

The *E&T* Beacon

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Fall 2010

The Newsletter of the Department of English and Theatre at UNC Pembroke

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Shelby Stephenson: A Literary Life

By JIM HELGESON

“I grew up on my family’s farm in Johnston County,” he begins, his voice somehow conveying both pride and humility at once. “We weren’t a very literary family; there were only two books in the house, in fact: the King James Bible and the Sears Catalog.” (Those familiar with farm life a half-century and more ago will remember that the latter was often read in the outhouse, where it usually served an additional, quite un-literary purpose.) What an unlikely turn, then, that Shelby Stevenson went on to become not only a much-published award-winning poet but also the editor of one of the country’s longest lived and most successful literary journals, *Pembroke Magazine*.

Shelby, who retired this past spring after thirty-two years of teaching, writing, and editing at UNCP, was honored earlier this term with a “thank you / good luck / we will miss you much” fête attended by scores of the friends he has made and colleagues he’s worked with over that long and productive span. I met with him on the day of this occasion, hoping to coax from him a few reflections about where he’s been and what comes next. “Retired,” he snorted when asked the inevitable “So, how’s it feel to be retired?” “Retired, yes;

tired and re-tired,” he laughed again, going on to list a half dozen or so new books he is planning and for which he has been writing poems at a pace seldom possible when he was teaching and editing as well. And, of course, he added, there’s the mowing. And mowing. (Shelby and his wife Linda still live on and—despite all the grass—love that family farm.)

As might be expected, much of Shelby’s writing over the years has focused on farm life—that and, of course, family: his own and his neighbors, present and long past. In his capacity as both writer and literary editor, he mastered early on the art of what might be termed “market selection.” “If you tend to populate your poems, as I have been known to do occasionally, with chickens and hogs and such, you’re less

likely to publish many of them in places where folks are already up to their ears in chickens and hogs—like the Carolinas. California, now, that’s a different matter.” He sighed a little in what appeared to be disbelief when confiding that he had published his first poem nearly forty years ago. (I didn’t think to ask him whether it featured any hogs or chickens.) Around that same time—while earning his Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin—he was also developing an interest in what was then called the “little magazine,” never expecting that in a few short years he would be editing one.



Retirement Reception for Shelby Stephenson 19 October 2010



Shelby reads a recent poem for the guests at his reception.



Shelby and Linda greet retired colleague Ray Rundus and his wife, Billie.



Shelby with *Pembroke Magazine* Managing Editor Tina Emanuel (above) and Interim Editor Jennifer Key (below).



Shelby with Monika Brown (above) and Richard Vela and Wendy Miller (below).



Pembroke Magazine was founded in 1969 by Norman Macleod, a well-known literary figure of the time who had founded several other journals, none of which survived for more than a few years. Begun as a forty-eight-page publication containing primarily student work, the journal now often runs up to 200 pages, sometimes more, and features the work of authors and artists from around our state, the country, and the globe. When Shelby assumed editorship ten years after its founding, the journal was still a comparatively small-scale operation. “It was pretty much a family affair back then,” he reminisced. “Linda and I used to edit and assemble copy on our dining room table. Our publisher being located in Southern Pines in those days, we would haul the copy up there in the bed of our pickup truck, then tote it from the truck to the publisher’s office in our son’s Red Flyer wagon.” Although the operation is considerably more sophisticated these days, its staff is still comparatively small, with Linda serving, up until last spring, as Associate Editor and Tina Emanuel, the department’s Technology Support Technician, handling the Managing Editor duties.

When asked which aspects of the magazine he has been most proud of, Shelby cited two continuing efforts that have been particularly close to his heart: the support the magazine has given to regional, especially North Carolina writers, and the receptiveness and assistance it has consistently extended to writers of all races and nationalities. “We recognized this obligation long before it became politically correct to do so,” he noted. “From the beginning

on up to the present day, we’ve never forgotten our sponsoring university’s (and our own) indebtedness to the area’s Native Americans,” he added, reminding me that what came to be known years later as “UNCP” took its original name (the “Croatan Normal School”) from the long-since-vanished Croatan tribe, believed by some to be ancestors of the area’s considerable present-day Lumbee population. Throughout its now forty-one-year history, the journal has devoted literally hundreds of pages to this heritage and to other undervalued and infrequently heard minority cultures. In 2008, to cite an example with which Shelby and his staff were especially pleased, the journal devoted an entire issue to Hispanic authors from around the world, several of whom were appearing in print for the first time.

Obviously, those many friends and colleagues attending Shelby’s party had much to remember, much to savor. Among many remembrances of what life was like having him around here, my favorite would have to be of our many spirited exchanges in the hallways of the Dial Building. Whether we were discussing a favorite author or simply how our respective gardens were doing, Shelby invariably had a way of interjecting some off-the-wall observation, one that sounded at first as if it might have been translated from some (very) foreign language, but which, upon reflection, proved to be most insightful and thought provoking, something that could never have been conveyed in less creative, less imaginative language. I miss that. 📖

Recent Presentations



Roger Ladd discusses his new book, *Antimerchantism in Late Medieval English Literature*, at the Livermore Library at a 23 October event sponsored by Friends of the Library.



Writing Center tutors Kimberlee Stepp, Kimberly Brassard, Tré Howard, Lonnie Cox, Chase Whisenhunt, and Ryan Wise present their poster, "Assessing and Adapting to Non-Traditional Students in the Writing Center," at the National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing in Baltimore, MD.

Merchants' Tales

By AMY BLITCHOK AND JIM HELGESON

Congratulations to Roger Ladd, whose *Antimerchantism in Late Medieval English Literature* was recently published as part of Palgrave MacMillan's distinguished *The New Middle Ages* series. Barely off the presses, Roger's first book has already begun to attract acclaim from such authorities in the field as noted medievalist R.F. Yeager, who has called *Antimerchantism* "the first fresh re-thinking of the roles merchants play in late medieval English writing in at least forty years—if not the first ever to do so systematically and comprehensively." "Ladd's readings are," Yeager concludes, "original and, time and again, spot on."

Antimerchantism represents the culmination of fifteen years of inquiry and exploration that began with Roger's dissertation and included such detours as an examination of a children's story about a poor orphan named Dick Whittington. The final product, which discusses many works from *The Canterbury Tales* to "The Childe of Bristowe," has grown considerably over the years as Roger added materials adapted from the many published articles and conference papers he has written on the subject. The task was further complicated by the fact that medieval works are frequently re-translated and otherwise amended, which, of course, leads to repeated revision (and revision, and . . .) for those who write about such works. Ironically, after all that research and all that writing, Roger learned that (for practical, publication purposes at any rate) he may have learned too much. His last big challenge was to cut 30,000 words from his manuscript.

No doubt Roger must be gratified to have placed his work with Palgrave and to have received such impressive kudos. An added excitement to the publication process was his involvement in the cover design. The source of satisfaction he mentions first, however—the one he seems to value most—is quite different: simply holding the book, sensing it and, through it, all the effort and accomplishment its enlivening heft represents. 

Changing of the Guard

By CATHERINE PARISIAN

The English and Theatre (E & T) Department congratulates Mark Canada on his new position as Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Mark served as chair of the department from July of 2009 through October of 2010; under his tenure, the department made advancements on a number of fronts. With respect to its course offerings, it created its first three-year schedule of upper-level classes in many years, increased its online literature course offerings, secured funding from Academic Affairs to continue its successful "Plus One" program for first-year composition, and scheduled several composition labs in computer classrooms for the first time. In administrative matters, it dramatically revised and expanded its Web site and hired four new tenure-track faculty members. Members of the faculty were also very productive scholars during this time frame, placing or publishing six books and more than two dozen essays and poems in journals and other publications. Looking back on his tenure as chair, Mark says he most enjoyed "supporting and promoting the outstanding scholarship and teaching of

Mark Canada



Mark shares a laugh with Tamika Carey at the department's September reception for new faculty.



Mark and Kay have an animated conversation following Fall Commencement.

Kay cuts the cake at Shelby Stephenson's retirement reception.



Kay McClanahan



our faculty.” He was “also thrilled for the cast of *Steel Magnolias*, when the students in this production, directed by Dr. Chet Jordan, took their show on the road and staged a successful production at Roanoke Island Festival Park.”

As associate dean, Mark will remain an active member of the E & T faculty and continue to teach two courses per year in the department. He will continue to pursue his scholarly interests in the intersections of literature and journalism in the United States. His book, *Literature and Journalism in Antebellum America*, is due out from Palgrave Macmillan in April, 2011. His next project is an essay collection on a similar subject. In addition, he is working on a couple of essays on Benjamin Franklin and Edgar Allan Poe and is collaborating with Michael Alewine, outreach distance education librarian, on a textbook related to information literacy. As associate dean, Mark hopes to meet with many members of the Arts and Sciences faculty to get a sense of their goals for the school and play a role in helping to achieve those goals. “I am particularly interested in promoting extraordinary teaching and scholarship opportunities.” Mark is a valued friend and colleague to members of the E & T Department where his regular presence will be missed.

The E & T faculty also welcomes Dr. Kay McClanahan as the new chair of the department. Kay has been a member of the department since 1999, when she returned to live in Laurinburg, NC, after spending twelve years teaching in the English department of a Korean university. While in Korea, she also edited an English translation of the Korean government's three-volume official record

of the Korean War, a work for which she received an award from the Korean Minister of National Defense. Kay received her Ph.D. in linguistics from the University of Illinois in 1997, and since joining the UNCP faculty, she has coordinated the speech program and taught courses in public speaking, voice and diction, English grammar, phonetics and phonology, and second language acquisition. She has also developed the teaching licensure program in Teaching English as a Second Language. For her teaching is about sharing. As she put it, “There's a lot for everyone to learn, not just the students.” Not surprisingly, Kay received the Outstanding Teaching Award from the university in 2005.

Kay has devoted much of her time at the university to serving others and making a positive impact on the university community. Prior to becoming department chair Kay served on a number of committees including the Welfare Committee, the Awards Committee, and the Graduate Committee. Most recently she served as assistant chair of the department. At the university level, Kay has served as chair of the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Governance Committee among others. Just this fall she was invited by Chancellor Kyle Carter to deliver the convocation address. There she enthusiastically encouraged students to enjoy learning and to live each moment to its fullest as they take advantage of the opportunities that they will have in the next four years to engage in new and exciting learning experiences. Kay received commendations from both Provost Gash and Chancellor Carter for her address.

Apart from the university, Kay enjoys membership in one of the longest

New Faculty Reception 8 September 2010



Polina Chemishanova and Tamika Carey sample the refreshments.



Charles Tita, Kay McClanahan, and Emma Evans welcome Denise Feikema.



Michele Fazio shares a laugh with Jennifer Key and Denise Feikema.



David Marquard and Polina Chemishanova enjoy the reception.

Holiday Potluck 6 December 2010



running book clubs in North Carolina, the 110-year-old Thursday Afternoon Book Club, which meets twice a month in Laurinburg. She also enjoys spending time with Bailey, her eight-year-old sheltie-beagle mix, who has a special connection to UNCP. Kay adopted Bailey in 2003 when a student found him abandoned on the side of the road and brought him to campus in hopes of finding him a good home. It was love at first sight; he got his home and his picture in the 2004 yearbook to boot! When time permits, Kay likes to read murder mysteries and to travel; most recently she has visited Egypt and China.

Kay recognizes that this department serves the entire university community through its first-year composition, speech, and general education literature courses. She is therefore committed to working to secure as many resources as possible that will ensure its continued excellence in teaching, service, and scholarship. The department wishes both Mark and Kay every success in their new positions. 📖

Building Bridges

BY TEAGAN DECKER

This past summer fifty students were recruited to participate in Bridge to Your Future, a new UNCP program developed by Jeff Bolles and funded through a grant from the UNC General Administration. The students were on campus from 30 June to 4 August, with a very busy schedule of ENG 1050 class, ENG 1050 tutoring, math class, and math tutoring daily. They also participated in a study hall each night and enrichment activities during the week and on Satur-

days. Students who passed composition and math were accepted to UNCP. For us on the English side of the program, this meant teaching students who were at or below the ENG 0104 level an accelerated ENG 1050 course. Cynthia Miecznikowski, as lead English instructor, created a syllabus and, along with instructors Teagan Decker and Sara Oswald, taught these challenging courses. Deana Johnson and Robin Snead tutored the students in computer labs each day after class. All five instructors and nearly all of the students worked harder than we thought possible on teaching/learning academic reading and writing. After an end-of-term group-graded portfolio evaluation, 34 students successfully completed the program and were enrolled in ENG 1060 classes taught by Ms. Oswald and Dr. Miecznikowski this fall. Although we have significant suggestions for improving the program if it is continued next summer, it was wonderful to see these students work as hard as they did and improve as much as they did, and we wish them success in their academic work at UNCP. 📖

Faculty Activities

MJ BRAUN's article, "Against Decorous Civility: Acting as if You Live in a Democracy," appeared in *Activism and Rhetoric: Theories and Contexts for Political Engagement*, a collection of essays published by Routledge in September 2010.

MARK CANADA served this fall on the Chancellor's Scholars Council, which attended sessions throughout the community to hear suggestions for new university initiatives. His recent and current research projects include an essay for a

English and Theatre Faculty Colloquium Series

Colloquia are sponsored by the department's Student Engagement Committee and are open to all.

Fall 2010

Monday, 1 November

Therese Rizzo
Scott Hicks
Teagan Decker
Michele Fazio
Youngsuk Chae

Teaching Jam:
Innovations in the Classroom



Spring 2011

Monday, 31 January
4:00 - 5:00 PM
Dial A-V Theatre

Mark Canada

"The Story and the Truth:
Literature and Journalism in
Antebellum America"

MJ Braun

"Propaganda Analysis as a
Cultural Practice: *The Daily Show*,
the Crisis of Democracy, and the
Corporatist State"

forthcoming MLA volume on teaching Benjamin Franklin's autobiography, an essay for the forthcoming book *Poe in Context*, an entry on eighteenth-century literature for the forthcoming reference book *American Centuries*, a collection of essays on literature and journalism, and a textbook on information literacy.

TEAGAN DECKER joined five University Writing Center tutors in a roundtable discussion and a poster presentation at the International Writing Centers Association's conference in Baltimore, MD, this November. They presented their research on non-traditional students in the Writing Center. Travel was funded by PURC and the E & T Dept. Also, Dr. Decker's article, "Writing Centers and Basic Writing Students: Institutional Advocacy through Public Texts," appeared in the October issue of *The Writing Lab Newsletter*.

ANITA GUYNN, MJ BRAUN, AND DUNDEE LACKEY led multiple sections of English 0104, 1050, and 1060 students this fall in an IRB-approved oral history project, "Rural Health Access Narratives." These will be published as an online archive for use by other researchers interested in health and wellness issues in Hoke, Robeson, and Scotland counties. Dr. Lackey will continue with this project with her spring English 1060 classes.

DEANA JOHNSON led her ENG 0104 and FRS 1000 students in a community service project on campus on 12 October. In coordination with the Office for Community and Civic Engagement, they hosted a Reading Party for 80 local elementary students. The goals of this project were to celebrate reading and to promote literacy. Her students read to the children,

engaged them in discussion, and assisted them with activities and crafts. They also served them lunch, which was provided by local businesses. The event generated positive feedback from the children and teachers who visited campus, as well as UNCP students.

DUNDEE LACKEY was recently chosen as editor of *PraxisWiki*, an online publication space that is an offshoot of *The Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy*. She also completed a multi-site study entitled "Revisualizing Composition: The Writing Lives of College Students." A published white paper of the results is available at: <http://wide.msu.edu/special/writinglives/>. Current projects include a collaboration with Robyn Tasaka on a version of a white paper focused on Multimodality and Basic Writing for a special issue of *BWe (Basic Writing Electronic Journal)*.

WENDY MILLER presented the paper, "I can tell you it made me all over trembly and feverish, too': *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Race, and the General Education Classroom," at the South Central Modern Language Association Conference in Fort Worth, Texas, in October.

CATHERINE PARISIAN delivered two talks this fall about her recent book *The First White House Library*. The first one was to the Thursday Afternoon Book Club on 23 September in Laurinburg, NC. She then gave the plenary talk at the Celebration of the Book in Columbia, Missouri, on 23 October. She also helped to coordinate the biennial meeting of the Burney Society of North America, which met in Portland, Oregon, on 28-29 October. 

E & Theatre

2010-2011 University Theatre Productions

Noises Off

By Michael Frayn

Directed by Chet Jordan
and Amy Cox

17-20 November 2010



Sylvia

By A.R. Gurney

Directed by Holden Hansen

16-19 February 2011



Godspell

Music and Lyrics by Stephen Schwartz

Book by John-Michael Tebelak

Directed by Hal Davis

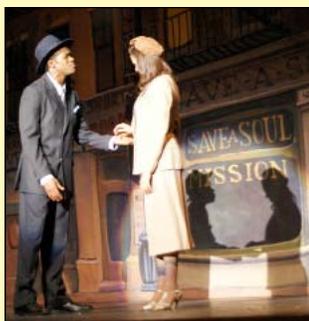
6-9 April 2011

Theatre Activities

University Theatre's final Spring 2010 production was the Tony-award-winning musical **GUYS AND DOLLS**, with music and lyrics by Frank Loesser and book by Jo Swerling and Abe Burrows. Presented in conjunction with the Musi-

cal Theatre program and directed by Hal Davis, the musical ran from 20-24 April on the Main Stage of the Givens Performing Arts Center.

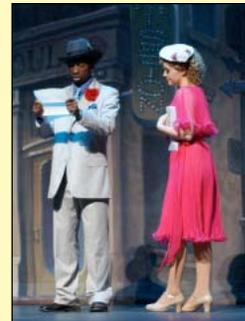
The Fall 2010 production, **NOISES OFF**, a British farce, was performed on 17, 18 and 19 November at 8 PM and on 20 Nov. at 2 PM. 



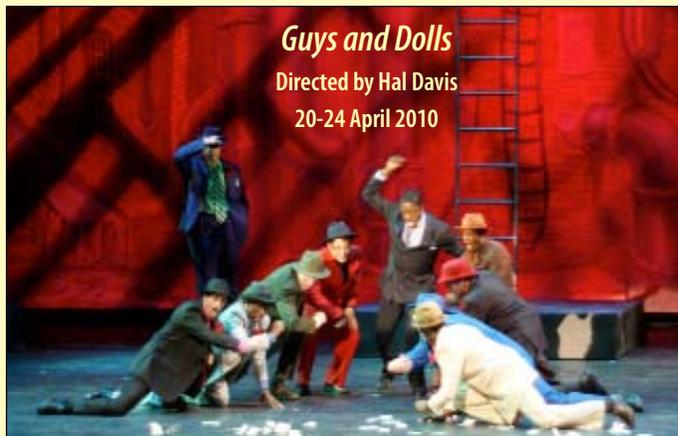
Sky (Jamaal Anthony) declares his love for Sarah (Jocelyn Hunt).



Nathan and Sky meet to plan for "The Oldest Established Permanent Floating Crap Game in New York."



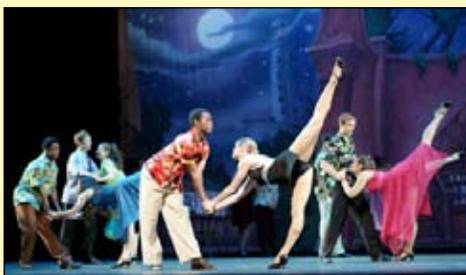
Nathan (Elisha Lawson) keeps Adelaide (Nikki Frabott) waiting—as usual.



Guys and Dolls

Directed by Hal Davis

20-24 April 2010



The dance number set in Havana features choreographer and costume designer Natalie Fields.



Adelaide performs with the Hot Box Girls: Ashley McLamb, Avonné Stallings, Yanissa Pérez de León, Emily Rasdorf, Sunni Haralalka, Taylor Folden.

English & Theatre Graduates May 2010



Noemi Navarrete



Tamara White-Chambers



Annette Glenn, Ashton Jordan, Brandi Kim



Henry Marx, Ashley McLamb



Charlotte Cassidy, Angelica Chavis, Amy Cox, DeAhna Crocker



Danielle Powers Barnes

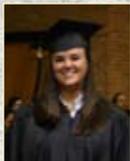


Grey Sweeney

December 2010



Keena McLaurin



Kimberley Gore



Elisha Lawson



Sabrina Taylor



Set for Acts 1 and 3: On stage



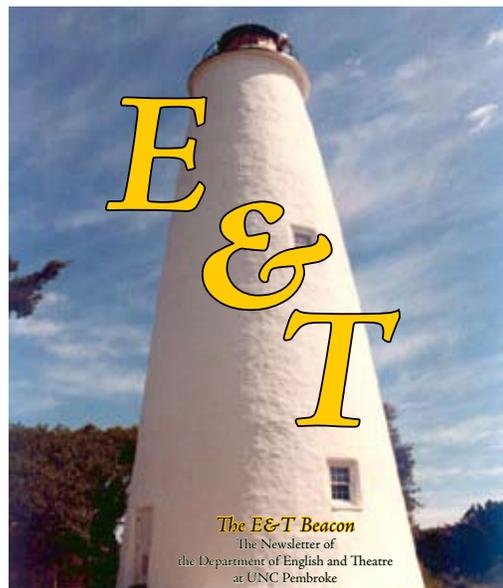
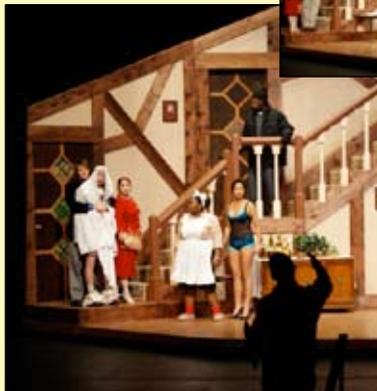
Set for Act 2: Backstage

Noises Off

Directed by Chet Jordan (Acts 1 and 3) and Amy Cox (Act 2)
17-20 November 2010



Act 3 Curtain Call: Amy Rowland, James Ellison, Morgan Hayes, Jon Davis, Seth Durham, Allyson Betot, Alexis Locklear, Chase McCall, Andrew Aaron



E&T

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PHOTO CREDITS: Pages 1, 2, 4, 5: Sara Oswald; Page 3: Teagan Decker, Sara Oswald; Page 6: Melissa Schaub; Page 7: Nick Faulkner; Page 8: Nick Faulkner, Sara Oswald

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News items and announcements for future issues should be submitted in Microsoft Word or Rich Text Format. Photos should be submitted as JPEG or TIFF files. Send news and photos to

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This and previous issues of *The Beacon* are available in PDF format on the department's website:

www.uncp.edu/et/news/