



PHOTOGRAPH BY DONNA KAIN



COURTESY OF THE NC STATE ARCHIVES



COURTESY OF DANA EZZELL GAY

A Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

NCLR's new Art Director will tell you more about the new look you were surprised by (pleasantly, we hope) when you opened your *NCLR* mailing envelope or picked this issue up from a bookstore shelf. Now an Assistant Professor of Graphic Design at Meredith College, Dana Ezzell Gay has been designing for *NCLR* since she was a student of Eva Roberts, who created *NCLR*'s original and unique format, and we are fortunate to have Dana step into the role of Art Director – in which capacity she has designed almost this whole issue.

Last year, Dana approached me with the idea of changing *NCLR*'s design. I will admit that my first, panicked reaction was the temptation to spout clichés like “don’t mess with success,” “leave well enough alone,” and “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” But at the same time, I thought of a quotation I have had on my office door since UNC President Erskine Bowles spoke at ECU’s 2006 commencement: “You must embrace change and treat it as your friend,” he told our graduates, continuing, “I have never believed that acceptance of the status quo is the way to go.” Being someone who has resisted the status quo since high school, I have been, on occasion, frustrated by the academic life, where I sometimes find myself surrounded by people resistant to change. Having dragged my share of people into trying something different, it was my turn to let someone push me into making some changes. This is, after all, our eighteenth issue.

While I leave the design for Dana to introduce to you, I will call your attention to two related elements of the change: the introductions to and the separate tables of contents for the different sections of the issue: see pages 6–7, 134–35, and 148–49 for more information about each section’s content. I will also note here that the design change of our annual publication is just a first step. We will take that change to our website, which will expand to include electronic submissions, updates during the year about what is forthcoming in the print issue, and news about literary activities throughout the state.

Of course, all of these plans for change will take time (from an already overworked staff) and money (in a depressed economy). *NCLR* has always been a labor of love for its editors and graphic designers, as well as for its regular writers and artists. To paraphrase Tennessee Williams’s Blanche DuBois (appropriate for a Drama issue), we have long relied upon the kindness of – friends. We so appreciate the generosity of the many who have contributed their talents over the years, and now more than ever we say, “Thank you.” As I also found myself writing to the membership of the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association earlier this summer, in these economic times we need to make certain that the arts are not neglected. Therefore, here we ask our readers to support our efforts to expand *NCLR*'s role in preserving and promoting North Carolina literature by buying subscriptions, back issues, and more copies of this issue as gifts throughout the year and/or by making a tax-deductible donation to become a “Friend of *NCLR*.”

In the meantime, we look forward to receiving feedback on our new look, so—

Let us hear from you,

Margaret D. Bauer, Editor

ABOVE TOP *NCLR* Editor Margaret D. Bauer introducing writers at the 5th annual Eastern Carolina Literary Homecoming, Greenville, NC, 26 Sept. 2008

ABOVE CENTER North Carolina Literary and Historical Association President Margaret D. Bauer thanking the “Lit & Hist” membership for the extra funding for the CDs that complemented *NCLR*'s 2008 humor issue; Raleigh, NC, 8 Nov. 2008

ABOVE BOTTOM *NCLR* Art Director Dana Ezzell Gay attending an American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA) lecture in Raleigh, NC, 8 Feb. 2008