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TRAVELERS IN TIME by Melody Lloyd Allen

In August 1989, Melody Lloyd Allen attended a one-week institute entitled "Travelers in Time: Past, Present, and to Come," at Newnham College, Cambridge University, Cambridge, England. The institute, sponsored by Children's Literature New England, focused on children's books in which time plays a central role. At the request of the RILA <u>Bulletin</u>, Melody agreed to keep a diary, describing her experiences at such an international conference. Her account follows.

Saturday, August 5

Surely I will discover a new sense of time, as the week has begun with a total loss of my senses of time and place. After two weeks' vacation on an island on Squam Lake, New Hampshire, sharing space with only a dozen people, I have spent an endless day, two really, traveling to Cambridge. Starting by boat to leave the island, I have taken a car, a bus, a plane, the Underground, a train, and a taxi in the last twenty-four hours. Through the rush of London to a Saturday's Market Day in Cambridge, my head is filled with so many languages that one wonders where the English are.

Newnham College is removed from the City Center but conveniently placed just across the river. Built in 1871 as the second college for women, it is more similar to an American college than one's picture of a medieval English college. However, it does have a classic dining hall with an elaborate plaster ceiling. A warm welcome at the Porter's Lodge contrasts with my dreary room. A large north-facing window reveals a garden with robins in the shrubs. On second look, I notice an antique desk, chest and an old fireplace. Under the striped canvas of the street market, I find a colorful scarf to

brighten my round table, a plant for the mantel, and a bottle of wine for the top of the bookcase. I can't chill champagne, but I do have strawberries, and there is a teddy bear in the kitchen. But, of course, Sebastian was at Oxford! All the bathrooms post stickers giving information about where to call in case of rape, so life at a Cambridge college is not all romance.

I have arrived a day early to recover from jet lag and get oriented. Wandering through town, in addition to seeing Kings College Chapel and the Mathematical Bridge, I hear a man playing a folk harp and watch a bride and groomin a flower-filled punt. To affirm that I am really in England, I have tea with scones, strawberry jam and clotted cream by the river. Returning to Sidgwick G17, my room now seems familiar, and the time is clearly bedtime.

Sunday, August 6

Breakfast in the Buttery is similar to that of any college cafeteria. A pile of two hundred fried eggs rather ruins the thought of a traditional English breakfast. Afterwards I load my pack and take the path along the water meadows to Grantchester, a village made famous by Rupert Brooke's

poem, "The Old Vicarage, Grantchester." Our English leaders, husband and wife, John Rowe Townsend and Jill Paton Walsh, have printed a limited edition booklet containing the poem and a map. I have number 112 of 250.

I discover a path through the Owlstone Nature Reserve to the river. As I come through a small wood, I startle a wide-eyed white cat high on a tree branch looking for all the world like the Cheshire cat. But, of course, that is Oxford, too. This is a sunny summer's England I have not seen before, with boys swimming in the river and everyone's picnicking. I pass a man reciting -- I don't know what, but it seems, in this setting, appropriate and not eccentric.

I am seated in the cool shade of a willow which overhangs a quiet twist in the Cam, quiet until a punt passes under its branches. From my secluded spot, I hear someone reminiscing with his fellow boaters that in his student days, he climbed this very tree and dropped objects on unsuspecting punters. I share my bit of bank with five ducks who are disappointed that I didn't have the foresight to save them a piece of toast from breakfast.

I return to the College for my registration materials which include poems relating to our theme. Heffer's, a major Cambridge bookstore, is selling books, and, naturally, we all buy something. There are those who want autographs, but most, including myself, are hoping to read a few more books from the booklist. There are about fifty titles, but even old favorites need re-reading to prepare for the discussions ahead.

The institute begins with a sherry party on the lawn. No one wears a straw hat. There two hundred participants including are authors, discussion leaders and organizers. The only other Rhode Islander is Melinda Cragg Challener, a teacher from Lincoln School who has come from her honeymoon in At dinner I sit with a school inspector from Glasgow and a music/literature specialist from Wales. They ask many questions about American politics. comments that for all of Reagan's popularity, he has never met an American who liked him. "Maybe I just meet the right people," he comments, telling me that Thatcher will be out in the next election.

We are welcomed by Townsend and Walsh. John Langstaff, American folklorist, leads us

in song which fills the Hall wonderfully. Next to me, my friend Joanna Long, Children's Review Editor of Kirkus, has brought music from last year's Institute. We sing about mountain thyme, sheep, tea. Appropriately for the anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing, we conclude with a beautiful four-part round, "What a goodly thing if the children of the world could dwell together in peace."

The evening ends with author and artist Ashley Bryan's reciting poetry by African Americans. Reciting is an inadequate word for a voice used as an instrument, making the words leap from the page with rhythm and sound: real voices shouting, laughing, crying, reaching out with sharp reality. Ashley Bryan will be at the Nathan Bishop School in Providence in the Spring of 1990. (Editor's Note: See Calendar page 16.)

Occupying a single room does encourage reading at night, but I miss having someone to discuss the day's program with. Rereading <u>Jacob Have I Loved</u> keeps me up 'til 1:00 AM.

Monday, August 7

Barbara Harrison, an Institute organizer, challenges us with art work which depicts symbols of time: a Chagall painting that depicts time as a river with no banks which interests Nina in Court of the Stone Children, and a complex representation in Peter Bruegel's The Triumph of Time. Does time devour all things? Can art and literature survive and become timeless? Is time a circle as depicted in Tuck Everlasting and Arilla Sundown?

Langstaff leads us in song again, though we seem more hesitant in this lecture hall. He discusses the survival of the oral tradition, with variants moving from one culture to another. As we come from England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Canada, Australia, Japan and over half the United States, the point is very appropriate. At the break, I gulp tea to wake myself up. No need to worry as Jill and Paul Heins, critic and essayist, present a lively dialogue on narrative time Fax had made possible an in fiction. exchange of ideas in advance, so that their comments build on each other's. examine five books in terms of compression and expansion of time, using the image of an accordian, and of a reordering of time as a method for structuring a novel. With these techniques, an author can skip insignificant parts of a character's life and concentrate on the significant and can use flashbacks and interpolated time. At lunchtime, I dash into town to do a few errands. It is shocking to see grafitti on college buildings.

That afternoon the book discussion group is large. Many themes and concepts are mentioned, but we move quickly from book to At the lecture hall, we meet Helen Cresswell, who appears in gold sandals. Within moments we are laughing uproariously. sixteen she began looking for a nice place to be buried. Her romantic reading of the Brontes had convinced her that writers die young. When her child was small, instead of outings to the zoo or the park, they visited cemeteries in search of a good place for Mummy to be buried. When she finally found a graveyard she liked, they bought a house in that parish. She has planned a twenty-six line epitaph; her husband said she would have the only stone which said PTO (please turn over). This obsession surfaces in her books. I was chuckling so hard, I had trouble taking her picture.

She tells of psychic experiences which inspired her books. She remembers a reviewer who called Winter of the Birds "self-indulgent," so she exaggerated "self-indulgent" with the Bagthorpes; originally one book which grew to a trilogy. Then while her publisher advertised the trilogy, she secretly wrote a fourth book which eventually led PW to announce "Macmillan to Publish Fourth of Trilogy." Having tried one biography, she said, "If I'm going to go back into the past, I'll make up my own."

In contrast, Leon Garfield, a very intellectual speaker, appears in a paisley bow tie, gray hair standing out from his head and a voice so smooth and deep, even Cary Grant would be envious. As a writer who strongly prefers the language, imagery and social structure of the late 18th and 19th centuries, he finds it "often better to suppress knowledge of a period than to display it." Many of his characters are based on contemporaries, and he finds feelings universal over time. because a man wears a triangular hat doesn't mean he has a triangular head." Once he received a bad review which irritated him. He pictured the reviewer as a "pinstriped monster with two heads, both of them empty."

One of his stories was based on his telling his daughter "Sleeping Beauty" backwards from the Prince's point of view, the only bedtime story he ever managed to tell.

Is it possible that it is still Monday? Richard Peck wanders in at dinner to join the audience. Jean Little is also here as a participant. At dinner I sit with the Vermont contingent, but it is hard to hear anything through the din of two hundred people. The couple opposite me, I discover, live next door to the house in which my family lived at the time of my birth. Travel is always a reminder of what a small world it is.

For dessert in an already rich day, we have Virginia Hamilton whose use of language always leaves one awestruck. She does not She is named for the state disappoint. where her family were slaves, but she is greatly influenced by her rural Ohio town. She says that she "learned how to write from [reading] Faulkner and went to college and learned what to call it." An important device for her is psychic distance, i.e. how close the author brings the reader into the character. A closeup makes one feel what the character feels. Her example demonstrates sentences which move from seeing a girl on her horse to feeling the sweat which represents her fear. Initially she follows hunches and "writes until her mind gets snagged on a raspberry bush and [she has] to wriggle [her] way out."

I wriggle my way back to my room. Keeping this journal in some way interferes with joining the social aspect of the conference. The little free time available is not enough for digesting the material and also interacting with fellow participants. It's 11:00 PM and time to do a little more reading from one of the books on the list.

Tuesday, August 8

There is tension in the air, as today there will be a raffle for three field trips on Wednesday limited to only ten to twenty people each. Everyone's first choice is visiting Green Knowe, home of ninety-seven year-old Lucy Boston. Her house and garden feature memorably in her books. A close second is an outing to Philippa Pearce's house for tea and a tour of the real Tom's Midnight Garden. A visit to

Norwich will be less sought after.

The birds have taken the bread crumbs I left on the window sill. Although I am usually up with the birds at home, here I don't wake up until I hear doors slamming and water running in the WC next door. On my immediate section of corridor are three participants from New York. Through the fire door are Katherine Paterson, Jean Little and Rosemary Sutcliff. Many of the authors stay most of the week, and are accessible at meals and other informal occasions.

It is not an author who starts the day, but a psychologist speaking on the child's perception of time. Diana Paolitto, who is from Cambridge, Massachusetts, says that "children live in another country." Her study shows how slowly children develop an understanding of sequential narrative, clock time, and calendar time, that vast past which extends beyond their grandparents. This understanding does seem to follow Piaget's developmental stages. Rhode Island children's librarians in the midst of hearing Summer Reading Program book reports would appreciate her reference to elementary age children's preoccupation with detail and the tyranny of accuracy and precision.

Greg Maguire's powerful talk on memory moves me profoundly. I kiss Greg's cheek with tears on my own, and as I leave the lecture hall, my hand reaches for Virginia Hamilton's arm to comment on the close psychic distance of his talk. I flee to a guiet corner of the garden so I can be alone with my emotions. His talk was a "mood piece" with references to great art and great writers and to a personal experience with an aging and finally dying Boston Brahmin woman, as well as references to a child met and remembered from Nicaragua. Interwoven is a discussion of five more of our books, so cleverly linked that the listener gains meanings beyond those of each individual book. Memory is elusive as a process and as a topic. As Greg points out, memories are like dreams, one moment so vivid and then fading and blurring. All the Sundays become one Sunday, i.e. "on Sundays we used to..." My journal writing will certainly help in remembering this conference, which is so full and overwhelming. Three authors still to come today, and it's only Tuesday!

The "take away" Ploughman's lunch, bread,

cheese, tomato and cucumber, available every day, is convenient for eating in the lovely garden, in the <u>sun</u>. Our book discussion group decides to take advantage of the gorgeous weather and gathers on the lawn. Ann Thwaite, our discussion leader, introduces into the discussion the phrase "verbal pickling" for the writer's attempt to preserve the past.

The afternoon session features Peter Dickinson, a riot in his shorts, sitting on the table, waving his arms, covering his face with his hands when a question is asked, flashing humor and intellect. Cameras click madly trying unsuccessfully to capture his enthusiasm, spontaneity and boyish charm at age We all want to be his children, because many of his books began as "car stories" made up for his children on long drives. Asked what he read at Cambridge he answers, "English, but I'm against the teaching of English. It's a soft-edged, sloppy subject." If he had it to do again, he would read anthropology. Animatedly, he tells us he finds speaking to us very amusing, and he will continue as long as we want. "I'm your poodle," he exclaims.

The afternoon ends with Betty Levin's having a dialogue with Penelope Lively. Lively agrees with Paolitto that children are different from adults, and she thinks that we do not remember childhood but imagine it. While we cannot shed our past, it is unknowable because we cannot recover our former state of mind. In books there is an order which does not exist in real life.

I have a treat at dinner sitting with Philippa Pearce. I am at ease immediately. Almost her first words are, "I wore my party dress." She is interested in people and a good listener. Her family lived at Tom's Mid-Now she lives across the night Garden. road. Hatty's childhood is that of her father's in the 1880's, while Tom's is in the 1960's just in the future of the 1950's when she was writing it. Now of course the author's present, and Tom's future are all in the past. In speaking she quotes the phrase "It didn't seem like the past at the time." Philippa attends many of the other sessions. I am impressed with the authors' enthusiasm for each other's work, and the way they ask questions of each other after their talks.

Wednesday, August 9

David Lowenthal, author of The Past is

Another Country, and Betty Levin's brother, substitutes for a cancelled speaker. He takes several amusing pokes at English attitudes about history and change, noting "nothing should ever be done for the first time." A contrast to Leon Garfield, he believes people were different in the past and, along with Penelope Lively, feels we have a false familiarity with an unknowable past.

John Rowe Townsend lectures on various theories of time and his references to Stephen Hawking's A Brief History of Time are echoed by many speakers. Both linear and cyclical views of time include prophecy which implies that the future is not a blank page. Instead it is predetermined and will be brought to This idea raises the question of whether there is free will. If Hatty, from Tom's Midnight Garden, in her childhood knew a Tom from the future, was not Tom's coming to the garden in his own time predetermined? Abigail in Playing Beatie Bow visits the past wearing a crochet collar that Granny Tallisker knows she will make in her future. While Einstein's theory of relativity opened up "stream of consciousness" writing, quantum mechanics suggest that time is a fourth dimension which our consciousnesses could intersect at various points in various sequence. Such leaps appear in Slaughterhouse Five.

Gathering for the evening session, I get reports from those who went to Green Knowe. Lucy Boston, at age 97, is reported as physically well and mentally acute. showed her guests around the garden and the house where she still lives alone. Up until three years ago, she took care of the topiary herself. The deer is there as are the chessmen. The river does run behind the house but does not threaten to flood its banks this summer. Also in the garden is the bush with the opening, inside of which Tolly finds the other children from an earlier time. house was once larger, but the Elizabethan expansion was lost in a fire. However, the Norman core of the 12th century remains. At one time, animals were kept at the ground level. Now the comfortable living room, with large walk-in fireplace, is used periodically for concerts. Apparently, Mrs. Boston was disappointed that no one in the group could play the harpsicord. Upstairs were found the rocking horse, the flute, the wooden mouse and the toy chest with its key, all mentioned in The Children of Green Knowe. Mrs. Boston has written a book about the house called Memory in a House which contains pictures based on the fifty years she has lived in the house.

Susan Cooper, the evening's speaker, is elegant and articulate. Langstaff introduces her as a collaborator in his Christmas revels. When he has a carol which is too religious, he has Susan "give it a pagan pitch." Despite the fact that she has lived in America for a long time, her books are set in England because the sense of continuity there is so strong; everywhere the present is surrounded by the past. For her, place includes time. Early settlers coming to America "threw away time" and began new traditions.

She reread her Dark is Rising, a five book sequence, straight through for the first time this conference and realized how unintentionally she was working on a definition of time. Editor Margaret McElderry commented that "perhaps this book has a little too much weather," and Cooper had to agree. However, she said, in reality there's not too much time. All times coexist, and one can travel through time. The future can affect the past. Despite some prophecy in her books, she believes in free will. main character in The Dark is Rising took a long time to name. She made a long list of possibilities and finally named him Will, after Shakespeare.

Thursday, August 10

The day begins with Eleanor Cameron's discussing time fantasy. She refers to Ursula LeGuin's comment on the "difficulty of translating from a language that doesn't exist." She discusses why an author writes time fantasy instead of historical fiction and uses Jill Paton Walsh's Chance Child as an example. She is so moved by the book that she cries while reading a passage. She feels that the material reveals its own form and notes that an author's role is to "part the darkness and follow slow."

Betty Levin quotes from Kenneth Grahame that "in England we may choose from any of a dozen centuries to live in." She introduces the concept of "presencing." In many of our books, a talisman is brought from another time period, or a place holds the past along with the present or a person serves as a witness. In Children of Green Knowe having a servant named Boggis in

each generation is a type of "presencing" carrying the past into the present. The past is a generative force in many books forcing those in the present to resolve something in In other books a problem in the the past. present is worked out by a visit to another time period. Many are in the tradition of fairy lore; sick children, "not themselves," have been carried to Elfland. An older person constantly plays an important role in protecting the child's passages through time and explaining the mysteries of the past. closing, she says that authors show readers how to catch the river of time, and for a moment, let it trickle through their fingers, to find islands in the chaos of the present which seems to swirl around us with no pattern.

Lunch. I'm tired. Can I listen any more? I would like just to read, but I rush to wash my hair, as there is less competition for the bath at this time of day. Attending my book discussion group, we reach a point where everyone regrets that this is our last session. There is some disagreement over whether a Welsh woman's comments about a stereotypical image are significant. The North Americans are much more sensitive and concerned about this issue than most of the English.

The afternoon panel relates well to our discussion as Janni Howker comments that the working class mill people she comes from are not reflected in school history. She wanted to write about them so that they would be depicted accurately in books and have a memory of what life was like for her grandfather's and great-grandfather's generations. Ironically, <u>Isaac Campion</u> which uses dialect instead of "BBC English" is too difficult for most working class children to read. brings out the political dimension of history and memory in making choices about what is recorded and remembered. She would like to find a voice for women's stories but lacked women in her childhood to draw on for her writing. As for time, she feels that adults live in the past and the future, while children live in the immediate present.

Critic Neil Philip discusses time in terms of line and loop. The loop is cyclical time, and linear time is what Adam and Eve were thrown into on leaving the Garden of Eden. In a book like <u>Tom's Midnight Garden</u>, Tom lives his ordinary life in linear time, but through fantasy is allowed to visit the eternal garden.

Gillian Avery uses the same image in discussing her motivation for writing. On moving from Oxford to Manchester, she felt that she had been "driven out of paradise." She tried in writing to recreate Oxford and to fulfill the yearning for an education she never had. As a middle class child in the 1930s and 40s, she couldn't even use the library because of fears that such children would spread disease by touching the books. As for negative emotion, she said, "You don't understand the meaning of hatred, if you don't have brothers." I guess it depends a lot on the brothers.

As the afternoon's speaker, Shirley Hughes, is as lovable to look at in her flowered dress and big straw hat, as the scrapedkneed, mud-stained children in her picture She talks more about illustrating than the theme of time. She says an illustrator should "give the author not what they want but what they never dreamed they could have." She bemoans the seeming lack of interest in illustrating books for older children. While she sketches a lot at appropriate sites (like National Trust Houses for the Secret Garden), "in the end you go home and make it all up." However, she does "lurk a good deal in sand pits" for her picture books. She joins others currently urging a move away from the painterly to a stronger story, avoiding illustrations that say "look at me and my lovely technique." But she's not above some subtle cultural education, as she slips pictures from the National Gallery onto the walls of homes in her books. She's as delightful as her books, and we enjoy slides of her heroes: illustrators who have pleased and inspired her.

We have a reception at Heffer's Children's Book Store. We cram in and spill over into the street with our wine glasses and bags of books. Heffer's can't put out enough books to sell to this crowd. Everyone gets a "card" to establish an account so that British books can be ordered from home. Not me. I'd rather come back and buy them in person!

I have an interesting chat with Tony Watkins who runs a master's program in children's literature at the University of Reading. We discuss, from the point of view of fellow educators, some gaps in this conference as far as the need for more interaction and opportunities for individual reflection. Most of the meals and social

occasions are so noisy that it is challenging to have a meaningful conversation.

Rosemary Sutcliff has arrived and is brought into the store in her wheelchair. Immediately, a line of pilgrims moves steadily to kneel beside her and briefly pay homage to one of the best writers of historical fiction for any age group of our time. I don't know what to say, but I too want to make contact.

We move on to Queen's College where we have a buffet reception in a marvelous hall, complete with timber beams, intricately painted wood walls and ceilings, and a gigantic stone fireplace fit for Henry VIII. I reunite with my Scotch, Welsh and Australian friends. We sing for our supper and then head out into the courtyard for breathing room. Only we are not allowed on the grass. Each plate has a clever plastic clip-on ring to hold your wine glass while you eat. I confess; I snitched mine. It says "Queen's College" and makes a great souvenir.

Friday, August 11

More nice weather. Breakfast is routine, but I notice that I seek out familar people from home and just listen. My energy is fading, and the noise in the room bothers me more. Fortunately, we enjoy a light and laughterfilled talk with slides of cartoon-style art by Jane Langton. Some people feel they underthe theories of time previously presented for the first time through these My favorite is a visual representations. sketch of several linked sausages, each one representing a century. A knife carves out a slice of the twentieth century, which is the piece one gets, like it or not. Writers, however, try to move back or ahead in time.

Ethel Heins tackles time in picture books and does indeed find examples of sequential time, the accordian's squeeze, prophecy, nostalgia, memory, flashbacks, linear time, interpolated time, calendar time, psychological time, simultaneous experiences of more than one time, barrier time, time slips, dream time and future time. The lights go on after her slides, and I am once again amazed at the depth of what is offered through the format of the picture book and the wide age appeal of books often relegated only to preschoolers.

Lunch. I grab my Ploughman's and rush with others to be sure I have pounds sterling for

the weekend. In town I bump into a fellow participant who points out to me that we have no one-to-two o'clock session. Oh joy, oh rapture unforeseen! I go to King's College Chapel. It is more glorious than in pictures or on TV. The fan vaulting soars to a height unimaginable from the outside. The sun shining on the stained glass makes colors dance on the marble floor. I avoid talking with people, so that I can hold the magic of this place close to me. Outside, I wander happily along the river and through colleges, slowly returning to the lecture hall to hear Rosemary Sutcliff.

As Sutcliff begins, we collectively hold our breath, sometimes struggling to get each word. She is warm and intelligent and is well-acquainted with theories of time. She introduces a new idea; different places and periods differ in their views of time. For Christians, the crucifixion was a unique event, so time had to move along on a progressive line. For those who saw a cyclical pattern, it really had to be a spiral with New phases emerged as similar periods. history did not repeat itself; inventions weren't undiscovered. Yet alternating periods seem to exist. the heroic emphasizing war and poetry, the classical highlighting art and prose.

She feels children should know the bare bones of history, the facts, to develop a sense of continuity. Roots give us reassurance and help us understand our own time during which we have trouble seeing any pattern. Most texts give the "God's eye" view of history, but "man's eye view" is more interesting. Historical fiction can breathe life into the bones of history.

If she had her choice, she would live in Roman times. While this is a period for which she has a particular affinity, she says the trip back in time is a lonely one for an author. The author must get on the inside looking out and feel as if she didn't know the outcome. She describes her method of writing a book. It must "smell right" not just be peopled by "cut-ups in olde worlde costumes." Due to her success, she does feel bereft when each book is finished.

A panel of the organizers takes questions. Afterwards, I take a walk in the college gardens to take some pictures and spend

some time alone. Near the end of my walk, a participant I haven't met yet asks me to take a picture of her with her camera. I oblige, and in return she takes a picture of me. We start talking and miraculously discover we have much in common. We eagerly talk right into and through dinner. She teaches children's literature, and we exchange exercises, techniques and books we use, to encourage students to explore themes, structure, literary elements in books. We are excited and wish this kind of conversation had gone on all week.

I am re-energized and go to Katherine Paterson's program, full of new ideas. She wears a simple dungaree skirt, blouse and sandals. She feels stories give us a sense of meaning and order which often seems to be lacking from our lives. Good writing is characterized by simplicity, harmony and brilliance, i.e. clarity, shedding light. The influence of the Bible and religion in her life have lead her to a narrative, linear sense of time.

When she finishes, I gather with a New England group to go to the local pub. About ten groups meet and go off in different directions for farewell drinks and to review the conference. It doesn't much matter what we talk about. Everyone just wants to be close, and no one is ready for an early end to the evening. At last call, we wander back to pack and think about tomorrow's departures to Scotland, East Anglia, the Cotswolds, London and for some, directly home. I will spend three days in Hampstead Village in north London.

Saturday, August 12

I wake with an alarm so I can pack and dismantle the room which has become comfortably mine. After a week of putting bits of bread on my window sill, for the first time a robin flits up while I stand there and takes a crumb. A nice farewell.

The morning is filled with songs and poetry by Langstaff and Bryan. Greg Maguire and Betty Levin give a synopsis, a lyrical linking of highlights from the whole week. It is well-done and reminds us of so much that was forgotten, as each speech overlaid the one before as in palimpsest, similar to pentimento in which one manuscript is scraped away and another inscribed in its place. This term seems to clarify some of the overlapping time periods of many of our books.

An apple tree which has stood in a container on the stage all week is also a symbol, representing the starting point for temporal existence for the Judeo-Christian tradition. Langstaff leads us outdoors while singing a song about apple picking. We find a basket full of apples for us each to take. Our time in this Eden of books and ideas has ended. In parting we form a large circle which moves ever tighter as we sing "Wild Mountain Thyme." Arms enfold friends as we hesitate over the line, "Will you go, Lassie? Will you go?" We will not, not yet at least, as several of us want to sing our poignantly melancholy four-part round, "What a goodly thing if the children of the world could dwell together in peace." Spontaneously, many join hands, and we walk slowly backwards until our circle is fully stretched. It breaks with lingering farewells.

Leaving on the train to London, I see a new foal lying in the grass. Life, death, time in the middle. Is it linear or cyclical? One speaker described his grief in seeing pictures of his family happy before his birth; no one mourned his absence. In a personal way, time begins with our own birth. In viewing collective history, we struggle with time because we are so insignificant. Through literature we try to understand other time periods, cope with our own, and explore the meaning of time. A few authors have transcended time through their writings.

Having begun the week with Helen Cresswell's obsession with cemeteries, I ended my visit at Highgate Cemetery in London. On George Eliot's tomb were these words: "Of those immortal dead who live again in minds made better by their presence."

Melody Lloyd Allen is Supervisor of Young Readers' Services at the Department of State Library Services. She is also an adjunct faculty member at the URI GSLIS and Simmons College GSLIS. She was a member of the 1986 Caldecott Award Committee and has written for American Libraries.

For further information on future institutes of Children's Literature New England or biographical information on any of the featured speakers mentioned above, please contact Melody at DSLS.



PETER BENNETT has been promoted to Head of Support Services at the Providence Public Library.

ROWENA BURKE is the new Children's Librarian at South Kingstown's Peacedale Library.

FRANCES FARRELL-BERGERON has left the East Providence Public Library, where she served as Assistant Director, to pursue a free lance career. DONNA ROBERTS recently was appointed to be Fran's successor.

PETER FULLER, former Coordinator of the Northern Interrelated Library System (NILS), is now Assistant Director of the Lincoln Public Library. MARGARET HIRST is presently serving as Acting Coordinator.

HELEN GUSTAFSON, Assistant Director at the Coventry Public Library, has retired after many years of service to the library and the community.

FLORENCE HINDLE, Head of Clerical

Services at Providence Public Library and a member of the PPL staff for over thirty years, retired on January 31st.

MARGOT McLAREN, in addition to her duties as Technical Services Librarian at the Rhode Island State Library, has been named Director of the Rhode Island Publications Clearinghouse.

JOAN PECK recently was appointed Librarian at Meeting Street School, replacing SALLY CURTIS, who is now Librarian at the Greystone Elementary School in North Providence.

KATHY RYAN has left Salve Regina College to become Children's Librarian at Newport Public Library.

New appointments at the Providence Public Library include JANICE GASPAR as Cataloger, effective November 28, 1989 and Children's Specialists ELIZABETH NUNES and CHERINE KENT, effective on December 1, 1989.

AN AFTERLOOK AT THE RILA CONFERENCE 1989

RILA's 1989 Conference entitled "Committment to Professionalism" was held on Monday, November 6. Designed as a liaison between RILA's traditional two-day Conferences, which will resume in June 1990, the one-day event consisted of five workshops given in the morning, and the Annual Business Meeting in the afternoon. Following are reports on the Conference by Carol Drought, Conference Chair, and reports on the Workshops by RILA members. (A report on the Business Meeting appeared in the December 1989 issue.)

REPORT FROM THE CONFERENCE CHAIR

Carol Drought Assistant Director Warwick Public Library

Judging from program evaluations and comments to committee members, conference attendees were pleased with changes in format and location of November's conference. Five concurrent workshop sessions were attended by 110 librarians and library-staffers.

Public libraries were the most heavily represented, counting for 62% of registrations. Completing the roster of registrants were

sixteen academic librarians, two school librarians, and twenty-four "others," a category which includes special librarians, library school staff and students, and DSLS staff.

As Doug Pearce, Past-President, put it, the one-day conference was "true to the scale of Rhode Island," and appropriate to its size and needs.

COOPERATIVE PROGRAMMING IDEAS FOR CHILDREN

Reported by: Angel Randall

Head Children's Services

Librarian

Cranston Public Library

According to Maggie Bush, Associate Professor, Simmons College, "a rich collection does not compensate for lack of service." As children's librarians we must decide where we're going. What are the trends? Library programming is becoming more responsive to the community, reaching out to potential patrons. By doing a community analysis or study, the actual needs in an individual city or town are communicated. Since needs change, community awareness is an ongoing process, and the librarian must keep in touch with others in the community to keep abreast of changing needs.

There is also a trend toward collaborative efforts. A large portion of the population becomes affiliated with other agencies at a young age. As children's librarians, the fact that we serve children and their parents is apparent and will continue. We must now stretch ourselves as professionals and collaborate with personnel of other agencies such as Day Care, Head Start, preschools, and caregivers.

Information technology still holds great interest, as do the cooperative efforts of school and public libraries networking to serve children.

Patricia Owens, Director of Library Services, Connecticut State Library, offered some practical advice and examples of what is already happening. She pointed out that cooperation occurs because people make it work. She emphasized that cooperation does not depend on staffing, budgets, or schedules, but on determination and attitude.

Owens introduced six levels of cooperation ranging from a level of "no cooperation or involvement" to "formal planning." Many participants seemed to identify with the "informal communication" level where, for example, only sometimes do they have prior knowledge of assignments or reading lists. Others acknowledged more formal planning. For instance, school librarians may arrange for the visit of the public librarian to the school.

The speakers suggested that typically we, as children's librarians, react when the children show up. Rather, we should take a pro-active stance. An example cited was the science fair project. We as librarians should contact the school. When we know the "who, what, and when," we may find the preparation by students with the librarian's help resulting in a display in the library.

The speakers invited the participants to share examples of cooperative efforts in their communities. What developed was a sense that many children's librarians have already begun to reach out into their communities, to identify needs, and to show that determination and attitude make a difference in library services to children in Rhode Island.

BY THE BOOK: DEVELOPING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Reported by: Susan Berman Assistant Director North Kingstown Free Library

Joseph S. Hopkins, Director of the Worcester Public Library, presented an overview of policy development. He began by defining policy and its importance, and continued with a discussion of who makes policy, what conditions merit the establishment of policy, and finally, treated such concerns as how policy should be presented.

Hopkins feels that policy is a governing principle, not an outline for specific action. Policy is important, he suggested, because it protects rights and provides for equitable treatment of staff as well as clients, and because it "gives support and rationale to institutional purposes and goals." The responsibility for policy usually appears in an institution's founding document, which forms the legal base upon which policy authority rests. Although responsibility lies with the legal authority, the process of development should include both management and staff.

Policy development should be considered when a recurring problem is recognized or when the library is planning a new service. In developing policy, it is important to include staff who must explain or carry out the policy. The proposed policy should be submitted, in draft form along with supporting documents, to the policy-making

body, allowing plenty of time for study, discussion and revision. If possible, there should be a testing period before final adoption. Meetings which include policy deliberations should be well publicized in order to avoid legal challenges.

The policy draft should include a description of the situation for which the policy is needed, an indication of the policy's relationship to other policies and mention any legal implications. Policy implementation should be outlined, and a clear distinction should be made between the policy itself and its supporting material.

The second portion of Hopkins' presentation offered a case study in policy development with a brief history of the online information services policy at Worcester Public Library, which demonstrated the application of the principles already reviewed.

Elizabeth Watson, Assistant Chief Librarian of Fitchburg Public Library, discussed the production, use and revision of the staff manual at her library in a presentation which further supported the concept of policy development as an on-going process which upholds the library's mission and strengthens communication. Key to this process is group participation, with regular staff meetings and standing committee charged maintaining and updating the manual. Routine review of the manual should take into account changes in practice, law and interaction with city government.

Following the formal presentations, the participants broke into two teams, led by Janet Levesque, Director of Cumberland Public Library, and Sheila Carlson, Supervisor of Institutional Library Services for DSLS. One team considered a policy to address meeting room use. The other worked on a policy concerning unattended children in the library. Finally, the group reconvened for a lively discussion applying the ideas presented by the speakers to everyday problems faced by librarians.

THE 1990 CENSUS: INFORMATION YOU CAN COUNT ON

Reported by: Deby Nunes, Assistant
Director & Reference Librarian
East Greenwich Free Library

Christine Payne, Information Services Special-

ist at the Bureau of the Census gave an informative talk on census material, particularly the 1990 census. Census questionnaires will be sent out sometime in March and will be due on April 1st.

Ms. Payne explained how census material is used, why it is used, and how to figure it all out once it is in print. This is not an easy task considering the ideosyncracies that can confuse users of census materials. For example, some information is based on 100% data, while other information is based on sample data. This distinction can be quite confusing and frustrating to users, as this type of data is intermingled throughout the census books. She used sample exercises to stress the importance of reading all headings very carefully. One subtle change in a heading can affect all the data.

Two packets full of handouts were given to participants explaining many aspects of the census. By far the most helpful was the listing of all telephone contacts for the Census Bureau in Washington. This list is broken down by almost every possible subheading used by the census and is a great reference tool for patrons who need indepth census information or assistance. Contact the Boston Regional Office at (617) 565-7100.

DILEMMAS IN COMMITTMENT TO PROFESSIONALISM

Reported by: Tanya Trinkaus Glass Technical Services Librarian Coventry Public Library

Fay Zipkowitz, Associate Professor, GSLIS, URI, discussed professional ethics. specific issues mentioned were: dishonesty, competency, appropriate vs. inappropriate behavior, morals, and one's ability to reason and solve problems based upon the different values brought to the work environment. She emphasized how difficult it is to teach ethics to adults since their values were formed as children. So, librarians must deal with staff's different values in different Dr. Zipkowitz is compiling a situations. case book of five categories of ethical librarians' relationships with peers, with colleagues, with clientele, with vendors, and in the institutional structure. Librarians' ethical choices affect their "behavior, performance, sense of self-worth, quality of service, and in-the-long-run,

[their] professional roles and how [they] meet [their] goals."

Liz Futas, Director of Graduate School of Library and Information Studies, URI, discussed professionalism and professional ethics as a "true believer." She suggested that a professional has five attributes: 1) Use of a professional organization as a major relationship, 2) Belief in public service as an indispensible service, 3) Belief in selfregulation, 4) Dedication to one's field, and 5) Autonomy. More specifically, she suggested five "field specific attributes" and five ways to measure these attributes (including the ALA Code of Ethics). Dr. Futas reminded the audience that professionals must keep up-todate, must keep in touch, must know whom to call, and must know where to go. "We have a way of life."

Gordon Fretwell, Associate Director for Public Services, University of Massachusetts Amherst, discussed gathering statistics for salary surveys or funding requests. compiles the ACRL salary survey regularly. He suggested that libraries are not unique but perform jobs similar to other professionals, so can use similar statistic-gathering techniques. Since some subjects are touchy, confidentiality and accuracy are paramount. Age and ethnic origins are two such areas. Consistency among all statistics is important as personal judgments can alter data; and relationships between data and other social and economic factors are useful in analyzing data on such issues as cost-of-living vs. salary.

In discussing professional ethics, Dr. Fretwell discussed sensitive information which must be dealt with "on-the-job." These include such areas as: critiques of performance, intellectual freedom, democratic operations. Decisions must be made by librarians, but the paraprofessionals and technicians can participate in the process.

This program was an interesting one which should inspire all librarians to be proud of their professionalism and need not be called "Professional Librarian." The phrase itself is redundant.

GETTING THE WORD OUT: A SHORT COURSE IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

Reported by: Maria Baxter, Adult Services Librarian, Reference Librarian Cumberland Public Library An energetic exchange of ideas for producing <u>library newsletters</u> and other PR materials highlighted the program, as audience members and knowledgeable speakers shared their experiences with each other. Affordable software options to be used "in-house" with a laser printer were of special interest.

Beth Watson Souza, Public Relations Coordinator, Providence Public Library, suggested lifting the <u>mission statement</u> from the annual report and publicizing it to inform the public of the library's goals and to let them know how they can help achieve them.

"Names and numbers. That's what news is all about," said John Hazard, Public Relations Director of the <u>Providence Journal</u>, in outlining an effective way to construct and present a <u>news release</u> and how to receive news coverage.

A comprehensive packet/handout included vendor options for computers, supplies, and printer services. Added to this was a PR checklist, a bibliography entitled "Marketing Yourself and Your Library," and other useful reprints. Gail Calu Mastrati, Chief of Information and Public Relations at DSLS, wrapped up the thoroughly well-done program, by announcing that she is available to help librarians with PR concerns.



President Carol DiPrete and Past President Doug Pearce.



RILA Executive Board members, 1989-1990.

Photography courtesy of Joe McGovern, DSLS.

THE PRACTICAL MATTERS: A WORKSHOP ON CENSORSHIP AND INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

SPONSORED BY THE INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM COMMITTEE OF THE RHODE ISLAND LIBRARY ASSOCIATION AND THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE HONORS PROGRAM AND THE VISITING SCHOLARS COMMITTEE, URI

Date: March 7, 1990

Time: 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Registration 9:30 a.m.-10:00 a.m.)

Place: University of Rhode Island Library (Galanti Lounge)

Kingston, R.I. (Directions and parking infomation will

be supplied)

Cost: \$10.00 includes handouts, refreshments, and lunch

The workshop will emphasize the basic tenets of intellectual freedom and the practical techniques necessary to prepare for and deal with censorship problems and complaints

Professor A.J. Anderson, Simmons College, Graduate School of Library Featured:

and Information Science

Professor Gene D. Lanier, Director of Graduate Studies, East Carolina

University, Dept. of Library & Information Studies

Professor Jonathan S. Tryon, University of Rhode Island, Graduate School

of Library and Information Studies

Send Registration to: Beth Johnson, Reference Department, Cranston Public Library, 140 Sockanosset Cross Rd., Cranston, R.I. 02920/(401)943-9080

DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 28, 1990 PLEASE PRINT

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bulletin board

- The Rhode Island Department of State Library Services (DSLS) recently was designated as a Center for the Book by the Library of Congress. In 1984 the Library of Congress established the Center for the Book to be a pro-active agency designed to stimulate awareness of books, reading, and libraries. then twenty state centers (including RI) have been established. Each state center plans and funds its own operations and each includes representatives of the state's "Community of the Book," from author to reader.
- The Department of State Library Services (DSLS) unveiled a 130-title book collection and exhibit on Japan at a ceremony that took place at the Providence Public Library on January 25th. The books were a generous gift from the Snow and Stars Corporation, importers and exporters of costume jewelry, to the citizens of Rhode Island to enhance their appreciation of Japan and her people. collection will travel to twelve public libraries over the next year before being permanently housed in five Rhode Island public libraries.
- The Providence Public Library is celebrating Library Week with a special recognition for Rhode Island authors scheduled for Sunday, April 22, 1990. The Library will honor especially Rhode Island authors of commercially published books with a 1989 reprint, and these authors will be asked to send a copy of their books for display. Authors of previously published books will also be recognized at the reception. Rhode Island authors are those born or currently residing in The Library is compiling the state. information on Rhode Island authors and would appreciate receiving resumes. send them to the Providence Public Library, Public Relations Department, 225 Washington Street, Providence, RI 02903, or call 455-8090 or 455-8055.
- Brown University Library has received a \$6,500 grant from the Rhode Committee for the Humanities (RICH) and the National Endowment for the Humanities to index the 3,500 items in the Rhode Island Sheet Music Collection - that part of the Sheet Music Collection at the John Hay Library related to Rhode Island culture and history or printed in Rhode Island. Under the administration of Brown's music

librarian, Sarah Shaw, the project will run from August 1989 through December 1990. For further information about the project, Sarah Shaw, Box A, Rockefeller contact: Library, Brown University, Providence, RI 02912.

REMINDER

All librarians interested in having their names referred to employers needing parttime/temporary librarians should complete the information form printed in the RILA Bulletin December 1989. Applications completed before December 1989 are no longer valid.

BERGERON POETRY PROGRAM ANNOUNCED

The William L. Bergeron Memorial Poetry Program will be held on February 15 at 7:30 PM at the Cranston Public Library. Sponsored by the Friends of the Library, the Program honors the memory of William L. Bergeron, who until his death in February 1989, served as Coordinator of Technical Services/Systems at the Library.

Forrest Gander, Rhode Island poet and member of Providence College's English Department, will not only read his poems, but speak on the role and importance of poetry in everyday life. Gander also serves as co-editor of Lost Roads Publishers, a Rhode Island book press of fiction and He will comment and bring examples of Lost Roads publications, as well as copies of his own most recent collection of poetry, Rush to the Lake.

Friends of the Library invite all interested in Rhode Island literature as well as friends of Bill Bergeron to join them in this evening of remembering a much-loved and muchmissed colleague. Additional information on the Program is available from John Fox Cory, Assistant Director, Cranston Public Library, 140 Sockanosset Cross Cranston, RI, (401) 943-9080.

RILA WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Deborah Mongeau, Membership Chair, reports the following new RILA members as of December 20. Welcome!

Judith Aaron Rhode Island School of Design Reference Librarian

Kevin J. Carty NELINET Member Services Librarian

Margaret Davis East Greenwich Free Library Children's Librarian

Christine Fagan Roger Williams College Collection Development Librarian

Wendy Knickerbocker Rhode Island College Catalog Librarian

Joel Marks Marian J. Mohr Memorial Library Children's Librarian

Deby J. Nunes East Greenwich Free Library Assistant Director/Reference Librarian

Edith Peck Roger Williams College Architecture Librarian

Joan C. Prescott Rogers Free Library Director

Nancy M. Reynolds Gilbert Stuart Elementary School School Librarian

Gail D. Solomon Providence Public Library Reference Librarian

Sandra Stone URI/GSLIS Student

Carol Tatian Brown University Orwig Music Library Music Librarian

Barbara Von Villas Middletown Public Library Trustee

Philip J. Weimerskirch Providence Public Library Special Collections Librarian

jobline

LIBRARIAN I, CHILDREN'S SERVICES: Pawtucket Public Library. Entry level position. Excellent benefits. Assists in collection development, reference and reader's advisory service, and plans and presents programs. Must have an ALA accredited MLS. Includes some evening and weekend hours. Salary \$19,528.08. Send resume and the names of three references to Personnel Department, City Hall, Pawtucket, RI 02860. Open till filled. Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

ADULT SERVICES LIBRARIAN (L-I) KNIGHT MEMORIAL: Responsible for the direct provision of service to the adult users of a large branch lbirary. Primary duties include the provision of reference and readers advisory assistance and the presentation of adult programs. The adult services librarian will be expected to participate in the development of library service at the branch and may participate in community outreach activity, program development, collection development, and clerical supervision. MLS from an ALA accredited library school required. Salary range: \$21,000-\$26,246. Applications accepted until position is filled. Apply to Dan Austin, Personnel Manager, Providence Public Library, 225 Washington Street, Providence, RI 02903. An Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Employer.

CHILDREN'S LIBRARIAN: Responsible for all activities in the children's room including planning and presenting programs; collection development; reference and reader's advisory service. MLS from ALA accredited institution desirable. Send resume to: Eileen Socha, Director, George Hail Library, 530 Main Street, Warren, RI 02885.

MEDICAL LIBRARY COORDINATOR: Brown University Library. Responsible for coordinating library services to the bio-medical faculty and students of the Brown Program in Medicine. Works with Brown and Affiliated Hospital Librarians to provide these services. Reports to the Head, Reference Department. Requirements: MLS degree from an ALA accredited library school, medical librarian accreditation, three years experience in a medical library with some administrative experience, experience with online systems and medical cooperative agreements, good organizational skills, and a knowledge of technological advances in medical librarianship. Appointment range: \$28,400-\$35,500 based upon experience. To be assured of consideration, please send letter of application, resume and names of three references by March 15, 1990, to Patti Andrade, Department of Human Resources, Box 1879, Brown University, Providence, RI 02912. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Brown University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

calendar

FEBRUARY 16: RHILINET Committee, Cranston Public Library, 2:00 PM.

MARCH 7: Ashley Bryan will speak at Nathan Bishop School. Time has not been scheduled, but will be in evening, free and open to public. Information: Naomi Caldwell-Wood at Nathan Bishop School.

APRIL 22-28: National Library Week.

APRIL 26: NETSL Annual Conference, 9:30 am to 3:30 pm, Yoken's Restaurant, Portsmouth, NH. Information: Colleen Valente, University of New Hampshire, (603) 862-1482.

JUNE 7-8: RILA Annual Conference, Salve Regina College, Newport.

RHODE ISLAND LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

PERSONAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM

January - December 1990

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			TOTAL ENCLOSED \$

Please send in your dues by March 31, 1990. Make check payable to RILA and mail to: $\,$ D

Deborah Mongeau University of Rhode Island Library Kingston, RI 02881-0803

RILA WRITES GOVERNOR

In response to the motion introduced by Carol Terry, RISD, at RILA's Fall Business Meeting, President Carol DiPrete wrote Governor Edward DiPrete, expressing concern for increased support for state-supported institutions of high learning. Following is her letter and response from his office.

November 22, 1989

The Honorable Edward D. DiPrete Governor State Of Rhode Island State House Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Dear Governor DiPrete:

The membership of the Rhode Island Library Association (RILA), at its annual meeting November 6th, voted unanimously the following motion:

Moved that the Rhode Island Library Association support an increase in state funding for state institutions of higher education and that the RILA President communicate the motion to the Governor.

The reason for this motion from RILA is that funding for libraries in those institutions is linked to the general funding that the institutions receive from the state. All of us are aware that the state is having some fiscal problems, but to cut funding to higher education can have a very long lasting effect on the future of Rhode Island as those institutions are charged with educating our future leaders.

You have a strong record in support of education. The Association appreciates that support and hopes that it continue for all educational areas, including increased funding for higher education.

Sincerely,

Carol K. DiPrete President

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

EXECUTIVE CHAMBER PROVIDENCE

Edward D. DiPrete

December 15, 1989

Carol K. DiPrete President Rhode Island Library Association Bristol, RI 02809

Dear Ms. DiPrete:

Thank you for your recent letter to Governor DiPrete in regard to the Rhode Island Library Association. The Governor particulary appreciates your concerns. In so far as we are fiscally able, to increase funding to libraries and education, including higher education, we shall do so. However, as you noted, we expect to experience fiscal constraints.

Thank you for your efforts and support of libriaries and higher education in Rhode Island.

Sincerely,

Nancy C. Rhodes Education Policy Analyst

cc: Sally T. Dowling, Director Governor's Policy Office Office of Higher Education

RHODE ISLAND LIBRARY ASSOCIATION BULLETIN INDEX 1989

Compiled by Tanya Trinkaus Glass

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[Letter to be sent to selected officials of public libraries]. Personnel Committee. Ap 89 RILA Personnel Committee salary resolution for 1990. D 89 Statistics report to the 1989 Annual Meeting. RILA Personnel Committee. D 89

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