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# RWSA NEWSLETTER

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Volume 1, Issue 5

August 2009

## CONFERENCE INFO

**RWSA Triennial Conference to be held at the  
Bloomington campus of Indiana University,  
September 24-27, 2009**

### WELCOME!

We are pleased to inform you that with your conference registration fee comes many wonderful opportunities to celebrate the lives of rural women throughout the world. There will be several opportunities to sit and network over a meal, an evening of dance entertainment and a film series that celebrate rural women's life and culture, and a chance to visit a farmers' market where women food producers will be present. The panel and paper sessions are rich and offer the opportunity for much dialogue. Participants include scholars, activists, community organizers, women living in rural communities, women involved with rural policy, food producers, and more. Moreover, the Lotus World Music Festival is convening in Bloomington and will include women musicians from rural Africa and the Caribbean. We invite and welcome you to join us in what promises to be an exciting and rewarding meeting!

### REGISTRATION

Participants may register through the online link, <http://www.confmanager.com/main.cfm?cid=1693> or through regular mail sent to Valerie Grim, c/o Melissa Steward, Indiana University, Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies, Memorial Hall, Room 18, Bloomington, Indiana, 47405.

### LODGING

As of a few days ago there were rooms still available at the Indiana Memorial Union Hotel, 900 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Bloomington, IN 47405. To make your reservation contact the hotel directly at 800.209.8145. Rates are \$94 for one double bed, \$114 for two double beds, \$124 for two queen or one king bed.

## GROUND TRANSPORTATION

Two companies offer service nine times per day between the Indianapolis airport and the Bloomington campus. The Bloomington Shuttle charges \$25 each way ([www.bloomingtonshuttle.com](http://www.bloomingtonshuttle.com) or 800.589.6004) and the Star of America ([www.starofamerica.com](http://www.starofamerica.com) or 800.933.0097) charges \$15 each way. Limousine ([www.classictoughlimo.com](http://www.classictoughlimo.com)) and car rental service also is available at the airport.

## DRIVING DIRECTIONS

Use the hotel address, above, for MapQuest or Maps.google.com driving directions. Driving from Indianapolis Airport to Indiana Memorial Union:

1. Leaving from the airport, exit onto Interstate 465 South & East.
2. Exit at Hwy. 37, South.
3. Continue on Hwy 37 through Martinsville.
4. Exit Hwy 37 at "College and Walnut" (you will emerge on College).
5. Continue on College Ave. to 7<sup>th</sup> Street.
6. Turn LEFT on 7<sup>th</sup> Street.
7. Continue about seven blocks.
8. Turn RIGHT into the circle drive in front of the Indiana Memorial Union.

## PROGRAM

The program is posted on the RWSA web site, at [http://www.uncp.edu/rwsa/Preliminary\\_Program.pdf](http://www.uncp.edu/rwsa/Preliminary_Program.pdf).

## Don't forget the Silent Auction!

The RWSA will be holding its usual fundraiser during the meeting, a silent auction of items donated by members and publishers. Please bring gift items to donate to the auction. Handicrafts and other items produced by rural women or of local interest from your region are especially welcome. Authors, please contact your presses and ask them to donate copies of your books and other books on rural women. For more information on the silent auction, please contact Cindy Prescott at [cynthia.culver@gmail.com](mailto:cynthia.culver@gmail.com).

## ***About the RWSA***

Founded in 1998 as an outgrowth of the Sixth Conference on Rural and Farm Women in Historical Perspective, the Rural Women's Studies Association is an international organization for the advancement and promotion of farm and rural women's gender studies in historical perspective. The Association aims to encourage research, to promote existing and forthcoming scholarship, and to establish and maintain links with contemporary farm and rural women's organizations. The RWSA aims to encourage scholars from different disciplinary backgrounds and countries to communicate about their research and all other activities that are supportive to the Association's goals.

### **Co-Chairs:**

Deborah Stiles, Nova Scotia Agricultural College  
Valerie Grim, Indiana University-Bloomington

### **Secretary:**

Deborah Fink

### **Treasurer:**

Debra Reid, Eastern Illinois University

### **International Membership and Communication Coordinators:**

*Pacific*—Kate Hunter, Victoria Univ. of Wellington  
*Canada*—Margaret Kechnie, Laurentian University  
*Europe*—Margreet van der Burg, Wageningen Univ.

### **Graduate Student Coordinator:**

Jenny Barker-Devine, Iowa State University

### **Web Master:**

Kathleen Hilton, University of North Carolina-  
Pembroke

### **Web Site:**

<http://www.uncp.edu/rwsa>

### **Newsletter Editor:**

Rebecca Montgomery, Texas State University

## **The Filson Historical Society Fellowships & Internships**

The Filson Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky, invites applications for internships and for fellowships to support research in The Filson's collections. Applications must be received by October 15, 2009. Detailed information about fellowships, internships, and application procedures can be found online at:

<http://www.filsonhistorical.org/fellowships.html>.

Information about The Filson's collections can be found on the online catalog. The Filson anticipates that fellows will publicize the results of their research in *Ohio Valley History*, the peer-reviewed journal published jointly by The Filson and the Cincinnati Museum Center.

Organized May 15, 1884, the mission of The Filson Historical Society is to collect, preserve and tell the significant stories of Kentucky and the Ohio Valley history and culture. The Filson is headquartered in the Ferguson Mansion in Old Louisville and houses a library, a museum, and a special collections department. It's fellowship and internship program is made possible in part by the Thomas Walker Bullitt Perpetual Trust.

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## **Send Us Your News!**

Please send any information you wished included in future newsletters to: [rm53@txstate.edu](mailto:rm53@txstate.edu). Feel free to do this any time! RWSA members would appreciate hearing of your accomplishments and awards, changes in employment, forthcoming publications, research discoveries or needs, etc. We also welcome all types of announcements from institutions and organizations regarding fellowships and awards, historical holdings, job openings, activities, and events.

# Member News

## Congratulations, Connie!

Connie L. Lester is pleased to announce that she received tenure and was promoted to Associate Professor at the University of Central Florida in Orlando. Connie also serves as editor for the *Florida Historical Quarterly*.

## News from Joan Jenson

Joan's essay, "Telling Stories: Keeping Secrets," will appear in the special issue of *Agricultural History* in honor of Mary Neth (Fall 2009). She also is finishing up an article on anthropologist Frances Densmore and "having fun making art quilts."

## RWSA Facebook Group

Jenny Barker-Devine, Graduate Student Coordinator, would like to remind everyone that the RWSA has a Facebook group, the RWSA Graduate Student Lounge. Anyone—not just graduate students—is welcome to use the group to network for the conference.

## News from Rebecca Montgomery

Rebecca is happy to announce that she was awarded tenure and promoted to associate professor of history at Texas State University in fall 2008. She is hard at work on the manuscript of her second book, a biography of Celeste Parrish, a progressive educational reformer who was rural school supervisor for North Georgia at the time of her death in 1918.

Rebecca's essay, "With the Brains of a Man and the Heart of a Woman: Missouri Women and Rural Change, 1890-1915," will be published in *Missouri Historical Review* in spring 2010. It is a companion piece to a book chapter, "'We are Practicable, Sensible Women': The Missouri Women Farmers' Club and the Professionalization of Agriculture, 1900-1915," published in a volume edited by Mary Neth and LeeAnn Whites, *Women in Missouri History: In Search of Power and Influence* (University of Missouri Press, 2004). While the latter essay examines female independent farm managers, the former focuses on women who were partners in family farms.

## Grey Osterud Receives Award

Grey is delighted to report that she has been given the Catherine Prelinger Award by the Coordinating Council for Women in History for the completion of her long-deferred second book on rural women in the Nanticoke Valley, tentatively called "Putting the Barn Before the House: The Lives of Rural Women in Early Twentieth-Century New York State." This means that Grey will be taking a leave from editing others' books to return to her own writing in January 2010.

Two articles based on this project are coming out soon. "Farm Crisis and Rural Revitalization in South-Central New York during the Early Twentieth Century," which is not about gender but about the changing dynamics of rural-urban relations, will appear in *Agricultural History*, vol. 83, no. 4. The UK-based *Women's History Review* will publish "Inheriting, Marrying, and Founding Farms: Women's Place on the Land" in a special issue drawn from the Women's History Network conference on the theme of "women and generations" held in Glasgow, Scotland, last autumn.

## News from Elizabeth Esterchild

Elizabeth is spending a month doing on-site research for her long-term project, "Gender, Generations, and Ranching in a Wyoming Community, 1880-2010." As mentioned in the January newsletter, she recently retired after 38 years on the sociology faculty at the University of North Texas. Elizabeth is pleased to inform us that the university has granted her the title of "Regents Professor Emeritus."

## News from Rita Marque Lunga-Mbatha

Rita's abstract entitled "Domestic Violence" was accepted for inclusion in the program of the Fifth IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment, and Prevention held at Cape Town, South Africa, July 19-22. As mentioned in the August 2008 newsletter, Rita founded Women's Comfort Corner in 1998 in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, to campaign against sexual violence, harassment, and discrimination against women and to promote legal reforms.

# Member News

## ***New Publication*** **A New Heartland**

Janey Casey has published a new monograph with Oxford University Press, entitled *The New Heartland: Women, Modernity, and the Agrarian Ideal*. Modernity and urbanity have long been considered mutually sustaining forces in early twentieth-century America. But has the dominance of the urban imaginary obscured the importance of the rural? How have women, in particular, appropriated discourses and images of rurality to interrogate the problems of modernity? And how have they imbued the rural—traditionally viewed as a locus for conservatism—with a progressive political valence?

*A New Heartland* demonstrates the importance of rurality to the imaginative construction of modernity; it also asserts that women, as objects of scrutiny as well as agents of critique, had a special stake in that relation. Casey traces the ideals informing America's conception of the rural across a wide field of representational domains, including social theory, periodical literature, cultural criticism, photography, and, most especially, women's rural fiction ("low" as well as "high"). Her argument is informed by archival research, most crucially through a careful analysis of *The Farmer's Wife*, the single nationally distributed farm journal for women and a little known repository of rural American attitudes. Through this broad scope, *A New Heartland* articulates an alternative mode of modernism by challenging orthodox ideas about gender and geography in twentieth-century America.

## ***New Publication*** **The Family Ranch**

The University of Nevada Press has published a book by Linda Husa entitled, *The Family Ranch: Land, Children, and Tradition in the American West*. In it Husa describes six different families and their ranches in the Great Basin. She discusses issues that affect them all, including the emerging rural marketplace, transmission of the ranch to the next generation, and water.

## ***New Publication*** **Telling History**

Joyce M. Thierer, founding partner of Ride into History, a historical performance touring troupe, and professor of history at Emporia State University, has published a book with Altamira Press. *Telling History: A Manual for Performers and Presenters of First-Person Narratives* is a new selection in the American Association for State and Local History Series.

*Telling History* is a manual for creating well-researched and engaging historical presentations. As museums and other informal learning institutions work to create new and appealing programs, many are turning to dramatic impersonations accompanied by informed discussions to educate their audiences. This book guides the performer through selecting characters, researching and writing scripts, performing for various kinds of audiences, and turning performance into a business. For museums, historic sites, and community organizations, it offers advice on training and funding historical performers, as well as what to expect from professionals who perform at your site.

## **Reminder to Renew Memberships**

Please remember to renew your RWSA membership. It would be easy to overlook this matter since dues payment is not included in the conference registration as it was in the past. The following names represent the only members who have paid their 2010-2012 dues:

Janet Casey  
Karen V. Hansen  
Mazie Hough  
Rachel Kleinschmidt  
Margaret Pilch  
Debra A. Reid  
Pamela Riney-Kehrberg

The membership renewal form has been attached for your convenience. As usual, contributions to the Jensen Fund would be greatly appreciated. Thanks, and we hope to see you at Bloomington!

RURAL WOMEN'S STUDIES ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP FORM

MEMBER INFORMATION

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FIRST NAME

LAST NAME

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AFFILIATION

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MAILING ADDRESS

---

CITY

STATE

ZIP

COUNTRY

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E-MAIL

PHONE

FAX

MEMBERSHIP AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO RWSA

Annual dues are \$10.00; if you would like to secure membership for the entire three-year inter-conference period (2010-2012), please send \$30.00.

We also encourage contributions to the Joan Jensen Fund (to help with registration fees for graduate students and international participants).

(RWSA is a 501C-3 non-profit organization and all donations are tax deductible.)

CONTRIBUTION TO THE JENSEN FUND \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail a personal check or international money order made out to RWSA to:

Debra Reid, RWSA Treasurer  
Dept. of History, Eastern Illinois University  
600 Lincoln Ave.  
Charleston, IL 61920

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