

July 22, 1976



**FOLK TALES** - Jeff Kiser, Donald Baker, Dudley Wilson, and Erle Wright, members of the Roadside Theatre Group perform folk tales at the Festival of American Folklife on the Mall in Washington, D.C. Baker is from Norton. Wright is from Wise.

It is presented by the Smithsonian Institution and the National Park Service and is sponsored by American Airlines and General Foods. The program for the Festival are divided into seven theme areas: Old Ways in the New World, African Diaspora, Native Americans, Children's Area, Family Folklore, Working Americans, and Regional America.

The Roadside Theatre group was invited by Smithsonian Folklorists to be part of the Regional America area. The group includes Donald Baker from Norton, Erle Wright from Wise, and Jeff Kiser and Dudley Wilson from Whitesburg.

Each day they are entertaining crowds of Festival visitors with their animated tale-telling. Much of the group's repertoire of approximately 40 tales is drawn from the old story tellers in the mountain region. By collecting and memorizing these tales, Roadside Theatre has preserved a verbal art which was being replaced rapidly by the television.

## Two county men in theatre group performing folk tales

The Roadside Theatre group from Whitesburg, Ky. are featured performers this week at the Festival of American Folklife in Washington, D.C.

Each summer for the past ten years, the Festival has brought together musicians, craftspeople, dancers, cooks and workers in a celebration of America's diversity. The Festival takes place on the National Mall, the 50 acre park between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument.

The group has been together since 1974, performing in schools, at meetings, festivals, and picnics in the mountain area. At the Festival Roadside Theatre is performing in the Assembly Hall of the Regional America area and has been a favorite with visitors of all ages.

The Festival of American Folklife is scheduled to run 11 a.m. - 5 p.m., Wednesday through Sunday, all summer. All events are free. For more information write: Festival of American Folklife, Division of Performing Arts, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560 -- or call: 202-381-6525.