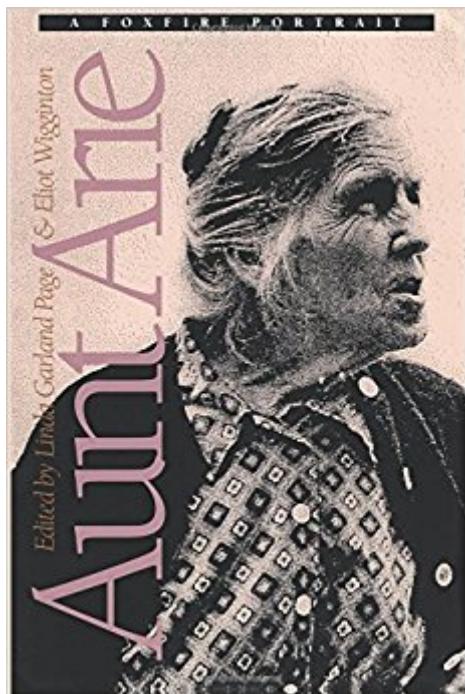


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# Aunt Arie: A Foxfire Portrait



## **Synopsis**

Of all the people documented by the Foxfire students since 1966, none has been more appealing to readers than Arie Carpenter. For all those who have read and cherished the Foxfire books, here is a loving portrait of a fondly remembered friend. This book is not just about Aunt Arie; it is Aunt Arie. In her own words, she discusses everything from planting, harvesting, and cooking to her thoughts about religion and her feelings about living alone. Also included are testimonials from many who knew her and a wealth of photographs.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

The picture we get is of an unworldly woman who nonetheless had world enough and time to live wisely and generously.--"New York Times Book Review"

The picture we get is of an unworldly woman who nonetheless had world enough and time to live wisely and generously.--New York Times Book Review[An] appealing record of a simple but fiercely independent life lived in Southern Appalachia.--Washington Post Book WorldArie Carpenter is a favorite of Foxfire readers, and here is an entire book of her conversations, transcribed from tapes recorded at her home. Although Aunt Arie died in 1978, at the age of 92, her indomitable spirit is captured forever here in the moving text and pictures.--Atlanta Journal-Constitution

book is about a time and place that no longer exists. our world is a poorer place for the loss of all the Aunt Aries who struggled to live under difficult circumstances, yet Aunt Arie neither asks for nor

needs your pity. I have known people like Aunt Arie, who welcomed you any time, insisted you eat with them, found you something to "take home with you" and watched from the front porch until you were out of sight. If you aren't familiar with Appalachian dialect, you may have trouble following her conversations, but to me it was like sitting down listening to a beloved elder. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"

This book is all about an elderly Appalachian lady named Arie. Most of the reviews were done on cassette so the printing of the book includes her "mountain" way of speaking. She speaks of how happy her life was living on the mountain, her love for her husband, how much she enjoyed cooking and what kinds of foods she liked to cook, how lonely it is when your loved ones are gone, how important God should be in your life. Her mother was born and remained sick all of her life but still managed to marry. Once she was old enough Arie took over her jobs of housekeeping, cooking and gardening. For a little kid she worked very hard. This is a FoxFire book so the students and teachers often make comments about Arie or add to the conversation. It was a wonderful book and I'd buy it again or give it as a gift to friends who like to read about old times.

A good read for those who would like to know more about what it is like to live with fortitude in adversity and still keep a good attitude. Aunt Arie was a rare breed nowadays.

Reading this book was like stepping back in time, to my childhood. My greatgrandmother was about the same age as Aunt Arie, and lived a very similar life. I come from a good stock of Appalachian people, living in Sevier and Cock Counties. Her speech pattern, and dialect were true to the way "we used to talk." The explanation from the author as to how they tried to spell out the way of speech was very nearly perfect. I could not put the book down. It took me back to many a day, at my grandmothers house in Sevierville Tn. Listening to the old ladies talk and tell stories of what it was like living in the mountains, when they were young women. How the men folk behaved. If a person was 'good to you' or not, declared his or her character. The medicinal herb/weed lore, the cooking in a fireplace and later on, a woodstove. The water well and the out house. The garden tending, animal managing, church going, activities that filled Aunt Arie's life so full. They could have been sisters. It touched me deep in my mountain girl heart and will be a book that I use for my own grandchildren some day, to relate to them, what it was like to grow up in the mountains, how hard it must have been, the simple pleasures cold spring water, a baked sweet potatoe and a pot of soup beans could bring. The greatful attitude and loving heart of Aunt Arie. She belongs to me now, a

little bit. She has made me stand on the end of the porch and watch my own loved ones as they leave and keep watching until I can no longer hear or see them as my own beloved Grandmother did each and everytime we left her home. Thank you Aunt Arie! Like the students in the FoxFire program - I will not forget you.

The skin and muscle of this book is in its introduction by its editor; it is in its tributes by the people who knew Arie Carpenter; it is also in the photographs within its pages. But its backbone is Arie herself, and that the book's creators wisely chose to let her speak aloud. You can truly hear Aunt Arie with all her laughter and solemn humility. Another editor might have paraphrased her, or created their own narrative peppered with Arie's quotes. Such a format would have diminished the magic that this book glows with, like foxfire. Here is a life exceeding ninety years, told with humor, humility, conviction and at times, fire. What would likely break anyone today she shrugged off and learned from it, reinforced her faith. This is a story of values; of life and love of it; of companionship and family; we could all learn a lot from Arie, things too near forgotten, but just might be far more important than what most of us now value.

I recently purchased 'Aunt Arie: A Foxfire Portrait,' along with two Foxfire guides, to assist me in establishing an Appalachian setting (and characters) for a story I am working on. I've only skimmed the guides at this point, but I haven't put "Aunt Arie" down! I've still got a couple of chapters left to read, but so far the story of this woman's life, as told by her to the folks at Foxfire, has proven indispensable to my research. The editors of the book have attempted, most successfully (they offer an explanation of ways and means at the beginning of the book) I think, to reproduce/preserve Aunt Arie's dialect and colloquialisms, as transcribed from the hundreds of hours of taped interviews. In this book, HOW she says things is just as important as WHAT she's saying...and what does she say? Where do I begin? Besides offering a virtual treasure-trove of information on the subjects of gardening, healing, economy, and food storage and preparation, she also delves into stories of her friends and neighbors, living and dead, speaks often of her life with her beloved husband, and before that her childhood, and all her talk of the people she's known, whether she loved them or could have done without them, is tinged with her faith, her basic love of and respect for humanity, and her simply ideology: you get what you give. If any of the above appeals to you, get this book. You won't regret it. I'm back here b/c I'm about to get one for my grandmother. Just thought I'd leave a more complete review than the ones I'd seen.

I wanted it to be more like Alex Stewart.

Very good book. I have shared it with many friends.

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