

MILK & HONEY

What Am I Supposed to Do Now? A Tribute to Helen Lewis

"I've been in education nearly all my life, but I've always thought of myself more as an organizer of students than a teacher...I wasn't interested in picking up broken pieces in these rural communities but with changing the system itself—I wanted my students working for real social change. That's what social work is all about, it seems to me."

[Excerpt from June 17, 2011 interview with Taylor Kirkland, founder of Appalachian History, a website found at appalachianhistory.net]

Amidst a colorful life and purposeful life, Helen Lewis lived. She made deep and long-lasting friendships, inspired her students and others, pioneered activism in the local context in which she lived, and created change both through her own work and that which she roused others to carry out. Big is her life, but it is the "small stuff" that shaped her into the iconic person she is.

Hear these stories that, the first time told, through the vision, creativity, and scholarship of famed Atlanta-area actor Brenda Bynum. Bynum spent time with Helen at her home in Virginia, read her interviews and books, and will transform for one evening into this lively powerhouse of a woman.

Hear her story, the first time *played*, through music arranged by accomplished musician and active composer and lecturer Don Saliers. Saliers carefully intermingles period music into this tale to represent the times Helen travels through and the music she loves.

As always, *Songs & Stories* is a free event and all are welcome. Seating is limited; please plan to arrive early. Contact the Center or visit www.craddockcenter.org for more information.



Story written and told
by Brenda Bynum

Music selected and
performed by Don
Saliers



SONGS & STORIES * SATURDAY, JANUARY 30TH * 4 P.M.

The Craddock Center * 186 Fred Craddock Drive, Cherry Log 30522



We've got news!

"Pete the Cat put on his fa-vor-ite shirt with four, big, colorful, round grrroovy buttons.

♪ My buttons! My buttons!

My four groovy buttons!"



And so begins the text to *Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons*. The coauthor of this children's book, Eric Litwin, is also cofounder of The Learning Groove. Along with music composer Michael Levine, the two have created a structured program of music education that uses music and movement to promote early learning.

Beginning last school year, the **Children's Enrichment Program** (CEP) staff and I began discussing and researching formal curricula available for young children's music delivery. After carefully developing a list of our own criteria for adopting a curriculum, discussing what we were and weren't willing to give up in the way how we've always delivered children's music enrichment, we began looking into different programs. This January, we'll roll out The Learning Groove curriculum. It offers many of the features we listed as critical in our music and movement offering: quality, diverse music, free, easy access to music for parents and classroom teachers (and you! Visit thelearninggroove.com and listen to the Rockin' Red CD—that's where we'll begin!); thoughtful lesson structure based on research-based evidence; and training support for new arts specialists, to name a few. Check it out!

Thanks to your generous support, the CEP has been around for over a dozen years. It consists of personal and enthusiastic delivery of songs and stories to more than 1,200 students weekly or biweekly, including a **NINETEENTH new school in October**—that's in addition to our announcement of **THREE new schools** this academic year. If you haven't come out in person to see it in action, join me! You'll be amazed by the mesmerized gazes on children's faces during a story and the joyful movement and music they create during music. While you'll be invited to sing or act along, you may find yourself, as I have, gazing in awe of our talented arts specialists—they're groovy!—*JJJ*



I GOT IN ON THE DEPRESSION. It was a terrible thing. The only redeeming feature of the Depression is that everyone around you was poor, so you didn't know you were poor and if you were on a little farm, like we were, you had food: you raised some peas and corn and all that. But we were poor and it showed up especially, as you would imagine, especially grievously at Christmastime. But we always seemed to have a little something at Christmas—we didn't have very much. I recall passing through the house one day and heard my mother say to my father, "It looks like the kids are not going to have any Christmas this year." A terrible thing to overhear. We were moving a little past Santy Claus, just sort of wishing on a star, and we would usually have a little something. What we had at Christmastime still in my mind belongs to Christmas: orange, apple, those raisins that are still on those stems—real sweet, but you know they have seeds in them—those kind of things. Even to this day when I eat that, I think it's Christmas. But it looked like we weren't going to have anything. So Christmas morning I got up out of the featherbed with all the others, there were 5 of us, and expected nothing really. I hadn't shared this terrible news with my siblings because they didn't have my constitution, and I didn't think they could handle it. We went in. The fire was built. The only heat we had in the house was the fireplace in the front room. And there in front of the hearth were the five shoeboxes. Christmas was always in a shoebox. And in each shoebox there was an apple, an orange, a tangerine some raisins still on the stem, a five-shot roman candle, a package of sparklers, and a stick of peppermint...enough to make you believe in Santy Claus. It was absolutely wonderful and especially to me because it was against the back drop of that horrible overhearing, "It looks like the kids are not going to have a Christmas this year," she said to my father.

And if we had not had any Christmas at all I think we could have understood it because the poverty was really deep. I recall one morning when the fire had gone out. You had to keep the fire going in the fireplace...to get it started the next the morning [you had] to take a burning stick from the fire to get the kitchen stove started with wood. I was sent to Jetty B. Grave's house, the black family that lived next to us, our neighbors. I was sent there with a metal shovel to scoop out of their fireplace a little fire and get back to our house to start a fire. We had no matches.

And there they were: five boxes of full goodies! I mean, enviable gifts! A long time, my mother never told how it came to be that we had such an abundant Christmas. Apple, orange, tangerine, raisins still on the stem, roman candle with five shots, box of sparklers, a stick of peppermint candy. How? She never would tell me. She wasn't wanting me to believe in magic; she wasn't wanting me to think miracle: it was just none of my business. But later on, years later, she told me how we came to have such an abundant Christmas.

My father provided it and this is how he did it. I had grown rather suspicious that perhaps he had done something illegal, had done something violent. You know, when you've got five kids that need Christmas, if you're a good father, you break the law or whatever it takes. He had provided it, and he provided it in this way and this was so: He had been in WWI and during his time in the army, the army dentist had repaired his teeth, and all of his back teeth had gold crowns. He took the pliers, just plain ole pliers, and creating with a piece of wood enough leverage, pulled one of his teeth, got the crown of gold away from the tooth, and went to town. There was a jeweler in town, the little town of Humboldt, who would buy gold from rings and whatever else. My father gave him that piece of gold, and he looked at it and weighed it and checked it out, and gave my father the money to fill five boxes. I didn't know that for a long time, but it added a great deal to my memory of my father who never spoke of it. And that's the truth. —FBC [as told at *Winged for the Heart*, 2003]

By the numbers

1219

happy children
with new hats



2438+52

hours knitting+
putting on hats

22+9

individual+
group knitters



**Enriching lives
through service...
Join us!**

How do you and those staffed at the Center enrich lives through service? According to our founder, we "...infuse every act and word with the grace of God. This is achieved not by an abundance of religious talk but by being gracious as God is. To be gracious is to welcome all without distinction. Some have and some do not; we make no distinction. Some give and some receive; we make no distinction. Some give and some receive; we make no distinction... There is no commandment, 'Thou shall barely get by...'"

If you're considering giving this holiday season, thank you for thinking of The Craddock Center. And if you already give your time, your talent, your financial support, **thank you.** —JJJ



today!
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