

A Silver Creek Paddle,¹ From the John Lane Papers

“Produced by Homer and Margaret King during the 1980s and 1990s, Silver Creek wooden paddles, made from local North Carolina mountain woods, were used by many great kayak and canoe paddlers all over the country. They are flexible, long lasting, tough, and just feel so right in your hand, like you are paddling with a living thing. I bought this one in 1984 and paddled with it for 20 years. I cracked it twice but Homer was able to repair and refinish it. Once I was driving out I-40 to paddle in Colorado and the bungee holding the paddles snapped and they flew off the car. The Silver Creek somehow survived. Another time I somehow got a blade of it lodged under a rock rolling in the middle of a rapid on the Chattooga River in South Carolina and it was ripped out of my hands. It took up an hour but we were able to recover it. I used it doing research trips on the Chattooga for my book in the late 90s and when I went to paddle the Youghageny for National Geographic Books.” -- John Lane, author of *Chattooga: Descending into the Myth of Deliverance River* (2004) and *My Paddle to the Sea* (2011).



The James Sowell Family Collection in Literature, Community and the Natural World contains the personal papers of some of the country's most prominent writers. These writers--Barry Lopez, Rick Bass, Gretel Ehrlich, Pattiann Rogers, among others-- are deeply engaged with questions of land use, the nature of community, the conjunction of scientific and spiritual values, and the fragility of wilderness. In addition to published books, materials available for research purposes include correspondence, drafts of manuscripts, research notebooks, diaries and calendars, and photographs, computer files, and film. The collection also includes unique artifacts, such as the kite Barry Lopez flew over the South Pole, Robert Michael Pyle's salvage of the treasures of a wood rat's nest, and this paddle, from the John Lane Collection.

Diane Warner
The Sowell Family Collection in
Literature, Community and the Natural World

¹ The paddle described is not pictured here.

