

'98 Literary Review features oral history, Chappell's fiction

By TOM DILLON
Times-News

Book beat

Where can you find fiction by Fred Chappell, an attempt to find the roots of the Ocracoke brogue, North Carolina storytelling and oral histories from both midwives and African-American physicians?

It's all part of the newly issued 1998 edition of the North Carolina Literary Review, out this month.

And as usual the editors and writers have done a first-class job. It's no hyperbole at all to call this the best annual review of books and writers in North Carolina.

The new issue is focused around two central themes: the fiction of Fred Chappell, North Carolina's new poet laureate, and oral history, which includes storytelling and the work on the Ocracoke brogue.

The section on Chappell, a professor at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, gives us a sneak peek at his current novel-in-progress, "Look Back All the Green Valley"; an early interview that gets into horror fiction, of all things, along with some early novels back in print; and other excerpts from and critiques of his work.

Don't miss the short story "The Tipton Tornado," a North Carolina mountain story that will have you both wondering and smiling until the last couple of paragraphs.

In the oral history section is an interview and some story selections from Donald Davis, probably the most well-known of North Carolina storytellers. He currently spends some 300 days a year on the road, approximately 100 of them in schools. There are excerpts from "Thirteen Miles from Suncrest" and "Listening for the Crack of Dawn."

Dawn.

The Literary Review began as a two-times-a-year publication and has now been reduced to one year. But that's still a prodigious amount of reading and information.

The publication includes interviews with North Carolina writers, explorations of North Carolina history, cultural and literary analyses, book review essays, fiction and poetry.

Past issues have delved into such topics as the writings of John Lawson, 17th and 18th century explorer, and the history of Black Mountain College. Future issues will feature the Civil War in North Carolina (1999) and Other Voices and Genres (2000).

The Review is published by

East Carolina University and the N.C. Literary and Historical Association. Subscriptions are \$20 for two years or \$36 for four years. Write NCLR, English Department, ECU, Greenville, N.C. 27858-4353.

Nearby, the Review is at the Regulator Bookshop in Durham and Avid Reader and Bull's Head Bookstores in Chapel Hill.