

[1965, June 23?]

MEMO TO: FREEDOM SCHOOL WORKSHOP PEOPLES:

FROM: MRS. KENNETH F. MONTGOMERY

Several of you have sent me exciting accounts of what you have been doing since we were together at Highlander Center in the spring. This memo will have two parts, first, news flashes which have reached me from several communities, second, a questionnaire for you please to fill out, letting me know about your Freedom School plans for this summer.

ARKANSAS - Nancy Stoller reports five Freedom Centers underway. Has an adequate supply of books, also use of building in four different locations. I was able to ship to her this week, as requested, art supplies and badminton, basket ball, volley ball and soft ball equipment, also rhythm and percussion instruments for the predominately pre-school group at Gould and a slightly different set for the high school students at Helena. Instruments included song flutes, recorders, harmonicas, a guitar and lots of other things to shake, jangle and blow. I wish we had some of Ribback's crazy instruments.

Arkansas plans, which might suggest useful ideas to you, include wooden and linoleum block printing and design; working out some materials to be used with an opaque projector, a very simple instrument with which you can throw pictures from magazines or those people draw or write, on the walls of classrooms or a tent.

Another good idea was for the high school students to make playground equipment, such as see-saws and swings, for the younger students.

ALABAMA - My last word from Alabama was that Lois Chinnery, under parental pressure, landed at the University of Illinois, in Carbondale, where she was hoping to do some volunteer work with the local S.N.C.C. group.

GEORGIA - Randy Battle, when last heard of, was in Atlanta working on Julian Bond's campaign. I guess EVERYBODY knows that Julian was elected this month to the Georgia State Legislature. Wow!

From Sunter county, Liz Henry reports on needs for their Americus project and tells of plans to start a nursery school which will operate the year round. Like everybody, they are busy assembling supplies and equipment.

MISSISSIPPI - Linda, Betty Jean and Janelle have been registering voters like mad and were among those jailed recently but soon bailed out.

In Rosedale, cotton pickers were on strike in large numbers. Some people have lost their homes, others need food and clothing. Some people have sent money for a

strike fund, but much more is needed. Miss Rogers was involved in this brave effort and is suffering because of it. Mrs. Lawrence's last letter indicates that after a rough period, things are looking up. She has found a new place to stay.

I don't know whether the two surplus army tents which I sent to Frank Howard ever arrived. Everybody has been too busy recently to write about that.

Christine Walker was married June 6th, the same day as my son Ruffin's wedding, so I couldn't go, though she was sweet enough to send me an invitation. No, Christine, I have not forgotten your wedding present. It will arrive some day when you least expect it.

From Holly Springs, I was sorry to hear that Beulah Mae has been ill for some time and unable to work. However, she is much better and expects to be rid of the headaches now that she has her glasses.

At West Point where John Buffington conducted his conference for Mississippi students at Mary Holmes Junior College, who should turn up but Arrece Webb, Hazel Lee and Joe Lewis Harris. Hazel was planning to work in Amite County and Arrece hoped to join McNamara for some taping and recording at Tougaloo. West Point is planning freedom centers in eight areas. Here is an interesting quotation from a West Point letter I received last week:

"The heart of the schools, as I see it, will be Joe Stone's Negro History course, and something we might call, for lack of a better name, community research. This means kids finding out about all aspects of Clay County, doing whatever it takes to find out, and writing it down. To find out about "white" religion they will have to try to go to "white" churches. To find out what is going on inside local industries they will have to talk to Negro workers, and try to talk to white managers. One or two kids also go to Atlanta with John to do research. This kind of activity, as well as the Negro History course, will be the source of material to go into newspapers which we are going to encourage each school to put out."

I am hoping to make a little project tour in August, so don't be surprised to see me. Please send notes and comments on what you are doing care of General Delivery, Aspen, Colorado from now until July 25th, after that to my home address.