplin County Board of Education is currently offering senior high school students the opportunity to participate in a local folk art education program, according to Associate Superintendent Gary Sanderson. The program, "Our Rich Inheritance: A Study of Duplin County's Regional Folklife," was designed to assist Duplin students in meeting requirements for arts education credit needed for the North Carolina Scholars' Program. The program being piloted this year will draw art education from the diversity of folk culture in the Duplin area, he said.

"This program makes it possible for students to learn about their rich cultural heritages as citizens of Duplin County," Gary Sanderson, associate superintendent of Duplin County Schools, said. "The course will make it possible for students to have learning experiences which would not otherwise be available. The classroom for this course is the entire community and the people of the community serve as valuable learning resources to the students. We are proud that Duplin County has been permitted by the State Department of Public Instruction to pilot this program." Duplin senior high school students participating in the program will study the traditional forms of folk entertainment, material culture and crafts, and family folklore.

Duplin County Board Of Education Honored At North Carolina Awareness Conference

Duplin County Board of Education was honored at the N.C. Awareness Conference Sept. 20. Duplin County was one of 23 school systems chosen from across the state to receive the prestigious award for Programs of Excellence in Education. The recognition banquet was held at McKimmon Center in Raleigh where Gov. Jim Hunt praised the educators for their en-

deavors for excellence and plaques were awarded. Traveling to receive the award were James F. Strickland, R.E. Wilkins, Carl D. Pate, Hubert E. Phillips, L.S. Guy Jr., Dr. Alice Scott, Dr. Austin Carter, Cecil Beamon, Jim Flowers and Mary Wellons.

Each year educational programs are reviewed by Gov. Hunt's committee and 30 are chosen to receive the

award. This year Duplin's direction sports program, based at Wallace Elementary, was among those selected. This is a unique program which combines athletics and academics to help students improve math, reading and coping skills. Mary Wellons remained in Raleigh to present the program to the 7th annual Awareness Conference Sept. 21 and 22.

Art Education Benefits Students Total Development

Art education spills over into the basic subjects, American Dance Festival artist-in-residence Chuck Davis said while visiting Duplin public schools last week.

"It is one thing to hear a drum beat," Chuck Davis, American Dance Festival artist-in-residence said. "But to actually recognize what that sound means is part of

art education." The sound of a single African drumbeat cannot only relay a message but identify a tribe. Authentic drums strung with goat skin and musical instruments made from ordinary gourds assisted Davis in this three days of African folk art presentations in Duplin elementary schools. The presentations were sponsored by the Duplin County Arts

Council. While in Duplin, Davis met with about 3,000 students and their teachers. Davis said local folk art is one of the best ways for small communities to provide art education while working with a limited budget.

"It is unfair to say the public school teacher must teach all the basic subjects and arts, too," Davis said. "Teachers with classes of more than 10 or 12 students cannot possibly supervise art activities successfully. More of the responsibility for arts education should involve parents and the community," Davis pointed out the arts must be recognized before they can be developed within a community.

"Some of the most successful programs I know have involved folk art," Davis said. "Folk art is an art which is being lost and like

African traditions, local family heritages may be related to a particular quilt pattern." Utilizing local artists and traditions will help provide a basis for art appreciation throughout the schools and not take a large amount of money. The local arts council is another possibility for providing art education in public school systems with budgets limited to basic studies, he said. Application by school systems or individual institutions with little art education monies stand a good chance of receiving grant funds from any of the state, national or corporate arts education out-reach programs, Davis added.

Communities can work to build the school library with numerous how-to books and slides of places outside Duplin County which can be taken by parents and local

Along the Way

Emily Killeto

The north and south running railroad of Duplin County left many towns without good transportation connections and promoted a group of area businessmen to build a railroad connecting Kenansville to the main Atlantic Coast Line in Warsaw, the May 9, 1940 issue of the DUPLIN TIMES explained.

The Atlantic and Carolina Railroad was chartered from Warsaw to Kenansville on March 30, 1914. The organizational meeting was held in Bowden on April 12, 1914 with incorporators A.R. Turnbull and William J. Jones of Norfolk, Va., T.A. Hefty of Bowden, R.D. Johnson of Warsaw, H.D. Williams and L.A. Beasley of Kenansville. Turnbull was elected president; Jones, Secretary; Beasley, general consul and the remaining incorporators were named as the Board of Directors of the Atlantic and Carolina Railroad.

According to the 1940 article, Turnbull financed a large portion of the railroad construction and the remaining funds were raised through a Kenansville bond issue. The bond issue was for a total of \$10,000. Beasley was given a great deal of credit for the construction of the railroad. As a prominent Kenansville attorney, Beasley worked on the railroad project drawing up the charter, securing right-of-ways and providing other types of legal services.

The roads in Duplin County were not in good shape in the early 1900s and most were still worked by hand under the supervision of a local overseer. The condition of the roads slowed freight to more than a two-hour horse team trip between Magnolia and Kenansville. And, model T automobiles traveled in low gear most of the way from Warsaw to Kenansville through deep mud and sand. After the railroad was in operation for one year, many Duplin farmers commented they had saved enough during the first year of rail service on freight to pay their tax created by the bond issue.

At the peak of the railroad's success hundreds of

loads of fertilizer and other freight were hauled on the line each year. The passengers were said to number in the hundreds each year and at the peak of the railroad, yielded more than \$4,000 in fares annually. The freight rates are said to have peaked at about \$10,000 worth of business in a year. Passenger service was offered twice daily between Warsaw and Kenansville and the train carried the Kenansville mail for many years.

The conductor of the Atlantic and Carolina Railroad was J.E. Jerriett, and the engineer was Robert McGowen. Jerriett came south to work for Turnbull who owned a million dollar lumber company. As conductor, Jerriett was in charge of operating the railroad, doing office work and acting as conductor. He continued to fill that position even after the sale of the line to Atlas Plywood Corporation of Boston, Mass. in 1931. The following quote about Jerriett appeared in the article published on the Kenansville railroad line in the 1940 issue of THE DUPLIN TIMES: "Mr. Jerriett is the most popular and beloved man in Kenansville, and liked by all who know him. He is praised by his wide circle of friends and railroad acquaintances of the larger roads as a most capable and efficient railroad operator, and a splendid citizen."

The first train used by the Atlantic and Carolina Railroad was constructed by the East Carolina Railroad of Tarboro.

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