



Words, Words, Words

Polonius: What do you read my lord?
Hamlet: Words, Words, Words.
Act 2, Scene 2
Volume 5, January 2007

From The Chair

*“Forward, forward let us range,
Let the great world spin forever down
the ringing grooves of change.”*

So wrote Alfred Lord Tennyson in his poem “Locksley Hall.” Although the hero of this particular work arrives at a somewhat ambivalent acceptance of modern developments, including the burgeoning British railway system (the poor-sighted poet was said to be under the mistaken impression that trains ran on grooves and not rails), we can still adopt this couplet as a collective mantra during this transitional period.

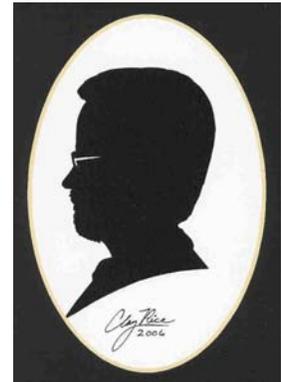
Indeed, the USCA Department of English is rather rapidly undergoing a metamorphosis. In a matter of four years, six faculty members either have retired or announced their intention to do so. That means that an academic unit that was once dominated by senior faculty will soon be brimming with new people. Just in the past two years, for example, Drs. Phebe Davidson, Sue Lorch, and Dan Miller have retired; and this year and the next, Drs. Stan

Rich, Don Blount, and Steve Gardner will be turning in their keys. It’s a challenging time for the Department of English; we have to figure out ways to maintain our admirable academic momentum, especially the blend of curricular and co-curricular activities that have put our program in the forefront of undergraduate education in our region, while, at the same time, taking advantage of the new ideas and new energy that our junior faculty bring with them.

This year we also confront change in the form of programmatic adjustments. This fall we inaugurated our new gateway course for all English majors: AEGL 275: Introduction to Literary Criticism, and from initial feedback, the new requirement seems to be a success. With this course, we are hoping to give our students an introduction to the discipline that will be just as challenging as our capstone requirement. In addition, this fall the Department hosted our first colloquium for majors; on September 13, Drs. Katie Kalpin and Matt Miller and Professor Linda Lee Harper talked about how to prepare for graduate school. We intend to host a similar event in the spring for those planning to enter the job market.

For more information on our ongoing activities, please refer to the articles in this newsletter. This is the fifth year for this publication, and assuredly the best dividend to be derived from this project has been hearing from our readers, especially our graduates. We’d love to hear from more of you. Please visit the department website at www.usca.edu/english/ where you will find more news about our people and our programs.

Dr. Tom Mack, Professor and Chair



This cut-paper silhouette of Dr. Mack was created by noted Low Country artist Clay Rice

National Writing Project

USCA is set to become the newest site for the National Writing Project (NWP) in the summer of 2007.

The National Writing Project is the premier effort to improve writing across America by providing professional development programs for teachers. Begun in 1974 by Jim Gray, the first writing project was created in response to a growing need for adequate structure and effectiveness in writing instruction primarily from fourth through twelfth grade. This program, offered during the summer months, soon developed into a professional and intellectual network that allows teachers across the country to emphasize leadership within their community and, most importantly, in the classroom.

After witnessing the effectiveness of the Low Country Writing Project in Charleston, Dr. Suzanne Ozment encouraged the development of an Aiken site. With diligent effort on the part of Dr. Lynne Rhodes and the support of the USCA English Department, USCA School of Education, and the Aiken County Schools, a site application was prepared; and this past November, USCA learned that its application had been approved. Now the Aiken Writing Project stands ready to join nearly 200 sites across the country by hosting its first summer program starting this coming June and lasting from four to five weeks. “It will provide an opportunity for teachers to remember that they enjoy writing,” says Dr. Rhodes.

In January of 2007, representatives of the National Writing Project will arrive in Aiken to help local staff set up the curriculum and launch a website. The upcoming summer institute will be based, to some extent, upon a graduate-level writing class that Dr. Rhodes taught in the summer of 2006.

The National Writing Project’s ultimate goal is to enable teachers to master and communicate more effectively the art of writing. After completing institutes held each summer, these NWP-trained teachers join an expanding pool of professionals making a positive difference in schools and communities in all 50 states.

Dr. Tom Mack

Since the last newsletter, Dr. Mack has a number of items to report on teaching and scholarship.

"Last spring (2006)," he asserts, "I had one of the best American Romanticism classes that I ever taught; everyone kept up with the reading, and we had lively discussions on the works of Poe, Hawthorne, and Melville. I also enjoyed my senior seminar group, and I look forward to the next batch of seniors in the spring (2007)." In the fall of 2006, he taught the new gateway course for English majors: AEGL 275: Introduction to Literary Criticism, and he's excited about the value that this course will bring to the program.

During this calendar year (2006), Dr. Mack has remained active in scholarship and creative activity. In the category of traditional research, he presented a paper on the Western novels of Percival Everett at the International Conference of the Association for the Interdisciplinary Study of the Arts and published two articles: a review of Everett's novel *Wounded for Magill's Literary Annual* and a reference article on the fiction of David Leavitt for *Magill's Survey of American Literature*. In the category of applied research, Dr. Mack edited the eighth volume of *The Oswald Review*; in the category of creative activity, he continued to write his popular column entitled "Arts and Humanities," which appears each Friday in *The Aiken Standard*.

Dr. Eunita Ochola

In January 2006, Dr. Ochola tested the marketplace by sending manuscript copies of her autobiography to various publishers; she thinks that her prospects of getting published in the UK are good. She is currently revising the book for the umpteenth time.

Since the last academic year, Dr. Ochola has engaged in active scholarship. She contributed an article for a special edition of the *Journal of Research in Reading* on the theme of "Reading and Literacy in Developing Countries," due for publication in 2007. In August, 2006, Dr. Ochola's sociolinguistics article, "English Words and Phrases in Dholuo-English Codeswitching" was accepted for publication in the *Cascadilla Proceedings* for the 36th Annual Conference on African Languages. She also resubmitted her article, "The Role of Academic Journal Writing and Linguistic Idiosyncrasies in College Writing" to the *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, United Kingdom.

From June 27 to August 18, Dr. Ochola taught English as a second language in the Institute for English Language Programs at Harvard University. She had a great experience with using the Harkness Table approach to teach English through reading literature and scholarly articles. Dr. Ochola also enjoyed guiding students through collaborative learning projects and co-teaching in the afternoon workshop classes.

Currently she is submitting and soliciting works for a projected *Anthology of African Literature* and is contemplating organizing a workshop/conference, with approval, toward this endeavor. The campus-based Forum for Discussion on Current Affairs that she started in September still has room for more members.



Dr. Stephen Gardner

This past fall, Dr. Gardner has enjoyed teaching a class he has thought about for many years, "Roethke and His Legacy." This course allows him to meander through the works of a number of his favorite—and extremely important—twentieth-century American poets. Dr. Gardner is very much looking forward to the spring term, when he will teach—for the final time at USCA—his workshop in poetry writing and his seminar in the early plays (with movies) of Edward Albee and Tennessee Williams. Dr. Gardner avows, "As I look toward retirement in 2008, I am trying to tie up those loose ends of courses that I've loved to teach and that I've dreamed of teaching."

On the creative side, Dr. Gardner's major editorial project is now in the hands of the publisher. For over two years he has been engaged, with co-editor and USCA alumnus, William G. Wright, in the task of assembling *The Southern Poetry Anthology: South Carolina*, the first of what they envision as a series that might include Texas, Mississippi, Alabama, and who-knows-where-else. This volume contains the work of seventy-six poets who are natives of, or have lived in, South Carolina. The list of writers includes George Garrett, Susan Ludvigson, Chris Forhan, Jim Peterson, Rebecca McClanahan (who will visit USCA in February, 2007), Kwame Dawes, and former USCA students Jannette Giles Hypes, James Enelow, Lindsay Greene McManus, and Ray McManus. After he takes a deep breath from this project, Dr. Gardner will resume work on a twenty-five-year retrospective anthology of the best of *The Devil's Millhopper*, a collection that he is co-editing with Stephen Corey and Jim Peterson, both of whom were editors of the *Millhopper* before he took on that task. Also, at the same time, there is his own work, which continues to occupy him as he tries to find, as Hemingway put it, "the one true sentence."

Dr. Lynne Rhodes

During the past year, Dr. Rhodes has written a grant proposal for USC Aiken to become a National Writing Project site. In support of the grant, she has been working with the USCA School of Education and with Aiken County language arts and English teachers to plan for an invitational Aiken Writing Project Summer Institute. Also in support of the National Writing Project initiative, Dr. Rhodes made a presentation at the South Carolina Council of Teachers meeting on Kiawah Island in January 2006, and she also attended several Writing Project Directors' meetings around the state.

Additionally, she spoke on the topic of the English Department's current initiatives in reading assessment this past May at the 2006 International Writing Across the Curriculum Conference held at Clemson and this past July at the 2006 Writing Program Administration Conference held in Chattanooga. She also gave presentations on the use of the Junior Writing Portfolio in departmental program reviews with Dr. Braden Hosch in Atlanta at the 2005 SACS Conference and with Dr. Hampton and Mr. Fornes at the 2005 SAMLA Conference, also held in Atlanta.

In short, Dr. Rhodes has done a lot of traveling and talking! Meanwhile, she continues to teach freshman composition, advanced composition, and technical writing; and she directed a technical writing thesis for Katherine McPherson this past Spring.

Dr. Don Blount

This coming May, after 32 years of service to the University, Dr. Don Blount will be retiring. His principal contribution to the English curriculum has been in the category of comparative literature, especially Great Books. Recently, he has published an edition of the letters of American poet Wallace Stevens.

Dr. Matt Miller

Dr. Matt Miller has been teaching courses in African and African American literature, non-Western literature, world film and literature, graphic novels (extended comic books), and writing in the university. In the Spring, Dr. Miller will be teaching the 400-level course in modern American writers, which will focus on the great novelists in twentieth century American literature.

In research Dr. Miller has published three entries in the *Encyclopedia of Asian American Writers* on Diana Abu-Jaber and her two major novels *Arabian Jazz* and *Crescent*. He also presented this past summer at the 2006 WAC conference at Clemson University on English 102 reading and writing assessment. In the spring Dr. Miller hopes to present two papers. The first will be on J. M. Coetzee's novel *Waiting for the Barbarians* for the British Commonwealth and Postcolonial Studies Conference in Savannah. The other will be on Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* at the Philological Association of the Carolinas Conference in Myrtle Beach. He also has two essays under review for publication.

Dr. Miller continues to serve the Department on various ad hoc search committees and the standing assessment committee. He is also on the Campus Life Committee, a subgroup of the Faculty Assembly.

His future goals, immediate and long term, include continued improvement of classroom instruction as well as getting his work published. He also wants to continue to be a good father for Jakob, and the new twins, Ella and Luke.

Dr. Bill Claxon

Dr. Bill Claxon presented a paper entitled "Boys to Men: Coming of Age Stories in Southern Literature" at the annual meeting of the Popular Culture Association in the South on October 7, 2006, in Savannah, Georgia.

Dr. Claxon continues to work on a long-term study of the representation of males in twentieth-century Southern literature, and he has possible presentations in mind for the annual Faulkner conference held during the summer in Oxford, Mississippi, and the annual meeting of the American Men's Studies Association. He has also resumed writing and circulating fiction; he looks forward to receiving a "hooray" letter in the near future.

Working in the last few years as USCA's Faculty Athletics Representative to the NCAA has been especially rewarding to Dr. Claxon. One of the biggest recent challenges, he admits, has been adjusting to the retirement and impending retirement of admired colleagues in the English Department.

Ms. Vicki Collins

Throughout the year Ms. Collins has kept busy continuing to teach English 101, 102, and 201. She presented "This is not Your Grandmother's Grammar" for the Writing Room Workshop Series, as well as making a guest presentation on "MLA Documentation and Learning Styles." She worked on the First-Year Experience Committee and as a First Year Advisor. Ms. Collins also provided instruction in the "Kids In College" program in the areas of creative writing, Spanish, and study skills.

In the category of professional enrichment, Ms. Collins was a presenter at the National First Year Experience Conference in Atlanta, concentrating on the topic of "Rules of Engagement and Critical Thinking." She is also both a member of the Augusta Poetry Group and Vice-President of the Augusta Authors Club.

Ms. Collins continues to be the annual judge for the Lakeside High School Senior Projects and an active member of the CSRA Tennis Association Board.

Mr. Karl Fornes

Karl Fornes was gratified by his promotion to Senior Instructor and his receipt of the USCA Excellence in Advising Award during the 2005-2006 academic year.

During the past year, Fornes has continued his work with technology and writing. He is particularly excited about teaching two new courses in upcoming semesters—Rhetorical Grammar in the spring of 2007 and Composition Studies in the fall of 2007.

In May 2006, Fornes presented a paper discussing reading outcomes and assessment with colleagues, Dr. Matt Miller and Dr. Lynne Rhodes, at the International Writing Across the Curriculum Conference. In February 2007, he will end his term as Treasurer of the Southeastern Writing Centers Association.

Off campus, Fornes now serves as Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees at the Gertrude Herbert Institute of Art in Augusta where he is pursuing internships for qualified English majors. Karl Fornes fills his limited spare time with reading, golfing, camping, and hiking.

Dr. Jill Hampton

Over the past year, Dr. Jill Hampton began teaching the Introduction to Women's Literature course, which resulted in a series of excellent campus-wide community service projects that her students researched and presented. She continued to teach AEGL 101 from a rhetorical stance based on civic engagement and responsibility and AEGL 102 from a global literary perspective.

One of many highlights of the year included her trip to the Western Literature Association conference in Los Angeles. Dr. Hampton was finally able to follow her passion for the Literature of the American West by presenting a paper on Irish-American immigrant poetry and the Western American landscape. She followed that paper with a presentation at the South Atlantic MLA conference on the new curriculum she developed for AEGL 201. In the spring, she was asked to participate in a panel addressing eco-criticism and Irish Literature at the national Irish Studies Conference, where her paper was solicited for a planned publication. After spending eight grueling days this past summer at sunny Daytona Beach grading English literature AP exams, she sank into her favorite chair at home to read, rest, and prepare for the coming school year.

Dr. Hampton plans to continue reading and writing on landscape theory and literature, especially American immigrant writing. She also looks forward to welcoming the new English faculty although she is going to miss her colleagues who are retiring.

Mr. Jim Saine

Jim Saine has a somewhat "non-traditional" teaching background. He was in the military for twenty five years, having graduated from West Point in 1967. Mr. Saine obtained a Masters in English in 1975 from UNC-Chapel Hill while on active duty and then taught English at West Point from 1978-1981. While on active duty with the U.S. Army, he continued teaching English "on the side" as an adjunct professor at Fayetteville State University, Wheaton College (Illinois), and Tidewater Community College.

Mr. Saine left military service in 1992 and came to Aiken to work at the Savannah River Site as a training manager. He served in that capacity until 1997 when he left SRS and went back to teaching (initially at Westminster Prep in Augusta from 1997-2000). While at Westminster, Mr. Saine taught some classes at Aiken Tech as an adjunct. Following that, he moved over to Aiken High School in 2000, primarily to teach in the new International Baccalaureate program there.

Ms. Ilona Law

Outside of Professor's Law's regular teaching duties, one of the most interesting and gratifying things that she has been engaged in has been serving as a new faculty mentor. Last fall she was privileged to work with new English faculty member, Dr. Matt Miller, and Head Reference Librarian, Prof. Rose Marshall. This fall she has mentored Dr. Carla Coleman. Mentoring entails assisting new faculty to transition smoothly to their new teaching schedules at USCA by assisting them with syllabus development and course and classroom management, as needed.

During Summer Session II, Prof. Law was tapped to teach in USCA's new "First Pace" program for incoming freshman. "First Pace" allows students to acclimate to college campus life and classroom expectations during a three-week summer session that includes academics and carefully planned workshops on campus resources. Specifically, Prof. Law was the instructor of record for AEGL-101. Since college-level writing expectations can be daunting to freshmen, this course was designed as a concentrated and highly structured initiation to college composition. The majority of these students were diligent, highly motivated, and the course was a success.

In September, Prof. Law presented a reading of Julia Peterkin's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *Scarlet Sister Mary* for the Aiken County Library's "Let's Talk About It" series. Peterkin was a Southern literary anomaly in her day, as she realistically portrayed the lives of black women, giving them rich and deep emotional and spiritual lives as well as human dignity. She remains controversial for some of the elements of these portrayals. This coming spring Prof. Law will participate in a USCA symposium on the works of Julia Peterkin.

Dr. Harry Hootman

After retiring from the Savannah River Site, Harry Hootman took advantage of the tuition-free education opportunity for senior citizens in South Carolina to pursue a doctorate in English from USC Columbia by majoring in nineteenth-century British and American literature. His dissertation entitled *An Index of British Literary Annuals and Gift Books 1823 - 1861* provides an index to these annuals, a comprehensive introduction, and a quantitative overview of interest to literary historical scholarship. Currently, the index, which consists of separate author, artist, engraver, title, and contents listings from 283 British literary annuals, is available on the internet at: www.britannuals.com. The comprehensive introduction and overview to British annuals can be found at www.geocities.com/britannualsinfo. Additional essays can be found at www.britannualsinfo.com.

Currently, Dr. Hootman is actively engaged in further research. He was recently appointed an associate editor for *The Poetess Archive*, an umbrella literary website being developed by Dr. Laura Mandell at Miami University of Ohio. This project is designed to enhance digital scholarship and criticism of British and American writing between 1750-1900.

**Dr. Carla Coleman**

Dr. Carla Coleman is one of the two newest English faculty members at USCA. She came most recently from The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she graduated with a doctorate in English; her major emphasis is on nineteenth-Century British literature, and her secondary emphasis is in Western drama.

After graduation, she spent several years as a visiting professor in the UNC-Chapel Hill Department of Dramatic Art, where she taught courses in dramatic literature. Dr. Coleman's main research interest is in the intersections of theatre performance and the novel in nineteenth-century Britain, as well as the intersection of that period's newly emerging scientific discourse with more popular, non-scientific literature. In addition to teaching at UNC-Chapel Hill, she also served as a visiting professor at Elon University, near Burlington, NC.

This fall, Dr. Coleman taught the British Romanticism course, in addition to AEGL 101. This spring, besides three sections of AEGL 102, she will be teaching Victorian literature, where she hopes to undermine her students' clichéd belief that all Victorians were prudish and that all Victorian literature is stuffy.

In addition to acclimating to her new life in Aiken and preparing for her courses, Dr. Coleman chaired two panels at this fall's Victorians Institute conference in Spartanburg, where she was re-elected as one of the organization's two members-at-large. She is currently working on a paper under consideration for a collection devoted to Victorian novelist Mary Elizabeth Braddon. She is also preparing a conference presentation on performance in Charlotte Bronte's *Villette*, as well as one on evolutionary discourse in Charles Kingsley's children's novella *The Water-Babies*.

**Dr. Kathleen Kalpin**

Dr. Kathleen Kalpin received her Ph.D. and M.A. in English from the University of California at Davis and her B.A. from the University of California, Santa Cruz. She specializes in the English early modern period, with particular interest in drama and cultural studies. Her current research projects investigate representations of women's speech in dramatic and non-dramatic texts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This year she will be teaching composition courses (101 and 102) as well as the Shakespeare course.

"As If the End They Purpos'd Were Their Own': Early Modern Representations of Speech Between Women" will be coming out in late 2007. This article looks at the way that early modern representations of speech between women are often interpreted as being sinister in some way. For example, one of the plays that Dr. Kalpin examines in her research is *A Warning for Fair Women*. This play was inspired by the real-life murder of a husband by his wife who wanted to be with her lover; the play places a great deal of blame on a neighbor, a woman, who allegedly convinced the wife to murder her husband.

About the Shakespeare class that she will be teaching this spring, Dr. Kalpin says, "I will focus on what I find most interesting and engaging in the period-emphasizing the historical and cultural elements of Shakespeare's England that impact the production or interpretation of the play." She also likes to pose questions to her class regarding stage performance: "How would you say this line, where is the character standing, what are they doing with their hands?" These questions are, essentially, questions of analysis and interpretation, and Dr. Kalpin thinks that they make studying Shakespeare seem less intimidating and more accessible.

The Long Journey: Full of Adventure, Full of Instruction

The lyric poet Constantine P. Cavafy (1863-1933), who lived most of his life in Alexandria, Egypt, wrote frequently on classical Greek themes. One of his most famous poems, and one of my favorites, "Ithaka," speaks eloquently of the human journey through a long lifetime. Using the age-old story of Odysseus' traveling from war-ravaged Troy back to his homeland of Ithaka, a small island on the western shores of Greece, Cavafy universalizes Odysseus' grand and often storm-tossed ten-year journey, speaking directly to his audience in these opening lines:

*When you set out for Ithaka
ask that your way be long,
full of adventure, full of instruction.*

These lines, since I first met them nearly four decades ago, have challenged and encouraged me along my own teaching journey of thirty-eight years, twenty seven of them being at USC Aiken. Setting out to teach college-level English as an idealistic, spirited, energetic, hopeful young man, I began a wondrous journey in classroom instruction that for me has continued to the present to inspire, energize, and to engender hope.

Meeting with students in that amazing, sacred space, the classroom—the heart and soul of the undergraduate experience—has always thrilled and sometimes scared me. The ever-developing drama of teacher-student engagement, a journey in itself, has constantly pushed me to be the best instructor I can be. Being present to the students in both mind and heart demands the full person, and I long ago committed myself to that Vocation. Building a community of scholars in the classroom has constituted a major focus of my teaching adventure, and I can today readily visualize many groups of students through the years where that "magical" on-going conversation occurred, lifting us all to a higher level of enjoyment in learning.

Dialogue and engagement with my own professional colleagues have also been part of the long and illuminating adventure. During my times of teaching at several schools—Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, Alabama; The University of Alabama Tuscaloosa; The University of South Carolina Aiken; Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Poland; Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas, Lithuania; and Tula State University in Tula, Russia—I have been engaged in wonderful academic conversations, leading to continuing intellectual growth. For the many, varied discussions with my academic colleagues at many, varied conferences nationally and internationally, I am grateful. As Cavafy says in his poem, I have been able "to gather stores of knowledge from the learned." And, as a result, I have been having the joy of sharing the newly-developing knowledge with both my students and my academic colleagues.

I am "rich with all I have gained on the way" thus far, and the numinous journey continues, so that, along with Odysseus, I may visit "ports seen for the first time."

Dr. Stanley Rich, Distinguished Professor of English



The Department of English is soliciting donations for the Dr. Stanley Rich Scholarship Endowment.

This Time of Year

Moving into my second full year of retirement from USCA's English Department, I can't help reflecting on how my life has changed. Certainly, the setting is different. From my desk, I look out at Lake Hartwell and think of the pines outside my office window at USCA, of my friends absorbed in their campus duties. Here, the water is low, as often is this time of year, and the afternoon sun sends up armies of light from the water's surface. The Blue Ridge foothills flank the view, and hawks are rising from the trees at the water's edge. There are powerful compensations to this "non-working" life: more opportunity to visit at leisure with friends new and old, the slow shaping of house and lot to the way we live now, time and space without the quotidian interruptions and distractions of the teaching life, fewer deadlines, no lengthy lists (*Oh fabulous day!*) of committee obligations, and a bowling average that is much improved over its level this time last year. Even at its most frenetic, life is more relaxed than it used to be.

To my surprise, I find myself wondering how I ever found time to hold a job. The past year has seen the publication of three new poetry chapbooks (*Song Dog* / SC Poetry Initiative, *The Drowned Man* / Finishing Line Books, and *Twelve Leagues In* / Spire Press). Eighteen additional poems have been published or accepted for publication in journals and anthologies, and I have finally gotten around to exploring internet publication. I have become a staff writer for *The Asheville Poetry Review* and the current chair of the Poetry Society of South Carolina's Regional Advisory Committee. I continue to review manuscripts for an academic press. Add to the mix an active schedule of public readings, and you can probably understand what I mean about time.

While I don't really miss the pressures of full time work, my professional years are indispensable to the life I am living now. Two scholarly essays, one on D.W. Griffiths and the other (co-authored with Debra Reddin Van Tuyl of Augusta State) on William Gilmore Simms, will soon see book publication. Since I remain, at heart, an academic critic, I will be nearly ecstatic to see these in a hardbacked volume.

I'll close with a little more about old habits. I continue to think of each new year as running from August 15 to the following May. When the calendar reaches mid-August, I know deep in my bones that everything is edging toward autumn, toward a new academic year and all the new beginnings that implies, and it makes me a little restless. As we move through fall towards winter, I think about the things I need to attend to, as a writer and as a human being. I remember that I'm getting older, and I find I don't mind very much. One recent morning, I watched a small flotilla of Canada geese sail out into the lake from a small island off our dock. The rain fell all day. Today, once more, sun bounces off water, the landscape shines, and the sky is no lower than it was. There are metaphors everywhere I look.

Phebe Davidson, Distinguished Professor Emerita



Donations are being solicited to build the endowment fund for the Phebe Davidson Prize in Creative Writing.

Lindsay Green

After receiving her B.A. in English from USCA in 2000, Lindsay Green began her graduate studies in English at the University of South Carolina in Columbia. She received her M.A. in American Literature in 2002, and she is currently completing her Ph.D. in Rhetoric and Composition. At USC-Columbia, Lindsay teaches Composition, Literature, Business Writing, and Advanced Writing. She has worked as an Instructor and Associate Director for Split P Soup, a literacy program designed to bring poetry to all ages in the community. As a guest artist and staff instructor, Lindsay has worked with the Palmetto Center for the Arts, the South Carolina Young Writers' Conference, and the Tri-District Summer Arts Consortium. She also performed for four seasons with the Power Company, Columbia's professional modern dance company, at Columbia College. Her work as a dancer and poet has greatly enhanced her approaches to teaching and research. She will soon defend her dissertation, *Performing Masculinity: Control, Manhood, and the Rhetoric of the Body*.

Lindsay Green feels fortunate to have taken advantage of the wide variety of courses offered to English majors at USCA. The intense submersions in American literature, British literature, linguistics, poetry, and special topics courses prepared her for a smooth transition to graduate school. She maintains contact with some of her English department professors from USCA, and she has enjoyed sharing news of her developing career and personal activities with these professors who continue to encourage and inspire her. In October 2006, Lindsay Green will be marrying Dr. Ray McManus, an accomplished poet and teacher who also received his graduate degrees in English from the University of South Carolina and studied English at USCA briefly as an undergraduate.



Will Wright

Will Wright graduated from USCA in the summer of 2002; he is now a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Southern Mississippi. In addition to pursuing graduate work, Wright is now co-editor of *The Southern Poetry Anthology* with Dr. Stephen Gardner. Since graduation from USCA, Wright's essays and poems have appeared in national journals; his first full-length collection of poetry, *Dark Orchard*, was recently published by Texas Review Press. Wright asserts, "The B.A. in English provides myriad opportunities; if one is considering graduate work in English or hopes to secure a job that requires writing ability, an English degree is indispensable."

The USCA English Department prepared Wright for graduate school. In particular, he credits his work on his senior thesis with laying a foundation for his work on the Master's level: "The work I did on my thesis during my senior year showed me what to expect and how to manage my defense." Many of his graduate school peers have remarked that their undergraduate programs did not include a senior thesis so Wright feels privileged to have had that opportunity at USCA.

Dr. Clay Morton

Clay Morton completed the BA in English at USCA in 1997. After working for a year as a Public Relations Specialist for Lower Savannah Council of Governments, he attended graduate school at the University of Georgia, earning the M.A. (2000) and Ph.D. (2005). Morton found that he was better prepared for graduate studies than many of his colleagues who had come from large research institutions—schools whose professors have famous names but relatively little commitment to undergraduate instruction. By contrast, he says, "USCA offers a student-centered learning environment that is actually quite similar to graduate school. The classes are small, and students enjoy genuine one-on-one contact with their professors. This kind of contact fosters mentor relationships that are valuable in so many ways, both before and after graduation."

Of the fourteen members of his graduating class at Georgia, Morton was one of only three to land a tenure-track job within a year—of these three, he was the only one to have completed the Ph.D. in just four years. Again, his undergraduate experience at USCA gave him a distinct advantage in the job search. Unlike most recent Ph.D. graduates, Morton had a deep understanding of what an undergraduate, liberal-arts teaching institution is all about. He was therefore able to market himself towards the kinds of jobs that are actually available.

Now known as "Dr. Morton," he is Assistant Professor of English at Macon State College, a four-year institution of the University System of Georgia. His teaching and research interests include the history and theory of media, nineteenth- and twentieth-century American literature, Southern cultural studies, folklore, and composition-rhetoric. In addition to presenting papers regularly at national and international academic conferences, Dr. Morton has published scholarly articles in the journals *South Atlantic Review*, *Storytelling*, and *Southern Studies*. He has also contributed to *New Georgia Encyclopedia* and *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of African American Literature*, reviewed books for *Gulf South Historical Review*, and authored a chapter of the Mellen Press volume *Conflict in Southern Writing*.



Derek Marshall

After earning his B. A. in English from USCA in 2000, Derek Marshall enrolled in the graduate program in Library and Information Science at the University of South Carolina in Columbia. Since earning his Masters of Library and Information Science in 2001, he has been the reference librarian at the Nancy Carson Library in North Augusta.

Before he began working at the Nancy Carson Library, there was no library programming geared toward teens in the area. Thus, in his first year, he helped expand the Summer Reading Program to include young adults. The Library now provides regularly scheduled programs and activities targeted toward that age group. More importantly, this year the Nancy Carson Library is hosting the 4th annual Ghost Story Writing Contest. When he first began planning teen programs, Marshall decided that a writing contest would be a great way not only to enhance the curricula of area schools by giving students another opportunity to practice their writing but also to provide him with an outlet that capitalized on his personal love of writing. The Library now offers writing workshops in both short fiction and poetry. The poetry workshops coincide with the annual poetry writing contest each spring.

Because of the success of the contests, Marshall was asked to present "Planning Writing Workshops and Contests for Teens" at the South Carolina Library Association's annual conference in 2004. That same year, he was elected Vice-President of the CSRA Library Association and served through the 2006 term.

Marshall has always loved to write, and the English professors and his peers at USCA really motivated him to improve his skills. While at USCA, Derek also interned, under Dr. Mack's supervision, at the *Aiken Standard* for two semesters. Recently, *The Star*, North Augusta's local newspaper, has featured weekly articles written by Derek Marshall and other staff members of the Library. He states "I definitely wouldn't have known what newspaper writing entails without that internship."



Phillip Grayson

After graduation from USCA in 2004, Phillip Grayson pursued additional study at the University of Tulsa in Oklahoma, where he worked on a Masters in Literature. After the completion of his graduate program in the spring of 2006, he spent the summer in Corinth, Greece, getting certified to teach English as a second language. This fall (2006), Grayson traveled to the Czech Republic where he started teaching at the Caledonian School in Prague.

Grayson definitely thinks that USCA helped him a great deal. Not only did the English program prepare him for graduate study, but the faculty also encouraged him to take advantage of the many opportunities that life brings his way. With his graduate degree in hand, Phillip Grayson is now investigating the larger world.



The Oswald Distinguished Writers' Series Welcomed Author Brock Clarke

For two days in early October, the Oswald Distinguished Writers Series welcomed novelist and short story writer Brock Clarke to campus. A native of upstate New York who currently teaches at the University of Cincinnati, Clarke brought to USCA his personal perspective on the world.



At the public reading in the Etherredge Center on October 10, Dr. Mack hushed a near capacity crowd and offered a few words of welcome. Senior English major Josh Catlett introduced the author, who read his short story "For Those of Us That Need Such Things." This tale on the brink of the absurd is narrated by a man who attempts to recreate himself and his life by buying the city of Savannah, Georgia. It's the sort of grand gesture that he believes will win back his wife. By recruiting groups of people for specialized functions, elderly ladies to run a literary society and retired gents to be the "city fathers," the narrator succeeds in at least achieving the appearance of a place that works. In the end, however, the city turns on its renovator, who manages to get his wife to take him back. Pretence may be all we have, the narrator argues: "if you can't have real cities and true love, then you settle for the next best thing."

The next morning, Brock Clarke visited Dr. Mack's Introduction to Literary Criticism class (AEGL 275) to chat with students who were about to practice what they had learned about the major modern critical approaches by analyzing two different stories from *Carrying the Torch* in two separate papers.

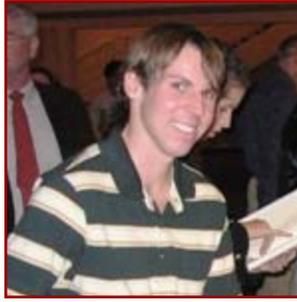
Now in its twenty-first consecutive year, the Writers Series continues to bring to campus notable novelists and poets. It also continues to attract the largest audiences in South Carolina for an event of its type, and the English Department is working hard to maintain this admirable momentum.



Poet and essayist Rebecca McClanahan will be reading from *The Riddle Song* as part of the Oswald Writers Series at 8 p.m., February 20th, 2007. For more information visit www.usca.edu/english/oswald.asp.

T.J. Overstreet: The Oswald Creative Writing Award

Jonathan Overstreet, a senior majoring in English, began submitting works in the annual Oswald Creative Writing Award competition during his sophomore year. For his second attempt, in his junior year, Overstreet began to prepare a poetry sequence months before the 2006 deadline. In the end, because of the competition limit of 150 lines of verse, he was able to submit only the first half of the poetry sequence that he had composed.



The competition, which invites submissions in fiction, creative non-fiction, poetry, and drama, is designed to recognize the highest quality of creative writing produced in a given year by a USCA undergraduate. As judged by a panel of three professors, Jonathan Overstreet's poetry sequence beat out a multitude of other submissions for the five-hundred-dollar prize.

Overstreet first became interested in creative writing during his senior year in high school; that interest was further cultivated by Professor Linda Lee Harper, with whom he studied both poetry and fiction.

When asked if he had any advice for the student wishing to submit creative work for publication or competition, Jonathan Overstreet replied: "I feel that it is important to be persistent and to ignore any fear of rejection. You are not always going to win, so it is important to keep trying and to submit in as many places as possible."

Overstreet plans to continue his exploration of creative writing by eventually pursuing an MFA degree.

Celene Carozza: The Virginia Kaplan Writing Award

Celene Carozza never set out with the intention of writing the paper that would lead her to win the Kaplan Writing Award. Yet, after three days of intense work, grappling with fifteen sources and compiling seventeen pages of text, she felt that she had produced her best paper to date.



The five-hundred-dollar Kaplan Award is presented each April at Academic Convocation to the student who best exhibits excellence in expository writing. All submissions are judged on the qualities valued and stressed by Virginia Kaplan during the many years that she taught English at USCA.

Her winning paper, entitled "Sexuality and Blood Consciousness in the Poetry of D.H. Lawrence," was a work that Carozza first submitted as a required assignment in a class in Modern British Literature and then revised for the competition. The poems she discusses in her paper, according to Carozza, "exhibit Lawrence's belief that there is an innate guide within the blood, that we should live by instinct." She feels that Lawrence's poems are often overlooked, and she encourages everyone to read the poetry of this gifted writer. "I think its gorgeous," she asserts.

Celene Carozza stresses the importance of feeling good about any paper that one might submit for competition, and she argues that there is nothing to lose by submitting. In fact, she is looking forward to entering this year one of the other writing competitions sponsored by the Department of English.

Stephanie Foote: The Writing Room

Every day of the week there is a great deal of activity in Room 112 of the H&SS Building. It seems that USCA students have finally "discovered" the Writing Room. Stephanie Foote, Director of the Academic Success Center and supervisor of the Writing Room, observes that in the past year, it has become an all too familiar sight to find every corner of the facility in use, including all of the computer workstations and the tutoring tables.



Foote has been spending a lot of time making sure that the Writing Room remains an "open teaching and learning environment for the collaborative discussion of writing." To augment the existing services, for example, Foote is expanding the WR website to provide off-campus students with some on-campus benefits. The website will include links to guidelines for the many documentation styles, including MLA, APA, and Chicago. A section devoted to the Junior Writing Portfolio will provide submission guidelines, due dates, and any other information relevant to this important graduation requirement.

Along with the website, the Writing Room has been increasing its in-house library. The library, which now encompasses an entire wall, is home to dictionaries, writing handbooks, literature anthologies, and just about any book dealing with the writing process. Most of the books are restricted to in-house use, but some can be checked out.

The future of the Writing Room is bright. Stephanie Foote, who is working on her Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration, says that she hopes to move into a larger space so as to accommodate the increasing traffic. Along with consolidating all of the academic labs in one location, Foote wants the Academic Success Center to provide comprehensive academic support for all students.

A Note On My Internship

Over the past semester, I have learned a great many things during this editorial internship under the direction of Dr. Mack.

The creation of this newsletter was no easy task, for it entailed a great deal of work and active interaction with faculty, staff, and fellow English majors. I had not a clue as to what type or amount of work would be needed to fulfill the requirements of this internship. I soon found out that my time management skills did not meet the demands of the newsletter assignment but, thankfully, Dr. Mack was patient and persistent with me, and I soon adjusted.

Along with expressing my creativity on this project and honing my editing skills, I have been fortunate enough to have the opportunity to meet the entire faculty and staff of the English Department.

Most importantly, this internship experience helped me develop valuable skills that will serve me well after graduation, and it gave me the chance to give something back to the English Department that has given so much to me.

