

# The Transylvania Times



## Film Spotlights 'Guardians Of Our Troubled Waters'



Local film maker David Weintraub and the Center for Cultural Preservation premiered its latest film over this past weekend, “Guardians of Our Troubled Waters.”

One of Weintraub’s past work, “Come Hell or High Water, Remembering the Great Flood of 1916,” also notes his interest in the French Broad River and its history. Although the flood of 1916 was dramatic, it was a regional disaster. In his new film he expands to look at river heroes of the South, with a past, present and future view of river conservation.

The French Broad is one of the three highlighted rivers in the film. Some great footage shot on and around the river and historic pictures around Rosman can be seen throughout the film.

As it should be, Wilma Dykeman, one of the main stars, or river heroes, and author of the book “The French Broad” is celebrated throughout the film. Her book, first published in 1955, is widely accepted as one of the first attempts to shine a light on industrial pollution and the killing of the French Broad River that was taking place when the book was first published. The book begins where the French Broad begins – underneath Devil’s Courthouse. I have had the privilege to visit her childhood home in Ashville and listen to some stories her son Jim has told.

A small spring and pond was on that property. Jim said it was that connection to that spring and pond that bonded Wilma to the French Broad, and I believe it was why it was so important for her to find the beginning of the French Broad at the headwaters of Courthouse Creek. Wilma was an advocate for the river to the end, speaking to groups, lawmakers, etc. One of my most cherished awards is a signed copy of “The French Broad” by Wilma in 1992 for a Friend of the River Award.

Weintraub also parallels two other river battles and its heroes, along with the French Broad: The Pigeon River and, much further south, the Everglades in Florida. One can’t help but note the two strong women leading these causes: Dykeman, in North Carolina, and Marjory Stoneman Douglas, in Florida. With the draining of the Everglades and encroachment to the wetlands before really an understanding of the negative impact, Stoneman took the task to protect the Everglades on her shoulders and made a difference. The same again occurred with the Pigeon River local grassroots efforts that stood tall and made a difference. Weintraub not only tells a good story of past heroes but also brings the audience up to date with what’s being done today and what tomorrow’s challenges and hopes look like. Also, Weintraub captures the perspectives of Native Americans from these areas and their relationship to the streams and rivers that has been part of their culture for many generations.

This film will be coming to the Transylvania County Library in early September. If you want to learn more about this film, more viewing opportunities or other films by Weintraub, visit <http://www.saveculture.org>

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