

WINTER 2009

NORTH CAROLINA CONVERSATIONS

A PUBLICATION OF THE NORTH CAROLINA HUMANITIES COUNCIL





The cover photo, “Spinner in Vivian Cotton Mills, Cherryville, N.C.,” is from the records of the U.S. National Child Labor Committee and was taken in 1908 by investigative photojournalist Lewis Wickes Hine (1874-1940). Hine’s caption reads: “Been at it 2 years. Where will her good looks be in ten years?” See page 6 for “‘They Are Not Strangers to Us’: Lewis Hine’s Gaston County Photographs, 1908.”

NORTH CAROLINA CONVERSATIONS

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From the Corner of Elm and Friendly

Shelley Crisp, Editor

KIRSTEN HEMMY, the 2008 recipient of the Linda Flowers Literary Award asks,

what survives us, what’s bequeathed

from mother to daughter, what’s passed
across oceans & migrations & border

crossings of the soul & every imaginable
landscape.

And Robert Allen offers a possible response in “Crossroads,” explaining in his words about the historic Lewis Hine photos of Gaston County textile workers that history is not an unbreachable chasm, but one that allows us to reclaim families and neighbors and to know the places they inhabited as the same ones we frequent today.

So when *North Carolina Conversations* reaches you from the office where I overlook Greensboro’s city park with its benches and street corners, where people greet each other on balmy days or hurry past to find shelter from cold February winds, please consider that the words within are not just descriptive articles of events or people across our state. Rather, they represent periods of time in which North Carolinians — individuals, groups, and organizations — have lived with one another and worked with one another. Through their various dreams, aptitudes, and efforts to look within and to reach out, they have provided something unparalleled in the programs, poems, memoirs, and lessons that they have come together to create. As with Kirsten Hemmy and Robert Allen, the programs and participants speak across the pages in ways they hadn’t planned or possibly imagined.

These and the others like them that the Humanities Council has supported and been supported by for thirty-eight years give life, breath, and breadth to the Humanities Council’s most important task — to make public humanities available and accessible throughout our state.

People and the process of possibility — this is what the Humanities Council does. At the core of the Humanities Council is an emphasis on, as Alba Onofrio put it, “being intentional about building collaborations.” Onofrio, the Executive Director of El Centro Hispano in Durham, was one of the twenty-four partners Carolina Circuit Writers brought together to create “Connecting Communities Through Literature,” which you will read about in “From the Field.” The cooperative movement of all parts to the same end — whether intentional or a surprise — is often incredible and always enlightening and revelatory. With many hearts and hands at work, *conversation*, derived from words meaning the “act of living with,” transforms words into action and interlocutors into partners.

As Carol Reinhardt, project director for the Gaston County exhibit “Standing on a Box” reflected on bringing her project to fruition, “Several things become obvious: the importance of partnerships; the importance of flexibility; the importance of volunteers; the importance of being able to tap into the expertise and experience of lots of different people — rather like building a network of mentors.” Or rather, I might add, like living in a state where the importance of ideas and words, the importance of people working together to explore where and how they live, builds a network of citizens for whom the state of living together is as thought-provoking as it is satisfying.

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CALDWELL AWARD

North Carolina Humanities Council Celebrates Walt Wolfram

as the 2008 Caldwell Laureate

ON OCTOBER 23, at 7 p.m. in the Stewart Theatre on the campus of North Carolina State University in Raleigh, pioneering sociolinguist Walt Wolfram accepted one of North Carolina's oldest and most prestigious public humanities honors: the **John Tyler Caldwell Award for the Humanities**. The ceremony, hosted by the North Carolina Humanities Council and free and open to the public, featured the premiere of *The Carolina Brogue*, a documentary film about the "hoi toide" dialects of the Outer Banks and coastal towns of North Carolina. The film was produced by the North Carolina Language and Life Project (NCLLP), which Wolfram directs.

At the ceremony Chancellor James L. Oblinger welcomed guests to NSCU, and William C. Friday, former President of the University of North Carolina system, long-time host of WUNC public TV's *North Carolina People*, and himself a Caldwell Laureate, delivered the annual Caldwell Lecture in the Humanities.

Wolfram is the William C. Friday Distinguished University Professor of English Linguistics at North Carolina State University, where he is the executive producer of the NCLLP. He holds teaching appointments at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University. Wolfram is former president of the Linguistic Society of America and the American Dialect Society. He is the recipient of the NCSU Alumni Association's Distinguished Research Award, the Distinguished Graduate Professorship Award, and the Association Extension and

Engagement Award, as well as the Holladay Medal for distinguished career service. Wolfram received an M.A. and Ph.D. in Linguistics at Hartford Seminary Foundation.

The Caldwell Award honors Wolfram's extensive research in the field of dialects in the U.S., with particular emphasis on the speech patterns of North Carolinians. Wolfram has authored more than twenty books, written numerous scholarly articles, and served as executive producer of documentary films, most recently *The Queen Family* and *The Carolina Brogue*. His many publications include *Fine in the World: Lumbee Language in Time and Place*; *Hoi Toide on the Outer Banks*; *The Development of African American English*; and *Dialects in Schools and Communities*.

As an early consultant for the producers of *Sesame Street* and the *Electric Company*, Wolfram introduced millions of children to America's rich linguistic diversity, and his ground-breaking community study of African American Vernacular English in Detroit in 1969 is still a benchmark in the field of linguistics. Wolfram's work with schools and educators, from his production of dialect curricula to documentary films and museum exhibits, ensures a practical application of his scholarship on dialect awareness, language adaptation, and ethnic speech patterns.

"Wolfram is a giant among sociolinguists, perhaps one of five 'big' names in the field," says Michael Aceto, Associate Professor of English at East Carolina University.

John Rickford, Stanford University Professor of Linguistics, describes Wolfram as the “complete linguist, an exceptional example of how to combine theory and application, research and teaching, and service.... He has contributed at the highest levels to the theoretical, descriptive, and historical debates of our field, but he has also been passionate about sharing linguistic knowledge with the public, through popular books, films, workshops and exhibitions. And he has endeavored to use his knowledge to increase the public good, whether it be in public education or in speech pathology.”

Born of German immigrants, Wolfram grew up speaking German and English in a working-class neighborhood of Philadelphia. In a WUNC interview with Frank Stasio, he recalled, “This was right after World War II. The last thing in the world I wanted to do was be associated with the German language.” Wolfram, who “didn’t feel German and didn’t feel American,” adopted the neighborhood dialect — what he calls the “blue-collar speech” of North Philadelphia, which itself was stigmatized by children of privileged families. Wolfram learned early the lessons he teaches now: “Ultimately, while it’s about language at one level, it’s never about language. It’s about what language symbolizes beyond language.”

Wolfram calls himself a “dialect nomad.” He came to North Carolina in 1992 and will tell you that making his home here, a place of rare and rich linguistic variation, was “like dying and going to dialect heaven.”

CALDWELL LAUREATES

THE JOHN TYLER CALDWELL AWARD FOR THE HUMANITIES, the Council’s highest honor, has been presented annually since its inauguration in 1990. Named for its first recipient, the late Dr. John Tyler Caldwell, former chancellor of North Carolina State University from 1959–1975 and a founding member of the Council, the award pays tribute to individuals whose life and work illuminate one or more of the multiple dimensions of human life where the humanities come into play: civic, personal, intellectual, and moral.

| | |
|---|--|
| 1990 - John Tyler Caldwell [†] | 2000 - Thomas J. Lassiter, Jr. [†] |
| 1991 - John Hope Franklin | 2001 - Houston Gwynne (H.G.) Jones |
| 1992 - Doris Waugh Betts | 2002 - Reynolds Price |
| 1993 - Samuel Talmadge Ragan [†] | 2003 - Wilma Dykeman [†] & Hugh Morton [†] |
| 1994 - Anne Firor Scott | 2004 - Mary Duke Biddle Trent Semans |
| 1995 - John Marsden Ehle | 2005 - Louis D. Rubin, Jr. |
| 1996 - William W. Finlator [†] | 2006 - Benjamin Eagles Fountain, Jr. |
| 1997 - Charles Bishop Kuralt [†] | 2007 - Emily Herring Wilson |
| 1998 - Dorothy Spruill Redford | 2008 - Walt Wolfram |
| 1999 - William C. Friday | |

[†]deceased



(L to R) William C. Friday, Walt Wolfram, James L. Oblinger.

2008 Caldwell Award Acceptance Speech

Walt Wolfram, William C. Friday Distinguished University Professor, North Carolina State University

I CAN'T THINK OF a person who personifies the humanities of this great state more than Bill Friday. Accordingly, it is sufficient honor on this occasion to share the stage with him. Bill Friday and I have a very special relationship that goes back to our first meeting in 1992. At that meeting, I brought him some material that might give him an idea of my research and writing. As I was handing him one of my books, the front cover flipped open and I noticed an inscription that started out, "Dear Sweetie, you can't imagine how much you have been a part of everything I have ever done...." I suddenly realized that I had inadvertently handed him the wrong book, the one I had inscribed to Marge, my soulmate and wife now for 45 years. But Bill and I bonded at that initial meeting, as he does with everyone he meets in his travels throughout the state. Bill Friday represents the best in the humanities and in interpersonal relations, and he is my role model for making everyone feel comfortable

and significant — from federal dignitaries in Washington, DC, to day farmers in Washington, North Carolina.

When Dr. Shelley Crisp called me early in the summer, she posed a question, "Would you be willing to accept the Humanities Caldwell Award?" As I sociolinguist, I found the illocutionary force of the question unsettling, since the question implies the option of rejecting the award. Was this a trick question? But her question did give me pause. Do I deserve to be the recipient of this award? I must say, I cannot honestly accept the award for anything I have done personally. But I can graciously and humbly accept it as the community organizer of a highly talented team that has been documenting, describing, and preserving the language traditions of the Old North State.

Our [North Carolina Language and Life Project] team starts with talented student fieldworkers who have interviewed and collected the stories of 2,000 North Carolinians from all walks of life, literally from Murphy to Manteo. Some of my first student researchers, now established scholars in their own right, have come back tonight to celebrate their accomplishments. Thanks, students, for making our research happen on the ground level. There are also videographers, designers, archivists, and educators who have helped translate our research into a format for public presentation. Neal Hutcheson, our videographer, is the best darned

documentary producer in the state, and he just keeps producing amazing documentaries about North Carolina language and life. No other state or university in the country does that. And of course you'll see his latest feature tonight, *The Carolina Brogue*. Charlotte Vaughn has designed public presentations that range from museum exhibitions to educational materials, and Tyler Kendall, our brilliant programmer, has developed software for archiving and analyzing dialect data that has become an international model. Thanks to our great libraries at NC State and to Susan Nutter for making such an innovative venture in archiving and analysis happen on a practical level. My colleague, Jeff Reaser, once my student and fast becoming my superior, works with me to put curricular materials about language diversity into the hands of 8th grade students in North Carolina. Our goal is simple: someday, in my lifetime — that is, the near future — every student in North Carolina should study about the rich language tradition of this great state as a part of learning about North Carolina's history and culture. That just makes sense. And students will have such fun doing it because language differences are so engaging and informative of culture, society, and history.

As a sociolinguist who looks at the symbolic meaning of language variation, I cannot help but see the representative dimensions of this occasion. First, there is the representation of the humanities at North Carolina State University, where its reputation in the STEM disciplines — science, technology, engineering, and math — largely guides its educational mission. But the roots of the STEM



Chuck Caldwell (L) and Andy Caldwell (R), sons of the first Caldwell Laureate, John Tyler Caldwell, congratulate Walt Wolfram.

...how well we succeed in redirecting our energies toward civility in public life, moral decency, and integrity in human relations will measure the legacy of our generation. And all of this rests upon our ability to communicate with each other sufficiently, to understand, appreciate, and be involved with other people. That is why the pioneering work of professor Walt Wolfram is so important and, therefore, worthy of the high honor we pay him this evening.

From William C. Friday's "2008 Caldwell Lecture in the Humanities."

The lecture will be printed in its entirety in the Summer 2009 issue of *North Carolina Conversations*.

disciplines must be grounded in the humanities. What is science without the humanities to situate it in society? Linguistics is often said to be the most scientific of the humanities and the most humanities-oriented of the sciences, an ideal token of the synergistic life of the humanities and the sciences. They are inseparable and belong together in a comprehensive university. They also belong together in life.

Second, this award ratifies the principle of linguistic gratuity, where researchers give back to the communities that fuel their research programs. If knowledge is worth having, then it is worth sharing. I hope that we have demonstrated that research and engagement can be integrated in scholarly activity. Thanks to the North Carolina Humanities Council for recognizing that research and engagement are not autonomous programs with disparate agendas. And for having the vision to include language as integral to the humanities' mission. For the rest of the United States, the North Carolina Humanities Council is a leader and a pioneer in the effort to promote the awareness of language differences as integral to the humanities' mission.

Finally, this award is a verification of the transformative potential of public

education in the humanities. When I started studying dialects in the 1960s, language diversity in North Carolina and around the country was a social stigma — a reflection of backwoods culture and linguistic subordination. Language differences were little more than an obstacle to be overcome in moving towards the homogenizing "mainstream" society. But attitudes are changing and will continue to change as we learn to appreciate the central role of language in cultural heritage and historical continuity, not just in social exclusion. As one writer put it, "I am my language" — whether it is Outer Banks English, Appalachian English, Lumbee English, African American English, Latino English, the Cherokee language, Spanish, or another language used in North Carolina. I hope that our celebration of language diversity through the John Tyler Caldwell Laureate helps transform the image of language differences in North Carolina into a positive reflection of a state richly endowed with language and dialect traditions. Let the language traditions of the Tar Heel State be celebrated, along with our great writers, our great performing artists, our great scientists, our great teachers, and our great personalities. If our program has made just a little difference in



1999 Caldwell Laureate William C. Friday (R) bestows the 2008 Caldwell Award on Walt Wolfram (L).

how the residents of this great state view its language heritage, then I am satisfied. Thank you, North Carolina Humanities Council and especially Shelley Crisp, Jenn McCollum, and Lynn Ennis, the Caldwell family who inspired the award to begin with, and of course my dear friend Lucinda MacKethan from North Carolina State University, who has contributed so much to the humanities in North Carolina. All of these folks put much effort, detail, and affection into this event to make it so special. Thanks also to all of the esteemed past recipients of this award and to the citizens of North Carolina who have come to celebrate language tonight.

CROSSROADS

“They Are Not Strangers to Us”: Lewis Hine’s Gaston County Photographs, 1908

Robert C. Allen

WHETHER THEY were photographed in 1908 or 2008, the subjects of documentary photographs usually remain strangers to the viewer. The separation by time, space, place, and history between the people who were photographed and those who look at them as unrelated subjects often creates a chasm that is too far to leap over. This is true for most people who see the remarkable photographs of child textile laborers taken by documentarian Lewis Hine. Hine’s images are well-known, and they are accessible through museum exhibits, Internet sites, and library archives. Probably millions of people have seen them — and experience them as images of *other* people from some *other* place in time.

But this is not the case for all. For those living in Gaston County today, Hine’s 1908 photographs bring family home. The images in these photographs are of places they know, of places now gone that their parents and grandparents knew. For some, the images are quite literally of parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, and other relatives and their neighbors, friends, and co-workers. The specific places they portray also are familiar. They are the Loray Mill, Trenton Mill, Ozark Mill, Melville Manufacturing Company in Cherryville, the High Shoals Mill, and the villages that surround them. Most of those mills are gone now, and some of us know of them only through the memories of relatives. We know the people and scenes in these photos. They are not strangers to us. I know because I am from this place.

It was only a few years ago when I discovered that the families of two of the young men Hine photographed in Gastonia a hundred years ago — Eugene Bell and John Poindexter — lived a few doors down from my paternal grandfather William Hoyle Allen in the Loray Mill Village.

Although neither my parents nor grandparents were photographed by Hine, I did begin to wonder about the descendants of those pictured in the photos. What happened to Eugene and John and the other young people who were photographed by Hine in Gastonia? Did their grandchildren and great-grandchildren have any idea that their relatives had been memorialized in this way?

Lucky contacts, happy accidents, and the help of other people also fascinated by these images and the people’s lives they represent — especially Joe Depriest of the *Charlotte Observer* and Joe Manning, an intrepid researcher of Hine subjects and their families — led to my being able to correspond and talk with the families of sixteen of the young people Hine photographed in Gastonia.

It was a wonderful experience hearing from family members from Goldsboro to California and talking with them about the lives of parents, grandparents, great-grandparents. I also heard from the children and grandchildren of other cotton mill workers who hoped that someone might have preserved their images.

Photographs are important for so many different reasons: they are personal; they offer a glimpse of someone’s sense of the world through both the subject and framing



of the picture; they are historical; they are artistic. They restore voices and faces of the people whose hard work, pride, resilience, triumphs, and tragedies made the world we live in today. In so doing, they reveal one of the most important connections of these Hine photographs: many people will get to see themselves as history-makers during the last century and know for certain those observing the photos are stakeholders in this county today.

Lewis Hine and Child Labor in Gaston County

In 1908, Lewis Hine worked as staff photographer for the National Child Labor Committee (NCLC). Founded in 1904 and based in New York, it was one of the first nonprofit organizations in the United States. NCLC



In 1908 Eugene Bell had worked for nearly two years as a sweeper at the Loray Mill in Gastonia. Pictured here are Bell's granddaughter, Barbara Groves Yarbrough, and his mother, Nita Bell Groves, who visited the Hine exhibit in 2008. Photo on the right by Barry Wood.

Gaston County: Before, During, and After

Harlan Joel Gradin

IN THE FALL of 2008, the North Carolina Humanities Council funded in part “Standing on a Box: Lewis Hine’s National Child Labor Committee Photography in Gaston County, 1908.” This multi-part project explored Greater Gaston’s textile heritage and its impact on the community’s present and future. “Standing on a Box,” directed by Carol Reinhardt of the Gaston County Public Library, used photographs taken in 1908 by Lewis Hine, a sociologist, reformer, and National Child Labor Committee photojournalist, to explore child labor conditions in textile mills at the turn of the nineteenth century.

Interpreting textile history is very complex and often contentious.

While Hine had one particular focus, many other factors also influence historical analysis. These include race, gender, power, culture, economics, the production process, working conditions, the nature of family labor in the move from farm to factory, and labor and union issues.

“Standing on a Box” featured a photographic exhibition with interpretive text; reflections by descendants of mill workers; a public concert featuring string band music of the era; an Internet component open to the community; and a community book-read of Elizabeth Winthrop’s *Counting on Grace*, the story of a 12-year-old millworker. The project included presentations on textile history by

scholars Roxanne Newton (Mitchell Community College), James Leloudis (UNC Chapel Hill), David Goldfield (UNC Charlotte), Tom Hanchett (Levine Museum of the New South), and Robert C. Allen (UNC Chapel Hill).

For the people of Gaston County, history is close and intimate. While studying Hine’s photos of 1908, Allen, a native Gastonian, was able to trace the descendants of several individuals pictured in Hine’s Gaston County photographs. “‘They Are Not Strangers to Us:’ Lewis Hine’s Gaston County Photographs, 1908” is an adaptation of Allen’s keynote address for the project “Standing on a Box.”



By 1908 Rush Merrill, doffer, had worked for three years in the Loray Mill. Rush's son John explains the Merrill family history to a visitor at "Standing on a Box."

was part of a larger reform effort at the turn of the twentieth century known as the Progressive Movement. Reform groups focused on a wide range of social ills plaguing ordinary Americans, many brought about by the industrialization of the country's economic base during the last decades of the nineteenth century. Reformers at local and national levels advocated strong changes in economics, politics, health, social issues, and moral attitudes and behaviors.

Among the pressing injustices, child labor seemed particularly cruel. According to the 1900 census, over two million children toiled in factories and mills across the United States. Among the industries for which child labor was most prevalent were textile mills in the South. Indeed, between 1880 and 1910, one quarter of the textile labor force was below the age of sixteen.

The first law in North Carolina regulating child labor had been passed

in 1903, only five years before the census was taken. Under the law, children could legally begin work at age thirteen and at twelve "in an apprenticeship capacity." The age limit for night work was fourteen.

However, as Hine learned, these laws were not regularly enforced. They in fact were blatantly ignored and routinely violated. The NCLC planned to use Hine's photographs of child laborers in protest. His notes on the photographs were designed to shock middle-class Americans into recognizing the extent and consequences of industrial child labor. By raising awareness of the evils of the problem, NCLC sought to lobby state governments to strengthen laws relating to the employment of children and young adults.

From Hine's notes as well as from the posters, articles, and brochures his photographs illustrated, we can see the outlines of the NCLC's arguments about the deleterious effects of industrial child labor — upon society and upon the children themselves. Child labor deprived children of the opportunity for an education and condemned them to a life of unskilled, menial labor. Child labor depressed wages for adult workers, making it difficult if not impossible for a family to survive without multiple family members, including children, working. Child labor encouraged parents to collude with employers in employing under-aged workers, even by the lax age requirements set by some state laws. Child laborers performed work that was not only tedious but in some cases physically dangerous. The child laborer's long hours of toil in factories, mills, and mines had long-term physical effects.

"We [in this room and community] are taking pride in our history, acknowledging its tough times, understanding its injustices, honoring the hard work of those whose labor and vision brought us here."

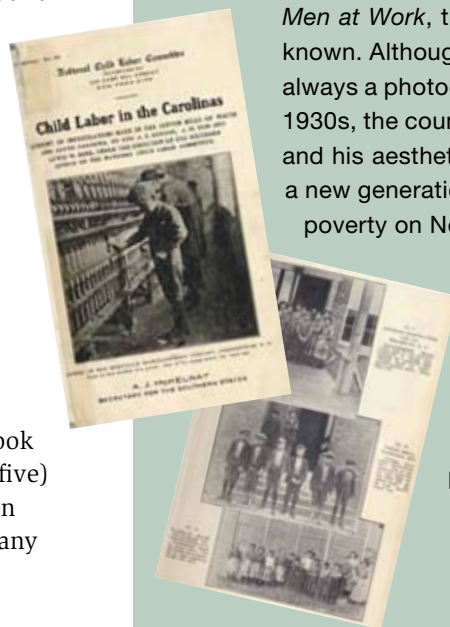
—Tom Hanchett, Levine Museum of the New South

The Photographs and Gaston County

In the last decades of the nineteenth century, thousands of Southerners from farms and the western mountains sought to escape the penury and endless indebtedness that resulted in the post-emancipation economy anchored in the crop lien system. Both white and African Americans left their homes; many of the white North Carolinians settled in the Piedmont to work in the area's cotton mills. In 1880, the Piedmont had 49 textile mills; by 1900, there were 177. When it was incorporated in 1877, only 236 residents lived in Gastonia. By the time Hine arrived in 1908, more than 5,000 people lived there. They worked in places such as the Loray Mill, which was one of the largest mills in the South. Surrounding towns such as Cherryville, Mount Holly, Bessemer City, and High Shoals sprang up around mills, and by the time Hine visited it, Gaston County was well on its way to becoming the combed cotton capital of the United States. Ten years after his visit, Gaston County would boast more mills than any other in the country.

When Hine reached Gastonia around the sixth of November 1908, he had been on the road photographing working children for several months.

Over the next three months, Hine would set up his camera in ten towns in North Carolina — from Whitnel in the west to Laurinburg in the east — and five towns in South Carolina — from Clinton to Dillon. In all he would take some 236 photos in and around nineteen mills. He took more photos in Gastonia (thirty-five) than any other town, and more in Gaston County (fifty-nine) than any other county.



LEWIS HINE

ROBERT C. ALLEN

LEWIS WICKES HINE, born in 1874 in Oshkosh, WI, studied sociology at the University of Chicago before moving to New York City, where in 1905 he graduated from New York University with a master's degree in education. While a teacher at the experimental Ethical Culture School, Hine became interested in photography as a pedagogic, or, as he called it, "interpretative," tool. He took his students and the newly invented Graflex camera to Ellis Island to document the thousands of immigrants arriving there.



Photo courtesy of the Hine Collection, Albin O. Kuhn Library and Gallery, Univ. of Maryland.

The founder of the Ethical Culture School, Felix Adler, also headed a reform organization, the National Child Labor Committee, and in 1907 he asked Hine to become the NCLC's staff photographer. For nearly a decade, Hine traveled widely to photograph children in factories and fields, canneries and mines, moving south to record the working conditions associated with increasing industrialization in North Carolina textile mills, sometimes posing as a fire inspector to gain access to child laborers. His photographs were designed "to exert the force to right the wrongs."

At the end of World War I, the Red Cross employed Hine to travel to Europe to expose the plight of refugees, particularly in the Balkans. In the 1920s and 30s, Hine sought out opportunities to celebrate the industrial worker and the dignity of honest physical labor, resulting in *Men at Work*, the book of photographs by which he is most popularly known. Although Hine won several awards for his photographs, he was always a photographer for hire and struggled to make ends meet. In the 1930s, the country was in the Great Depression, Hine was in his sixties, and his aesthetic of documentary photography was being replaced by a new generation of New Deal documentary photographers. He died in poverty on November 3, 1940.

Over 5,000 of Hine's NCLC photographs and 350 glass negatives are housed in the Library of Congress's Prints and Photographs Division. To view the digitized collection, visit http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/coll/207_hine.html. Other large Hine collections are held at the George Eastman House and the Albin O. Kuhn Library & Gallery.

Approximately 200 Gaston County children and young people had their photographs taken by Hine over the five days he spent here in November 1908. The photographer names twenty-nine of the children, for two of whom he offers only first names, Lacy and Savannah. It was unlikely these children had ever seen a camera before, much less been photographed. None of them, so far as I know, ever saw their photos.

At 5' 4", not much taller than the oldest child laborer, Hine always wore a hat, suit, coat, dress shirt, and tie. He was thirty-four years old when he came to Gaston County — around the same age as the parents of many of the children he photographed. Hine was the same age as Eugene Bell's mother and four years younger than his father. Hine was two years younger than both Rush Merrill's father, Luther, and Minnie and Mattie Carpenter's mother, Mary.

We can only imagine what Gastonians would have made of Hine. As soon as he opened his mouth to engage them in conversation, he revealed that, as my mother used to say, he wasn't from around here. His Midwestern accent would have instantly marked him as a "Yankee." In 1908 the vast majority of North Carolinians had been born in the state, and those who were not native had crossed the border from an adjacent Southern state.

What would Hine have said to the young millworkers? How would he have represented himself and his reason for wanting to take their pictures? Would he have explained why he wanted to know how old they were and how long they had been working? Why did he want their names?

"One of the smallest boys" (Hine).



Why "Standing on a Box"?

One descendant of a mill worker wrote to me, "My grandfather...was nine years old, worked a twelve-hour shift at Loray...I remember him stating that...he had to stand on a box to reach the spinning frame to do work." Another wrote, "I cannot remember the name of the mill where they worked, but my mom was very young. I remember the story that she had to stand on a stool to reach the loom at which she worked."

—Robert C. Allen



He asked the children of the cotton mills about aspects of their work lives most directly relevant to the NCLC's agenda for public exposure and reform: their age, how long they had worked in the mill, how many hours a day and a week, how much they earned, what kind of work they did, whether or not they went to school. Sometimes he wrote down their responses in their own words — or as he heard and understood them.

In some cases, but not all, he wrote down their names and addresses. For whatever reason, Hine more often noted the names of his Gastonia subjects than those in other towns.



"Lincolnton, N.C. Spinner. A moments [sic] glimpse of the outer world. Said she was 10 years old. Been working over a year" (Hine).



Child laborers at Loray Mill. Hine notes that two smaller children "appeared at the door and vanished back immediately" on seeing him.

He also wrote down his observations: how large or small his subjects seemed for their age, their apparent state of health, working conditions in the mill, the attitude of the overseer or superintendent to his request to take pictures of their workers.

The photographs Hine took in the Carolina cotton mills began to be published within months of his taking them. They appeared as illustrations in magazine articles and on posters, which the NCLC displayed at conferences, legislative hearings, and other gatherings in the early 1910s.

Four of the Gaston County photos appeared in a 1909 NCLC brochure entitled “Child Labor in the Carolinas,” written by Alexander J. McKelway. A Presbyterian minister and former editor of the Charlotte-based *Presbyterian Standard*, McKelway had lobbied in 1903 for the passage of the North Carolina child labor law. The following year he went to work full-time for the NCLC’s Southern committee, focusing on child labor in the textile industry, by then the South’s chief manufacturing industry.

What impact did these photos have on child labor laws? That is, of course, very difficult to assess, but in calling attention to cruelty of child labor and to the weak enforcement of child labor laws in many states, particularly in the South, Hine’s work on behalf of the NCLC has certainly been credited with helping build support for legislative action. North Carolina’s child labor law was strengthened somewhat in 1910. The first federal child labor law was passed in 1916 (with McKelway leading an intense lobbying effort), but a Constitutional challenge to the law was upheld in 1918. It would take until 1938 before a law banning the sale of products manufactured by



Spinner in Whitnel Mill. Hine’s note to this photograph reads, “When asked how old, she hesitated, then said, ‘I don’t remember.’ Then confidentially, ‘I’m not old enough to work, but I do so just the same.’”



Doffers in Cherryville.

child labor would be passed. By that time, however, a combination of technological changes in textile manufacturing and an increase in the age at which a young person could drop out of school had largely ended the era of child labor in the cotton mills of Gaston County.

Doffer in Mellville Mill. "Said he had been working for two years. Many of them below age" (Hine).



About the Author

ROBERT C. ALLEN is the James Logan Godfrey Professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, with appointments in the Departments of American Studies, History, and Communications. His research has focused on the history of American popular entertainment and popular culture. Allen's books include *Film History: Theory and Practice* (1985), *Horrible Prettiness: Burlesque and American Culture* (1992), and *To Be Continued: Soap Operas Around the World* (1995). While studying Lewis Hine's Gaston County's National Child

Labor Committee photos of 1908, Allen identified millworker John Poindexter, pictured here, as a boy who grew up on the same block as his paternal grandfather.



Photo by
Barry Wood.



John Poindexter, Loray Mill, 1912.

Claiming the Past: Textile History of Gaston County

Harlan Joel Gradin

THE PROJECT “STANDING ON A BOX” exemplifies how public humanities can plant seeds of local community development — in this case, a deepening awareness of the connection between the personal and communal, an understanding that lives are intertwined and depend on each other. Success in any cultural and economic endeavor requires nurturing this connection.

Driven by project director Carol Reinhardt’s passion, energy, and organizing brilliance, “Standing on a Box” drew over 2,100 participants. It energized and gave substance to a collaboration of organizations

throughout Gaston County. Major partners included the Gaston County Public Library, the Gaston County Museum of Art and History, the Gaston County Historic Preservation Committee, Friends of Gaston County Public Library, the Gaston Arts Council, Preservation North Carolina, the *Gaston Gazette*, county schools, local churches, and the Levine Museum of the New South.

The three-month project included an exhibition of photographs by social documentarian Lewis Hine; presentations by scholars of textile history; reflections by relatives on early twentieth-century textile workers;

string band performances of era-specific work songs; weekly news profiles of Gastonians who spent their childhoods in mill villages; radio spots with project leaders; an interactive Internet component open to the community; and a book-read of over 5,000 Gastonians, young and old. The Lewis Hine photographs will travel to the Levine Museum of the New South in Charlotte and will finally be installed in the former Loray Mill.

Development of this kind happens when citizens have the opportunity to assert that their lives are important. They matter to how history happens; they are not incidental to how history unfolds. The extent to which this deepening awareness can be realized and nurtured is rooted in front-end planning, inclusive participation at all levels of implementation, a diversity of opportunities provided by programs, and the expansiveness of publicity that educates about the project’s content.

While “Standing on a Box” stemmed from historian and Gaston County native Dr. Robert C. Allen’s desire to identify the people in Hine’s photographs and trace them to their descendants and neighbors, it was nurtured to full growth by Reinhardt and her colleagues. The public conversation about Gaston County’s complex textile history actually began, however, in 2005, when the North Carolina Humanities Council funded another community project, “History Happened Here,” spearheaded by Lucy Penegar

Gaston County native Bobby Brown reflects on growing up in “mill hills,” or mill villages, in the *Gaston Gazette*.

The Gaston Gazette | www.gastongazette.com

Hometown

Monday, September 28, 2008

4A

BELMONT ABBEY HOMECOMING
Page 7A: Abbey Spirit: Catch It All Over Again. Homecoming has more than a sporting chance of being the greatest ever.

Our Textile History

EVERY MONDAY SERIES
NEXT WEEK: SMYRE VILLAGE

The Mill and the Village

BELMONT
1930s, 40s, 50s
Special to The Gazette

By Bobby Brown
Special to The Gazette

THE MEMORIES

The Village:

The mill village was made up of homes built by the company for the workers and their families. Most were built between 1900 and 1920. Almost every mill had a “Village” and you were “raised up” on the “Majestic,” where I was born or raised on the Crescent, Climax, National, etc.

Belmont had more than 20 textile mills and some 15 with mill villages consisting of 30 to 50 homes. Most were referred to affectionately as “Mill Hills.”

Each village was named after the mill company that built them. They were all pretty much alike in style. That is clapham siding, three-, four- or five-room houses, some larger — two stories, built on pillars, beaded wallboard on the inside with 10-foot ceilings. They had large porches; most toilets were on the back porch, no bathtubs and no hot running water.

The walls, floors and ceilings were not insulated and the heat source was a “coal fireplace, coal burning heaters called “laundry heaters,” or “warm roomings.”

The rooms were dirty and cold in the winter compared to today’s standards, and you sat close to the heater or fireplace during the winter.

Most folks heated only the kitchen and

“sitting room” in the winter. The fires were coal and never burned all night. It was necessary to build a new fire each morning to heat the rooms. Each room was lighted with a single bulb hanging from the ceiling with a pull-chain socket. In the bedrooms, usually a string attached to the pull chain with the other end attached to the iron bed

head rail so that it could be turned on in the night without feeling about toward the ceiling in the middle of the room.

The bedrooms were never heated. As your family grew and you were a good employee, you could manage to get a larger house on the village. There was competition for workers and moving from one vil-

lage to another for a “five cents on the hour wage increase” was sometimes a frequent thing.

Almost everyone had an oil stove in the kitchen. Some of our neighbors had wood stoves for cooking.

See Mill/ Page 5A ▶▶

To share your memories, call Interactive Editor Kevin Ellis at 704-869-1823 or e-mail him at kellis@gastongazette.com. The Gazette is at 1893 Remount Road, Gastonia.

Story and photos submitted by Bobby Brown of Old Forge Drive, Gastonia. He is the Belmont Historical Society Inc. president.

Brown was born on the Majestic Mill Village in Belmont. He graduated from Belmont High School in 1957 and graduated from Appalachian State,

class of 1961. He married his high school sweetheart, Gail Yount. The couple returned to Belmont to teach school. Brown also coached at

Belmont High. They moved to Gastonia in 1969 and have retained close ties with the Belmont community over the years.

THE GAZETTE IS EXPLORING GASTON COUNTY’S RICH TEXTILE HISTORY THROUGH WORDS, PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS ONLINE AT GASTONGAZETTE.COM/TEXTILES.



Photo by Laurel Hicks.

ON MAKING PROJECTS MATTER

“STANDING ON A BOX” project director Carol Reinhardt gives this advice for planning and executing public humanities programming that results in real community development: “Choose a project topic of local interest; partner with appropriate institutions as cosponsors; involve local media early and often; network extensively to plan and promote project activities through a variety of venues and outlets.”

Reinhardt also believes that “being able to tap into the expertise and experience of lots of different people — rather like building a network of mentors” is an important part of a successful public humanities program. “Every project director,” she explains, “needs a network of mentors/advisors, even if those persons aren’t directly connected to the project.”



of the Gaston County Historical Preservation Commission.

“History Happened Here” commemorated the 75th anniversary of the contentious Loray Mill strike of 1929. The project gathered together former mill workers and management, church leaders and labor organizers, and their discussions helped the community examine one of the county’s most significant historical events, one that has haunted residents since the strike occurred. Penegar understood that such revelatory and healing discussions were necessary for her community to determine what to do with the deserted but still standing Loray Mill. Plans now are for the

mill to be refurbished. It is expected to include a charter high school, apartments, local businesses, a police office, postal branch, and permanent displays of the mill’s history.

In 2005, reflecting on the events associated with “History Happened Here,” historian James Leloudis wondered, “In what ways will the conversations begun...continue to reverberate in Gastonia? Will they be sustained? How? By whom? And what consequences will they have?” It will be interesting, he observed, to return a year later to see if local residents were still debating their history and grappling with its complex past.

“Standing on a Box” suggests that this discussion is ongoing, even three years after “History Happened Here.” In her project diary, Reinhardt wrote that “Standing on a Box” has “embraced hundreds of people — old and young...who came together...to examine and celebrate our local textile/mill village history.... For the first time in the forty-plus years I’ve lived in the Piedmont of North Carolina, I’ve heard people talk with pride about family roots in the textile culture, share family stories in the *Gaston Gazette*, and claim their own past.”

BE A PART OF THE STORY
Support the North Carolina Humanities Council

ROAD SCHOLARS

The Alchemy of Speaking and Listening

Roxanne Newton



The daughter and granddaughter of mill workers, Roxanne Newton grew up in a small NC textile town. Currently she is director of the Humanities and Fine Arts Division at Mitchell Community College in Statesville where she teaches English, women's studies, and humanities courses. The recipient of a number of academic and teaching awards, Newton is the author of *Women Workers on Strike: Narratives of Southern Women Unionists* (2006).

AT ITS BEST, a special kind of alchemy occurs between a Road Scholar and her audience, and new elements are formed that did not previously exist. By the time I arrive for a talk, I am eager to meet the audience because *the people and their stories* are integral to the process. As a North Carolina native, I enjoy traveling across the state, visiting communities not only to share my knowledge of and passion for labor history, women's history, and the narratives of working men and women, but also to hear *other people's stories*, to learn about *their hopes*, and to understand *their visions* for their community.

In a recent Road Scholars talk about North Carolina's textile mill history, audience members learned how race was a factor in the type and availability of jobs and in the unionization effort during the twentieth century. The alchemy was evident in a thoughtful and spirited dialogue between North Carolina natives and recent residents who hail from more industrial areas of the country. Several people shared their stories of life in the mills when African Americans first were given access to production jobs in the mid-1960s, and native Northerners talked of their experiences in "closed shops" with unions that promoted racial

integration and equality in employment. People spoke of plants closing and the globalization of textile jobs in recent decades, amazed to learn that their experiences parallel those of northern workers of the late nineteenth century when those jobs moved to the South. Several union members gave me their addresses so that I could learn about their experiences. Ultimately, people eagerly discussed plant reunions and the need to preserve their histories and their stories. Thus the alchemy of learning about the past, reflecting on the present, and looking to the future resulted in transformations, giving rise to new elements of community.

In addition to giving talks in communities across North Carolina, Road Scholars are often asked to assist groups who are planning North Carolina Humanities Council grant projects. Such was the case when I was invited in 2007 to serve as a consulting scholar for "Standing on a Box: Lewis Hine's National Child Labor Committee Photography, 1908." Carol Reinhardt of the Gaston Public Library asked me to offer insights into the cultural history of textiles and to suggest ways to attract, represent, and give voice to different populations and audiences in the community.



In order to put the Lewis Hine photographs into context in textile history and Gaston County's seminal role in that history, I organized and moderated a panel of noted scholars in the field. These scholars shared their expertise about the textile industry from its beginnings, from the early twentieth century, and from the recent past and present in Gaston County and the region. Their enthusiastic audience was inspired to tell their own stories and relate their families' experiences in the textile industry in Gaston County.

Men and women shared stories of working in the Loray Mill and life in the villages, echoing childhood experiences that Lewis Hine photographed. Several women spoke of growing up on local dairy farms that served the mill families, adding their own families' contributions as new elements to the continuing story. An undergraduate history major asked me for information about women in textiles from the recent past, and we talked at length about options for collecting information and narratives. It was a wonderful alchemy of audience, scholar, and knowledge; people stayed late after the program ended, building community through shared experiences and diverse narratives.



Picturing America

AMERICA'S HISTORY THROUGH OUR NATION'S ART

The North Carolina Humanities Council offers grants up to \$500 for projects related to "Picturing America," an initiative from the National Endowment for the Humanities that places a collection of reproductions of American art in schools, libraries, and other cultural organizations. The nation's artistic heritage — paintings, sculpture, architecture, fine crafts, and photography — offers unique insights into the character, ideals, and aspirations of this country. Projects that utilize "Picturing America" materials and themes by teachers, library, and cultural staff through interdisciplinary, humanities-based approaches are appropriate for this funding. Expenditures covered through this grant may include stipends for presenters, travel and lodging, publicity, and other materials. For grant information or to request a grant application, please contact Darrell Stover at dstover@nchumanities.org or (336) 334-5723. For information about a North Carolina Humanities Council Road Scholar to visit your area with a "Picturing America" presentation, please contact Carolyn Allen at callen@nchumanities.org or (336) 256-0140.

How to Sponsor a Road Scholars Program

ANY NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION planning a public program for an adult audience is eligible to apply for a Road Scholars program. All applications are subject to approval and availability of funds. Organizations may apply for three speaker appearances per year.

An application form can be obtained from the Road Scholars catalog or online from the North Carolina Humanities Council's website at www.nchumanities.org. For assistance in planning or applying, please contact Carolyn Allen at (336) 256-0140 or callen@nchumanities.org. Applications should be received by the Humanities Council at least four weeks in advance of the desired program date.

The Humanities Council provides grant funds to pay the speaker's honorarium and up to \$100 in travel expenses to the speaker. Any travel expenses above \$100 must be paid by the sponsoring organization.

Programs are designed to last 45 minutes to one hour, followed by a 15–30 minute question-and-answer and discussion period.

Programs cosponsored by more than one community organization are acceptable and may even attract greater local participation.

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT



A Scholar's Perspective

Bes Spangler

ANTICIPATING SOMEWHAT NERVOUSLY my first Let's Talk About It presentation as a scholar in 1989, I arrived in Hendersonville, NC, in time for dinner with the librarian and a brief review of the program and of the readers signed up for the series. By the time I was introduced to the assembled group, I felt comfortable and eager to talk about the book assigned for the session. Since that evening, I have enjoyed the opportunities provided by Let's Talk About It to review literary works in preparation for each meeting, to interact with knowledgeable and efficient library staff members and Friends of the Library volunteers, and to share lively discussion with insightful readers.

As a designated Let's Talk About It scholar, I provide information about the author, the book's context, the historical background or setting, and the literary elements of a book. Several weeks before my scheduled appearance, I send questions for the participants to think about as they read. These questions are designed to explore the book's relationship to the series' theme as well as to elicit personal responses.

One of the chief appeals of the Let's Talk About It programs is the opportunity for participants to discuss books in a thematic context in a structured setting. The scholar doesn't dominate the discussion but generally keeps it focused and makes sure that all voices are heard.

I've learned to anticipate with pleasure the fact that meaningful personal experiences sometimes occur during the discussion period in unanticipated ways. I remember, for instance, an evening some years ago in which

my focus was on a pivotal passage in Doris Betts' *The River to Pickle Beach*. Family members were gathered at a rural gravesite to replenish flowers, cut down weeds, and clean family headstones. This scene led to readers sharing their memories and the similarity of North Carolina's family customs to those among retirees from other parts of the country. These shared memories opened the way for a discussion of other customs aimed at keeping the past alive in families, communities, and nations and ended with thoughtful comments on the value of such efforts. Discussions like these, I believe, are at the heart of Let's Talk About It as this program fulfills the North Carolina Humanities Council's "commitment to dialogue... [and] self-discovery."

A recently added series, "Divergent Cultures: The Middle East in Literature," has been chosen by a number of libraries for fall 2008 and spring 2009 programs. This series is attracting readers not only through the appeal of the selected books but also through the opportunity such books offer readers to perceive the human dimension behind the headline news. Leading the discussion of Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* in several libraries, I have noted that in addition to the historical and political information the novel provides, it offers opportunities to discuss universal human acts of betrayal, forgiveness, and repentance. It also has evoked memories of childhood experiences of being the favored or the not-so-favored child or of playground bullying, opening thereby a discussion of the uses and misuses of power. Hosseini's novel illustrates the power of literature to humanize the abstract.



Bes Spangler received her A.B. from Atlantic Christian College, her M.A.T. from Duke University, and her Ph.D. from UNC Chapel Hill, with specialties in American Literature and Southern American Literature. She recently retired from Peace College in Raleigh.

Fulfilling the intended discussion of a series' theme — be it aging, war, or a better understanding of individual lives in the Middle East — each book provides, additionally, the means and opportunities for readers to share incidents from their own lives, explore passages in the work they find appealing, engage in arguments where they are free to agree or disagree, meet authors they hope to explore more fully, and encounter unanticipated insights or questions that keep the programs fresh and vital. The growing attendance at programs and the increased number of libraries offering the series indicate the importance of such avenues of thoughtful reading and response. Being part of such a dynamic humanities program for nearly twenty years has been a rewarding and enriching experience.

BOOK SERIES

| | |
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| Destruction or Redemption: Images of Romantic Love | Tar Heel Fiction: Writers from North Carolina's Literary Hall of Fame |
| Exploring the American West: Whose West? | Tar Heel Fiction: A Second Look |
| Faith Differences, Different Faiths: Exploring Religion in Modern American Fiction | The Journey Inward: Women's Autobiography |
| How Folklife Crafts Our Literature, Lives, and Communities | The African American Experience: Looking Forward, Looking Back |
| Imagining the Future: Scientific Revelations in Fiction | What America Reads: Myth-Making in Popular Fiction |
| Journeys Across Time and Place: Mapping Southern Identities | Discovering the Literary South: The Louis D. Rubin, Jr., Series |
| Mad Women in the Attic | Beyond the Battlefield: Alternative Views of War |
| Mysteries: Clues to Who We Are | Affirming Aging |
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| Rebirth of a Nation: Nationalism and the Civil War | |
| Divergent Cultures: The Middle East in Literature | |

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| From Rosie to Roosevelt: A Film History of Americans in World War II/ The American People | The Sixties: A Film History of America's Decade of Crisis and Change |
| Post-War Years, Cold War Fears: American Culture and Politics, 1946-1960 | Looking At: Jazz, America's Art Form |
| | The World War I Years: America Becomes a World Power |

POETRY SERIES

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| NC Reads NC: Our Poets Speak | Voices and Visions |
| Poets in Person | |

How to Sponsor a Let's Talk About It Program

ANY PUBLIC LIBRARY IN THE STATE seeking a program for an adult audience is eligible to apply for a Let's Talk About It program. The librarian selects the series and decides on the dates for the program. The two-hour sessions take place at the same time and day every two weeks for nine weeks. The film and poetry series run weekly for six weeks. All applications are subject to approval and availability of funds and books. Programs are available spring and fall.

An application form can be obtained online from the North Carolina Humanities Council's website at www.nchumanities.org. For assistance in planning or applying, please contact Carolyn Allen at (336) 256-0140 or callen@nchumanities.org. Applications should be received by the Humanities Council at least eight weeks in advance of the desired program start date.

Once the program is confirmed, the Humanities Council arranges for the books to be made available from the North Carolina Center for the Book, schedules scholars for each book, and provides grant funds to pay the scholars an honorarium.

LINDA FLOWERS LITERARY AWARD 2008



Linda Flowers Literary Award
2008

Carolina Landscapes: Poems

Kirsten Hemmy, 2008 Linda Flowers Award Recipient

Idolatry

To those who say there is a slippery slope
between the sacred & the profane, I wonder
what you'd make of the woman in church today,

& the church itself, rented by the pastor
in a low-down theater on a run-down street known
otherwise for the truck & trunk & nighttime sales

of anything for a good price so long as you're willing
to pay cash only & not ask too many questions.
It is summer again. Hibiscus, hydrangea, the rose garden

uptown — hell, everything has exploded into bloom,
even in the alleys & the backstreets, & then,
if that weren't enough, white people start coming to

church here, too. The pastor preaches on, has a plan,
gives lessons disguised as praise, uses words like
gentrification & autonomy & together & struggle, &

for anyone ignorant or not listening, reminds us
that the story of the tree of life only proves
that we can't do it alone. Autonomy may be the dream.

But. Community — that collection of people stumbling
into one another with words & sometimes tenderness.
The summer is hardly ever dark; at night there remains

a kind of luminescence that comes from the awareness
of heat, of growth. It is the world that can be dark — lights
are ever dim in the theater; there are no windows, no

stained glass to let in cherubic slants of summertime. But
this woman, sitting in front of me, singing as with a new
voice, all electricity & shimmer, and yet still, the lightness

was definitely from her hands, held high as though closer
to reaching what she hoped to, surely heavy from all
the beads she wore — earthen, glass, hand-made, real. Colors

exploded as if they, too, were sky bound, constrained by only
the imagination. Later on, when I closed my eyes in prayer,
the jewels were there, a city of color, a world of pattern & chaos.



Sacred Geometry 2

Great Pyramid: Jazz Pianist, Gospel Choir, Orchestra

Night out. I hold
my breath like lovers
hold one another. Outside

it is moonlit, the skies all
city & show. Floodlight
of pattern, possibility.

Inside, there is a meeting.
It is a union much like
anything which begins

from nothing, which is
everything. Spiral of
disparate moving together.

The pianist, his feet
dancing on stage despite
the austere reserve of

the philharmonic. Gospel
choir in back, a rainbow
in black & white, beaming

moon of silk, dazzling
voices that hurt the soul
with pain & sweetness both.

Carolina Landscape in Two Parts

l'esclavage — a child holds chains
there is a reservoir
somewhere
not
here —
the cramped & fetid
waiting rooms of
history

*

in a field
notebook
she records
the cotton, not
free labor
high profits
low overhead
but the way
she saved her son
from the same
hell
with the rusted
meat cleaver late
on a sunday afternoon



Collective

“If art is our only resistance, what does that make us?”

– Adrienne Rich

House of people whose eyes do not meet.
White people. The reason I first joined
a black church. Black people.

My new family is used to accepting pain &
wearing it gently, & therefore they take me in,
put me on. Black is beautiful but I am too almost,

imperfectly shaped. A mismatch. Question
to my parents: how could you. Not following
the rule of law is who I am. Even when the law begs

questions it’s still there to be followed.
In the South, I wonder. Am I an eyesore.
My brown skin not white. My light skin not dark.

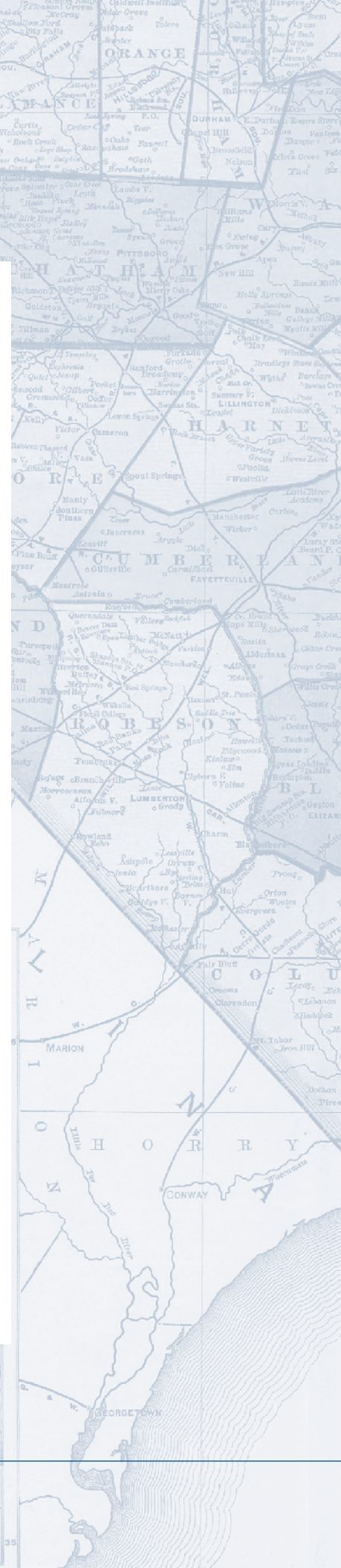
Simplest blueprints of displacement: I dream
of the ocean, become a cliché, buy ocean-scented
everything. Blue becomes me, blue becomes

the symbol for all that has lost me.
What is to be done? Do I stay or can I go.
Tired & redundant I am. That was them
not me. I am an island
girl without water in sight. The imagination creates
mirage after mirage. The painting is on the wall. Where

is all that’s yet to be written. Isolation begins
like death — the moment is almost
an instant. When did it all begin. More

than a question: what wrests beyond, where
is collective, is shared, is memory. Long ago
a boy of rage compelled by loss & love &

distance’s song slew his brother.
His punishment: banishment & more distance,
a long lifetime of wandering barren lands.





Dear Beyond

“Happy the eyes that can close.”

– Alan Paton, *Cry the Beloved Country*

Tell me if this is true: I want to know
what survives us, what’s bequeathed

from mother to daughter, what’s passed
across oceans & migrations & border

crossings of the soul & every imaginable
landscape. Some nights I dream of cities

rising brick by brick, cream colored &
pink, flesh-like & built on enslaved sweat,

fishermen cleaning silver kettles of pewter
fish, their eyes slab gray & forced open

by death, atrociously seeing & seeing & —
men bent close to the earth, arms like scythes,

mountains grizzled with pine trees, ash
trees swiped down for love of money, starved

boys, girls turned to ash, men & women made
into soap, people loved & hated beyond

reason, an ocean of memories — all mine
even in their hideous imaginableness —

which slosh against my skull. I wake to
shadows I have been or will become:

flutter of leaf to ground, birds returning,
too early, to naked trees. Movement

in the corner of everywhere. What is there
unrepeatable, what cannot be handed down?

The Lost Hours

Even when I have dismissed them all —
the barber, the trick on the corner,

the man who shows up in my dreams.
What is this night — the darkness, the moon,

the streetlights giving way to the fog
that encroaches like a beast. I run &

I hear it all: the gun blast, jazz, the man
kicking his woman in her ribs, a soft harp,

until she falls to the street & pleads, a trumpet
from someone’s bedroom window. I have

kept the lost hours like my mother kept
what she could — our hair, our teeth,

the things we lost in our childhoods.
No one ever told us that we might need

to keep hold of so much that gives way
to time: my mother’s memory, my father,

holidays & birthdays & the words *I love you*
& cakes & even the memory of these things.

I have kept the lost hours, those days I lived
in Africa, where the child slept on the street,

the boy who followed me until we both got
lost. Even my rapist, I keep him, it, the night —

I could tell you what the darkness looked like &
the sweet, sweet shape of the moon. The scent

of plantains & hibiscus. I have kept the lost
hours, trying to do what, I don’t know.

A detailed, light blue-toned map of North Carolina serves as the background for the entire page. It shows county boundaries and names, with some counties like Forsyth, Guilford, and Randolph being more prominent in the upper sections.

Elegy for Places I've Left

What gets remembered: the prodigal son, Joseph's dream, loosened fist of the tree, magnolia blossoms strewn along the river bank, a white trail leading to its end. The slowing

of the pulse at the Japanese garden, heart all twisted at first like bonsai, later soft & careless as koi floating in the pond. Late afternoon, sneaking in, the light slanting & certain,

all glorious like the sweet hymning of a spiritual, the sound the ocean still makes in ears long after leaving the ocean. The taste of salt which also remains on the lips & skin, white

like snow. Blue-black skies during a sluggish snow in the heart of chill, middle of night. The urge to open the mouth, let flakes catch on the tongue, shiver the eyelashes & nose.

The art of distance & of boundaries. The hard look of the moon some nights, & in winter's frigid slow motion, the sly pleasure of staring back, equally hard, equally wistful.

Dangerous Love Poem

Wet bright moss under & over the stream. Against. The stream itself, cold, mountainous, dark like

the mountains themselves. How from a distance they'd seemed more like hills, less cragged &

risky. Rain from fog, its caress sharp, almost: cool on my warm cheek like an accidental slap.

The losing of the hands, the body limber & bending to plunge rushing waters. Oh, the sound

of water on rock, friction of two improbable bodies meeting, movement of, whisper-gurgle of one &

one touching the other. The noise, a kind of music. Bodies together — the breaking open of one against

itself or the other, the getting lost as to which is which. Lightness crafted within harshest landscape.

Green, mere life, surviving nearly everywhere. Water-beaded heaviness of ferns. The unfurling.

In Medias Res

-- for CP Maze, the Concrete Generation Slam Poets, Charlotte, NC

The world has put its hands all over us, & we have both learned to yield to this kind of intimacy. We've learned what to do with silence, with now & with gone & with prayer. But here our paths have crossed, our bodies dream-heated & our minds curious. Still, you stay. & come closer. You too have told me the world is topside down or outside in, that for us to sleep at all would be to close our eyes inside a bullet — cheek to cheek, in public anonymity — to feel the utter loneliness that comes from a reckless closeness, the after that follows abandonment of reason. Free spirits believe in providence, in chance, in the accidental beauty of rain at midnight, the yellow certainty of late afternoon. The air between us an idea, nothing but the rhythm of breath. Everything held this moment in place — I drew you in my mind as you are, hoping to recreate you here, now, without distractions of the ghosts inside us, the brokenness of the body. The sky is bright with dusk & I have been watching my shadow fold in on itself, without words, devolving into a deeper shade of darkness until it disappears. You asked why we write, what makes a poet. Here. I am showing you. This darkness is the body of our words: we write to understand we're not alone in it — even though it is ours to do alone.

2008 Linda Flowers Literary Award Recipient

KIRSTEN HEMMY is an assistant professor of English at Johnson C. Smith University; a member of the Southern Humanities Council executive board; and the director of the Mosaic Literary Center of Charlotte, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the discovery, cultivation, and preservation of contemporary literature and the arts. She received her M.A. in Literary Studies from the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee and her Ph.D. in Creative Writing from Western Michigan University. As a Fulbright Scholar in 2003, she studied politics and poetry in Senegal. Hemmy has also studied

in Ghana and is currently completing a book on Emma Brown, an Ibibio freedom fighter and political activist in Nigeria.

Hemmy's poetry has appeared in *Sonora Review*, *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *Spoon River Poetry Review*, *Green Mountains Review*, *Callyx*, *Cake Magazine*, *Midwest Poetry Review*, *Lake Effect*, *Bellingham Review*, *Southern Humanities Review*, *Cream City Review*, *Smartish Pace*, *Antioch Review*, and elsewhere. She has published interviews with poets such as Yusef Komunyakaa and Ralph Angel.

"Carolina Landscapes: Poems" was among more than ninety entries of original poetry, prose, and nonfiction submitted to the North Carolina Humanities Council for the 2008 Linda Flowers Literary Award. The award celebrates outstanding writing that shows a deep connection to the people of North Carolina and illuminates in a vital way their distinctive stories and voices.



Linda Flowers Literary Award

Description

THE NORTH CAROLINA HUMANITIES COUNCIL invites original entries of fiction, nonfiction, or poetry for the Linda Flowers Literary Award. Submissions should detail examinations of intimate, provocative, and inspiring portraiture of North Carolina, its people and cultures, bringing to light real men and women having to make their way in the face of change, loss, triumph, and disappointments.

While authors do not have to be North Carolinians, entries are expected to draw on particular North Carolina connections and/or memories. Above all, entries should celebrate excellence in the humanities and reflect the experience of people who, like Linda Flowers, not only identify with the state, but also explore the promises, the problems, the experiences, and the meanings of lives that have been shaped by North Carolina and its many cultures.

Guidelines

ENTRIES SHOULD BE original, unpublished works of up to 2000–2500 words, typed and double-spaced. Five copies of each submission are required with a cover letter (copies will not be returned). The author's name should not appear on the submission. Only one entry per writer will be accepted.

You may wish to enclose a SASE postcard for the Humanities Council to acknowledge receipt of your manuscript and a SASE for notification of the award selection.

Send entries for the 2009 Linda Flowers Literary Award, postmarked by August 15, 2009, to the North Carolina Humanities Council, 122 N. Elm Street, Suite 601, Greensboro, NC, 27401. Questions may be directed to Executive Director Shelley Crisp at (366) 334-5383 or scrisp@nchumanities.org.

The winner of the Linda Flowers Literary Award receives a cash prize of \$500 and a stipend towards a Writer's Residency at the Weymouth Center for Arts and Humanities in Southern Pines, NC. While the author maintains copyright of the work, the winning entry is published in a Council publication with the understanding that the Council may publish or republish it at any time.

Previous Recipients

KAREN GILCHRIST
(2001)

JOSEPH BATHANTI
(2002)

HEATHER ROSS MILLER
(2003)

BARBARA PRESNELL
(2004)

KERMIT TURNER
(2005)

KATHY WATTS
(2006)

SUSAN WEINBERG VOGEL
(2007)

2008 Selection Committee

THIS YEAR'S distinguished Linda Flowers Literary Award selection committee included

- Keith Flynn, Managing Editor of the *Asheville Poetry Review*
- Chris Gould, English professor and Director of Faculty Leadership at UNC Wilmington
- Miranda Monroe, a reading specialist for the Cumberland County School System, an adjunct instructor for Reading Education at Fayetteville State University, and a North Carolina Humanities Council board member
- Barbara Presnell, creative writing professor at UNC Charlotte and the 2004 Linda Flowers Literary Award recipient



The North Carolina Humanities Council was privileged to have Linda Flowers as one of its members from 1992 to 1998. During the years we shared with her, she taught us many things. Above all, Linda showed us what it means to live by one's belief that "the humanistic apprehension is as necessary for living fully as anything else. Education in the humanities," she wrote, "is equipment for living."

*That my book about Eastern North Carolina might touch a chord with some people, and with several ready-made audiences—teachers, social workers, health personnel, civic organizations, book clubs, readers in general... I had not anticipated. What these groups are responding to in *Thrown Away*, I think, is its human dimension: the focus on real men and women having to make their way in the face of a changing, onrushing and typically uncaring world.... This humanistic apprehension, I tell my students, is as necessary for living fully as anything else they may ever hope to have...they must recognize and nurture it in themselves...to realize more fully the potential of the human spirit.*

~ Linda Flowers,
*letter to the North Carolina Humanities
Council Membership Committee, July 1992*

TEACHERS INSTITUTE

The Teachers Institute Launches American Indian Curriculum Project

THE TEACHERS INSTITUTE has recently completed a major curriculum enrichment project for American Indian Studies which is available for K-12 public school educators: *Curriculum Enrichment Project: North Carolina American Indian Studies* (©2009). The purpose of the project, which is aligned with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, is to provide teachers with suggestions and resources for incorporating the study of American Indians, and specifically North Carolina American Indians, into their own classroom curriculum. Funded in part by grants from the Cherokee Preservation Foundation and the Ford Foundation, its publication represents the culmination of work in American Indian Studies that the Teachers Institute launched in 2005.

Invited, along with other state councils, to join the Minnesota Humanities Commission in conducting teacher seminars that highlight the history and cultures of the

American Indian tribes in their respective states, the North Carolina Humanities Council offered a series of four seminars for teachers between 2005 and 2007. These seminars focused on the state's two largest tribes: the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians and the Lumbee Indians.

Out of these initial four seminars, the Teachers Institute developed a Curriculum Enrichment Project designed by NC public school educators. Teachers who participated in a fifth seminar in March 2008 critiqued a draft of this project. Cherokee and Lumbee tribal members critiqued a later draft.

Contributors to this project included Ms. Gazelia Carter (Craven County Schools); Ms. Lisa Hodges (Cherokee Central School System); Ms. Patricia Lancaster (Bladen County Schools); Mr. Kevin Norris (Jackson County Schools); and Ms. Linda Tabor (Watauga County Schools). Dr. Kathryn Walbert served as the coordinator for this project and provided the conceptual framework and an extensive list of classroom resources. Dr. Walbert develops and teaches online professional development courses on U.S. history topics and in the Carolina On-Line Teacher program at LEARN NC.

Reviewers of the curriculum project were Ms. Myrtle Driver, Tribal Cultural Traditionalist in the Office of Cultural Resources of the Eastern



(L to R) Tina Ntuen (Guilford County) and Janice Locklear (Robeson County) examine American Indian artifacts at the March 2008 seminar. Lead scholar Anton Treuer from Bemidji State University in Minnesota looks on.

Band of the Cherokee Indians; Dr. Mary Ann Jacobs, Chair of the American Indian Studies Department at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke; and Ms. Rita Locklear, Director of the Indian Education Resource Center and the Indian Education Title VII program of the Public Schools of Robeson County.

All participants in the five Teachers Institute seminars have received a full curriculum enrichment packet, which includes a conceptual overview for incorporating American Indian studies into K-12 classroom curricula, a vetted list of print and web-based resources, sample lesson plans, and a CD which offers

a sample of the Cherokee language plus a Cherokee legend. For a minimal cost to cover reproduction and mailing, interested educators may request a copy of this packet by contacting Lynn Wright-Kernodle, Director of the Teachers Institute at lynnwk@nchumanities.org or (336) 334-4769.

Teachers Participate in Course at Duke University

THE TEACHERS INSTITUTE has partnered with the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University to sponsor the participation of eleven public school educators from the Durham, Granville, and Orange County Schools in the spring 2009 semester course "The South in

Black and White: Southern History, Culture, and Politics in the Twentieth Century."

Dr. Tim Tyson and Mrs. Mary D. Williams team-teach this course. The course focuses on the history and culture of the American South,

a region described by Tyson as one "of the heart, the mind, and the United States where democracy has been envisioned and embattled with global consequences." Participants will survey Southern history and culture in print and music, film and oratory, and religion and politics.

READING TEXTILES: NARRATIVE & ART

Teachers met in Charlotte at the Mint Museum of Craft & Design for the October 24-25, 2008, seminar. Lead scholars were Dr. Magdalena Maiz-Peña from Davidson College; Dr. Sally Peterson from the Folklife Division of the North Carolina Arts Council; and Ms. Anne Fitzgerald Sutton, a classroom teacher in the Union County Schools. In the photo below, Charlotte-Mecklenburg public school teachers analyze photographs of Chiléan arpilleras, textile narrations of political oppression.



(L to R) Sara McGue, Alice Mae Evans, and Barnetta Boston.

CONTEMPORARY TAR HEEL WRITERS

Teachers practiced their own writing and text analysis at the September 26-27, 2008, seminar held in Greensboro. Dr. Mary Ellis Gibson from UNC Greensboro served as the lead scholar. Participating North Carolina writers were Marcie Ferris, UNC Chapel Hill; Jennifer Grotz, UNC Greensboro; Randall Kenan, UNC Chapel Hill; Jill McCorkle, North Carolina State University; David Rigsbee, Mount Olive College; and Lynn York, High Point University. The Touring Theatre of North

Carolina presented *Family Business*, its play based on short stories by Kenan and McCorkle.



(L to R) Marcella Moon (Guilford County); Thomasania Craft and Yvonne Dial (Robeson County).

Donors Provide Teachers Institute Scholarships

GIFTS FROM INDIVIDUAL DONORS help the North Carolina Humanities Council provide exceptional professional development opportunities to public school educators throughout the state. Recently, several individuals have made generous donations.

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New Culbertson-Dagenhart-Hauptfuhrer Endowed Teacher Scholarship Established

Interest from an endowed scholarship provides funds annually and in perpetuity for a teacher to participate in a weekend seminar in the fall or spring and a week-long seminar in the summer. The Culbertson-Dagenhart-Hauptfuhrer Endowed Scholarship, which will be awarded to a teacher from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools beginning in 2010, is the fourth endowed scholarship for the Teachers Institute. The other endowed scholarships are the Alice Smith Barkley Endowed Scholarship, established by John and Polly Medlin and Bob and Sally McCoy; the Moore-Robinson Endowed Scholarship, established by Bill and Sandra Moore and Russell and Sally Robinson; and the Caldwell Endowed Scholarship, established by the board of the North Carolina Humanities Council in honor of Dr. John Tyler Caldwell.

PEGGY AND BOB CULBERTSON are members of the Humanities Council's Advisory Board. Peggy has been active in public education, the arts, human services, urban planning, and the environment in

Charlotte for forty-six years. She was elected Charlotte's "Woman of the Year" in 2008 for her years of service. She is a graduate of Auburn University with a Master's Degree from Vermont College of Union Institute. Bob has also been heavily involved in public education and art, having served on the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Board and now serving as President of the Arts and Science Council. He has been active on the board of the Penland School where he has taken pottery classes for fifteen years. An active potter, he gives the proceeds of his work to charity. Bob is semi-retired as senior partner of the Morehead Group.

"Bob and I are passionate about the work of the Teachers Institute. This is such a valuable resource for the teachers of North Carolina, and it is important that we support it."

SARAH AND LARRY DAGENHART are also members of the Humanities Council's Advisory Board. Larry is an attorney with McGuireWoods, a national law firm. He has been an attorney with Helms Mulliss for over fifty years, a firm that has recently merged with McGuireWoods. A North Carolina native, Larry attended Davidson College and New York University

North Carolina author Lee Smith (left) and Advisory Board member Sarah Dagenhart share a moment of laughter at the 2002 Teachers Institute summer seminar, "Story, Song, and the Expressive Spirit." Photo by Gail Komives.



(L to R) Chair Sally Robinson discusses Advisory Board business with Patty Morton at the April 2008 Advisory Board annual meeting.

Law School. Larry is currently Chair of the Council for Children's Rights and has served as Chair of the Davidson College, UNC Wilmington, and Charlotte Country Day Trustees as well as several organizations in Charlotte. Sarah is a graduate of Agnes Scott College and remains active there. She is a Stephen Minister at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Charlotte and also served in several roles at Charlotte Day School.

"We have been interested in the Teachers Institute since Sarah spent a weekend with the Institute and saw first-hand



how valuable the experience is for those teachers fortunate enough to participate.”

CAMMIE AND BARNES HAUPTFUHRER, members of the Humanities Council’s Advisory Board, are active in the Charlotte community. Cammie currently serves on the board of Mecklenburg Ministries, an interfaith nonprofit that builds bridges across differences through the inspiration of shared faith traditions, and on the advisory board of Duke Divinity School. She has also served on the boards of the Levine Museum of the New South, Charlotte Country Day School, Discovery Place, and the United Way. Barnes serves on the boards of the YMCA of Greater Charlotte and the Foundation of the Carolinas. He is Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Chapter IV Investors, an investment firm he founded in February 2006.

“Barnes and I are delighted to join the Culbertsons and Dagenharts in establishing an endowed scholarship for the Teachers Institute. It’s so much fun to share a passion with friends and to work together

to advance it. Teachers are the key to a good education, and to excel they must have the resources and the time to refine their craft. We think the Teachers Institute is a unique and dynamic way for teachers to do just that. We look forward each year to hearing what teachers have learned at Institute programs and the exciting ways they are using what they learned to energize their classrooms and their schools.”

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New Annual Teacher Scholarships Given

An annual scholarship provides funds for one year for a teacher to participate in one weekend seminar and a week-long summer seminar.

PATTY AND THRUSTON MORTON of Charlotte are members of the Humanities Council’s Advisory Board. For several years, the Mortons have provided an annual scholarship for a teacher and have done so again for 2009. Patty, a graduate of Duke

and the University of Pittsburgh, is a Partner and Director of Franklin Street Partners with thirty years of experience working in the international financial services industry. Patty is active in the North Carolina community serving on a number of boards, including the National Humanities Center. Thruston is the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Global Endowment Management, an investment management firm in Charlotte. He was formerly the President, CEO, and Chief Investment Officer of Duke University’s Duke Management Company (DUMAC). Thruston currently serves on the Finance and Investment Committee of the Rockefeller Foundation.

“Education is a cornerstone of our society; indeed, in today’s competitive world, education is vital. The Teachers Institute provides the tools and resources for teachers in our state to achieve their full potential. Thruston and I enthusiastically support the great work of the Institute.”

MARYLYN WILLIAMS honored her husband **ED WILLIAMS** upon his retirement as editor of the editorial pages of *The Charlotte Observer* with a 2009 Teachers Institute scholarship. Ed says, “You can imagine my surprise and delight at Marylyn’s gift. To me, the Teachers Institute is one of the best things the North Carolina Humanities Council does.” Both Marylyn and Ed are members of the Humanities Council’s Advisory Board. They met in 1972 at Harvard University, where Ed was a Nieman Fellow and Marylyn was



Cammie Hauptfuhrer (left) and Peggy Culbertson (right) exchange ideas about the work of the Advisory Board at the April 2008 Advisory Board annual meeting.

assisting historian Frank Freidel on a book. Marylyn currently works for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department. She has been active in the Charlotte community and has served on the boards of Planned Parenthood and Summit House and has helped with fundraising efforts for the Arts and Science Council. Much of her time now is devoted to the local food movement. During Ed's thirty-five-year *Observer* career, his columns and editorials were part of projects that won two Pulitzer Prizes for Public Service. After Ed's retirement, Governor Mike Easley conferred upon him the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, the state's highest award for service to North Carolina.

"At Princeton and Duke Law School, our son Jonathan has had some brilliant professors, but his list of teachers who've had an impact on his life always includes some great ones from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg public schools. The curiosity, intelligence, and energy we've seen in participants at the Humanities Council's Teachers Institute reminds us of the teachers who helped shape and inspire our son. Marylyn and I are pleased to be able to support their work."

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Teachers Institute Alumni and Scholars Give a 2009 Scholarship

Through the generosity of Teachers Institute alumni, a teacher new to the Teachers Institute will be able to participate in one of the 2009 weekend seminars as well as the week-long summer seminar. This teacher will receive the first Teachers Institute Alumni Scholarship. Participating teachers and scholars will continue to have the opportunity to donate to the Teachers Institute Fund, with a goal of offering a second Alumni Scholarship in 2010.

2009 Teachers Institute Opportunities



North Carolina Textile Heritage: Stories of Mill Workers

May 1–2, 2009, Charlotte

This seminar is based on the Lewis Hine photo exhibit "Standing on a Box." See the article about this exhibit in this issue of *North Carolina Conversations*.

Lead Scholar: Dr. Roxanne Newton, Mitchell Community College



The Culture of Textiles in North Carolina: Past, Present, and Future

June 21–27, 2009 — SUMMER SEMINAR — Chapel Hill

This seminar is an interdisciplinary study of the state's textile culture incorporating history, literature, science, music, and economics.

Lead Scholar: Dr. James Leloudis, UNC Chapel Hill



The Segregated South through Autobiography, 1890s–1960s

October 2–3, 2009, Wilmington

This seminar examines legal segregation in the American South from its origin until its demise through the autobiographical writings of the most prominent interpreters of the era.

Lead Scholar: Dr. Melton McLaurin, UNC Wilmington, Emeritus



Special Teachers Institute Opportunities

The Teachers Institute often provides special opportunities for North Carolina teachers. Learn more about these opportunities on the North Carolina Humanities Council's website: www.nchumanities.org.

Full descriptions of all seminars and application forms and deadlines are posted on the Humanities Council's website: www.nchumanities.org. Space is available in all three seminars.

AlumNews

Mary Bonnett (TI 04, 05, 08)

has received her National Board Certification. Mary is currently teaching at the Caswell County Alternative School in Yanceyville, NC.

Rocquel Erman (TI 01, 02, 05, 06)

has received her National Board Certification, Academically and Intellectually Gifted Certification, and a Master's Degree in Education. She is currently renewing her National Board Certification and is working on a project with the North Carolina Museum of Art entitled "The Art of Collaboration."

Mark Meacham (TI 02, 03, 04, 06)

has begun the Ph.D. program in Curriculum and Instruction at UNC Greensboro. In addition, he was selected as one of seven Alamance-Burlington Schools faculty to participate with Elon University faculty in the Elon Teaching-Learning Partnership.

Pamela S. Myrick (TI 04, 06) and **Sharon S. Pearson (TI 04, 06)** who served as teacher edition authors for the 2008 Gibbs Smith *North Carolina Journeys* grade 8 social studies textbook and as teacher consultants for Gibbs Smith *North Carolina Journeys* textbooks for grades 4, 5, and 6, conducted the in-service training for school systems across the state which adopted the Gibbs Smith social studies textbooks. **Pamela Grundy** (Lead Scholar, TI 01) is the author of *North Carolina Journeys*, grade 8.

Susan Norwood (TI 00) was recently named Executive Director of the Teacher Incentive Fund and Leadership for Educator's Advanced Performance with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

Teachers at the 2008 Summer Seminar, "Somerset Place: Slavery and Its Legacy," study issues of slave medicine with Dr. Todd Savitt.

Maria Ormerod (TI 03) has completed a Master's Degree in Spanish Language and Literature at the University of Granada, Spain. Currently, she is working on a second Master's Degree in Spanish at the University of Salamanca, Spain.

Deborah Russell (TI 08) is pursuing a Master's Degree in American history at UNC Greensboro. She won a graduate assistantship and was named a Greensboro Graduate Scholar. In the fall, she led a session in the UNC Greensboro "Women in American History" class, focusing on slave women in eastern North Carolina. Her session was based on much of the content of the 2008 Teachers Institute Summer Seminar held at Somerset Place plantation.

Amy Price Vaughn (TI 00, 01, 02), Burke County Schools, is currently the coordinator for the Secondary Schools Linkages Program in conjunction with the U.S. State Department. This spring, ten teachers from Burke County will travel to Turkmenistan to visit schools, learn about Turkmen culture, and share

information about America. In the fall, ten teachers from Turkmenistan will travel to Burke County to learn about American culture and how North Carolina's public school system functions. Amy has already traveled to Turkmenistan and worked with teachers there. In addition, Amy made a presentation at the National Council of Teachers of English Conference in Texas in November 2008.

Chris White (TI 08 Textile Seminar)

is a social studies teacher in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. He recently took the Language Arts Praxis and was certified in that subject as well. He will speak about his experience with the Teachers Institute at the Humanities Council's Advisory Board annual meeting in April.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF YOU for these accomplishments! If other Teachers Institute alumni have news to share, please send that news to lynnwk@nchumanities.org.



MUSEUM ON MAIN STREET

Beverly Patterson, State Scholar for Museum on Main Street's *New Harmonies*

BEVERLY PATTERSON HAS BEEN SELECTED as the State Scholar for the touring Smithsonian Institution exhibition *New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music*. North Carolina has a vast roots music heritage, and Patterson has been central to its examination and celebration. Her stellar credentials in folklife documentation, preservation, and programming will serve the North Carolina Humanities Council well as she contributes to site selection, programming, and evaluation of North Carolina's first venture into presenting a Museum on Main Street exhibit.

Since September 2004, Beverly Patterson has served as executive director of the North Carolina Folklife Institute whose mission is to document, preserve, and present traditional cultures in North Carolina. Previously, she worked with cultural institutions and traditional artists across the state as a folklife specialist at the North Carolina Arts Council. As director of the North Carolina Folklife Institute, Patterson consults on a wide variety of public folk arts projects ranging from heritage tourism trails and museum exhibits to publications, documentary films, conferences, concerts, and special events. She holds a Ph.D. in Cultural Anthropology from UNC Chapel Hill and an M.A. in Ethnomusicology from SUNY-Binghamton.

Patterson's past projects include directing the "Cherokee Heritage Trails" project of the Blue Ridge Heritage Initiative and a related series of interpretive exhibits for several North Carolina mountain communities. She also coordinated and edited the *Cherokee Artist*



Beverly Patterson. Photo by Sarah Bryan.

Directory, supervised the writing and publication of the *Cherokee Heritage Trails Guidebook* by Barbara Duncan and Brett Riggs, and contributed to a second guidebook, *Blue Ridge Music Trails: Finding a Place in the Circle*, by Fred Fussell. Patterson's book, *Sound of the Dove: Singing in Appalachian Primitive Baptist Churches*, is based on her field research in the mountains of North Carolina, Virginia, Kentucky, and West Virginia.

Patterson's musical interests are reflected in current projects such as developing an online "Traditional Artist Directory" for the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area and supporting the research and development of an African American Heritage Music project in seven eastern North Carolina counties. A new collaboration between the Institute, the Southern Folklife Collection at the University of North Carolina, and the North Carolina Arts Council aims to produce a series of recordings to make available outstanding archival recordings of master North Carolina musicians and tale-tellers.

New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music

2010 Exhibition Sites and Schedule

THE NORTH CAROLINA HUMANITIES COUNCIL is bringing Museum on Main Street, an exciting traveling Smithsonian Institution exhibit, to six North Carolina sites in 2010. Museum on Main Street brings together the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES), the Federation of State Humanities Councils, individual state humanities councils, and museums in a collaborative effort to serve rural audiences. The partnership, established in 1991, was formed as a creative response to the challenges faced by rural museums to enhance their own cultural legacies.

New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music offers rural communities access to first-rate exhibits from the Smithsonian Institution and gives North Carolina the opportunity to collect and showcase its distinct musical traditions, sacred and secular.

Each site hosts the exhibition for approximately six weeks. Sites for the 2010 *New Harmonies* tour are

Mount Airy Museum of Regional History (March–April)

Perhaps best-known for the guitar-pickin' Andy Griffith, Mount Airy is home to some of the richest music-making in the Blue Ridge Mountains. The area's radio station WPAQ can claim a long tradition of broadcasting live mountain music, Tommy Jarrell, The Carter Family, Lester Flatt, and Earl Scruggs, among others. Nestled right on Main Street in historic downtown, the Mount Airy Museum of Regional History chronicles the history of the back country of north-western North Carolina.

Warren County Memorial Library in Warrenton (May–June)

The newly opened library in this quaint, history-saturated town will immerse northeastern North Carolinians in an exploration of the region's musical roots, including gospel, jazz, and soul. Warren County served as the location for the first African American public radio station. Preservation Warrenton, the Haliwa-Saponi Tribal School, music departments of the Warren County Public Schools, and many other local organizations will join to celebrate the exhibit.

The Museum of the Albemarle in Elizabeth City (June–July)

The Museum of the Albemarle features some of the earliest coastal history of North Carolina and will highlight the region's folk music heritage. It plans to display *Rhythm and Roots of North Carolina Music* as a companion exhibit.

The Arts Council of Wayne County in Goldsboro (August–September)

This region has been engaged in a deep examination of African American musical heritage which will be highlighted during the *New Harmonies* tour here.

Mars Hill College Museum of Rural Life (September–November)

Home to the Bascom Lamar Lunsford ballad collection and host of the "Minstrel of Appalachia" Festival since 1967, Mars Hill is rooted and ready through the museum to extend the celebration into the rich tradition of mountain sound.

The Don Gibson Theater in Shelby (November–January)

This theater, named for the prolific songwriter Don Gibson, will bring the exhibit full circle to western North Carolina and the original haunts of Earl Scruggs. The banjo and its West African origins will get full play here.



FROM THE FIELD

Connecting Communities Through Literature

LATE IN THE EVENING on March 30, 2007, writer Sofía Quintero was assessing one of her teaching sessions in Durham earlier that day. She just could not believe that her efforts had made any impact on her students. One of her colleagues with the Carolina Circuit Writers (CCW) reminded her, though, of how change can occur through seeding ideas and ways of thinking that require long-term nurturing and often grow well after they are planted.

“It is easy to forget these things,” Quintero reflected that night in her blog, “when one is in that teaching moment and the ‘aha!’ one is striving toward does not occur.” She remembered “that learning and transformation can still be taking place unbeknownst to me.” She had to believe.

Kirsten Mullen, founder and executive director of CCW, understands the competing impulses of wanting to create change now and appreciating that those who can bring change must be nurtured over time in an environment carefully developed. In many ways, “Connecting Communities through Literature” is the balance she sought in identifying and giving experiences to young writers of color.

Mullen, a writer, folklorist, and creative visionary, founded CCW as a statewide literary consortium in 2003. Its partners include over twenty academic, community, and cultural organizations whose purpose is to “bring engaging writers of color to the state

as short-term residents.” The goals for the Artist-in-Residence, Mullen notes, are to “energize communities to experience and create art, provide opportunities for diverse communities to meet and discuss issues of common interest, and inspire individuals, groups, and organizations to create their own art works, events, and conversations.”

CCW’s inaugural residency brought artist and writer Julie Ezelle Patton to Charlotte, Winston-Salem, and Durham in 2006 for a project titled “Race, Space & Place.” Funded in part by the Humanities Council, the project’s ambitious scope and geography stretched the resources CCW was able to assemble. For its next residency, CCW had two new goals — to “appeal to younger and even more diverse audiences” and “to build excitement and engage a larger audience with local media” within a more focused region.

Sponsored by the Durham Literacy Center, CCW organized twenty-four partners to invest time, energy, and resources in “Connecting Communities.” The result, according to Mullen, was “a grassroots movement in every sense, engaging



Foreground (L to R): Kirsten Mullen,
V. Dianne Pledger; Background: Judith
Quijano, Yanina Chicas

breakout artists, arts presenters, and arts supporters alike.”

Among the partners were the Humanities Council, the Arts Council, the Southern Arts Federation, the African American-Latino Alliance, Carolina Wrenn Press, Durham bookstores, the Center for Documentary Studies, the Office of Community Affairs, Duke University, the Durham Arts Council, the Durham County Public Library, Durham Technical Community College, El Centro Hispano, Nuestra Familia Unida, SpiritHouse, the English and Mass Communications Departments at NC Central University, the NC Writers Network, and UNC Chapel Hill as well as many other organizations.

After careful review of available authors, CCW selected Quintero to be the 2007 Writer-in-Residence in Durham. Quintero’s books and multimedia productions were an excellent fit for the specific needs of the intended project participants. Mullen describes Quintero’s narratives as following the “trials and aspirations of youthful characters — teenagers and young adults — trying to find their way in a troubling and dangerous world. Her work and endeavors seek to inspire young people to turn their lives toward creative problem solving, self-determination, and productive goals.”

Planning for the residency was intense and began well over a year before the actual activities. Partners were keenly aware that Quintero’s different workshops, classes, and discussions needed to be tailored to audiences of different ages, races, ethnicities and cultural identifications as well as diverse levels of ability to communicate. Details were important; for example, at events taking place with Latino/a youth, CCW would have to provide Spanish translators; otherwise not all people

“BLACK ARTEMIS” IS NO MYTH: ON SOFÍA QUINTERO

“WE CONSIDERED AND CONTACTED over twenty Latino/a writers,” Kirsten Mullen says, “and selected Sofia Quintero because of her many skills and accomplishments as well as her enthusiastic response to our proposal.” Both qualities would shine through the entire residency.



Quintero is a “self-described ‘Ivy-league homegirl,’ filmmaker, screenwriter, and novelist.” Born in a Dominican-Puerto Rican family, she was raised in the Bronx and still lives there. She earned a B.A. in History and Sociology as well as an M.A. in International and Public Affairs from Columbia University. After graduation, Quintero went to work on policy issues and advocacy for a variety of organizations including the New York City Independent Budget Office, the Office of City Councilwoman Lucy Cruz, the New York City Department of Transportation Safety Division, and the Hispanic AIDS Forum. Her passion for self-expression, though, took her on a different journey.

Quintero founded Chica Luna Productions, which she describes as “a nonprofit that identifies, develops, and promotes socially conscious entertainment for, by, and about women of color between the ages of 14 and 25.” Quintero’s first novel *Explicit Content* (2004) was about female MCs in the hip-hop industry. Writing this hip-hop novel under the pseudonym of Black Artemis, she completed a trilogy with two more books, *Picture Me Rollin* (2005) and *Burn* (2006). Her award-winning screenplay *Interstate* became the highly regarded novel *Divas Don’t Yield* (2006).

What does it mean to be a hip-hop novelist? For Quintero, hip-hop is “a form of cultural power” that has the potential to “give people voice and their lives meaning.” She is insistent that although it has some overlap with “gangster rap,” hip-hop is not the same thing.

Rather, it has roots in the Black Arts Movement of the 1960s. Hip-Hop consciousness is informed by the experiences of African American youth from the 1970s to the present. Its identifying hallmark is self-determination and a challenge to outsiders. A “generational consciousness,” hip-hop is commentary about grappling with social disenfranchisement and dislocation in the late 20th century; having no place of their own, youth have forged space through expressive creativity.

The cultural expressions of hip-hop appear in all genres of with the effect of layering elements on top of each other to create something new. You can see and hear it in graffiti, rap and oral literature, breakdancing, DJing and mixing.

of color could be included. Planning in 2006 was supported by the NC Arts Council and then the Humanities Council.

Eleven partners served as hosts for thirty-eight events during four weeks in February and March 2007. Programs included training sessions with guest artists and community partners, teen and adult writing workshops, and nineteen staged public readings. Almost 2,000 people participated.

The participants were very diverse by all measures: age, from youth to seniors; long-time residents and Latino/a immigrants; people with very different educational backgrounds; people with very different socio-economic backgrounds and a variety of educational backgrounds (public and private schools). In addition to a massive publicity campaign, CCW had significant support from the local press and radio. Participants were heard on WUNC-FM, WXDU-FM, and WCOM-FM.

“Connecting Communities through Literature” was a complex and multi-faceted program. CCW organized three “core writers groups” of individuals who would be engaged actively in all aspects of the project. The groups included Triangle youth; faculty, staff, and students from local academic institutions; and a group of adults and young adults.

The program activities were divided into two different components designed to build on each other. The first part was Las Peñas (Creative Writing Workshops Phase). Its purpose was “to provide a place where artists and humanities scholars could meet for creative sustenance, mutual support, and collective inspiration.” The target populations were teens, especially Black, Latino/a, Asian, and Native American youth.

The second component was Ofrendas Públicas (Public Community Offerings Phase), which included Merienda (Training Sessions to learn how to utilize and expand the residency with developing additional programming such as films, dance, and music); Lectura (Public Readings by Quintero and core writers); Coloquio (Roundtable discussions); and Fiesta (a Community Celebration).

Quintero in fact turned out to be an extraordinary match for her Durham colleagues. Maria DeGuzman, Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature at UNC Chapel Hill, evaluated and observed that “whatever the approach, it was clear that the teens had connected on a deep level with Sofía Quintero’s work and the interaction with the other instructors in terms of their sense of themselves and their agency, both individual and collective, in the world.”

A project of this scope and scale, even so geographically focused, was not without its struggles. Mullen wrote that “our intention was to engage a racially and culturally diverse community in every phase of the Residency Project and we succeeded. That said, I believe it extremely difficult to do this work, especially without the benefit of relationships built over many years.” In some ways, Mullen jump-started the seeding process on which Quintero reflected in her blog.

Wanting to build those relationships and accomplishing it are not the same thing. Mullen and her team had to find creative ways to connect partners who otherwise would not be collaborating. She wrote, “We were constantly reassuring each group that ‘Connecting Communities’ was an ideal project for them to work on, that the fact that the visiting artist



Quintero interacts with some members of the Carolina Circuit Writers.

was Latina did not mean she would be presenting to Latina/o communities exclusively.”

An even greater challenge was succeeding in spite of the modest resources CCW had and was able to obtain through grants. How do organizations already stressed because of limited financial and human resources commit to such a project? “For organizations like CCW that do not have institutional support,” Mullen observes, “it is extremely difficult to engage in meaningful planning with the available funding structure.”

“The Council’s support made it possible,” Mullen says, “for us to come together over a period of eighteen months to think about our community and to deepen our connections to each other as we planned and executed the Residency Project. That experience has been a real gift.” But, it happened because of the passion, dedication, and non-stop work of individuals who believed in the possibilities of creating a future community enriched by all creative writers including people of color. CCW, like most groups planning projects such as “Connecting Communities” or “Standing on a Box,” need continued investment and resources to sustain and nurture what they have started.

Keeping It Real

Writing Exercise #1

WACK/COOL: COOL/WACK: “The point,” Sofía Quintero observes, “is not so much to determine who’s cool and who is not, but [to understand] the criteria we use to determine who is cool. Folks who initially said ‘X is beautiful by my standards’ began to consider that there are other standards of beauty. What makes someone cool got expanded.”

**Malcolm Goff, Art Instructor,
E.K. Powe Elementary School**

In the war of cool vs. wack
wack won. Wack always wins because cool is so uncool
and wack is seen as sin.
The cool is wack to me and
wack is wack too. Things
change into their opposites
so what do their opposites do?
Supermodels don’t fight crime
And superheroes die.
Just like all other wars.
Cool vs. Wack. Whose got
The time.

Writing Exercise #2

POWER SHUFFLE: The purpose of the Power Shuffle, Quintero explains, is “to lead participants in an exploration of their various identities (e.g., race, class, gender, sexual orientation, etc.), the power differentials assigned to these social constructs, and the impact it has on how they see themselves and interact with others of similar and different identities.”

Arlonzo Williams II, Senior, Durham Academy

“I feel that in this community there would be a lot of people who would have a hard time doing the power shuffle. Especially people in Durham, because we seem to relate to each other in an almost static way where ‘I know who I am; I know what my problems are, and I don’t need,

necessarily, for you to know what my problems are. I can fix them by myself.’

“I think ‘Connecting Communities’ especially helps us with that kind of thinking because it seems to me there are a lot of groups that are divided by racial tensions or gender tensions...that we feel like we can handle it ourselves and we don’t need any other person to tell us how to handle it. But really, what we need to be doing is talking amongst ourselves and saying: ‘We have some similarities. I might be black and you might be white and you may be Latino but I think we can all help each other with our problems.’ I think if Durham was able to do a power shuffle in a true, connected manner, we would not have as many problems and could become a truly connected community.”

From “The Richard Brown Show,” WCOM Community Radio, 103.5 FM

Writing Exercise #3

ARE YOU ALONE? Quintero says that the purpose of this exercise is to draw awareness to situations in which you might *think* you are alone as a way to show you that you are *not* always alone.

**Alexa Marie Christiano, Sophomore,
Northern High School**

Memory

The memory of knuckles to my flesh
Of blue-black-green bruises
The memory of the irony smell of blood
As metal meets my skin

The memory of the shame and the anger
Hot and bubbling
Wanting, needing to break out
With no one to tell

And the memory of the greatest pain of all
The name-calling: dyke, slut, whore
And the trust broken just to prove me wrong
And the one thing taken from me that I can never get back



Back Row (L to R): Malcolm Goff, Usha Rajagopalan, Rasika Rajagopalan, Cornelio Campos, Aden Darity, Alexis Gumb, Michelle Collins, Lenaé Frazier, Nadeen Bir, Emily Chávez, Erik Saucedo, Joshua Anderson, Tennessee Watson, Bela Kusin, Dafne Sánchez-Aguirre, Kirsten Mullen.

Front Row (L to R): Jorge Campos Vicente, Mustapha, Axel Sánchez-Aguirre, Juan Sánchez-Aguirre on floor wearing bandana, Sergio Graterol, Sofía Quintero.

NORTH CAROLINA HUMANITIES COUNCIL

North Carolina Humanities Council Announces Six New Board Members

SIX NEW MEMBERS have joined the Council board as of October 2008. To read full bios, go to www.nchumanities.org.



***DR. GLEN ANTHONY HARRIS** is Associate Professor of History at UNC Wilmington and author of numerous articles on topics such as postmodern slave narrative and interracial marriage. Harris is currently researching and writing a book-length manuscript that explores African American-Jewish relations during the first decades of the twentieth century.



***DR. TOM HANCHETT** is staff historian at Charlotte's Levine Museum of the New South, where he has curated a string of prize-winning exhibitions. Hanchett has written on such subjects as North Carolina music traditions and black Rosenwald Schools, and his research into the history of American shopping centers has been hailed as "groundbreaking" by *The New Yorker's* Malcolm Gladwell.



DR. REGINALD HILDEBRAND, Associate Professor of African and Afro-American Studies at UNC Chapel Hill, focuses his research on the emancipation and reconstruction period of America. He is working on a collection of essays about W. E. B. DuBois, Malcolm X, and Howard Thurman. Hildebrand serves as co-chair of the North Carolina Freedom Monument Project.



***MR. JONATHAN HOWES**, former mayor of Chapel Hill, is Special Assistant to the Chancellor and Adjunct Professor of Regional Planning and Public Policy at UNC Chapel Hill. His teaching interests involve environmental policy, North Carolina politics and public policy, and the university and community. Howes chairs the board of the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Authority.



***MS. CAROL LAWRENCE**, a professional writer and editor from Asheville, is the principal with Carol Lawrence Consulting, which helps nonprofits in western North Carolina increase fundraising success, prepare for large-scale campaigns, develop leadership, and improve organizational effectiveness.



***DR. HEPHZIBAH ROSKELLY**, former Director of the Composition Program at UNC Greensboro, is now the Linda Carlisle Distinguished Excellence Professor at the university, where she also holds the Women's Studies Professorship. The author of five books, Roskelly's teaching interests include feminist pedagogy, literacy, rhetoric, reading and composition theory, and gender studies.

*Gubernatorial appointees.

Call for Nominations:

North Carolina Humanities

Council Board

IF YOU — or someone you know — can help advance our goal of bringing people together to explore the state's history, identity, and culture, please consider making a nomination for the Council Board. Visit www.nchumanities.org for details on the roles and responsibilities for board members as well as information about where to send a nomination letter and resumé.

**Nominations are due by
APRIL 20, 2009.**

North Carolina Humanities

Council Mission Statement and Core Values

THE MISSION of the North Carolina Humanities Council is to support through grants and public programs vital conversations that nurture the cultures and heritage of North Carolina.

The North Carolina Humanities Council ascribes to the following core values:

- A **commitment** to an interdisciplinary approach to the humanities
- A **commitment** to dialogue
- A **commitment** to self-discovery such that an individual can come to one's own understanding of the humanities — culture, identity, and history
- A **commitment** to meeting community members where they are and honoring all who participate
- A **commitment** to humanities scholarship and scholars to develop humanities perspectives
- A **conviction** that the end-result of participating in the process of historical self-understanding is to become an informed and active citizen willing to grapple in the public realm with how to make decisions about local, public destiny
- A long-standing programmatic **commitment** to cultural diversity, meaning inclusiveness for every North Carolina citizen

BOARD MEMBERS

** Gubernatorial Appointee*

| | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Lynn Jones Ennis, Chair Raleigh | Glen Anthony Harris* Wilmington | Jim Preston Charlotte |
| Kathleen Berkeley Wilmington | Reginald Hildebrand Durham | Greg Richardson Raleigh |
| Robert S. Brunk Asheville | Jonathan Howes* Chapel Hill | David Routh Chapel Hill |
| Julie E. Curd Chapel Hill | Tom Lambeth Winston-Salem | Hephzibah Roskelly* Greensboro |
| Joseph Porter Durham, Jr. Charlotte | Carol Lawrence* Asheville | Richard Schramm Carrboro |
| Donald Ensley Greenville | Townsend Ludington Chapel Hill | George E. Stuart Barnardsville |
| Calvin Hall Banner Elk | Joanna Ruth Marsland Chapel Hill | Jeanne Tannenbaum Greensboro |
| Tom Hanchett* Charlotte | Miranda M. Monroe Fayetteville | |

ADVISORY BOARD

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Sally Dalton Robinson, Chair and Russell Robinson Charlotte | Murphy and Helen Wolfe Evans Raleigh | Bill and Sandra Moore Chapel Hill |
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| | Paul and Martha Michaels Raleigh | Robert and Joan Zimmerman Charlotte |

THE LAST WORD

Bailes Old Mill
by Steve Lautermilch

Bailes Old Mill

Steve Lautermilch

THE STONE IS WHAT I REMEMBER, how the quarried stone blocks held the sun even as the light glinted and broke and scattered like chips from flint being worked to a point. The stream of water that funneled and flashed and raced beneath the old mill, and the paddles that took the force of the water and bore it for a while and then let it go, feeding it back to the stream, returning the water to the source where it began and would continue to play.

Fall, and the leaves on the maples already yellowing, the sumac ablaze with orange and vermilion, scarlet and crimson and lake. And the long, split pine logs, taking the sun at the front of the workshed, side by side and extending out of the shadow of the shed and into the light. The polyurethane finish, still wet and drying, slick and glistening and deep with the hues of the wood, the grain reflecting the colors of the leaves and repeating them in long rippling currents of red and yellow, orange and umber and scarlet and gold.

I'd just purchased an old Hasselblad camera, made in Sweden, one of the first of its kind, a camera as finely honed by hand and craft as the woodwork I was studying; and when the shadowy form of the craftsman, carpenter, and as it turned out the owner of the mill moved in the depths of the shed, I approached and



The Miller's Retreat. Split pine, workshed, Bailes Old Mill. Photo by Steve Lautermilch. ©2009

voiced the question that had brought me to a stand in front of his work.

A half hour later he was explaining how he had come to North Carolina, to this back road outside Greensboro, not far from what in time would be named the Triad International Airport, to purchase the old mill and begin restoring it to its original condition and use. After a year overseas, teaching and studying in Germany at the University in *Mainz am Rhein*, I was glad to be able to find a local supply of stone ground flour, intending to make a bread as rich and close in texture and crust as I could manage to the loaves sold in the bakeries on *Hintere Bleiche*, the backstreet where I'd lived for the first six months that earlier year.

Unbleached white, whole grain wheat, and Durham — I was still searching for the right proportions, working with the sourdough starter that was already ripening on the back porch.

The stream of water that funneled and flashed and raced beneath the old mill, and the paddles that took the force of the water and bore it for a while and then let it go, feeding it back to the stream, returning the water to the source where it began and would continue to play.

Twice a week, the four loaves would come from the oven; and after a month of trial and error I returned with a freshly baked loaf, a way of saying thanks and letting this trans-migrating, transplanted Scot sample my regard for his work, his place of labor, this mill by a stream.

The square set of the chin, the white shocks of hair streaked with both silver and black, the mustache that divided and bristled and curled over and around the upper lip — all embodied his homeland and heri-tage, but none so much as the lilt and music in his words as he spoke, and in the way he moved to those words, carried his shoulders and back, moved his arms and legs as he leaned to scoop the grain from the barrels and shovel the gold spill onto the conveyer to be ground.

As a young boy learning to play the piano I'd memorized from hours of practice the songs of the Scots; and as we talked the melodies and lyrics came back, as if under the current of the stream and within the rhythms of his sentences the old ballads were singing, strains of the Irish blending with the Scotch, lines from Annie Laurie, the refrain of *On the bonny bonny banks of Loch Lomond*.

Above the first story, constructed of stone, the working heart of the mill housed the great wood chutes that transported the grain, the wood railings and stanchions and rafters aged and burnished to a rubbed gold red; and the dust that rose from the grinding filtered through the grinding



Bailes Old Mill, also known as the Old Mill of Guilford, was founded along Beaver Creek in 1767 to grind corn for early settlers. Today the water-powered mill is fully operational and listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Photo by Steve Lautermilch. ©2009

A POET AND PHOTOGRAPHER, for ten years Steve Lautermilch of Kill Devil Hills has been exploring the sites and images of the first peoples in the far west. A new chapbook, *Fire Seed & Rain*, won the 2008 Longleaf Press competition. His photographs and poems have received major awards from *Kakalak*, *The Marlboro Review*, The New England Poetry Club, and the W. B. Yeats Society of New York.

room like a mist. Around the walls of the room and stacked in the corners were bulging burlap sacks, twenty-five-pound and fifty-pound sacks of ground meal, waiting alongside smaller, paper sacks of one, two, and five-pounds, ready to fill purchase orders and be delivered to restaurants and bakeries in the city.

But for all the strength and character of the wide planks that floored the place, for all the noise and clatter and pounding of the gears and chains in the mill works, it was the steady turning of the millwheel and the quiet flow of the stream that gave the mill power that marked the place and its proprietor. That turning, roiling quiet played under the language and through the build of the man, the way the dark depth of the mill stayed with me as I walked outside, leaving the shade and cool shadows for the warm sun and the stream.

Against the side wall, as I headed toward the water, a low window was covered in dust and blown grit; and between the frame of the stones that ledged and linteled the glass a pair of flower pots lay stacked, one within the other, covered in a loose wrap of plastic. The owner had not spoken of a wife or a lover; and I wondered, perhaps under the spell of the old ballads, if in his home town another story waited to be told.

Some distance beyond the mill, emerging from the rushes and cat-tails that grew along the banks of the stream, a wood footbridge ran from one side of the stream to the other, the long worn planks swaying and wobbling underfoot with a rhythm that eluded and defied any attempt



Photo by Steve Lautermilch. ©2009

That turning, roiling quiet played under the language and through the build of the man, the way the dark depth of the mill stayed with me as I walked outside, leaving the shade and cool shadows for the warm sun and the stream.

at a steady walk, allowing nothing but a touch and go, teeter-totter balance. At the side of the bridge, propped against a split rail fence, a great iron wheel stood erect, its circumference as large as a human standing with arms and legs outstretched.

Once maybe part of a wagon, maybe once drawn by a single horse or team of horses, the wheel stood idle, without purpose, of no intent or use. Across the center pair of spokes, radiating left and right and coming to a stop at the empty hub at the center, a snake was stretched, like the braided length of a rope that was done, completely through with knots, finished now with work and taking the sun.

Ouroboros. The world serpent that circles itself, swallowing and never swallowing its tail. The story and heart and mystery of a water wheel. *In my beginning is my end.*

The breads have gone, as loaves of breads will go; and the negatives of the pine benches and two flowerpots have been printed and filed. But the stones remain, there by the side road a little below the airport; and I believe if I returned to that mill, I could find that braided rope of a snake, or the snake's offspring, the kin of the snake, unthreatening, bathing in a warm sun. The stones, the waters, the harvest grain, the common snake. The pitch and current of the Scot's voice, like a stream moving through rushes, like grain entering the wood chute of a mill. Like benches of hard wood or soft that wear with age, like photographs that age and yellow but retain the impact of their images, the stones and the mill, the stream and grasses and that voice are of a kind, a character, a family; and it is in the nature, the way of such things, like the songs of a folk, to call to their kin, and endure.

EVENTS AND DEADLINES

Large Grants

For projects beginning after **July 15** and **December 15**

- Draft proposals are due **March 20** and **August 20**
- Final proposals are due **April 20** and **September 20**

Mini-Grants

Mini-grant applications must arrive at the Humanities Council office by the **first day of the month** to be considered for funding within the same calendar month.

Planning Grants

There is **no deadline** for a planning grant.

Road Scholars

Road Scholars applications must be made at least **four weeks** in advance of the requested program.

Let's Talk About It

Let's Talk About It grant applications are due at least **eight weeks** prior to the start date of a series.

Council Board Meetings

- **June 12, 2009**
- **September 12, 2009**
- **November 13, 2009**

New Board Member Nominations

Nominations for new Council Board members must arrive in the Council office by **April 15, 2009**.

Linda Flowers Literary Award

Entries must be postmarked by **August 20, 2009**.

Teachers Institute Application Deadlines

- "North Carolina Textile Heritage: Stories of Mill Workers," **March 31, 2009**
- "The Culture of Textiles in North Carolina: Past, Present, and Future," **April 6, 2009**
- "The Segregated South through Autobiography, 1890s–1960s," **August 17, 2009**

WINTER 2009

WWW.NCHUMANITIES.ORG



NORTH CAROLINA
HUMANITIES
COUNCIL

MANY STORIES, ONE PEOPLE

The mission of the North Carolina Humanities Council is to support through grants and public programs vital conversations that nurture the cultures and heritage of North Carolina. The North Carolina Humanities Council is a statewide nonprofit and affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

NORTH CAROLINA CONVERSATIONS



NORTH CAROLINA
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