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“Y’ALL COME BACK”
Continuing Arts and Crafts in Gatlinburg

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Honors

by

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ABSTRACT

Gatlinburg, Tennessee is a tourist town. I was born and raised in this area, and am currently employed at a ceramics shop in the historic Arts and Crafts Community. Due to this job, I have decided to research the importance of the town and crafts area. In this paper, I will present an overview of the history of the town and its art community, and also present an inside look at life and business in a tourist town. Although the Arts and Crafts Community has grown to be a tourist attraction, its roots still lie in the traditional handmade trades, and its artisans attempt to balance the integrity of their crafts with modern demand and economic realities.

“Y’all Come Back”
Continuing Arts and Crafts in Gatlinburg

I. INTRODUCTION

There is a little town in the heart of eastern Tennessee, nestled in the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. It is called Gatlinburg. Gatlinburg, which lies in Sevier County, is known for its beautiful views, cool rivers, abundant wildlife, and rich mountain history. The National Park has kept some old buildings to display early life in the Appalachian Mountains, and they are easily accessible to the public. In fact, the National Park and the history it has preserved have drawn in countless tourists over the years to the little town of Gatlinburg, which has changed from a community battling the harsh environment to a bustling tourist stop. The area’s appeal, however, is not entirely due to the breathtaking scenery, nor even to Gatlinburg’s salamander population—the most diverse in the world. Gatlinburg’s main allure is found in the shops, amusement parks, and restaurants targeted at vacationers.

Gatlinburg is my hometown, and while many may find the go-karts, hillbilly dinner theaters, and T-Shirt shops charming, I always found them tacky and exaggerated. More than that, they have led me to foster a deep-rooted hatred of traffic and crowds of people. There is nothing that irritates me more than rolling roadblocks of packed SUVs, full of families transfixed more on the many stores and attractions than on the actual road. I almost regret living in Sevier County when packs of people decide to cross the street while the “do not walk” sign is blinking, causing the entire oncoming traffic to miss their green light, which in turn clogs the

roads even more and results in extra traffic jams and aggravated drivers. The collective hindrances of tourists have led us locals to commonly refer to them as “tourons,” or “tourist morons.” Tourist traffic makes getting to work, school, grocery stores, appointments, and even home an ordeal.

No time is safe for local traffic in Sevier County. Springtime beckons spring breakers and hikers, summer is full of families free from school, autumn’s leaves bring hungry photographers, and winter’s many twinkling Christmas lights bring in more than just skiers and snowboarders. I sometimes feel alone when sitting in traffic and I notice that not one car has a Sevier County license plate, but recently I came to realize the importance of the great waves of visitors, the history of the town, and immense development the area has experienced. It all started one summer while I was job hunting.

I had spent years working in retail sales. I never felt that the places I worked held any real artistic or authentic value; after all, anything would sell if it had the word “Gatlinburg” stamped across it. I eventually realized I needed a new job, one that was more suited to my area of study than selling monogrammed tote bags. So one rainy day I made my way to a little specialized community often overlooked by putt-putters and “Believe It or Not” thrill-seekers: the Gatlinburg Arts and Crafts Community. The Arts and Crafts Community is found offset from the downtown strip. It is very different from the rest of the town, and it presents visitors with a vastly different experience from any other collection of gift stores. The Community is a quiet gathering on an eight mile looped road housing the nation’s largest group of independent artists and craftsmen. This unique road offers a relaxing shopping experience in which visitors

can choose from over 120 shops and studios to explore, and they can meet and watch the artists at work. My first stop of the job search was at a pottery shop at the beginning of the loop, and I have been there ever since.

Almost four years ago, I was hired merely minutes after I walked in as shop help, despite my lack of ceramic experience, by ceramics artist, Buie. Since then I have learned more than just ceramic techniques. I have been introduced to the importance of tourism to the Gatlinburg economy and heritage preservation. These artisans are able to have their studios and shops set up in such an unusual community because of tourist clientele. The income made from visitor spending buys materials, tools, and the labor that goes into the locally made arts and crafts. Tourists enable the art community to grow.

In return, the shops in the Arts Community are able to produce souvenirs that are more personal and more representative of mountain culture than products in other Gatlinburg stores. Even though our culture no longer relies on such handmade goods and products, they are interesting keepsakes that remind the owner of the time spent in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. They act as evidence that the traditional Appalachian culture still exists.

Sometimes, mountain folk are thought of negatively. Many types of media portray southern life as ignorant or extremely primitive. Appalachians are sometimes called hillbillies and mountaineers and are often categorized as incompetent, backwoods, inbred people. A slightly more positive stereotype portrays Southerners as a warm, welcoming, hardworking folk; however, they are still hardly ever shown as educated or intelligent. They are also seen as old-fashioned and disconnected from the rest of the world; a prime example would be the TV

shows “Ma and Pa Kettle” or “The Beverly Hillbillies,” both comedies about poor farm families who become wealthy and have to learn to adapt to modern technology and comforts (swimming pools, washing machines, etc.). Historically, all of these stereotypes do hold some truth, so rather than completely erasing evidence of southern roots, Sevier County embraces its past and the stereotypes that accompany it, using them as economic advantages.

Several attractions in Sevier County use the “Southern charm” in order to generate tourist appeal. Visitors appreciate the hospitality and humor found in themed attractions such as native Dolly Parton’s famous amusement park, Dollywood, which in 2008 brought in \$836 million (Harrington). At Dollywood, Dolly presents visitors with a taste of Sevier County, Tennessee. A policy of research is followed at the park for hiring people who produce Appalachian handicrafts because Dolly wants to showcase individuals who possess skills and give them jobs. By searching for and hiring such craftsmen, Dolly and her park have become components in preserving Gatlinburg crafts tradition. Dolly built a replica of the small cabin she and her large family grew up in so visitors can see her humble beginnings and understand what life in the mountains meant. (Miller)

The over the top, exaggerated southern themes help bring vacationers into a different world, and they want to leave Sevier County with evidence of where they have been. The items made and sold in the Arts Community help accommodate that need in a slightly more sophisticated method than perhaps the “redneck comb” and the “hillbilly weather rock” do.

The Arts and Crafts Community consists mostly of artisans who either recreate items used in the early mountain life or craft representations of the local area. Basket weaving,

pottery, candle making, painting, drawing, wood carving, quilting, photography, jewelry, glass blowing and staining, sculpture, and furniture making are among the trades found on the loop, along with restaurants and cafes. They portray the mountain feel without the often unappealing hillbilly stereotype.

The attractions found throughout the county and the crafts local artists make may be reminiscent of times past, but they also offer proof that Gatlinburg and its art scene has evolved over the years and developed into a profitable tourist attraction that draws countless visitors and art collectors each year. In this paper, I will present an overview of the history of the town and its art community, and also present an inside look at life and business in a tourist town. Although the Arts and Crafts Community has grown to be a tourist attraction, its roots still lie in the traditional handmade trades, and its artisans attempt to balance the integrity of their crafts with modern demand and economic realities.

II. THE HISTORY OF THE TOWN

Without the seasonal downpour of tourist after tourist, the town would not exist as I know it. Tourism keeps the economy alive. As of 2008, tourist spending brought Sevier County about \$1,502,000,000 per year: over \$4,000,000 a day and about \$440,000 from retail sales, making the county the third highest ranking tourist economy in the state of Tennessee (SCEDC, Tourist Spending). Gatlinburg receives over nine million visitors each year (SCEDC, Gatlinburg Visitor Profile), but it was not always so popular. Gatlinburg was a small mountain town, overlooked and cut off from most of the country, until an idea in the 1890s led to an action that has since put Gatlinburg on the map: the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. A crucial aspect of the town of Gatlinburg is its history and early settlers.

In the Paleo-Indian period, 10,000 BC, the first residents of Tennessee were great mastodon hunters. Centuries later, in the 1600s to 1700s, the “Principal People,” the Cherokee, were its permanent inhabitants. The eastern and central areas of Tennessee were their hunting grounds. (Commerce) Archaeological evidence has proved that the first inhabitants utilized the entire environment, using stone to make weapons, gathering fruits and nuts for sustenance, and trapping and hunting wildlife (Trout). The material unearthed can also tell archaeologists that there were at least six “cultural horizons” that existed in a period of over 8,000 years— Early Archaic, Middle Archaic, Late Archaic, Terminal Archaic/Early Woodland, Middle Woodland, and Pisgah-Cherokee eras (Trout).

Early life was a self-sustaining life. The Cherokee settled in the Appalachian area and were no longer nomadic—they farmed for food and built houses from timber and clay, and

eventually their fields and structures became towns with somewhat of a democratic governing system. Around 1700, white settlers in surrounding areas began instituting trade systems with the Cherokee, which not only bartered skins and other goods, but customs as well. (Trout) The Cherokee tradition was not completely lost once bartering with Europeans took place; the Cherokee continued to use their handmade clay pots to cook in and store food. The European iron pot shards were used in tending fields, and the faience pottery fragments were used as pendants for necklaces. Cherokee women even used their crafts in diplomacy with the British and northern allies. (Hatley)

The early Cherokee crafted out of necessity. Their most notable crafts are perhaps their baskets which were not only functional, but are also tied closely to their beliefs. Their rivercane baskets were always the Cherokee's most profitable bartering item due to the time and concentration it took to create the basket designs. (Hatley) And, depending on the materials used to make the baskets, either rivercane, white oak, honeysuckle, and red maple, an observer can easily recognize the basket's history. Each change in material represents an era in the Cherokee's timeline in Appalachia: rivercane represents pre-removal, a time of contact with Europeans and an introduction of new forms to the basket tradition; white oak represents the removal and changing gender roles, as it was a weaving material used by European American males and females; honeysuckle represented the change of the twentieth century when clear cutting had forced a change in materials, developing new traditions; and the red maple marked the start of a tourist trade for the Cherokee. (Hill) Baskets were even a key element in pottery making. In order to make certain ceramic pots, Native Americans would first weave a basket,

then place the clay over the basket mold (Canfield). Evidence of the Cherokee craft tradition can be found in Appalachia today in museums, galleries, and craft stores.

Tennessee formed a state in 1796. (Commerce) The area of what is now Gatlinburg was relatively untouched by white settlers until the early 1800s when immigrants from Europe came to America in search of new lives and began settling in parts of the Appalachian Mountain Range. The Scotch-Irish are said to have chosen to nestle in the mountain range because it reminded them of their highlands. Due to the local growing white oak trees, the area was originally named White Oak Flats (Bureau). In 1854, a Jefferson County resident named Radford Gatlin moved to the Flats and opened a local store on Burg Hill (Trout). The town was eventually renamed “Gatlinburg” after Gatlin, although through controversy he was not a resident for long (Bureau).

Legend has it that one of Gatlinburg’s first residents was widowed Martha Jane Huskey Ogle, who, in 1795, traveled from South Carolina with her children and brother to start a new life in White Oaks, as a last promise to her deceased husband (Temple, McDonald and Library). They purchased fifty acres of land and built a home, and within ten years she had almost eighty grandchildren which accounts for the prominence of Ogles in Gatlinburg today. (Trout) Her cabin still stands, and it represents much history and culture to its residents.

The Ogles were soon joined by Trenthams, Maples, Claboughs, Whaleys, Reagans, Shultz, and McCarters, names that are also common among the locals today, but life was not easy for the early settlers. The locals became farmers and had a very self-sufficient lifestyle. Although the weather was not particularly worse than any other part of the US, the rough

environment made the cold winters and harsh summers more of a battle (Trout). The people who chose to settle in the White Oak Flats area had to be prepared to work hard and keep faith in order to survive. Fortunately, for those who could make the journey and had the money, Knoxville and Sevierville were close by settlements and provided the town with what it could not produce itself.

Similarly to the Native Americans, the use of natural, local elements continued as the white settlers began to make their homes. They had to coexist with the lush wildlife, which soon became integrated into their developing culture. They hunted bear, deer, raccoons, and any other mammal they could eat, as well as fish and birds. They also collected berries, nuts, and spices, and other forms of plants became medicinal remedies. When food could not be gathered by hunting or gathering, they turned to their crops of beans, squash, melons, and most importantly, corn. Corn could grow in the forest as well as on the mountain slopes. It was used not only to feed the settlers, but also their animals. Not only did everyone eat corn, but Appalachians used the shucks for some of their weaving. Similar to the versatility of corn, some farmers trapped and owned hogs, and every part of the pig was put to use. (Trout) I learned in elementary school that the early residents even used the bladder as a toy for children.

A Southern tradition began out of survival. People needed to preserve the food they grew and gathered for the seasons in which they could not produce more. They learned which foods could be dried, as well as pickled. They kept herbs in the houses and smoked and salted their meats. (Trout) Visitors to Gatlinburg can still see the smokehouses and springhouses that used to be an essential part of survival. Public schools were not present in the area for many

years, but plenty was learned. In White Oak Flats, people learned means of surviving in their environment: living off the land, harvesting their crops, and utilizing plants as dyes and medicine (Trout). Many studies have been performed in order to better understand the mountain foodways and medicinal folklore. Just as important were the ways the mountain people produced their own products.

Since many were of a poor folk and were cut off by mountains, wildlife, overall distance, and a general lack of interest in traveling, the early Appalachian settlers had limited means of buying materials. To compensate, they had to make do with crafting their own furniture, quilts, clothing, pots, pans, utensils, candles, and other various necessities from the materials at hand. Spinning wheels, flax hackles, small cotton fields, and sheep were common among White Oak Flats (Trout).

They even made their own means of entertainment such as instruments and toys. Not everyone was a skilled craftsman, but different people in the communities were able to perform specific trades and bartering systems then ensued. They produced these items out of necessity, but their techniques became part of their culture and influences present day life in Appalachia. Southern Appalachian art groups later formed to preserve, transform, and teach these traditions to others in the area. Little did the early Gatlinburg settlers know that their utilitarian items would eventually evolve into visitor keepsakes and art collections, sold in places such as the Arts and Crafts Community. (Temple, McDonald and Library)

Gatlinburg and its beautiful scenery began to get more recognition, and its population began to grow. During the late 1800s into the early 1900s, travelers and sightseers could not

help but notice the area and wanted to see more, so, combined with a desire for an easier passage to North Carolina, a monumental idea was formulated—to preserve the area as a park and build more roadways to it. Part of the area preserved would be halfway between Knoxville, Tennessee and Asheville, North Carolina. It was called the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and would expand over 150,000 acres of land. (nps.gov)

In the 1920s, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park was in its first phase of creation. Wealthy citizens wanted to auto tour parts of the United States, and they along with biologists and the like saw a great opportunity in the Appalachian Mountains. In 1926, President Calvin Coolidge passed a bill that allowed the establishment of the Park. Those in favor started a movement to raise money to establish the land as a park. By 1928, they had raised \$5 million; however they needed double that in order to buy the land. With the help of the Laura Spellman Rockefeller Memorial Fund, they were able to raise enough money for the federal government to take notice of their efforts and purchase the land. In September 1940, President Roosevelt formally dedicated the land and the area was established as a National Park. (nps.gov) Gatlinburg paved some of its roads and added electricity to accommodate cars and guests. The National Park was so popular that in one year after World War II, the park received over a million visitors and is now the country's most visited national park. (Temple, McDonald and Library)

Consequently, everyone on what is now National Park property had to move to another location. The government and park creators were trying to preserve the beautiful landscapes of the mountains, but unfortunately they were also changing a very unique culture of life. The

mountains and lack of roads had sheltered these folk from the rest of the world, subsequently keeping their lifestyles and customs unchanged and more true to their origins. The preservation of the people's culture was not considered when the Park first came into being. However, once Gatlinburg began to get more recognition and was turning into a tourist stop, the primitive mountain culture became part of the allure, and the town has benefitted from it ever since.

III. THE HISTORY OF ART IN THE GATLINBURG AREA

The trade of craftmaking was an important way of life for mountain folk, but it soon became a solid element of the economics for the area as well as its culture. The trade was designed, not only to preserve a way of life, but also to provide the town with social and economical benefits, (Williams). As people began to discover the Smokies, others began to discover the Gatlinburg residents. Better schools and other necessities were beginning to find a place in Gatlinburg. And with these came preservation and transformation of culture.

When tourist areas sell souvenirs indigenous to the area's culture, they are oftentimes exaggerated. The reason behind this is to draw in more money—to make the tourists feel as if they were in a land much different from their own. Tourist areas utilize any cultural differences because travelers like to have a unique item that carries some connection to another world—it gives a sense of excitement and the item becomes more personal to its purchaser. Handicrafts can be used as evidence of Southern Appalachia's distinct culture (Williams). Gatlinburg and the rest of Sevier County are key examples of “playing up the culture” to make their culture stand out. Many locals in my area accentuate the Southern accent to make their areas of business seem more homely and warm. Cabins and hotels, shops, and restaurants often include bears, wood carvings, fish, mountain scenes as part of their décor, even though most local homes and offices are not themed this way at all. Gatlinburg has been accentuating its heritage for a very long time.

Appalachia experienced many changes, some of which could have erased the mountain culture, including the introduction of the steam age in 1900 and the cry for logging that it

brought. Gatlinburg's human population began to grow as its tree population shrank. As life became more about the surrounding timber, organizations stepped up in order to educate the locals. In 1912, the Pi Beta Phi Settlement School, founded by the Pi Beta Phi National Women's Fraternity, changed education in the mountains. There were longer school sessions, more qualified instructors, and a more extensive curriculum. People were able to learn more about home economics, livestock, agriculture, and health. Alongside these skills were courses that taught blacksmithing, carpentry, and other forms of weaving including basketry. Production by hand was becoming a forgotten trade, but Pi Beta Phi stepped in to bring handcraft skills back, and in turn started a revival of local crafts. (Trout)

In 1915, Pi Phi—what locals called the organization—began to sell the Settlement School's crafts through the alumnae department of the fraternity (Temple, McDonald and Library). In 1926, Pi Phi decided they needed outlets to sell the products the Gatlinburg residents had been practicing and producing, so they opened the Arrow Craft shop—later, Arrowcraft Shop. The students were encouraged to make items they grew up using—baskets, quilts, and blankets—and the shop accommodated their sales (Temple, McDonald and Library). They began shipping some of the crafts to other Pi Beta Phi settlements in the nation, and Gatlinburg's crafts—furniture, baskets, tools, and other items—were rapidly gaining popularity. Craftsmen began receiving an income, and the school was also aided by craft sales. (Trout)

Major industries in weaving and furniture making were created and by fall of 1926, ten thousand dollars worth of craft items were sent out of Gatlinburg (Temple, McDonald and Library). The crafts movement was in the making.

In the 1930s, an organization was formed in Knoxville, Tennessee called the Southern Highland Handicraft Guild. There an idea was formed to keep folk arts and crafts alive in the National Park; however, not all of the locals knew how to create anything handmade. Even though some trades were evident in every household, others were only specialized by certain people. And as machine made objects were becoming more popular and accessible, handmade crafts were becoming unnecessary. A decision for a handicraft revival was made to teach the mountain people more about their own crafts and to introduce new ideas and techniques, all as a way to expand the appeal of Gatlinburg and to help it grow as a tourist town. This decision helped the Sevier County residents receive an education, employment, and a resurrection of past traditions. (Barker)

A year later, a pioneer crafts exhibit was showcased at the Mountain View Hotel in Gatlinburg. Alongside it was the St. Louis Handicraft Guild's modern weaving exhibit. The guild was granted full title to the Allandale Cottage industries in North Carolina, and it continued to grow. By 1932, the guild had twenty-five centers. The following year was the first showing of the "Exhibition of the Southern Highland Handicraft Guild." It was presented at the 1933 convention of the Country Life Association in Blacksburg, Virginia. It then traveled to Washington D.C., Brooklyn, Georgia, St. Louis, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Milwaukee, and Berea, North Carolina to dedicate Berea College's new art museum. The exhibit's sponsors were the wives of Herbert Hoover, Calvin Coolidge, and Franklin D. Roosevelt. Shortly after, a concrete idea of proposing craft sales in the National Park was made. (Barker)

In order to improve conditions in Tennessee, the Tennessee Valley Authority invested with the guild to create a craft marketing program called Southern Highlanders, Inc., and decisions were made to begin opening a craft shop and to begin assisting with craft production and design. More shops began to open as sales in New York began to improve, and more and more locals were beginning to find employment and new skills. It created a regional development for the Gatlinburg area. In 1947, the guild opened an office in Gatlinburg in the O. J. Mattil's Woodcrafts and Carvers Shop. The next year, the first Southern Highland Handicraft Guild and the Southern Highlanders, Inc. crafts fair, the Craftsman's Fair of the Southern Highlands, was held in Gatlinburg on July 26-29, 1948 on the Pi Beta Phi Settlement School property. It was the founding steps of today's craft fair culture. (Barker)

The teachers at the Pi Phi Settlement School were not locals. Many of them had been trained in craftmaking up north, including at the Yale School of Fine Arts. They made the executive decisions regarding colors, patterns, quality, and other aesthetic options, and some teachers went as far as to introduce new items and ideas that were not originally a part of the Appalachian tradition. These invented and re-taught traditions helped draw in customers and visitors and also opened up new product lines for smaller, more affordable crafts. (Williams)

The crafters were drawn in to the arts movement due to an economic motivation. Many of them never had crafts as part of their lives until the school offered lessons. Most of the craft traditions were no longer in use and were no longer taught through families, but the training they received at the school could bring in cash for their households. This "new" tradition became a tourist trade. A negative effect of the preservation of the Appalachian folk

art for tourism was the removal of meaning for the crafter. The items made as souvenirs had lost most utilitarian purposes and most did not have any artistic meaning to them. They were no longer skills taught in families, but items made as souvenirs for tourists, from skills learned from non-native instructors. (Williams) David Whisnant, author of *All That is Native and Fine*, stated that tourists “accept as authentic and traditional ‘mountain handcrafts’ the guild-produced items whose lineage leads far more often to the craft-design programs of major universities than to mountain-bred potters, metal workers, or chair makers and the patterns handed down to them from the past” (Barker). Even though the crafters were in the middle of an invented tradition, tourists enjoyed their products and the craftmaking continued.

Allen H. Eaton, author of *Handicrafts of the Southern Highlands*, helped convince the crafters to listen to their foreign instructor by warning them that the crafters were competing against machine-made products, so shortcuts that would lessen quality were not an option, and that their instructors could teach them what they “[needed] to know most, that the only advance for handicrafts is the continuous improvement of quality of design, materials, and workmanship” (Barker). Eaton offered five proposals to the crafters: machinery that was introduced to speed up production should only be machines that the crafters can afford and use without hindering their quality or skills; out-of-home working centers were suggested but Eaton argued that, if taken out of the home, production would be turned into “small mountain factories” instead of “fireside industries”; he rejected the idea of selling crafts in departmental stores as crafts would not sell as well and the crafters would not make enough to support the rent payment in such stores; experts on design should not be introduced and the products of the crafters should come from the locals themselves; and to standardize excellence, not the

product. (Barker) Eaton understood the importance the artists's connection with their crafts would have for consumers and tourists, and his observations are still apparent in present day Gatlinburg's Arts and Crafts Community.

As the crafters began to improve their skills and become more popular with tourists and folk collectors alike, freedom was found for the craftsmen. They were able to make what they wanted outside of the schools and were also able to teach their families what they had learned to do, which in turn created an entirely new tradition. Families were involved in a cultural revival because outsiders had re-established the Appalachian culture, changing a lost art to a profitable tourist stop—the tradition had been re-invented. (Williams)

An easy example of turning tradition into tourism lies not only in trades found on the Arts and Crafts loop, but also in the accommodations tourists stay in while visiting Sevier County. When touring the National Park, one can see evidence of early settler life. Several cabins remain in the area, and information is posted at each one about its former inhabitants. Afterwards, visitors return to their comfortably modern cabins or hotels with heat, air-conditioning, running water, electricity, televisions, hot tubs, Jacuzzis, kitchen appliances, and other "necessities." What some people may not realize is that the cabins they are vacationing in are modeled after the run-down shacks they just visited. (Williams)

Cabin building was a needed trade in the early mountain life. However, the structures then were not as cozy as they are now. There was no insulation apart from newspapers covering the walls, no plumbing or heat, and there were not even floors, apart from the dirt ground. They were very tiny and rarely had kitchens. Early cabins were about the absolute

necessities since most settlers were not wealthy enough for luxuries. (Williams) I think it is important to notice the transformation of the early cabins to the cabins or cabin themed hotels visitors stay in today. The cabin building tradition has continued, but it has also changed to suit tourist wants and needs, a decision that has been met with overwhelming popularity.

The Arrowcraft Shop gained recognition and in 1945, they started their very first summer craft workshops. Instructors from the University of Tennessee led the programs and about fifty people signed up for the summer. As time went on, the workshops continued to grow and, by word of mouth and notice from tourist traffic, the workshops grew and attracted students and faculty from all over the world. The end result was a change for the Shop: the name became the Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts (a name it still holds today), and in 1965 Arrowmont's new studio complex was built. (Arrowmont) Around the same time, the interstate highway was constructed and, with an exponential increase in traffic through the mountains, the craft market exploded (Barker).

IV. THE ARTS AND CRAFTS COMMUNITY

As the popularity of Gatlinburg and its crafts grew, artists knew they had a profitable business in their hands. In 1937, an idea for a community of artisans and craftsmen was formed and implemented. Glades Road was chosen and craft shops opened all along the driving trail and eventually became established enough to grant its own maps, brochures, and commercials. The Pi Beta Phi Fraternity used its privileges to introduce visitors to the Gatlinburg's craft area. Guests were able to meet the craftsmen and see where they worked and how they made their crafts, a still popular tradition. (Temple, McDonald and Library)

I had the privilege of speaking to several members of the Arts and Crafts Community about their involvement as artisans in a tourist town. The artists I interviewed have all been a part of the Community for most of their lives, but their roots do not all lay in Sevier County. In fact, most of the artists in the community were not born in Gatlinburg; however, I spoke with one family who had not only been born and raised in the area, but craftmaking was part of the family tradition.

I first spoke with Buie Hancock, a prominent potter and owner of the Buie Pottery shop and Buie's Landing{*Figure 1,2,3*}, the surrounding complex. Buie was born in California, but her family moved to Knoxville, TN, a short drive from Gatlinburg, when she was still under a year old. She has been making pots for thirty-one years, and her initiative and success is impressive. In 1986, after graduating from the University of Tennessee Buie came to the Arts and Crafts Community and bought the Potter House Studio and all its equipment from a retiring potter. She changed the name and began to establish herself in the Community. I asked why she

considered Gatlinburg for a place of business and she stated that “the shop became available, so Gatlinburg picked me.” She had taken classes at Arrowmont and knew the area and its developing arts community. She said that “there was more availability for craftsmen to survive [in Gatlinburg].” When asked about the changes the area has experienced since she moved to Gatlinburg, she stated “the amount of tourists have more than doubled in twenty-three years, which is good and bad. There are now more retailers so more competition.” Buie is confident in her decision of settling in a tourist town, but laughed when I asked if she felt differently about the area before she opened her shop. “I swore I would *never ever ever* be a Gatlinburg craftsman. In the 80s, there were too many ‘fake’ craftsmen.” She said they sold junk that was not all locally made or of high quality. That has changed and improved over the years. Now that the Community requires handmade items, Buie feels that the requirement of working on premise definitely aids in selling her products. About eighty percent of customers prefer Buie’s items that appear to be more native to the Appalachian area—items with plant patterns or animal paw prints, or more primitive styled pots.

Buie does not use local materials—in fact, most of the artists do not due to lack of materials. She buys her clay from Highwater Clays in Asheville, North Carolina. “I have to buy materials from Highwater because the dirt here is not reliable enough. I could get clay from one area and it turn out fine, but a couple feet away could produce bad clay. Besides, I use too much of it.” Buie goes through 12,000 pounds of clay a year, and she is not the only potter in the Community. Gatlinburg simply could not accommodate the amount of clay needed. And, although she buys her glaze materials, she mixes them herself which results in unique colors that other potters do not have. Many customers favor her *honey brown* and *cobalt blue* over

the rest of the glaze colors. Her clientele consists of mostly repeat customers (about sixty percent) and the rest are tourists. When asked why she decided to make ceramics her career for this long, she replied, “because I love for people to use my pottery. I love to be a part of their lives.” And by personally making her products, she is a part of her customers’ lives.

Neighbors to Buie Pottery are Jean and Al Stewart who own the Stewart Gallery. Jean is a palette knife painter and Al photographs the Smoky Mountains. {*Figure 4*} They are originally from North-Western Massachusetts but came to East Tennessee because they wanted to find a home in the South. Jean laughed and said, “I’m a local but not a native.” They chose Gatlinburg in particular almost by accident, and Jean swears it was fate. They were not originally planning to go to Gatlinburg while they were hunting for a new home, but some craftsmen in Batcave, North Carolina insisted that the couple drive through the Parkway to Gatlinburg while they were touring the mountains. Drive they did—and leave they did not. Jean says they “fell instantly in love” and never considered the difference of living in a tourist town. They knew this area was the right one. She said that even if she had to quit painting, she would still live in Gatlinburg. Painting, although not a local tradition, is a family tradition of Jean. Her mother was “a Sunday painter” who taught Jean how “to see.”

The frames around Jean and Al’s images are made from local barnwood. This aids in selling their products because not only is the image of the mountains, historic cabins, or local wildlife, but the barnwood frame ties the whole piece together as a native Appalachian piece of work. Almost all of her paintings are from the Smokies, and she chooses to paint the surroundings because of the beauty. Also, the opportunity that tourists get to meet the artists

helps sell her paintings. Her customers are mostly tourists, and her online sales are almost always customers who have been in the shop and want a painting shipped to them. Jean is “astounded at the amount of repeat customers” and states that for every 1000 tourist customers there are about two actual art collectors. Jean and Al seem to have found a good home for selling their art in a tourist town. The painter admits that the Community has changed a good deal since she moved to the area. “I liked the way it used to be. The Community used to be very close knit. There used to be monthly meetings, but they usually ended badly, with that many artists in one room voicing their opinions...” she joked. Jean and Al are happy in Buie’s Landing and Jean feels comfortable because “everyone here [in this complex] knows each other and care about each other.” I can testify to this statement because several years of working for Buie has introduced me to this mini-community of artists—Buie, the Stewart Gallery, Licklog Hollow Baskets, Smoky Mountain Leather, the Lisa Deater Gallery, and Rocky Flats Pottery and Soap who are friends as well as neighbors. An environment such as this one can aid sales in more ways than one.

Licklog Hollow Baskets is a basket shop in Buie’s Landing. The Canfield family own and work the shop, making baskets and other woven art forms. They are from the North Carolina coast and moved to Gatlinburg in 1994 because they had visited the area, loved it, and decided to open a shop in the Arts Community. They do not use any local supplies because, like Buie, they cannot get them. They do not have enough land or time to harvest their own materials, but they do make their baskets in the shop.

The Canfields got involved with basketry because of daughter Lisa's interest in the art form. Lisa was in school and had a negative response from a teacher that she vowed to prove wrong: her teacher told her baskets were not art. Since then, Lisa and mother Billie have taken classes together and opened their shop. Lisa has entered, been accepted, and won awards in art contests with her baskets. She has been accepted twice to the Sevier County Biennial Exhibition, thrown by Arrowmont, and has won third place and, in this past competition, first place. She has risen from a simple basket maker to an award-winning featured artist. {Figure 5,6,7}

Tucked in the back of the Jim Gray Gallery on Glades Road is a little shop called the Ogle Broom Shop. Although probably the smallest store on the loop, the Ogle's shop has a very large history. David Ogle {Figure 8} not only owns the store and makes the brooms himself (with help from his wife Tammie), he is a third generation broom maker, and proud of it. David stated that his grandparents started the tradition in 1920, and in 1977 they opened shop on Glades Road. Wayne came next and started off building furniture but family tradition held out and he switched to making brooms as well. "Wayne had a natural ability for broom making and enjoyed making them and talking to tourists." Wayne taught his son, David, to make brooms as well. He was only nine and thirteen when he started to pick up the trade, and by the time he was sixteen it became his career. David nodded and said, "I always knew I wanted to make brooms," and he has done so for forty-six years now. He and Wayne had their own shop downtown Gatlinburg from 1960-1988 and in '88 he moved to the spot he is located presently and says he does better business in the Community. When asked what has changed in the

Community over the years, he stated that the number of craftsmen had grown from about thirty or forty in the 1980s and has more than doubled since then.

David believes that his clientele vary between tourists, art collectors, and repeat customers. His product attracts customers because of how unique the brooms are. David states, “it’s all I’ve ever done in my life. No one else does it. It’s one of a kind.” The brooms are made with all local materials by simple hand tools. When I asked from which trees they make the handles from, David chortled and said, “we probably got a piece of everything that grows here in the mountains in ‘em.” The brushes are made from “broomcorn” and are tied onto the handles with a natural fiber material. Then they sew it by hand. David also whittles walking sticks—all different, all unique, no two items identical. {*Figure 9*} Their products are so varied that, even though they do have a website, they cannot sell their products online. It is merely for reference and advertising. David noted that “lately, more people won’t buy anything unless it’s from here and they watch you make it.” David’s talent has given him a leg-up for selling his product in a competitive tourist town. For ninety years the Ogle family has been crafting and selling brooms and, although David is the last member of his family to still make them, his unique product becomes a memorable experience to Gatlinburg visitors.

V. MY OWN INVOLVEMENT AND WORKS

“The craftsman’s necessity for a big turnover of under-a-dollar merchandise need not mean that it be dull in design or non-functional in its character. Each thing we make can have a kind of life within itself.”-Mary Ela, Head of Berea College’s art programs, 1940. (Barker)

Landscapes, unless as the background in a painting or drawing, have always bored me. I admire other artists’ abilities to render a countryside or forest, but I often find making them myself to be painful and all-together not fun. I prefer rendering animals or people. I think that is why Mary Ela’s quote spoke to me. Not only is it addressing tourism which is pertinent to this area of study, but it is also speaking about the life that needs to go into a piece of art or craft. If a piece of work is too static, it loses interest and becomes unappealing.

Movement is one of the key components in artwork for me. Without it, the viewer’s eye would be stuck on one aspect of the artwork, inhibiting the viewer to find pathways to see the rest of the piece. It maintains continuity and can often balance the piece. The use of line is often utilized for movement. I admire the simplicity of a black line on white paper and how it can bring forth movement, mood, and can narrate a story just as effectively as adding color or words can. I admire expression and action in a still drawing. I have long harbored a love for illustrations, cartoons, and comic strips. I have taken multiple classes on drawing and comic book illustrating, and hardly a day has gone by that I have not doodled something on a sheet of paper (or even my hand). Cartoon animals have become my forte, mostly because animals can be quirky and unpredictable, something I find useful in expressing them on paper.

With all this talk of my love for illustrating, it may seem odd that I have worked so hard these past four years in ceramics. I found it odd myself because I never intended to work in ceramics. However, I have discovered another form of art that I now enjoy just as much as cartooning. Clay can be just as expressive as drawing with line. It can produce just as much humor as a comic illustration. And the fact that clay is a three-dimensional object automatically gives it more movement and life than a two-dimensional drawing. With a three-dimensional object, the viewer can physically pick it up, turn it over, and gain a more personal involvement with the piece than with a drawing. Working in ceramics has given me not only more art experience, but it has introduced me to the life of working in tourism in folk-oriented Gatlinburg Arts Community.

I came to Buie Pottery, Shop 1 of the Arts and Crafts Community, in search of a new job. I walked in and asked if she, Buie, would need any help that summer. I told her I was an Art student at East Tennessee State University, and she looked at me and asked, “Do you have experience in ceramics?” I immediately felt my heart drop. I had little to no experience with clay. When I was younger I made my mother miniature clay creatures, but that was about the extent of it. Downcast, I answered her with a no, expecting a rejection, but her response was completely unexpected. “Alright, we’ll see you on Friday!”

She brought me in, took me under her glaze-covered wing, and taught me more than I ever thought I would ever know about ceramics. At first, I am not sure how much help I was, but I like to think that I adapted quickly. My first day was spent making a mess. She explained to me about glazing and sent me to dunk all her bisqued pieces in various buckets of her self-

made glazes: clear, turquoise, white, red, brown, green, and purple, with red, tan, robin's egg, gray, blue, green, and purple accents. I was worn out and covered with about as much glaze as the pottery was, but I had fun and her pieces, despite my inexperienced glazing hand, turned out as gorgeous as always.

After a long time of unloading the electric kiln, sanding, glazing, unloading the gas kiln, sanding again, and pricing, I eventually learned to make some pieces myself. Lopsided and overly thick at first, deeming the name "Molly Wobbly Pots," they were not much to speak of. However, like Gatlinburg itself, I have been taught to refine my craft in order to sell it to the incoming tourist crowds.

Buie began a new line of product by trying to utilize my drawings in her pottery. *{Figure 10, 11}* She made several plates with a porcelain slip applied to the center of them. After bisque firing, I am able to draw on them with special underglaze pencils that will not burn out after the final firing. I have done countless scenes of bears, deer, raccoons, opossums, foxes, moths, great blue herons, eagles, waterfalls, and Mount LeConte, the third highest peak in the Smokies (Lodge), on Buie's hand-made plates. After drawing on them, we pour her clear glaze over the center, then dip and roll the rim of the plate in her brown glaze, then add tan, sage, and red for more interest, making it colorful and foodsafe. The end product is different from what one can find in other ceramic shops in the area, and gives its purchaser a connection to the Gatlinburg area.

It was not until studying the works of Navajo potter, Rose Goodman, that I gained a real, permanent interest in ceramics. Rose was one of the first Navajo craftmakers and potters to

realize that utilitarian pots were no longer in high demand, but more decorative ceramic pieces were gaining interest for tourists. The Navajo knew that in order to save their art form, they had to cater to tourist demands and began making souvenirs. (Rosenak and Rosenak) She creates primitive ceramic sculptures of bears, all hollow coil pots coated with a pine sap mixture and pit fired, in the traditional Navajo technique. Some are piggy banks, and others are simply decorative. {*Figure 12,13*} I felt a connection with Rose because she lives in a tourist community as well, and she makes her bears to sell as souvenirs. I love animals, and I loved Rose's ceramic representation of bears, so I set off to make my own animal pots. The first was a giraffe as a Christmas gift, and then my creations led to a school project where I made several more animal pots. After that, Buie decided we should make and sell them in her store.

Buie Pottery now carries "Critter Jars," a collaborative works by myself and Buie. Buie throws the vessel—a closed vase form generally shaped like an overly plump bullet—and then hands them off to me to do the rest. {*Figure 14,15*} We let them dry in front of the fan until they are not quite leather hard and will hold their shape well enough under the pressure of applying more clay to them. Then, with my help, they become animals.

The vessels start off with about two pounds of clay, and after they have been made into a critter, they are double the weight, if not more. I have made bears, deer, raccoons, opossums, owls, beavers, turtles, foxes, and rabbits to name a few, and even some creatures not native to the area such as moose, goats, llamas, and elephants. I sculpt the head by studying various pictures of animals. More often than not, the face will have a certain expression, one that I think relates back to my interest in comics. Almost all of the critter jars

have open mouths, a decision I made to add more interest and life to the clay animals. I tend to make them slightly goofy, like the horse {*Figure 16,17,18*}, but other times I leave their faces more tame and natural {*Figure 19,20*}. The effect is usually successful in drawing in customers. After the head, I extend a neck, then score and attach it to the vessel. I then add its legs, arms, and tail. I apply texture with a scoring tool, needle tool, or wooden stick, or sometimes I will leave the surface smooth. After that work is done, I cut the animal jar open, smooth the edges of what has now become a lid, and then the two of us sign the bottom. {*Figure 21, 22,23,24,25*}

After the bisque firing, we apply glaze on the inside so it will no longer be porous, and on the outside I paint on stains—a blend of oxides and metal that when brushed on the ceramic surface, stains coloring onto the clay. Manganese, red iron oxide, and various blues, greens, yellows, and browns are among the colors I use to add more life to my critters. The jars go in for their final firing and come out looking much different than they did when they went in. {*Figure 26,27,28,29*} I also make other animal themed items, ranging from attachments to oil burners to figures on slab dishes. {*Figure 30,31,32,33*}

Buie's shop is set up so customers can comfortably browse her many options of functional ceramics while watching us work in the back. A window and an open doorway welcomes visitors and their questions and comments. {*Figure 34,35*} They are able to see the ceramics' creation, hence connecting them to the product even more. Many people have come in and talked to me about my animal pots and have watched my process of creating them. We have taken custom orders due to the openness of the shop and of Buie. The customers appreciate the connection with their product and the creator, and they are more encouraged to

purchase souvenirs. The effectiveness of the “Artist at Work” technique is something the Arts and Crafts Community has realized and taken advantage of.

Mary Ela was not necessarily talking about giving the craft or art piece movement, but she did mean that the artist needs to put something personal in the product to bring it alive and make it more interesting. I feel that my jars do show a personal involvement because of my interest in animals and my growing attraction towards sculpting clay. I believe that not only can a bit of my personality show in the rather more expressive pieces, but they also show my preference for movement in art. Humor and movement work together to bring them alive, and customers have a personal involvement with the items sold at Buie Pottery, adding another level of life to the objects. Handmade items tell a story not only of the vacation its owner went on, but also of the craftsman who made it.

VI. CONCLUSION

Growing up in Gatlinburg has accustomed me to what some may feel is an odd way of life: I am surrounded by miniature theme parks which are shadowed by Dollywood; I have to take longer backroads in order to reach my destinations; venturing downtown—and sometimes even leaving my house—is avoided at all costs; going to dinner at a pancake restaurant is completely normal; coming across bears, raccoons, foxes, wolves, coyotes, rabbits, snakes, and other wildlife in my backyard, garbage can, or even house is also completely normal; and having a thriving artist community right down the road is a historical preservation most of us take advantage of.

I never considered the history involving Gatlinburg and the Arts and Crafts Community until recently. White Oak Flats was a small community, previously settled by Native American Indians, then by the likes of Martha Ogle and her family, and it soon gained more residents as the years went on. Once the idea for roadways to reach the mountains surrounding Gatlinburg was formulated, enough people had seen the beautiful Appalachian scenery to raise money to preserve the area and not only create roadways, but a National Park as well. The Great Smoky Mountain National Park caused many people to lose their homes and lands, but it protected 150,000 acres of forests and meadows. The Park has kept several of the early families' homes accessible to the public, so that visitors can learn about and connect with the Appalachian history contained in the mountains. These cabins, barns, storage buildings, etc. never seemed out of the ordinary to me, but many people would not have been able to witness evidence of Appalachian life without the National Park.

An excerpt from the Encyclopedia of Appalachia describes Appalachian crafts as such:

Handcrafted items in Appalachia serve utilitarian, aesthetic, economic, and symbolic functions. A handmade quilt, for example, may be used as a bedcovering, a decorative wall hanging, an item for sale, or a symbol in a photographic scene to convey immediately a sense of "Appalachians" to the viewer. The history of craft work in the region reveals much about Appalachia's changing economic and social climate over the last 250 years and how handcrafted items emerged as icons of the region. (Wilson)

This is an accurate portrayal of the folk craft, and I feel it important for others to realize that Appalachian crafts are more than just unique souvenirs. They represent the past and present of residents in the Appalachian areas.

The Arts and Crafts Community is also an important historical piece to the Appalachian puzzle. The Community is a part of Gatlinburg's tourist economy which provides visitors with handmade souvenirs, but it is also a link to how life used to be. Appalachians crafted out of necessity in their self sustaining communities and had to learn to live off of materials found in their surroundings. The handcraft tradition was originally taught in homes to family members, and bartering was a way of life in the mountains. Once the Pi Beta Phi Settlement School opened in Gatlinburg, the art of handcrafting utilitarian and decorative items was taught to all willing locals. If it was not for the school, the craft tradition would have become lost due to growing demands for the efficiency and convenience of machine made products. The school made it possible for locals to create and sell their products, and eventually other Appalachian handicraft groups formed and craft fairs began to welcome a new tourist economy. The school

reinvented the crafting tradition in the Smokies and the integrity of handcrafted items has remained popular ever since.

The Arts and Crafts Community allows tourists to witness a traditional way of life, to witness history in the present. They are able to see how the crafts are made and meet the creators. This interaction is extremely important to visitors. They are able to buy a souvenir that they personally had a connection with and, in a sense, are taking a piece of Gatlinburg back with them when they return home. This item purchased is unique, as is the store it is from. It has the personality of the crafter and the integrity of being handmade. And the item often holds more meaning of Appalachian folk traditions than the purchaser realizes. The arts and crafts are a part of Gatlinburg, and I am grateful for being exposed to such a unique and diverse community. Working in the Arts and Crafts Community and being a part of the tourist economy and local history has impressed on me the importance of the Appalachian folk traditions. My own works connect me with the town, and connect customers with me.

The National Park and the arts tradition caused Gatlinburg to gain recognition, and nowadays the area welcomes millions of visitors a year. Hotels, information centers, stores, and restaurants all target tourists. Sevier County's economy thrives on the income from tourist spending and is fortunate enough to survive year round as a tourist hot spot. I always disliked living around so many tourists. They seem to take the sense of "home" out of my town, as most people walking around are not locals. It comes as no surprise when I am often asked, "Do people actually live in Gatlinburg?" The answer is yes. Yes, people live in Gatlinburg and have lived there for hundreds of years. Excited vacationers often overlook the rich history found

throughout the town, but it is there and Gatlinburg welcomes visitors to explore its roots.

Wooden carvings and furniture, southern recipes, cabins old and new, dialect, activities, and handcrafted souvenirs are all reminders. I hope that Gatlinburg always retains its heritage, and I hope the Arts and Crafts Community continues to provide tourists with unique gift items. My closing suggestion can be found throughout the tourist town, and is among the many efforts Sevier County has made to preserve and direct its southern roots to visitors:

“Y’all come back, now.”



{Figure 1} Buie Hancock's sign, outside of Buie Pottery.
<http://www.buieslanding.com/images/hot%20links/Buie%20Pottery.jpg>



{Figure 2} Buie's Landing, home of Buie Pottery, Licklog Hollow Baskets, Rocky Flats Pottery and Soap, Smoky Mountain Leather, Stewart Gallery, and Lisa Deater Gallery.
<http://www.buieslanding.com/images/front.jpg>



{Figure 3} Examples of what tourists can find at Buie's Landing.
http://smokiesinformation.org/bus-members/images/large_76_1228259580.jpg



{Figure 4} Stewart Gallery palette knife paintings and photography.
<http://www.buieslanding.com/images/SG1.jpg>



{Figure 5} Lisa Canfield at work.
<http://www.aboutthegreatsmokies.com/shopping/images/locklog-hollow.jpg>



{Figure 6} Examples of the Canfield's baskets at Licklog Hollow Baskets.



{Figure 7} Image on the 15th Sevier County Juried Biennial Exhibition postcard. Baskets by Lisa Canfield.

<http://www.prlog.org/11181915-sevier-county-artists-exhibit-at-arrowmont.html>



{Figure 8} David Ogle, third generation broom maker, sitting in his shop in front of his handmade brooms.



{Figure 9} David Ogle's intricate and unique broom handles.



{Figure 10} A stack of plates with mountain images drawn in high-fire pencils, found at Buie Pottery, collaborative works between Buie and myself.



{Figure 11} Large bear platter for sale at Buie Pottery, a collaborative work between Buie and myself.



*{Figure 12} Bear jar by Navajo potter, Rose Goodman.
http://savvycollector.com/product_images/0002/2912/Goodman_bear_48_one.jpg*



*{Figure 13} Size variation, color, and texture make Rose Goodman's jars unique.
http://savvycollector.com/product_images/0001/3199/Goodman_large_bear_1.jpg*



{Figure 14} Buie starts throwing two pounds of clay for the base of our animal jars.



{Figure 15} After throwing a cylinder form, Buie brings the walls in to close the top of the jar.



{Figure 16} Some of my animals appear more comical than others. {Figure 17}



{Figure 18}



{Figure 19} I make other Critter Jars more natural.



{Figure 20}



{Figure 21} I begin making animals by attaching neck and head to leatherhard closed forms that Buie throws.



{Figure 22} I attach legs to the base, {Figure 23} then the face is given more detail, and the body is given texture.



{Figure 24} Usually, the animals mouths' are open.



{Figure 25} After all its parts are attached, the critter is cut open to create a lid.



{Figure 26} Clusters of our finished projects. {Figure 27}





{Figure 30} Oil burners, coasters, spoonrests with animal attachments, collaborative works between Buie and myself {Figure 31}.



{Figure 32} Bowl with animal figures and slab dish with bear figure, collaborative works between Buie and myself {Figure 33}.



{Figure 34} From the entrance of Buie Pottery. On the right is the open doorway to the back studio where all the pottery items are made. Visitors can watch the artist at work.
http://greatsmokyartsandcraftscommunity.com/_shops/buie_pottery_gatlinburg_peek_inside_photo1of15b.jpg



{Figure 35} Buie Pottery invites its visitors to sit, be comfortable next to the fire, pick up the pottery, and enjoy their visit.
http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_xs8NIFQfbzg/ShMHuWnpJII/AAAAAAAAAUM/frIXbp7xMcU/s320/buie+blog+2.bmp

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