



Reading is for Everyone

By John Barrett

*Regional Librarian,
Talking Book Services, NHSL*

Books and reading are important because they give people a form to interpret fact and fiction to make their lives more productive and meaningful. This is as true for the visually disabled as it is for the sighted community. "Blind and physically handicapped individuals are entitled to high quality free public library service with access to all information, books, and materials perceived as useful," says Frank Kurt Cylke, Director of the Library of Congress National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS/BPH).

Library service for the blind in the U.S. began in the late nineteenth century. The Boston Public Library established a department for the blind after receiving eight embossed volumes – with raised text readable by touch – as early as 1868. New York became the first state to create a department for the blind in a state library in 1896. The concept of a national library for the blind was developed in 1897 by John Russell Young, the Librarian of Congress, when he established a reading room for the blind with about 500 books and music items in raised characters. Congress in 1913 provided that, under government subsidy, one copy of each book in raised characters made for educational purposes was to be deposited in the Library of Congress by the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) of Louisville, Kentucky. In 1930, identical bills were introduced in Congress by Represent-

tative Ruth Pratt (H.R. 11365) and Senator Reed Smoot (S. 4030) to provide adequate service on a national scale through an appropriation to be expended under the direction of the Librarian of Congress. The Pratt-Smoot Act became law on March 3, 1931. For fiscal 1932 there was \$100,000 appropriated to carry out the provisions of the act to provide books for blind adults. This program would become NLS/BPH. Eighteen libraries were selected, in addition to the Library of Congress, to provide adequate service and regional coverage of the country.

Two significant developments occurred in 1933: the establishment of a uniform system of Braille for all English-speaking countries and the invention of the talking book. The first talking books were recorded on a disc by the voice of a good reader and reproduced by means of a phonograph machine. A durable record, perfected in 1933, recorded at 150 grooves to an inch, so that a book of 60,000 words could be contained on eight or nine double-faced, twelve-inch records with thirty minutes of reading time on each record. The Library's appropriation did not at first include funds for playback machines. These had to be purchased either by the person who desired to borrow the recorded books or by philanthropic organizations on his or her behalf.

Several times the Act has been amended and appropriations increased. Service to blind children was initiated in 1952, and in 1962 the

program was authorized by Congress to collect and maintain a library of musical scores and instructional texts. In 1966, Congress passed Public Law 889-522 authorizing the Library to provide talking-book services to all persons who could not read standard print because of visual or physical disability. This brought about an immediate need for an expansion of program activities. Book collections in NLS/BPH and those in established regional libraries were strengthened by building a reserve collection of books and increasing the number of copies of recorded and Braille titles produced, eventually leading to the establishment of additional regional and subregional libraries. In response to serious limitations on storage space at NLS/BPH in the 1970's, multistate centers, one on each side of the Mississippi River, were created. Each multistate center provides services, including interlibrary loan of books in various formats, tape duplication, magazines, equipment, supplies, forms, and publications, for cooperating libraries.

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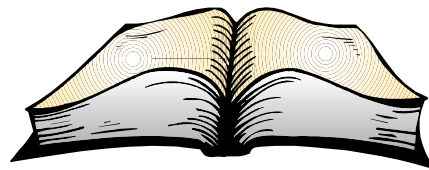
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New Hampshire Books

By Donna Gilbreth



New Hampshire celebrity Fritz Wetherbee (he even has his own bobblehead doll) has compiled many of his charming New Hampshire stories into a new collection titled *Fritz Wetherbee's New Hampshire*. The stories have the humorous and conversational style of Wetherbee's television essays on WMUR's *New Hampshire Chronicle* program. Indeed, many of the stories were first heard on that program. Wetherbee, an 11th generation New Englander, has gathered a treasure trove of tales about New Hampshire's towns and residents over the centuries. People both famous and obscure populate the stories and the emphasis is on little-known, and somewhat peculiar, New Hampshire history. For instance, you might know that the original "Uncle Sam" (Sam Wilson) grew up in Mason, New Hampshire. But did you know that Sam's wife was originally pursued by John Chapman, who later became known as "Johnny Appleseed"? And did you know that the first man to fire a shot at the Battle of Bunker Hill was an overanxious resident of Deerfield (John Simpson)? Mr. Wetherbee cannot help but give his own humorous twist to many historical tales. He tells the story of an eccentric doctor found cradling his dead wife's body in her tomb. Later, after the death of the doctor's friend, as Mr. Wetherbee states, "Dr. Sylvanus Brown did not cradle the dead body of his friend, but he did cradle the live body of his widow." But there are also tragic stories that expose the harsh reality of life in early New Hampshire. Mr. Wetherbee tells of the hanging death of unwed mother Ruth Blay for the death of her stillborn child – hanged just five minutes before the governor's pardon arrived. Mr. Wetherbee ends his book with a few tales of his ancestors and himself. This is a fun and informative read.

Wetherbee, Fritz. *Fritz Wetherbee's New Hampshire*. Concord, NH: Plaidswede Publishing, 2005.

Another fun read is a first novel by Hollis resident Michaeline Della Fera. *Trading Faces* is a charming addition to the ranks of murder mysteries. Protagonist Cecce De Lucca is a 39-year-old, overweight, Italian-American private detective in suburban Hollis, New Hampshire. De Lucca is also single, although enamored of a married police detective and her horse Eddie. The story begins with De Lucca almost killed while following a philandering husband. To recuperate from her gunshot wound, Cecce, her mother Sophia, and best friend Ginny take a two-week vacation at a swank health spa in Arizona, financed by Sophia's gambling winnings. Junk food lover Cecce barely tolerates the spa's healthy cuisine and the hot Arizona climate. She spends the vacation complaining, sweating and sneaking in contraband Cheez-Its to survive. Finally, she finds some excitement when a spa staffer, who had been dating Ginny, is found dead. Cecce launches into action to clear Ginny of suspicion and find the murderer. She is almost killed again, but solves the mystery with the help of Ginny, Sophia, and the local redneck sheriff.

Della Fera, Michaeline. *Trading Faces*. Richmond, KY: Wings ePress, Inc., 2005.

Letters About Literature *Read. Be Inspired. Write Back.*

Letters written by Isabel Starr of Hollis, Kylee Drugan-Eppich of Madbury, and Steve Therrien of Exeter were selected as the New Hampshire winners in the 2006 Letters About Literature (LAL) writing competition. They each received a cash prize and a gift card to Target Stores. Additionally, their letters were sent on as entries in the national LAL competition. Ms. Drugan-Eppich's letter was selected as a runner-up in the national competition.

Letters About Literature 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 coordinated in New Hampshire by the Center for the Book at the New Hampshire State Library. 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. There are three competition levels in the program: upper elementary, middle school, and high school. The contest theme encourages young readers to explore their personal response to a book and then express that response in a creative, original way.

In 2006, there were more than 47,000 entries nationwide. Twenty-eight New Hampshire semi-finalists were selected across the three competition levels by a panel of judges working on behalf of the Library of Congress. Our three winners were selected from this group of outstanding letters.

Isabel Starr, a sixth grader at Hollis

Thank you to our 2006 NH Letters About Literature Judges!

- Ann Hoey, Youth Services Coordinator at the NHSL
- Selma Naccach-Hoff, English Department Coordinator, Manchester High School Central
- Amanda Joaquin-Allan, Special Education Teacher, Auburn Village School
- Rob Greene, Editor, Hippo Press
- Donna Ciocca, author of *Harley & Homer*
- John-Michael Albert, poet.

Upper Elementary School, wrote a letter to Natalie Babbitt about her book *The Search for Delicious*, which was selected as the Granite State's first place winner in the level I competition for students in grades 4 through 6. Miss Starr wrote that before reading the book she "never would have guessed that the search for the definition of 'delicious' would be controversial" and goes on to explain several insights she gained by reading Ms. Babbitt's book. She concludes: "Now I would still pick chocolate or chicken noodle soup, but I am more aware that I should be grateful that I am able to have a choice."

Kylee Drugan-Eppich, an eighth grader at Oyster River Middle School in Durham, wrote to Jenni Schaefer about *Life Without Ed*. Ms. Drugan-Eppich's letter describes her own struggles with an eating disorder and credits Ms. Schaefer with helping her through a really hard time in her life: "I am very far into recovery, and can't see going back to that monster you and I call *Ed*. . . . Since I've declared my

independence from my eating disorder, I have had so many dreams that I know I wouldn't be able to achieve if *Ed* was still in charge of my life." This letter was the Granite State's first place winner in the level II competition for students in grades 7 and 8 and was chosen as a runner-up in the national competition.

Steve Therrien, a ninth-grader at Exeter High School, wrote his letter, which was selected as New Hampshire's first place winner at level III, to Rowland Sill. He begins: "Your poem 'Opportunity' is a great poem. It inspired me in many ways. It helped me realize that I must work hard in everything I do and to use all that I have to reach my goals." Mr. Therrien goes on to explain how this poem, which his grandfather knew by heart, helped him to reconsider a decision to stop playing J.V. football.

The entry deadline for the 2007 Letters About Literature competition is December 8, 2006. We anticipate another batch of great letters from the students of the Granite State.

**Entry coupons and participation guidelines for LAL 2007 are at
<http://www.nh.gov/nhsl/bookcenter/programs/letters.html>**

Before Dan Brown Came Grace Metalious: *Peyton Place* Turns 50

By Robert B. Perreault
Teacher & Freelance Writer

What New Hampshire novelist wrote a controversial blockbuster that broke all sales records up to its time, sparked worldwide discussion, joined lists of banned books, and spawned a Hollywood movie? To anyone under age 40, the obvious answer is Dan Brown. Nevertheless, people over 60 might recall another name: Grace Metalious. Although circumstances that involved both writers differ greatly, *Peyton Place* created much the same sensation a half-century ago as *The Da Vinci Code* now fuels. Yet, those under 40 might ask “who was Grace Metalious?”

Marie Grace DeRepentigny, daughter of Alfred and Laurette (Royer) DeRepentigny, was born on September 8, 1924 at l’Hôpital Notre-Dame de Lourdes in Manchester’s Little Canada. Since their third-story apartment at the corner of Bridge and Ash Streets—their first of seven within a decade—lay within the boundaries of L’Église St. Georges, they had Grace christened there, where Rev. J. Ernest Vaccarest had married them the previous May 12. Coincidentally, Rev. Vaccarest was an uncle of New Hampshire novelist Ernest Hebert.

In “All About Me and *Peyton Place*,” published in 1958 in *The American Weekly*, Grace wrote: “My father and mother are both first-generation Americans, both born in Manchester, New Hampshire, and both of French parents. I don’t know how much more French I could be and still have been born in the United States. I have to chuckle when people refer to me as a rock-bound New Englander. My maternal grandmother, who lived with us all the

during Grace’s childhood. She had barely reached adolescence when her parents divorced and Alfred joined the Merchant Marine, from which he retired in 1980 at age 78. Consequently, Grace and her younger sister, “Bunny” (Doris), grew up among divorced or separated women, then a rare phenomenon among Catholics: their mother, their maternal grandmother, as well as their paternal grandmother and her daughter, “Aunt Georgie,” both of

“To a tourist, these towns look as peaceful as a postcard picture. But if you go beneath that picture, it’s like turning over a rock with your foot – all kinds of strange things crawl out.”

years I was growing up, spoke only French, which I learned before I learned English. [...] If there was ever a New Hampshire household that was un-Yankee, it was ours.”

Despite her working-class background, Laurette belittled her husband Alfred, a skilled pressman who worked in various print shops, including that of *L’Avenir National*, Manchester’s French daily. He therefore spent little time at home

whom Grace constantly visited.

In an effort to escape her humble ethnic roots, Laurette created as cultural and secular a household ambiance as possible. While her mother, “Mémère” Royer, did the housework, Laurette read to her daughters, which later inspired Grace to devour all the Nancy Drew mysteries. By age 10, Grace graduated to more sophisticated works by Dickens, Maupassant, and others from her

Peyton Place Anniversary Events

Slide presentation. “Before Peyton Place: In Search of the Real Grace Metalious” by Robert B. Perreault, Manchester City Library, Carpenter Memorial Building, 405 Pine St., Thursday, Sept. 21, 2006, 6:30 p.m. Funded by the N.H. Humanities Council. Information: Cindy O’Neil, 624-6550. Admission free. By focusing on Grace’s Québécois ancestry and on her formative years in Manchester, this presentation reveals a side of the author that has remained largely unknown to the general public.

Walking tour. “In the Footsteps of Grace Metalious” by Robert B. Perreault. Sunday, September 24, 2006 (actual day of 50th anniversary). Pre-registration required. Call Millyard Museum, 622-7531. Walk through the neighborhoods of Grace’s youth, where she lived, went to school, and drew inspiration for her fiction. The tour includes readings from Grace’s writings, including *No Adam in Eden*, set in “Livingstone” (Manchester), as well as Robert Perreault’s interviews with her father, Alfred DeRepentigny, and her aunt, Georgianna “Aunt Georgie” DeRepentigny McConnell.

mother's collection. Before long, Laurette had her reading the *New York Times Book Review*.

Grace received most of her elementary education at the Ash Street School, across from her earliest childhood home. Within its walls her imagination produced the seeds that would eventually blossom into a literary career. As a fourth-grader, she penned her first short story, "My Brother," for which the teacher reprimanded her because she had no brother. In seventh grade, Grace wrote her first "novel" called "Murder in the Summer Barn Theatre." In these early years, she did much of her writing in Aunt Georgie's bathroom, a refuge from her parents' domestic quarrels.

While at Manchester Central High School, Grace wrote stories and even plays. Her first encounter with censorship, a foreshadowing of reaction to *Peyton Place*, occurred when an avant-garde student theatrical group staged one of her controversial creations. During this era, Grace also began adopting some of her mother's social-climbing airs, such as signing her name "de Repentigny." In fact, "Grace de Repentigny" appeared as the byline of her earliest known published work, a short story entitled "Fuller Brush Man," which appeared in the November 1942 *Oracle*, Central's literary magazine, after her graduation.

On February 27, 1943, Grace married her childhood friend, George Metalious, at L'Église St. Georges. Subsequent circumstances, including George's studies at UNH and his military service, saw the newlyweds living sometimes together, sometimes apart. In 1954, after several moves within the Lakes Region, where George taught school, the couple and their three children settled in Gilmanton. There, Grace soon made

<p style="text-align: center;">Works by Grace Metalious</p> <p>Novels <i>Peyton Place</i>. New York: Julian Messner, Inc., 1956. <i>Return to Peyton Place</i>. New York: Julian Messner, Inc., 1959. <i>The Tight White Collar</i>. New York: Julian Messner, Inc., 1960. <i>No Adam in Eden</i>. New York: Trident Press, 1963.</p> <p>Short Stories [Grace de Repentigny] "Fuller Brush Man," <i>Oracle</i>, Vol. 48, No. 1, November 1942, pp. 27-28. "Edna Brown and the Charming Prince," <i>Glamour</i>, March 1960, pp. 124-125, 188, 190-191, 193-195.</p> <p>Article "All About Me and <i>Peyton Place</i>," <i>The American Weekly</i> (Sunday supplement, series in four parts), May 18, May 25, June 1, June 8, 1958.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Works about Grace Metalious</p> <p>Books Delinsky, Barbara. <i>Looking for Peyton Place: A Novel</i>. New York: Scribner, 2005. Metalious, George, and June O'Shea. <i>The Girl from "Peyton Place": A Biography of Grace Metalious</i>. New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1965. Toth, Emily. <i>Inside Peyton Place: The Life of Grace Metalious</i>. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1981.</p> <p>Articles Perreault, Robert B. "In the Eyes of Her Father: A Portrait of Grace Metalious," <i>Historical New Hampshire</i>, Vol. XXXV, No. 3, Fall 1980, pp. 318-327. Perreault, Robert B. "Beyond <i>Peyton Place</i>: The Lesser-Known Side of Grace Metalious," <i>Manchester Journal</i>, Vol. 8, No. 16, Dec. 28, 1983, pp. 8-9, 20. Sorrell, Richard S. "A Novelist and Her Ethnicity: Grace Metalious as a Franco-American," <i>Historical New Hampshire</i>, Vol. XXXV, No.3, Fall 1980, pp. 284-317.</p>
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literary history.

Prior to the official publication date, September 24, 1956, of her earthshaking first novel, Grace gave columnist Hal Boyle her view of small-town life. "To a tourist, these towns look as peaceful as a postcard picture. But if you go beneath that picture, it's like turning over a rock with

your foot – all kinds of strange things crawl out."

Risqué for its time but tame by 21st-century standards, *Peyton Place* attracted millions of readers, many who perused it secretly. It shocked and offended certain readers and, curi-

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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/literacy/awards.html

The Flume: NH Teen Readers' Choice Award

In April 2006, New Hampshire teens in grades 9-12 chose *The Da Vinci Code* to win the first Flume: NH Teen Readers' Choice Award. Teens voted for their favorite book among 13 titles, which included various works ranging from fantasy to non-fiction. More than 850 students cast ballots for New Hampshire's newest book award. The 2007 Flume Award nominees are listed on our web site.

Great Stone Face Award

The winner of last year's GSF Book Award was *The Legend of Spud Murphy* by Eoin Colfer. A new list of books for next year's GSF Book Award can be found on our web site. Voting will take place in May 2007. Children in grades 4-6 can vote at their school or public library.

Isinglass Teen Read Award

The 2005-2006 Isinglass Teen Read Award for 7th and 8th graders was awarded to Sonya Sones for her book *One of Those Hideous Books Where the Mother Dies*. Ms. Sones will be visiting Barrington NH in the fall to accept her award in person. The new reading list for 2006-2007 is now posted on our web site under the Teen Zone button; an order form for printed bookmarks at \$6.00 for 100 is also online. This award is now statewide and supported by CHILIS. Student recommendations for next year's list are currently being accepted at blibrary@metrocast.net.

Ladybug Picture Book Award

New Hampshire children, from preschoolers to third-graders, are invited to vote for the 2006 Ladybug Picture Book Award. Voting materials and an order form for stickers are available on our website. Votes must be received by November 30, 2006 to be counted. The 2006 nominees are: *The Best Pet of All* by David LaRoche & Hanako Wakiyama; *The Dancing Tiger* by Malachy Doyle, Steve Johnson & Lou Fancher; *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.

Sarah Josepha Hale Award

Renowned journalist Ellen Goodman will receive the 2006 Sarah Josepha Hale Award for distinction in writing by a New Englander on October 21st at 8:00 p.m. at the Newport Opera House.

August 1, 06

Dearest Friends of the Ladybug,

I love my beautiful award. It sits on a shelf in my studio where I can see it and draw strength from it everyday. It's not always easy doing this job (at least for me it's not) and whenever I might have doubts about my abilities (and I do ... often) the Ladybug will always be there to encourage me. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for this special gift. Encased in glass is not only the Ladybug (my favorite insect) but also the Love and good wishes for a book that was my pleasure to create for you, the big and little readers of New Hampshire.

Very Truly Yours
(covered in cat fur!)
Judy Schachner
and Skippyjon Jones

The Center for the Book received a big thank you from the winner of the 2005 Ladybug Picture Book Award. The sentiments are reproduced here. To see the letter as we received it, including a portrait of Skippyjon, please visit www.nh.gov/nhsl/bookcenter/programs/ladybug.html

50 Years of the Sarah Josepha Hale Award

By Andrea Thorpe
Library Director,
Richards Free Library

This year is the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Sarah Josepha Hale Award and this year's winner, Ellen Goodman, continues Sarah Josepha Hale's legacy as a groundbreaking woman journalist. The award began as a way to raise awareness and money for the Richards Free Library. It was conceived by Raymond P. Holden, a poet, writer, library trustee and with his wife Barbara founder of the Friends of the Richards Library. Raymond asked his old friend Robert Frost to come to Newport and give a reading. Barbara Holden Yeomans remembers, "It was some days or weeks after that reading that Raymond Holden had the idea of establishing a literary award for the benefit of the Richards Library. Frost would be the recipient of the first award, but he would accept it after the fact."¹ Evan Hill remembers that

1. Yeomans, Barbara Holden. *The Richards Free Library: Its First Hundred-and-Three Years. Newport, NH: The Friends of the Richards Free Library, 1993. p.63.*

2. Hill, Evan, "The Literary Scene in Newport, New Hampshire." *Boston Globe*. August 17, 1975. p.20.

Raymond "...knew his authors well enough to know that it wouldn't be money alone that would bring them...but a medal will."²

The Friends didn't have any money to cast a medal, but Raymond found local money that would serve his purpose. Money had been raised to erect a statue on Newport's common of Mary and her lamb as a tribute to Newport's own Sarah Josepha Hale, editor, author and champion of Thanksgiving Day. The backers never raised enough money to afford the statue, but the amount in the bank was enough to cast a medal in Sarah's image. Raymond convinced the remaining trustee of the project that an award to honor writers in Hale's name was a suitable memorial. Raymond Holden was also responsible for bringing together a national board of judges. And it was Holden who administered the award for the Friends until his death.

To be nominated the writer must have a connection with New England, and be willing to come to Newport to receive the medal and to give a reading or a talk. This rule has led some authors to decline the award. When this happens, the award is given to someone else. Lillian Hellman and

Theodore White backed out after accepting the award and no medals were given out in those years.

The Hale Award has also sparked controversy, both times in the pages of the *Union Leader*. In 1958, it carried an editorial calling for the withdrawal of that year's awards to Archibald MacLeish and Dorothy Canfield Fisher for their association with organizations involved in "un-American activities." In 1966, the *Union Leader* reprimanded Robert Lowell for his remarks on President Johnson.

Since 1956 the people of Newport have had the privilege of hearing, meeting and talking to some of the premier writers of the last half century including Pulitzer Prize winners, National Book Award winners and three Poets Laureate of the United States. People remember a Hale Award evening. There are many people who remember Frost's reading. Maxim Kumin confided to the audience that she liked to read to people who already knew what a mud season was. Wes McNair, the only Hale Medalist born in Newport, made people laugh with familiarity at his poems depicting life in the Lake Sunapee area.

Grace Metalious

Continued from p. 5

ously, its non-readers, by its media-manufactured image as a violent and sexually explicit book. Meanwhile, some critics dismissed it as trash and many librarians refused to place it on their shelves. To make matters worse, the public soon learned that this tale of murder, suicide, rape, and incest had come from the mind of a housewife and mother who defied feminine conventions of the day by wearing plaid flannel shirts, jeans, and sneakers, and by smoking, swearing,

and especially outdrinking some men. Finally, the townspeople of Gilmanton, many of whom apparently recognized themselves and their quaint hamlet in what they considered a betrayal of their darkest secrets in book form, promptly shunned their infamous neighbor.

For Grace, commercial success proved a double-edged sword. *Peyton Place* and its sequel, *Return to Peyton Place*, both inspired Hollywood films. Two more novels appeared, *The Tight White Collar* and Grace's autobiographical swan song, *No Adam in Eden*. Set mostly in

"Livingstone" (Manchester), it contains local references, including the "Pilgrim Ice Cream Parlor" (The Puritan) and the "corner of Bridge and Ash Streets," plus some dialogue in French. Conversely, with fame and fortune came financial mismanagement, exploitation by others, alcoholism, divorce, depression, all of which led Grace to drink herself into an early grave by age 39 on February 25, 1964.

Grace Metalious rests in a remote corner of Gilmanton's Smith Meeting House Cemetery, ostracized in death as she was in life.

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.

Barrington

Amy Inglis,

Director, Barrington Public Library

Twilight by Stephanie Meyer. This young adult novel follows Bella, a 17-year-old girl, who moves to Washington state and meets a handsome but mysterious boy. She soon realizes that he is a vampire but she falls in love with him anyway. It is a gothic romance filled with tension, passion, and high-voltage chase scenes as she is tracked by another band of vampires. A wonderful romance for teens with a penchant for vampires. I can't wait to read the next volume in this trilogy!

Brentwood

Marilyn Morehead, Librarian

The Book Thief by Marcus Zusak. This is an amazing, imaginative, and heart-rending book about Nazi Germany with Death as the protagonist. This book was marketed in Zusak's native country, Australia, as an adult fiction, but it has been marketed here as a young adult book. It deserves both readers.

Center Barnstead

John Reed

The Fist of God by Fredrick Forsyth. The background of this espionage thriller is eerily prescient, in light of current events. It is set in the days before the first Gulf War, and starts with the bizarre (mostly true) story of Gerald Bull, the artillery genius. Forsyth is an excellent craftsman, characters are drawn with a deft hand, the story is well plotted and fits history well. A good read -- makes you wonder what some folks was thinkin'

Weare

Cora Jo Ciampi,
Children's Librarian

The Whistling Season by Ivan Doig. Doig uses a variety of characters both in the past and present to present a delightful story about the one-room schools in Montana. His description of having been educated in a one-room school along with the farming life on the prairies is rich and delightful. The answer to the huge question throughout the book...to keep or not to keep the schools...is met in the dreaming way the main character has with answering all of life's questions. A great read!



Manchester

Charles Shipman,
Librarian, NH State Library

I'd like to recommend *Black Swan Green* by David Mitchell. It is the story of a precocious thirteen-year-old navigating the treacherous seas of early adolescence in early 1980's England. The theme isn't new, but the writing is fresh and original, the characters are vividly drawn, and the protagonist, Jason Taylor, is one of the most engaging characters I've ever encountered.

Merrimack

Janet Angus, Library Director

The Madonnas of Leningrad by Debra Dean. This excellent first novel combines two aspects of Marina's life. She was a young Russian woman who survived the Siege of Leningrad in 1941 while working at the Hermitage Museum. She is now an elderly woman living in Seattle and in the early stages of Alzheimer's. The book is a superb story of the Siege, a lesson in art history, and what it's like to grow old. The family relationships add greatly to this wonderful book.

Colebrook

Cody Hastings

Cirque Du Freak: Tunnels of Blood by Darren Shan. I like it because it is action-packed and it gets you right in the story so you don't want to stop reading it until you finish.

Derry

Josef Hodgkins, Parishoner, Grace Episcopal Church, Manchester

Living Simply through the Day (Spiritual Survival in a Complex Age) by Tilden Edwards. I am a Christian. I am a parishoner. But those two facts, in my opinion, are not required in reading this book. This book, as they say, "tells it like it is!" It lets you in on how to live, simply. Life is not simple but I believe this book will help anyone, if read without the idea that it will "cure all." What it may do is heal, some.

Sutton

Carrie Thomas

I would like to recommend *The Other Boleyn Girl* by Philippa Gregory. It's a fast paced historical novel told from the view of Mary Boleyn, who was Henry VIII's mistress for a few years before he married her sister. The characters are well drawn and I was intrigued enough to drag out my high school English history textbook to research what happened to people eventually. I have read that this story may be made into a movie with Natalie Portman as Anne.

Tilton & Northfield

Mary Ahlgren,
Director, Hall Memorial Library

Abide with Me by Elizabeth Strout. I think she has New England small town churches down to a T, and tells a mighty good story of strength, and when it is the right thing to do to admit needing help.

Northwood

Patricia Savage

She Got Up Off the Couch by Haven "Zippy" Kimmel.

When I read her first memoir, *A Girl Named Zippy*, I thought how delightful, how original. But it wasn't until I read the sequel, *She Got Up Off the Couch*, that I got so I did not want to end my visit with Kimmel. She draws you into her young world with a tenderness and style so full of vivid images that I force myself to put the book down after one chapter at the end of the evening so I can be with her again tomorrow.

Self-Portrait of a New Hampshire Bookseller

Greg Powers

I actually became a bookseller by accident. Having moved from Texas to Boston after graduation in 1986 in expectation of getting an entry-level job in the publishing world, and having subsequently told a Prentice Hall HR manager that I frankly didn't have a clue how my education and background would make me an asset to the company, I decided to stop in at my favorite local bookshop to find stop-gap work until I could decide what to do with my life. Here's how that interview went:

Owner: "What are you reading right now?"

Me: "I just finished the Essays of E.B. White, and have been reading some James Thurber and Thomas Hardy."

Owner: "Okay, come back at four o'clock and we'll start you on the evening shift."

I showed up at four, stayed on for a year and became a shift manager, then quit when I realized that in my transformation from an hourly worker to a salaried shift manager I was earning \$3.10 an hour. In Boston! During my year's tenure the owner of the shop, Martin Weinkle, was beginning to add rare and antiquarian books to his mix of inventory, and I had naturally gravitated to that side of the business. A year after my departure, when Martin was admitted as a member of the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America and became eligible to exhibit at their prestigious New York Book Fair, he called me in Texas: Would I come help him exhibit at the fair if he paid all my expenses?

Having been thus far unsuccessful in formulating that Life Plan, and suspecting that if I went he might offer me a job, I accepted. At the least I'd get a free trip to the Big Apple. He

did offer me a job and so I moved back to Boston with a more comfortable salary and a job as a rare book cataloguer. It was fascinating work; I catalogued Shakespeare folios, carefully packed and shipped Nuremberg Chronicles, and once took a credit card from a Kuwaiti businessman to pay for the only known inscribed copy of Isaac Walton's *Compleat Angler* (for a cool \$15,000). Life was good.

I spent the next six years writing tantalizing descriptions of fabulous books, travelling to book fairs, absorbing other dealers' catalogues on my long bus commute from New Hampshire, and generally learning the business. For a variety of reasons I grew disenchanted with the job and thought I should pursue another career. So once again, I quit.

I spent a desultory few weeks casting resumes on the wine-dark sea, but the longer I tried to get a real job, the more I realized that I was a bookseller. I truly loved the business—the search for treasure, lovingly describing your find, and meeting another soul who appreciates the book as much as you. There is charm beyond words in the whole enterprise.

I couldn't go back to my former job a third time, so I took the plunge and established Powers Rare Books in my living room with some leftover savings and a few shelves of good books. Five years later I was—dare I say it?—thriving. After another five years, another abortive career switch and an expansion into used books, I still love the business. No matter where the vicissitudes of life and career may lead me, I'll always be a bookseller at heart.

Visit Powers Rare Books at
www.gwpowers.com/powersbks.html

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Center for the Book at the New Hampshire State Library

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The New Hampshire Writers' Project

By Martha Carlson-Bradley

Poet Martha Carlson-Bradley is the author of two chapbooks and the forthcoming Season We Can't Resist (WordTech Editions, 2007). A freelance editor, she edits NHWP's publications and is a former NHWP trustee.

Since 1988, the New Hampshire Writers' Project (NHWP) has been the only state-wide organization committed to writing as an occupation and as a means of self-expression. NHWP has offered workshops, conferences, special readings and events, advice, referrals, and publications—to support the development of writers at all stages of their careers and to encourage an audience for literature throughout the state. To former New Hampshire poet laureate Marie Harris, NHWP is “the clearest and best voice in the state, speaking out on behalf of writers and publishers.” NHWP serves all writers, from beginners to accomplished writers such as Donald Hall, Maxine Kumin, Donald Murray, and Ernest Hebert. NHWP Executive Director Barbara

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 Writers' Project is one of these organizations and this profile is part of a continuing series of articles on members of New Hampshire's literary community.

Yoder says, “Our board and staff are guided by a firm belief that the literary arts make a vital contribution to the quality of life in New Hampshire and enrich our cultural landscape.”

NHWP members include writers, readers, publishers, editors, agents, booksellers, librarians, book reviewers, and teachers. In addition to providing beginning and intermediate writers with an array of workshops,

other vital resources. The Writers' Project also publishes *Book Sampler*; an annual catalog of new books by members. On its Web site, the Writers' Project publishes information of upcoming NHWP events, reviews of member books, and a calendar of literary events.

NHWP's annual *Writers' Day* conference brings together award-winning authors, publishing profession-

“It is a continuing source of gratification to see how the struggling organization I once knew has blossomed into a vibrant force for the writers of this state. So much energy! So much talent!” -- James Patrick Kelly

the Writers' Project supports advanced writers by offering them opportunities to mentor other writers. NHWP also celebrates writers' successes by publishing their news in the organization's newsletter and by producing the biennial New Hampshire Literary Awards.

NHWP's publications are among the organization's major services. The acclaimed bimonthly newsletter *Ex Libris* (to be renamed *NH Writer* in 2007), features news and interviews, articles about craft and process, advice about the business of writing, a calendar of events, and publication leads. “The newsletter,” said novelist Ernest Hebert, “is the only mechanism I have for keeping in touch with what other New Hampshire writers are up to. This gives writers something they really don't have, which is connections.” Biennially, one issue is published as the *New Hampshire Writer's Handbook*, a detailed guide to conferences, retreats, publishing advice, agents, copyright law, and

als, and writers for a day of learning, sharing, and networking. The conference includes a keynote address, craft and business-of-writing workshops, and panel discussions. In 2006, NHWP reintroduced its weekly classes for more intensive study and launched online classes, which allow writers in all corners of the state to improve their skills. “Workshops! They are the best single thing you offer writers, and even the established writers take master class workshops with major writers,” said Donald Murray, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, author, and educator.

NHWP special events have included an author reading series featuring such distinguished writers as Donald Hall and Robert Bly, Maxine Kumin and Lucille Clifton, and Cynthia Huntington and Grace Paley. In 2003, poets laureate from around the nation gathered in New Hampshire for Poetry and Politics, a conference on the role of poetry in society. Poets representing twenty states, plus

prominent politicians, educators, theologians, civic leaders, and members of the media, came together for two days of groundbreaking discussions on the role of poetry in our communities. In 2004, NHWP's *An Evening with Dan Brown* drew an audience of 900 readers and generated national media interest.

More recently, NHWP has offered *NH Writers' Trail* programs, giving the public opportunities to learn about our state's literary history and visit the locations that have inspired writers. On October 7, 2006, NHWP will present a special *NH Writers' Trail* event, the *Kearsarge Poetry Festival*, in Wilmot, to celebrate the work of Donald Hall, Jane Kenyon, and Maxine Kumin. For details visit www.nhwritersproject.org.

NHWP has collaborated with Southern New Hampshire University, New Hampshire State Library, New Hampshire Center for the Book, New Hampshire Young Writers Conference, the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts, and many other organizations since its founding in 1988. One of its original members, James Patrick Kelly, Hugo Award-winning author and current chair of the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts, has said, "It is a continuing source of gratification to see how the struggling organization I once knew has blossomed into a vibrant force for the writers of this state. So much energy! So much talent!"

The New Hampshire Writers' Project is dedicated to using this energy and talent to serve writers and the written word in the Granite State.

Reading is for Everyone

Continued from p. 1

In 1970, the New Hampshire regional library was established as part of the national network of libraries affiliated with the Library of Congress NLS/BPH. Today, Talking Book Services, as it is now known, is a section of the New Hampshire State Library serving eligible state residents. The service is free to adults and children who cannot read regular print because they are legally blind, visually impaired, unable to hold a book or turn pages due to a permanent or temporary condition, or are unable to read because of a reading disability resulting from an organic dysfunction as certified by a medical doctor. We lend books and magazines, on cassette or in Braille, at no cost to the borrower through the U.S. Postal Service.

There are currently over 70,000 copies of approximately 43,000 titles in our recorded book collection. Our patrons may subscribe to over sixty popular magazines in cassette format or in Braille. The special playback machines used to listen to these materials are loaned to eligible users free of charge along with other accessories for readers with limited mobility or hearing impairments. Publications that list new titles with brief annotations are also available in various formats. Our other services include a newsletter in electronic and large print formats, a collection of popular movies with

added descriptive narration and large print books made available to NH residents through public libraries.

We also offer *Unabridged*, which launched on November 29, 2004 and serves to bridge the current demand among blind and visually impaired individuals for digital audio books, and the planned launch in 2008 of a national digital audio book service by NLS/BPH. New Hampshire State Librarian Michael York played an instrumental role in creating *Unabridged*. New Hampshire was one of the original five states (there are now nine) that teamed up to provide a web-based library of narrated digital audio book content and services to eligible library users. The service allows self-checkout and facilitates the download of digital audio books which may either be played back on PCs with Windows Media Player and the OverDrive Media Console, or be transferred to WMA-enabled portable playback devices, or be burned onto CDs.

As part of a national community serving the information needs of the blind and physically disabled, the New Hampshire State Library Talking Book Services brings books and reading to visually disabled adults and children in New Hampshire. Active users of Talking Book Services in New Hampshire include more than 2,100 individuals ranging from 6 to 100 years of age. We also work with 176 different institutions including libraries, schools, hospitals, and nursing homes. The goal of Talking Book Services is to develop and conduct a broader outreach effort to increase the number of eligible registrants, enhance our web access to relevant electronic documents and online resources, and continue to evaluate the services we provide to the blind, visually impaired, and physically challenged residents of New Hampshire to meet their reading interests and needs.

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



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.

Librarian of Congress Appoints Donald Hall Poet Laureate

Librarian of Congress James H. Billington has announced the appointment of Donald Hall to be the Library's 14th Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry. Hall will take up his duties in the fall, opening the Library of Congress's annual literary series in October with a reading of his work. He will also be a featured speaker at the Library of Congress National Book Festival poetry pavilion on Saturday, Sept. 30, on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. Hall succeeds Ted Kooser as Poet Laureate and joins a long line of distinguished poets who have served in the position, including Robert Frost, Richard Eberhart, and Maxine Kumin.

On making the appointment, Billington said, "Donald Hall is one of America's most distinctive and respected literary figures. For more

than 50 years, he has written beautiful poetry on a wide variety of subjects that are often distinctly American and conveyed with passion."

Hall has published 15 books of poetry, beginning with *Exiles and Mariages* in 1955. Earlier this year, he brought out *White Apples and the Taste of Stone: Selected Poems 1946-2006* (Houghton Mifflin). In 2005, he published *The Best Day The Worst Day*, a memoir of his marriage to the poet Jane Kenyon, who died in 1995.

Among his children's books, *Ox-Cart Man* won the Caldecott Medal. Among his many books of prose are his essays on poetry, *Breakfast Served Any Time All Day* (2003).

For his poems he has received the Lenore Marshall/Nation Award, the

National Book Critics Circle Award, and the Ruth Lilly Prize for Poetry. He has also received two fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation. He is a member of the Academy of Arts and Letters.

Hall was born in Connecticut in 1928. He was educated at Harvard, Oxford and Stanford universities and taught at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. For the past 30 years he has lived on his family farm in rural New Hampshire, in the house where his grandmother and his mother were born. He has two children and five grandchildren.

Dana Gioia, chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, characterized Hall's selection as "long-overdue recognition for one of America's greatest and most-admired men of letters."