

North Carolina Miscellany: “North Carolina . . . rich in literary resources”

Margaret D. Bauer, Editor

As part of our new look, *NCLR* 2009 introduces the North Carolina Miscellany section that combines the sections previously designated as Creative Writing, Reviews, and North Carolina Writers. And we are pleased to open the first North Carolina Miscellany section with editorial board member James Smith’s interview with poet Betty Adcock. We thank Betty Adcock for generously sharing not only her thoughts about poetry but also her family photographs and for allowing us to reprint some of the poems discussed in the interview. We also thank James Smith for his usual insightful questions (see other interviews he has conducted for *NCLR* in the 2007 and 2008 issues), as well as for his help with selecting poetry collections and reviewers for some of the reviews in this and previous issues.

I have recently found myself comparing the privilege of editing the *North Carolina Literary Review* to being an ambassador for North Carolina literature. It is a particular pleasure to introduce within *NCLR*’s pages writers from our state whom readers might not yet know about, like Kat Meads and William Conescu, also interviewed in this section of the issue. After reading Meads’s novel *The Invented Life of Kitty Duncan*, I have been on a crusade to introduce her 1950s-era Scarlett O’Hara to other readers, and after reading Louisa Dang’s interview with Conescu, I put his novel *Being Written* on my own “must read” list.

Also in the new combined section are book reviews and poetry, as well as the 2008 Doris Betts Fiction Prize first- and second-place stories (and information about the new guidelines for the competition), a tribute to Betts on the occasion of her most recent honor, literary criticism on Reynolds Price, several news stories of recent North Carolina literary award winners, and more. We thank the writers who gave their time to be interviewed or who allowed us to

publish the fruits of their talents in various genres, the “reporters” who shared their presentation remarks from various award ceremonies, and the reviewers who contributed their expertise in order to bring new books to our readers’ attention.

For this new section and/or our planned new website, we invite organizers across the state to send us news articles on recent or forthcoming literary events that feature North Carolina writers.

In my capacity as *NCLR* editor/North Carolina Ambassador for Literature, interesting literary “miscellany” crosses my desk every week – like an 1894 *Winston-Sentinel* article on North Carolina literature, which includes the following passage that I’ve read at several literary events over the past year:

We should naturally expect North Carolina to be rich in literary resources. The climate is similar to that which nourished Homer and Hesiod, Horace and Virgil. The scenery from mountain crest to the surging sea is a source of ceaseless inspiration. Our history is sufficient to call forth the sweetest strains of the poetic lyre. Our heroes, celebrated in times of peace and war, deserve recognition in story and in song. Traditions amusing and pathetic thickly cluster along the coast and wild mountain frontiers of years ago. Surely there are few fields more inviting than the “Land of Tar.” . . . This field has been entered by writers of both prose and verse.

I smiled when I read this over 100-year-old prediction of the inspiration North Carolina would be to writers for years to come, thinking of the many writers whose work fills the 200-plus pages of *NCLR* every year, showing that a literary magazine can be devoted to a particular state’s writers and never run out of material – if that state is North Carolina. ■

