Center for the Book
at the
New Hampshire
State Library

Book Notes

Spring 2006 Vol. 2 , Issue 1

Adult Literacy in the Granite State

By Rebecca Albert
Chair, New Hampshire Center for the Book Advisory Board

When I came to New Hampshire 18 years ago, to interview for the newly created position of Literacy Coordinator at the NH State Library, I had no experience with or knowledge of adults who couldn't read. On the plane from Kentucky, where I had recently completed my master's degree in Library Science, I skimmed through Jonathan Kozol's *Illiterate America* (still an excellent exposé of the issue) so that I wouldn't come across as totally unqualified for the job. What I learned while reading sections of that book (and later finishing it, of course) is that there are millions of Americans who lead quiet lives of uncertainty and shame, where they can't read their own utility bills, medical information or a daily newspaper, and they spend enormous amounts of energy trying to hide this fact from family, friends and employers. Fortunately for me, I was offered that job and stepped onto a career path that brought me greater satisfaction and personal growth than I ever would have imagined.

The adult "students" that I met throughout my 12 years at the State Library taught me that all people have potential for greatness, and that greatness comes in many forms. I came to know many individuals who were successful business owners, loving parents, generous caretakers, and enthusiastic learners. They shared what many of them felt was a dark and shameful secret – the inability to read the most basic texts, or compute simple financial transactions. After years of hiding their secret, having spouses or co-workers do their reading and cover for them, they took the most courageous step of admitting their need and seeking help. Their lives were enriched and transformed by conquering the written word and discovering the power of books. I shared the fears and the triumphs of many of these people through the exceptional *Connections* program.

In the 1990's, New Hampshire was at the forefront of a now national program to conduct book discussion programs for adult literacy students using children's literature. *Connections* was developed by librarians and adult educators in Vermont, and later in New Hampshire and Maine, to mirror humanities-type reading and discussion programs. *Connections* still exists today as part of the NH Humanities Council's Humanities-To-Go catalog. There are currently 15 different series of *Connections* programs available.

Award-winning and classic children's books are grouped by theme and provided free of charge to students in participating literacy programs. The students and their tutors or teachers meet monthly in the local public library to discuss the books and the themes with the librarian and a humanities scholar. The level of discussion and reflection demonstrated at these programs met or even surpassed my personal experiences of traditional book discussion programs. I found it simply joyous to be with adults who were discovering the power of books for the first time in their lives, who completed a book for the first time ever, and recognized that the story has personal meaning and value. Many young parents in these programs find the courage to read a book aloud to a child for the first time. Laughter and tears are shared as much as insights and ideas. And, most encouraging, so many people visit their public library for the first time, and find it to be a welcoming and friendly place.

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New Hampshire Books

By Donna Gilbreth

Gina Barreca, a professor at the University of Connecticut, has written an intriguing memoir of her student years at Dartmouth College. The book is *Babes in Boyland: A Personal History of Co-education in the Ivy League*. Ms. Barreca arrived at Dartmouth in 1975 soon after they began admitting female students. At the time, many at Dartmouth did not take kindly to their new co-educational status and sported banners stating "Better Dead than Co-Ed." In addition to being one of a few females on campus, Ms. Barreca's family background made her feel even more at odds with the Dartmouth environment. She grew up in the New York metropolitan area in a working class family of French-Canadian and Italian backgrounds. She felt out of place among the many WASP students from prep school backgrounds at Dartmouth. Ms. Barreca comments on her first day at college that "I feel like Margaret Mead in her first day among the Samoans. Actually, I feel more like a Samoan among a thousand Margaret Meads." Ms. Barreca's humor, sometimes caustic, protected her during these difficult Dartmouth years and makes this memoir fun to read.

The author describes her youth and family life, setting the scene for the person she has become when she arrives in New Hampshire at age eighteen. Her lower middle class youth in the city did not prepare her for an elite, mostly male college in the New Hampshire woods. She felt out of touch with many at Dartmouth. She describes the friends she makes as "too urban, too shy, too ethnic, too working class, too outrageous, too intellectual, too subversive to be accommodated by the mainstream…." She and her friends counter the fraternity society at Dartmouth by forming an unofficial sorority, Tau Iota Tau (TIT), whose motto was "They may be small, but there are those who love them." Ms. Barreca also relates her experience studying abroad in England for one year. Upon returning to Dartmouth she decides to graduate early before her companions. Although eager to leave New Hampshire at the time, almost thirty years later she regrets her rush to leave the school.

Ms. Barreca keeps the tone light in this memoir of adjusting to an alien environment. She is a very amusing writer yet she doesn't trivialize her experiences. She conveys her insecurities, awkwardness and fears as she progresses through her college years. I related to the author's experiences, as someone who also went to college in the 1970s and sometimes felt out of place.

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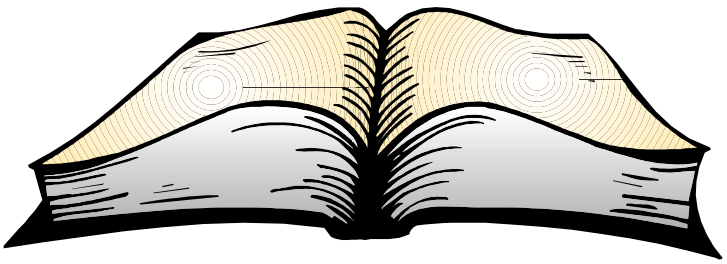

Bow Elementary School and the Ladybug Picture Book Awards

By Kay Herrick
Media Generalist,
Bow Elementary School

Bow Elementary School in Bow, New Hampshire participated in the New Hampshire Ladybug Picture Book Award program for the first time in 2005. In the spring of 2005 I decided it would be fun and would promote interest in current picture books in our school, which has approximately 425 students in kindergarten through third grade, to participate in the Ladybug program. I had read the 2004 winner ***My Lucky Day*** by Keiko Kasza to many of our classes in the spring of 2005. Students and teachers thoroughly enjoyed this book. I was concerned about providing sufficient copies of the nominees for exposure to all of the students in a limited amount of time. Also, I was concerned about having adults in the school community buy into and support the Ladybug program. Sue Kurtz, Reach Coordinator in the Gifted and Talented program, and I had worked together to support The Great Stone Face Award with fourth graders at Bow Elementary so we agreed to work together to coordinate the Ladybug Picture Book Award. I purchased two copies of the ten 2005 Ladybug Picture Book Award nominees for the library/media center.

After we got back to school in September I decided we would need another copy of each title to create maximum interest in the books by focusing the interest for a limited amount of time prior to voting during Children's Book Week. The program was kicked off at the October Showcase -- an entire school assembly. Mrs. Kurtz and I appeared dressed as ladybugs to introduce the Ladybug Picture Book Award. We used the visual presenter to project the illustrations on the wall as Mrs. Kurtz, dressed in winter attire, read ***Winter Woes*** to the entire school. Everyone became enthusiastic about the Ladybug program!

Students in first, second, and third grade art classes created two and three-dimensional ladybugs which were used to decorate bulletin boards in the school foyer and library/media center. One copy of each nominated title was always on display for students to peruse when they were in the library/media center.

We were very fortunate to have guest readers from the community come into Bow Elementary to read some of the books to our students. Jennifer Ericsson from Baker Free Library in Bow read ***My Little Sister Hugged an Ape*** and Laura Lafreniere, a BES parent, shared ***Skippyjon Jones*** with our students. They read to the entire grade levels of six classes each in the library/media center. As a special treat Ann Hoey from the New Hampshire State Library, who chairs The Ladybug Picture Book Award committee, made a visit to Bow Elementary and read ***Moo Who*** to three classes. Several classes had the pleasure of listening to staff member Naomi Parris, dressed as a cow, read ***Moo Who***. In addition to listening to the story ***I Wanna Iguana***, students made origami envelopes with Mrs. Kurtz. This was a great opportunity for students to examine polygons. Classroom teachers and I read the remaining titles to students.

Voting took place in the classrooms during Children's Book Week. Bow Elementary students selected ***Skippyjon Jones*** as our winning title. Following the week of voting, Mrs. Kurtz created graphs depicting the voting with individual classrooms. "Ladybug Books" have been moving in and out of the library/media center. I feel we have justified the expenditure for three copies of each of the ladybug nominees and the entire school community supported the program. Students and staff are looking forward to participating in the 2006 Ladybug Picture Book Award.

2006 Ladybug Nominees

The Best Pet of All by David LaRochelle & Hanako Wakiyama
The Dancing Tiger by Malachy Doyle & Steve Lou
The Dog Who Cried Wolf by Keiko Kasza
The Great Fuzz Frenzy by Janet Stevens & Susan Stevens Crummel
Henry and the Buccaneer Bunnies by Carolyn Crimi & John Manders
I Ain't Gonna Paint No More! by Karen Beaumont & David Catrow
Llama Llama Red Pajama by Anna Dewdney
Mr. Tuggle's Troubles by LeeAnn Blankenship & Karen Dugan
Our Tree Named Steve by Alan Zweibel & David Catrow
Terrific by Jon Agee

Letters About Literature
Read. Be Inspired. Write Back.

by Mary A. Russell

Letters About Literature (LAL) is a reading and writing promotion program of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, presented in partnership with Target Stores and the state Centers for the Book. To enter, young readers are asked to write a personal letter to an author explaining how his or her work changed their view of the world or themselves. Readers select authors from any genre—fiction or nonfiction, contemporary or classic, novels or poems or plays. The contest theme encourages young readers to explore their personal response to a book and then express that response in a creative, original way.

Four hundred elementary, middle school, and high school students from New Hampshire sent letters for the 2006 LAL competition. Two groups of readers working on behalf of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress read over 47,000 letters from students throughout the United States and selected semi-finalists for each participating state. There were twenty eight essays selected as New Hampshire's semi-finalists. The books that inspired the semi-finalist letters cover a wide range of topics and genres – fact, fiction, poetry, even comic strips. The complete list of titles that inspired 2006 LAL entries is available on our web site.

In recognition of their accomplishment, each New Hampshire student who wrote a semi-finalist letter received a certificate and a bookmark depicting the 2006 inspirational titles at their competition level. There were three competition levels in New Hampshire this year: level I included students in grades 4-6; level II included 7th and 8th graders; and level III included students in grades 9-12. The semi-finalist essays at each level were sent to a panel of New Hampshire judges who will select a state winner at each level. The essays of these state winners will be sent on to Washington, D.C. for the national competition.

The 2006 New Hampshire winners will be announced by early April at www.nh.gov/nhsl/bookcenter/programs/letters. Winning letters from previous years are available there as well. Competition guidelines, materials for teachers, entry coupons and other details of the 2007 Letters About Literature competition will be available on our web site in the fall. Meanwhile, read, be inspired, and get ready to write back!

Congratulations to the 2006 NH Semi-finalists

Anna Hochgraf – Durham
Ashley Jones – Brentwood
Brad Fagan – Hampton Falls
Cardin Kennedy – Hollis
Cynthia Bennet – Stoddard
Dillon McNulty – Exeter
Elias Kim – Merrimack
Emma Pancoast – Goffstown
Greg Melanson - Wolfeboro
Henry Jones – Keene
Isabel Bowser – Henniker
Isabel Starr – Hollis
Jonathan Bower – Hollis
José Carrasquillo – Londonderry
Joseph R. Cabral – Pelham
Kerry L. Cabral – Pelham
Kylee Drugan-Eppich – Madbury
Meg Schwenzfeier – Lee
Ryan Heden – Hollis
Sara Heard – Brookline
Sarah Holt – Kensington
Stacy Russek – Londonderry
Stephanie Brady – Newmarket
Stephanie Leverone – Londonderry
Steve Therrien – Exeter
Tess Nicholson – Durham
Toni Theriault – Kingston
Victoria Rines – Hollis

Award Notes

New Hampshire is home to several book awards and details about each of them are included on the Center's web site at www.nh.gov/nhsl/bookcenter/literacyc/awards.html

Cochecho Readers' Award

The Cochecho Readers' Award is sponsored by the Children's Librarians of Dover, New Hampshire. The award is named after the Cochecho River which runs through the heart of Dover. This award is given each year to an author whose book receives the most votes from third and fourth graders in the city. Each year a team of school and public librarians select 26 titles published within the last three years for the children to vote on during National Library Week in April. The criteria for selection are quality of writing and child appeal. Children are required to read or listen to at least three of the titles on the list in order to vote. Children then vote for their favorite book during National Library Week in April at the school libraries. Ballots are also available at the Dover Public Library for home schooled children and for those attending private schools.

The Flume: NH Teen Readers' Choice Award

Now in its second year, the Flume Award is given for a work of interest to New Hampshire teens in grades 9-12. This April, high school students will vote for their favorite book from a list of 13 titles. All of the titles were nominated by students in grades 9-12 and include fiction and nonfiction works. This past winter, Nicole Copple of Keene won the Flume Award logo contest. She received a gift certificate to Barnes and Noble for her winning design, which will be used for promotional materials.

Isinglass Teen Read Award

The Isinglass Teen Read Award for 7th & 8th graders in NH will finalize the new list for 2006-2007 in April and release it by May 8th. Check http://www.barringtonlibrary.com under the Teen Zone button for the new list, book descriptions, cover art, and a list of past winners. The 2005-2006 winner will be announced on May 15th. Children may vote for their favorite book at many local school and public libraries by May 1st, 2006. If your town is not participating and you'd like to vote, send your selection to blibrary@metrocast.net.

Great Stone Face Award

The Children's Librarians of NH have chosen 25 new titles for students grades four through six to read and consider for the 2005-2006 Great Stone Face Award. Voting will take place during National Library Week in April 2006 and students will have the chance to vote for their favorite book from the list. The winning author will be announced in May 2006 at the New Hampshire Libraries Conference during the Great Stone Face Tea. *The City of Ember* by Jeanne DuPrau won last year's GSF Book Award with 699 votes out of a total of 6124 votes cast by children in grades 4 to 6 throughout NH.

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The Park Street Foundation serves as the fiscal agent of the Center for the Book at the NH State Library and is a tax-exempt 501c(3) organization. Your contribution is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Center for the Book at the New Hampshire State Library
20 Park Street,
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Adult Literacy in the Granite State

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Today, the number of adults in the United States who need help with day to day reading and math skills has not changed significantly since I came to NH in 1988. In 1992 and again in 2003, the National Center for Education Statistics conducted the National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) to measure the literacy skills of adults aged 16 or older. An improvement over previous studies which relied on self-reporting of literacy skills, this assessment was specifically designed to measure prose, and document quantitative literacy skills by asking respondents to demonstrate their understanding of texts and ability to complete tasks. In both 1992 and 2003, 14% of the adult population, approximately 30 million people, were found to not read well enough to complete the most basic literacy tasks that we are all faced with on a daily basis: understanding medical information and prescription drug instructions, reading a bus schedule, the electric bill or a restaurant menu, helping their children with homework, and keeping up with the latest headlines. NAAL also measured quantitative literacy skills, and found that in 2003, 22% of adults over the age of 16 could not complete basic computations. For the complete NAAL report, sample survey questions, demographics and key findings, visit http://nces.ed.gov/naal/.

Fortunately, New Hampshire adult learners have available a wide variety of programs to meet their educational needs. State-run programs, local school districts and public libraries offer free services to teach reading and basic math skills. One adult returning to school may choose an Adult Diploma Program, taking high school level classes in the evening. Another may prefer the small group or individual learning environment of Adult Learner Services. Others may seek GED (General Equivalency Diploma) Preparation classes. Many who arrive here from other countries look for help at ESOL classes (English for Speakers of Other Languages).

The New Hampshire Department of Education's Bureau of Adult Education provides grants to school districts and private not-for-profit organizations for the purposes of offering educational services to adults who have not received a high school diploma or GED certificate, or do not read, write or speak English.

Local adult education programs, formerly known as Adult Tutorial Programs (ATP's) and now called Adult Learner Services Programs (ALS's), serve adult learners whose skills range from very basic to high school level.

In New Hampshire, the population of adults enrolled in adult education programs is increasingly ESOL. In one small program in the southern part of the state, more than half of the students are aged 25-44. One quarter are aged 45–59, while 10% are 19-to-24-year-olds. Interestingly, women outnumber men in this program 3 to 1. The number of young students dropping out of high school and seeking a GED as an alternative to a diploma is increasing. However, overall program enrollment has been consistent for several years.
If you know of someone who has difficulty with reading and is ready to seek help, please refer them to the NH Bureau of Adult Education for a listing of programs.

While I have moved on to a different career path in recent years, I will be always grateful for the experiences and enrichment I gained from working in the field of adult literacy. While researching this article, I was pleased to discover that the programs and people I worked with years ago are as strong as ever. While we hope that one day there will no longer be a need for programs to teach adults to read, we can be encouraged by the fact that New Hampshire has dedicated educators offering so many options for the adults who are still in need today.

Resources for Adult Literacy

Illiterate America by Jonathan Kozol. (Anchor Press, 1985.)

New Hampshire Department of Education
Bureau of Adult Education 603-271-6698

New Hampshire Humanities Council
Connections Program 603-224-4071

The Center for the Book at the NH State Library maintains a list of web-based literacy resources, including the agencies mentioned in this article at www.nh.gov/nhsl/bookcenter/literacyc/promoting

Granite State Readers Recommend

We invite readers from around the state to tell us about a book that they would recommend to others. Here is a selection of the recommendations that we received recently. Please check out the complete list of Granite State readers' recommendations and tell us about a book that you would recommend by visiting our web site at www.nh.gov/nhsl/bookcenter/programs.

Durham, NH
Zelda Moore
If you like surreal, metaphysical, contemporary Japanese novels (and WHO doesn't?), try Haruki Murakami's *Kafka On the Shore*. What fun!

New Boston, NH
Howard McDowell
Occasional reader
The Magus by John Fowles. A strange journey but a great read!
To See Every Bird On Earth by Dan Koeppel. Interesting look into the world of bird watching and the kind of people who would devote a lifetime to it.

Portsmouth, NH
Charles A. Le Blanc
Supervisor - NHAIS Services @ NHSL
One Good Turn: A Natural History of the Screwdriver and the Screw by Witold Rybczynski.This is hardly a page turner, however the subject pulls you deeper and deeper until you're wrapped in early Middle Ages military history. From there the Industrial Revolution seems like a natural progression for this subject because of the turns that better previous fasteners. There's more to this title than simply a good turn.

Tuftonboro, NH
Cindy Barnard
Reader
The Power of One by Bryce Courtenay is excellent. Characters leap off the page right from the first page. The author describes events so well that sometimes I had to put the book down for a few minutes to catch my breath. The setting is South Africa and you feel that YOU ARE THERE. This is a story about apartheid, about the human spirit and about faith.

Tuftonboro, NH
Patricia W. Osmond
Board Member, Friends of the Library
Neither Foreigners nor Strangers by Nokolai Arjannikov and Jeannie Ferber, Andover Green, Alton c2005. The authors founded ACCESS TO IDEAS, a nonprofit, to promote understanding between Russia and the US by opening libraries in Russian villages. In five years, seven libraries have been opened and furnished with 4000+ books. A wonderful tale amply illustrated with photos of the vast Russian landscape and the beautiful and loving people they met. Proceeds from the sale of this book support their work.

Tuftonboro, NH
Bob Osmond
Legacy of a Spy by Henry Maxfield, Southwick Publishers, c1958, republished 1986. One of the best spy novels I have ever read. A fast moving, suspenseful tale of espionage and counterintelligence with convincing characters. Maxfield's background, Army Air Corps in WWII and the CIA, adds credibility to a great read. He also wrote *Another Spring,* depicting New Hampshire life fifty years ago in a small town: humor, romance, seduction and fascinating characters -- a fun read.

Some notes about the Merrimack County Adult Learner Services Program

by Susan Bubp
Adult Learner Services Coordinator, Second Start

A part of Second Start in Concord, The Merrimack County Adult Learner Services Program offers tutoring and classes for adult learners throughout Merrimack County. Each county in the state has a similar program.

Right now there are approximately 80 students enrolled in the program. The major shift in demographics in the Merrimack County ALS Program has been the increase of refugees to the Concord Area. Over the past five years, we have seen a population shift of the refugee population from families from Afghanistan to families and single people from many African countries. Many of the students from Africa are from cultures that have no written language, while others come from literate cultures, but they themselves have had no education at all. Consequently, the challenge has been to learn about approaches to literacy and learning about life in America for these students.

However, although there is slightly higher enrollment of ESOL students this year, there continues to be amazing diversity of adult students. Teens seem to be more at home in the classes or alternative high school program that Second Start offers. The core group of Connections students is still coming together (I think they've been coming for over ten years!), welcoming a handful of newcomers to the group every year. Although they only meet four times a year, it seems like a highpoint in many of their lives.

Some people come to the ALS Program to fill a nagging void in their lives…they want to be able to read. Others know that without more education, they will be stuck in dead-end jobs. Others come and stay because they have a wonderful bond with their tutor, and both are engaged in learning and laughter at every session.

Harriet E. Wilson: NH's Pre-Civil War Black Author

By Stasia B. Millett
and Mabelle Barnett
of The Harriet Wilson Project

In 1859, Harriet Wilson, a native of Milford, New Hampshire, left her imprint on history. Struggling to save herself and her son from the poorhouse, she chose a bold, creative, and courageous action: she wrote and published a novel. Her book, *Our Nig; or Sketches From the Life of a Free Black*, became the first known novel published by a black woman and the first novel published in the United States by an African American. Despite this accomplishment, the woman Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., called the "mother of the African-American novel" remained in relative obscurity in her home state until 2002. That was when an ethnically diverse group of women came together to form The Harriet Wilson Project with the aim of honoring Wilson and educating the public about her life and the contributions of African Americans to New England's culture and history.

Overview of the Novel

In this blended autobiography, 19th-century sentimental novel and slave narrative, the author, Harriet Wilson, tells the story of Frado, or (as cruelly called by her mistress) "Our Nig." Frado, like Harriet, is a racially mixed child abandoned by her white mother to grow up as a servant in the Belmont household in the heart of "abolitionist territory." While there, she is cruelly abused for twelve years, having only minor emotional and physical support from two family members. Finally, at the age of eighteen she gains her freedom -- and one silver dollar -- and leaves the Belmont family home. Weak and sickly after years of severe abuse, Frado tries to earn a living out on her own. She eventually marries a fugitive slave named Tom, a lecturer on the Abolitionist circuit. However, after her son is born, Frado is once again abandoned, this time by her husband, and now must find a way to support both herself and her child. The novel ends with the author speaking in her own voice and appealing for support from her readers not through donations, but through the purchase of her book.

Background

Wilson, however, was not successful in receiving remuneration for the book. Research done by England's Professor Eric Gardner shows that *Our Nig* was mainly purchased by adults and given to children. The novel seems to fall in the category of many books of the 1800s that were written for children but were statements of the political structure of the day. And it was not until detailed research was undertaken that it was determined that the book was written by a black woman and not, as widely assumed, by a white man because of its wording and sophisticated structure. It is ironic that in the 20th and start of the 21st century this groundbreaking novel continues to be neglected by US audiences while it is studied in foreign countries for its unconventional treatment of issues central to women's writings, race, power and class.

"It is ironic that . . . this groundbreaking novel continues to be neglected by US audiences while it is studied in foreign countries for its unconventional treatment of issues central to women's writings, race, power and class."

The Research

Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., chair of African and African American Studies and the Director of the W.E.B. Dubois Institute for Afro-American Research at Harvard University, discovered the 1859 novel languishing in a bookstore in Chelsea, N.Y., and re-published it in 1983. Dr. Barbara White, Professor Emeritus of Women's Studies at the University of New Hampshire in Durham, herself an author of seven books on influential women writers, wrote the afterword to the Gates edition of Wilson's novel. Both Drs. Gates and White researched the novel from a chronological and genealogical point of view. Scholar R. J. Ellis, who at the time his two editions were printed was a Reader in English and American Studies at the Nottingham Trent University in England, explored and compared Wilson's writing style with other blended genres. Further, he identified the introductory poetry heading each chapter in the book. Gabrielle Foreman, an Associate Professor of English and American Studies at Occidental College, Los Angeles, and Reginald H. Pitts, Historical Researcher and Genealogical Consultant from Philadelphia, did extensive genealogical research of Harriet Wilson. Prior to their research, it was assumed that Wilson died in 1863 after her book was published. However, the Foreman/Pitts edition of *Our Nig,* published in 2005,

revealed that Wilson became a well-known spiritualist lecturer until her death in 1900.

Acknowledging Wilson's Legacy

From time immemorial, civilizations, nations, and towns have preserved their history through public art. These memorials, symbolic representations of an official history, often commemorate and validate men and women for their historic deeds. However it is not unusual for an important historical figure to go unheralded or to slip from our collective memory. It has been so for Harriet E. Wilson. Despite Wilson's innovative contribution to American literature and her prominent place in American history, for 145 years she has remained in relative obscurity in her hometown and state. Many local people did not know that this pre-Civil War woman from Milford, New Hampshire, made history when she penned and published her novel in 1859.

In April 2002, The Harriet Wilson Project was formed by a group of ethnically diverse women who came together as a response to an editorial in a local paper claiming that Wilson's book should only be studied at the university level. In 2003 it was incorporated as a 501 c (3) organization. The goal of The Project is to raise awareness of Wilson, educate the community and students on her role in American literature, and to commemorate her for her achievements. Members of The Project began visiting schools, libraries, and civic organizations, holding book and scholar-studded panel discussions. In May 2004, the Project presented a huge celebratory event in Milford to officially acknowledge and welcome the town's most famous daughter: Harriet Wilson. The event, hosted by Dr. Gates, was attended by over 450 people. As a result of these events and a recent area Read-A-Thon, Wilson's book is now being studied in some area high schools and has given impetus to the exploration of books written by other minority writers.

Ensuring the Legacy

The Harriet Wilson Project has moved to its next step of creating a permanent memorial in her honor. Under the auspices of The Project, Bicentennial Park, a site in downtown Milford was selected, then approved by the town's Board of Selectmen. Renowned sculptor Fern Cunningham, creator of the Harriet Tubman Memorial in Boston, has been commissioned to create a full-size sculpture of The Harriet Wilson Memorial. By giving visual authority to Wilson, this memorial, the first to commemorate a New Hampshire citizen of color, will send a clear and unequivocal message of inclusion to the state's growing and culturally diverse population.

NH Books

continued from p. 2

Others have written of their experiences at Dartmouth College over the years. Below is a sampling of memoirs of life at Dartmouth.

Barreca, Gina. *Babes in Boyland: A Personal History of Co-education in the Ivy League*. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2005.

Hart, Benjamin. *Poisoned Ivy*. New York, NY: Stein and Day, 1984.
Hart was a member of the Dartmouth class of 1981 and a founder of the conservative paper *The Dartmouth Review.* Unlike Barreca, Hart was a third generation Dartmouth student who grew up in nearby Vermont.

Heussler, Robert. *Interlude in the Forties: Memories of Dartmouth and the War*. Lunenburg, VT: The Stinehour Press, 1980.
Heussler came to Dartmouth as a freshman in the fall of 1942. By early 1943 he was a member of the Dartmouth Squadron, a volunteer unit of the Army Air Corps. After the war about half the members of the squadron returned to Dartmouth to complete their studies. The author graduated in 1946.

Kemeny, Jean Alexander. *It's Different at Dartmouth: A Memoir*. Brattleboro, VT: Stephen Greene Press, 1979.
A slightly different perspective from Kemeny, wife of John Kemeny, 13th President of Dartmouth College (1970-1981). This is an interesting counterpoint to Barreca's book, offering different perspectives on life at Dartmouth in the 1970s.

Willey, Samuel Hopkins. *Dartmouth, 1840-1845: A Reminiscence.* Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College Library, 1955.
A very brief recollection of his college years by the author. After attending Dartmouth and Union Theological Seminary, Willey traveled to the territory of California in 1848. He became a prominent minister in San Francisco and co-founder of the College of California, which later became the University of California.

New Hampshire Library Association

By Brian Hackert
Reference Librarian,
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The New Hampshire Library Association (NHLA) is a professional association of library personnel, trustees and library supporters. The NHLA works on behalf of libraries to generally maintain and improve conditions of libraries throughout the Granite State. The Association benefits library users through a wide variety of activities that make libraries more efficient and more responsive to their customers. The official NHLA mission is "to advance the interests of its members through advocacy on library issues and increasing public awareness of library service." That means we work as a team to keep all libraries in New Hampshire up to date, useful, accessible and ready when you need us.

The NHLA sometimes encourages the state and towns and schools to provide enough money for the newest and best resources for all of you readers and researchers out there. There are many things that will make library users more effective at completing projects for school, work or home, and libraries dedicate themselves to helping people achieve their goals. We know libraries deliver better service when they can afford space for books, new technologies and highly skilled staff people. With good libraries and good librarians, communities improve the lives of all their residents.

One of the goals of the Center for the Book at the New Hampshire State Library is to promote the many organizations throughout the state whose work supports our mission of celebrating and promoting reading, books, literacy, and the literary heritage of New Hampshire. The New Hampshire Library Association is one of these organizations and this profile is part of a continuing series of articles on members of New Hampshire's literary community.

Libraries are proud to help students get good grades on their history papers and book reports. Librarians feel gratified to help consumers find the best car at the best price, and to help them learn the basics of buying a house. We are fulfilled to see your delighted young children start learning about books at storytimes, and we are rewarded to see the library become an important part of each child's intellectual and emotional development. The New Hampshire Library Association gets librarians together in order to make them all better at their jobs, by showing them what to know and getting them what they need. In turn, NHLA members help to produce smarter, happier and more successful community members.

The New Hampshire Library Association was formed in 1889 and is the oldest statewide library association established by legislation in the nation. New Hampshire has always been at the vanguard of library service to the general public, with such historic milestones as the first American public library in Peterborough in 1833, and the first state law authorizing all towns to raise money for public libraries in 1849. Today the NHLA includes the following divisions that specialize in certain services or types of libraries: Academic Libraries, Children's Librarians (CHILIS), Reference & Adult Services (READS), Small Libraries, Urban Libraries and the Young Adult Librarians (YALS). CHILIS and READS are two divisions which frequently promote interactive programs for groups, which encourage regular library users to keep coming back, and which attract new library users who begin to notice how much we can mean to them. Keep an eye out in your town for interesting happenings at your library.

The Children's Librarians of New Hampshire (CHILIS) is the section of the New Hampshire Library Association comprised of public and school librarians working to provide high quality library services to Granite State youth. Bedford Public Library's Luci Albertson is the current CHILIS president, and CHILIS has its own board and several active committees. Some of its major activities include the New Hampshire Summer Reading Program, the sponsorship of statewide book awards and two annual conferences devoted to youth services. More information about CHILIS and its programs can be found on the CHILIS website at http://www.chilisnh.org/. Pam Darlington from the Exeter Public Library maintains the website.

If you have kids or you are a kid, it's not too early to start thinking of great books to enjoy this coming summer, when the youngsters can

read what they want to instead of what they have to. CHILIS enables them to participate with other young readers in fun activities that reflect the importance of books all year round. New Hampshire libraries will welcome pirates, treasure and daring adventures of the high seas this summer as they celebrate "Treasure Reading" during the 2006 New Hampshire Summer Reading Program. Shiver me timbers — new this summer are the full-color reading log and the full-color certificate. The "Treasure Reading" t-shirt has a front and back design! Go take a look at it on the Laconia Public Library website at www.laconialibrary.org/ChilisSummerReading.htm. If you think it's as cool as I think it is, make sure you talk to your school or children's librarian about getting one. I already asked Peterborough Town Library's Lisa Bearce to save one for me (if we have any left after the kids, of course).

READS stands for REference & ADult Services, which relate to many aspects of the public library. Amherst Town Library's Sarah Leonardi is the current READS president. READS provides programming and communication opportunities to library staff working in reference, circulation, technical services and interlibrary loan. Throughout the year, READS sponsors events that are designed to meet the diverse and ever-changing needs of libraries in New Hampshire. A recent READS workshop for librarians featured the subject of book groups, or reading clubs, where members all read one book and get together to discuss it afterward. The READS workshop taught librarians how to start new groups and how to improve established groups. By encouraging libraries to organize forums for people who are excited about sharing ideas with one another, READS seeks to strengthen bonds among fellow readers, and between patrons and their libraries, fostering the role of libraries as community centers.

Stimulating literary programs may be going on now in your town, so check your local library bulletin board or ask your library staff about book groups and other activities that you can join. Chances are a new group may be starting, or an old one may be reaching out or sprucing up. If you've ever yearned to talk with others about literature and about life, this spring could be just the time to finally do it.

If you have kids taking part in the CHILIS summer reading programs each year, or if you take part in a reading discussion group every month, or if you come to the library just because it is a place you like to be, then the New Hampshire Library Association is looking out for you. NHLA looks out for you by looking out for your librarians, who are always ready to help you find something important, whether it be the friendship of a good book or the answer to a tough question.

IMPAC Dublin Literary Award Winner to be Announced in June 2006

by Alice Nye

On June 14th, members of the New Hampshire nomination panel participating in the IMPAC Dublin Literary Award's pre-selection process will have their sights set toward Ireland, where the 2006 winner will be announced. At £100,000, the prestigious award is the largest literary prize in the world today.

The NH State Library is one of 180 nominating libraries from 124 cities in 43 countries that recommended titles for the upcoming award. For a full listing of all the IMPAC Dublin Literary Award novels in contention, as well as those shortlisted (to be announced on April 5) visit http://www.nh.gov/nhsl/bookcenter/programs.

Books eligible for the 2006 award must have been first published in English in 2004 or, if a translation, published in its original language between 2000 and 2004.

New Hampshire's nominees were: *There is Room for You* by New Hampshire author Charlotte Bacon; *My Nine Lives* by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala; and *Shadow of the Wind* by Carlos Ruiz Zafon.

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http://www.nh.gov/nhsl/bookcenter

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Center for the Book
at the New Hampshire State Library
20 Park Street Concord, NH 03301

The mission of the Center for the Book at the NH State Library is to celebrate and promote reading, books, literacy, and the literary heritage of New Hampshire and to highlight the role that reading and libraries play in enriching the lives of the people of the Granite State.

LC Center for the Book Co-Sponsors Art Exhibition on "The Exploration of Place"

Meridian International Center, which brought the *Troubled Images* exhibit to the New Hampshire State Library in 2003, has launched a new exhibit in partnership with the Library of Congress Center for the Book. This fourth exhibit in Meridian International's widely acclaimed series drawn from children's picture books is entitled *This is Our Land: Discovering America and the World through Original Illustrations from Children's Books*. On view between February 18 and April 30, 2006 at Meridian's Cafritz Galleries in Washington, D.C., the exhibit includes 80 original artworks by 80 well-known illustrators depicting pastimes and natural wonders from all 50 states, together with images of life in 20 other countries around the world. Its theme is "exploration of place," whether discovering a neighborhood, learning about nature, exploring one's roots locally, or finding America and the world through travel.

"The Center for the Book is delighted to be a partner in this exhibition, which will tour the country under the auspices of Meridian's Traveling Exhibition Service," said Center for the Book in the Library of Congress Director John Y. Cole. "The important connections among place, books, and reading are a vital part of the Center for the Book's national program. Among our state affiliates, it's great that the New Hampshire Center for the Book has been able to participate in our wonderful 'Exploration of Place' traveling exhibit with the Meridian International Center."

To represent the Granite State an illustration by Emily Arnold McCully from Donald Hall's book *Old Home Day* was chosen. "The NH choice was based on art style and quality – but also on the book text/content and how this will tell a story about your state to readers outside NH. There are wonderful illustrations of the mountains – and it has a good NH feel to it. We were delighted to find this book; the artwork is in the collection at UConn, Storrs, and they were kind enough to lend it to us," explained Curtis Sandberg, Ph.D., Director of Exhibitions for Meridian International Center. The exhibit also includes an illustration by Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher from *The Range Eternal,* written by Louise Erdrich, formerly of Cornish, New Hampshire.