
The Midcoast Inquirer

Newsletter of Midcoast Senior College
June 2014, Volume 9, No. 3



We Are Moving!

On June 25th, 2014 Midcoast Senior College will be moving to Cooks Corner, between Bath and Brunswick. Our new office and classrooms will be located at Southern New Hampshire University at 10 Tibbetts Drive, next to the main entrance to Walmart. TD Bank is also located in this building.

DIRECTIONS: From Cooks Corner (where Rt 24 intersects Bath Rd.) drive east on Bath Road to the first traffic light and turn right onto Tibbetts Drive. A Days Inn is on the right at this intersection. Drive straight and pass a yellow pedestrian walkway sign and Southern New Hampshire University is the first right. Our office and classrooms are located on the right side of the building on the 2nd floors. **Please** drive to the rear of the building and park. This area also has handicap availability.

Behind the building there is very ample, level parking and a level entrance to the building. The best and preferred entrance to our suite is from the rear of the building in the center. There is a stairwell to our classrooms on the right, and through a set of doors, a single, small elevator on the left.

We will have four classrooms, one computer classroom and an office. We will have access to a larger room and two small conference rooms. Sadly we will not have a Cafe 101, but there is a small refreshment lounge on the first floor which we may use. The lounge has a few tables where you can have a brown bag lunch and there are two vending machines. Refreshments are also permitted in the classrooms. Restrooms with handicap accessibility are in the main corridor of our suite on the second floor.

We will have signs for MSC located both outside and inside the building to help you find your way to your classroom or event.

continued on page 2 top



Dorothy J. Bell (left) with Judy Rouillard (right)

Dorothy Bell Awarded 2014 Wheeler-Thompson Founders Award

In 1997, Dorothy took her first senior college course at the Portland campus of USM. The instructor was Jack Thompson. In 2000, he and Nancy Wheeler co-founded Midcoast Senior College and his first semester course, Maine Experience was her first at MSC.

Dorothy has been an active volunteer at MSC since 2002. She has served on the Board of Directors, was President of the Board, served on many committees and feels blessed to continue serving in each semester's "new beginnings".

When asked why she became so involved at MSC, she replied, "I was looking for a new direction, for something that had meaning and offered learning in new

continued on page 2 bottom

The Midcoast Inquirer

is the newsletter of
Midcoast Senior College
10 Tibbets Drive, Suite 210
Brunswick, Maine 04011

www.midcoastseniorcollege.org
(207) 725-4900
mscoffice@midcoastseniorcollege.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

President: Richard Neiman
Immediate Past President: Mark C. Smith
Vice President: Susan Mikesell
Treasurer: Sandra Neiman
Secretary: Nancy Zugehoer

BOARD MEMBERS

Standing Committee Chairs
Administration: Richard DeVito
Curriculum: Howard Whitcomb
Development: Richard Neiman
Finance: Sandra Neiman
Nominating: Mark C. Smith
Policy: Al Prest
Public Relations: Linton Studdiford
Special Events: Kelly Watt
Technology: Nancy Zugehoer
Editor of our Newsletter, Joyce Bessen

Board Members-At-Large

Anthony Belmont, Joyce Bessen, Richard DeVito, Ronald Golz and Lois Lamdin

Sub-Committees

Winter Wisdom: Stuart Gillespie
Summer Wisdom: Richard Neiman
Membership: Dorothy Bell
Current Events Forum: Richard Neiman

Midcoast Senior College is one of eighteen autonomous, self-governing Senior Colleges in this State. We serve the area from Damariscotta to Freeport and inland toward Augusta. Most classes are held at the University College site at 9 Park Street in Bath.

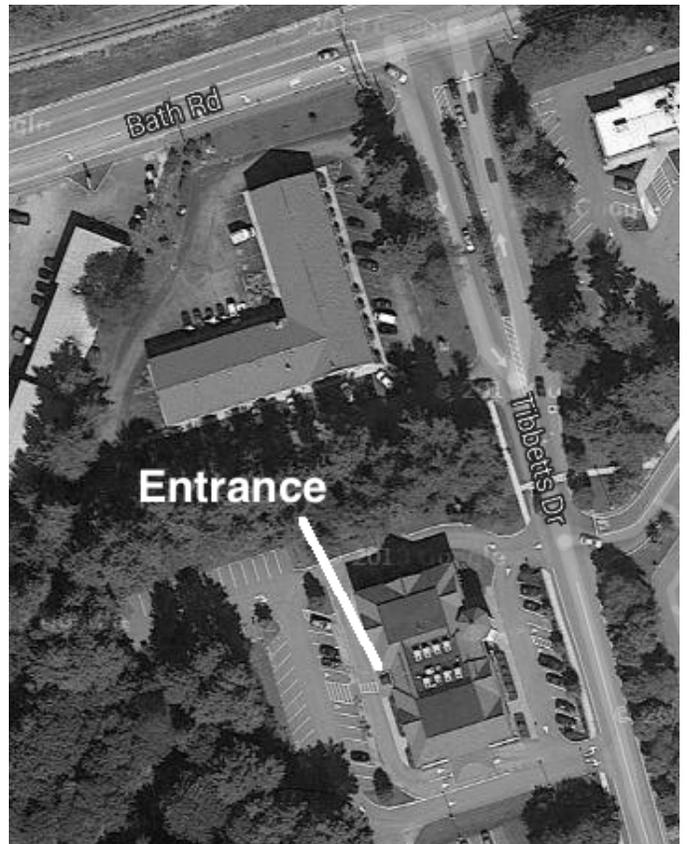
Our mission: to provide non-credit academic courses and other educational events for people of 55 years and older to continue their lifelong learning.

continued from page 1 (Moving)

We are very pleased with our new location, and will continue to hold classes as well at The Highlands, Thornton Oaks, Sunnybrook Village, Curtis Memorial Library, and Patten Free Library.

Our new address after June 25 will be:

Midcoast Senior College
10 Tibbets Drive, Suite 210
Brunswick, Maine 04011
Telephone Number: (207)-725-4900



continued from Page 1 (Dorothy Bell)

areas. After taking several senior college courses, I realized that I wanted to be involved with my peer group. I found it refreshing to exchange ideas with people who shared this stage of life. It's been a rewarding experience. I've met truly fine people, taken courses given by an exceptional faculty, worked with devoted and talented Board members and with a loyal group of volunteers."

Dorothy feels that MSC is now involved in another "new beginning" and, that, although our organization will grow and our enrollment expand, we will continue to maintain our warm and welcoming community.

Profile of a Maine Poet

by David McKeith

*April and then May,
violets up in the field,
the ewes with their twin lambs;
time has decided
to turn into spring again
after all.*

Thus, KATE BARNES (1932-2013) invites us to walk with her in the beauty and the mystery of the rural commonplace.

Selected by the Maine Arts Commission as the State's first poet laureate (1996-2000), Kate was born to a family of writers. We best know her father, Henry Beston, from his classic *The Outermost House*, set in the dunes of Cape Cod; and her mother, Elizabeth Coatsworth, who authored over 100 books in all genres, many in poetry and many for children. Whether in Massachusetts during the school year or summers at the family's "Chimney Farm" just north of us in Nobleboro, at bedtime Elizabeth read poetry to Kate and her sister. Thus, in lonesome hours when attending private school, Kate found comfort in reading poetry to herself. Beginning then, and soon after in college, she experimented with her own verse.

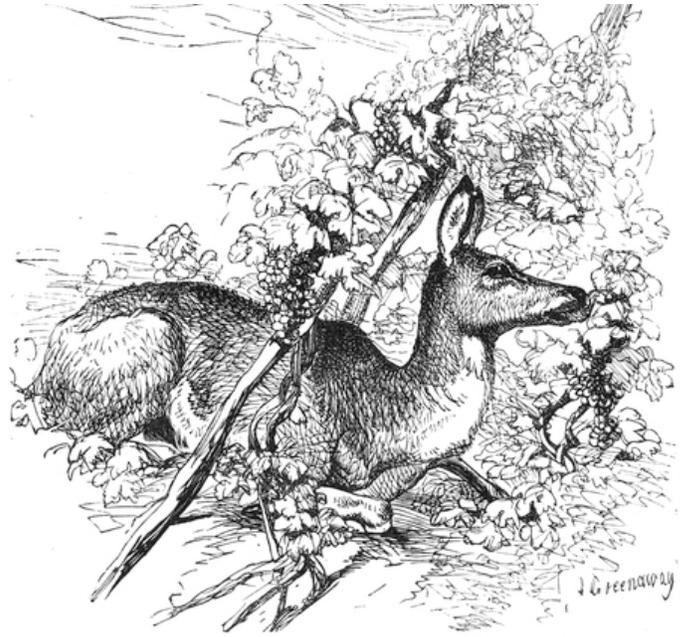
But she did not begin serious publication until after she had raised four children and then took up a productive blueberry farm in Appleton, Maine, near her parents at "Chimney Farm".

Kate found pleasantness in the common things of humans and Nature that surrounded her: memories stored in an old farmhouse; workhorses grazing; the shore in moonlight; a barn in winter; blueberry barrens; the hay rake; and much more. As we pick up any of her collections of poems, we step into a quietly-paced rural world where, as she says of it, "everything is divinely ordinary".

I have chosen Kate Barnes for this issue of *The Inquirer* for several reasons: she speaks of her sensuous engagement with the commonplace of life in rural Maine, its people and their relationship, even interdependence, with Nature, of loneliness, of forbearance and acceptance. I also find here an invitation to each of us to consider gathering our own responses to both our human and natural surroundings, to bring them to thoughts, then into phrases like hers that flows freely with rich impressions and authentic feeling.

So then, let us listen to Kate. This from the second verse of "The Logging Sled":

*... I am as gray and heavy
as a badger, the pockets of my old coat sag
with carrots and books. The horses nose at my hands,*



*the wood thunks onto the sled, and I hear the blue jays
squalling behind me among the pines; I smell
a dampness in the air that promises spring.
To whom can I say how happy this all makes me?*

And from the third verse in "Living in My House":

*In a kitchen window a rock crystal pear hangs
from the curtain rod;
outside the black horse chews his timothy by the fence
and the autumn leaves darken on the twisted pear tree.
Under the window, the doomed snapdragons still bloom
at Halloween;
across the road, sumac and poplar cling to the last
of their red and yellow.*

Those among us who grandparent young children—as her mother parented her—could do well to bring poetry to their ear. Or is it to their heart?

At Kate's memorial service in September, 2013, those gathered heard her poem "Inside the Stone":

*Up in the woods,
in the circle among the beech trees,
last winter one of the lumber horses split a stone
horizontally, with a clip of his big steel shoe.
It had seemed to be a plain gray stone,
but when it was opened a black wall appeared,
rusty at the edges, flecked with pale checks
like unknown constellations, and over all
floated wisps of blue-gray, trailing feathers of clouds.*

*I brush away the fallen leaves
and stare into the distance inside the stone.*

*If one could become a bird —
if one could fly into that night —
if one could see the circling of those stars —
and then the woods become very still,
and beech leaves blur at the edge of my vision.
I find I am bending lower and lower.*

Thanks to Gary Loveless for his assistance. Gary and his wife Beth, owners of Gulf of Maine Bookstore in Brunswick and owners of Blackberry Bookstore press, were good friends of Kate Barnes. They are the current residents at Chimney Farm. Permission has been received to print from Kate Barnes's poems. Her collected verse is found in *Talking in Your Sleep* (Blackberry Books, 1986), *Crossing the Field* (Blackberry Books, 1992), *Where the Deer Were* (Godine, 1994), and *Kneeling Orion* (Godine, 2004). Further information and her obituary are accessible on the Web.

David McKeith, our first Inquirer editor, also writes poetry.

Fall Courses & New Faculty

by Linton Studdiford

This fall the Midcoast Senior College will be offering 22 courses. It is significant that 7 of those courses will be taught by 8 new faculty members (one course is taught by 2 new faculty). The strength and long term viability of the Midcoast Senior College rests on our ability to keep and attract skilled faculty from many disciplines.

Leona Dufour and **Janet Kehl** will be team teaching "Marriage Games and Power Plays" and exploration of the battle of the sexes in selected English and French literary works. Leona lives in Georgetown and holds a BA in English from Wilkes University and a MA in English from the University of Maryland. She taught honors and advanced placement in English at Carmel High School in Carmel, New York. Janet lives in Arrowsic and is a graduate of Middlebury College and Yale where she earned a M.A.T. She has taught French and Spanish at Phillips Exeter Academy and most recently at Trinity School in Trinity, New York.

Jane Knox received a Ph.D in Slavic Languages and Literature from the University of Texas, is Professor Emeritus in the Russian Department at Bowdoin and is a specialist in Russian cinema. Her course, "Understanding Putin's Russia", will explore modern Russian history through the use of feature films.

Another new faculty member, **Karen Johnson**, is a resident of Bath, a graduate of the University of Maine and a literacy, reading and writing specialist. "A Future is Possible" will investigate the proposition that the dream of a peaceful future is realistic through an exploration of Riane Eisler's book, *The Chalice and the Blade*.

Alison Johnson's course, "Exploring Henry James Through Three Short Works" will study one short novel and two short stories of James. Alison lives in Topsham and is the author of *Henry James: His Life Revealed Through His Letters* and *Wallace Stevens: A Dual Life as Poet and Insurance Executive*. She is also an expert on Willa Cather.

Susan Bowditch has lived abroad for 16 years, primarily in Asia and Africa. She has served as a cross-cultural consultant to a variety of governmental and private organizations including the Peace Corps. Her course, "Understanding Across Cultures" will use traditional art forms as a way to gain understanding and insight into other cultures.

Larry Lemmel is a graduate of Westminster Choir College and the Yale School of Music. He has taught music history and theory and directed a number of university choirs. "The Greatest Music You May Never Have Heard" will focus on lesser known and neglected works by well known composers from Bach to Ives.

Our final new faculty member is **Mike Knudsen** who lives in Bath. He has a Ph.D in Computer Science from Carnegie Mellon and was a computer scientist with Bell Labs. Mike will teach "Why Does Anything Exist? (Or, Much Ado About Something!)" with veteran faculty member Fred Cichocki. The course will investigate, among other issues, why is there something rather than nothing.

Linton Studdiford is now a co-chair of the Curriculum Committee with Howard Whitcomb.

A Student Profile: Dean Clark, A Model Volunteer

Many of you have probably met Dean Clark if you have attended Winter Wisdom lectures where he stands in the rear of the classroom and opens the doors for everyone. He is the tall, handsome and smiling gentleman. Or if you have taken classes with Barbara Snapp, Ann Kimmage, or Ted Allen, he was probably the classroom liaison. We both attended a course with Ann Kimmage and he was very involved in classroom discussion, both as a good listener, and someone seeking deeper insight into the material. Last winter I interviewed Dean because I was curious about this dedicated student volunteer who so willingly gives of his time.

Dean has been attending classes at MSC for the past nine years. He estimates he has taken about 40 courses. "I'm getting a brand new college education." In his youth he attended night school at Syracuse University for 12 years to acquire his first degree. Then he worked as the Vice President of sales and marketing at the Sebago Shoe Co. for 23 years prior to his retirement.

“At an advanced point in life, it becomes quite apparent that our 50 year old schooling has been superseded by a new and challenging body of knowledge, most especially in the scientific fields.....I have gained most by signing up for subjects that I know nothing about. This way of choosing from the course offerings has in some cases proved life changing. What a great feeling it is to break through to a higher level of understanding!”

Dean feels “being a volunteer at MSC is an honor rather than a chore...as a classroom liaison, it is just a case of observing what needs to be done and doing it.” Dean has much to teach us as students. Thank you, Dean, for your support of Senior College.

Summer Reading: Nonfiction

by Mark Smith

Thinking about recommendations for nonfiction reads this summer, was an easy task. The challenge was how to fit the number of good current nonfiction books into this column. Here goes.

As I write this, I am within 100 pages of finishing *The Guns at Last Light* by Rick Atkinson. It is the third volume in this Pulitzer prize winner’s trilogy of battles in the European theater of WWII, and the best. The Prologue itself is the best description of the build up for D Day that I have read. As in his first two volumes dealing with North Africa (*An Army at Dawn*) and Italy (*Day of Battle*), Atkinson enhances the story with vignettes about those who fought and about the history of the cities devastated by the march from Normandy to Berlin. He also quotes freely from letters home, the poetry produced by GI’s, and dispatches from journalists covering the battles. It is a well researched, literate and eminently readable book.

I also read a lot of biography. My pick for this year is volume four of Robert Caro’s masterful multivolume biography of Lyndon Baines Johnson, *The Passage of Power*. It begins with LBJ’s difficult decision to join the ticket with John F. Kennedy and goes through the agony of a Vice President who is used to real power, but is relegated to the background and on to the assassination and the transfer of power. That transition was handled masterly by LBJ, a fact for which he has received little credit. The final chapters deal with LBJ’s ability to push important legislation through a reluctant congress, especially the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a study of how Washington can work.

For political junkies, there is *Double Down*, by Mark Halperin and John Heillman, the authors whose book about the 2008 presidential election (*Game Change*) was a runaway best seller. *Double Down* is their attempt to do the same for the

2012 election. While it is not quite as exciting (there is no Sarah Palin), it is an engrossing story of both the Republican and Democratic campaigns.

For a change of pace, there is *Don’t Let Us Win Tonight*, Allan Wood and Bill Nowlin’s oral history of the historic League Championship series in 2004 between the Red Sox and the Yankees and the subsequent World Series sweep by the Red Sox. It is an oral history because Wood and Nowlin interviewed and quote extensively front office personnel, coaches, players and even medical staff (remember Curt Schilling’s bloody sock). This is a great read for all sports fans.

This suggestion goes back a ways, but I had to include Baron Wormser’s book of essays entitled *The Road Washes Out in Spring*. The essays tell the story of Wormser and his wife’s decision to move to a house in Maine with no electricity and no running water and live there for twenty plus years. His experiences and portraits of his small town neighbors is a fascinating read and predate his years as Maine’s Poet Laureate.

Researching for this column, I decided to seek recommendations from a life long friend who only reads nonfiction and to question Gary Lawless and Beth Leonard of Gulf of Maine Books about nonfiction book sales. My friend gave me many titles, but his top recommendation was *Devil in the Grove*, a Pulitzer Prize winning book by Gilbert King. It takes place in Grovetown Florida in 1948 and tells the story of a forgotten chapter of racial injustice and the efforts of a young Thurgood Marshall to right a wrong.

Gary and Beth reported two well selling nonfiction books here in Brunswick. The first is Monica Wood’s *When We Were the Kennedys*, which takes place here in Maine. The second is *Quiet*, by Susan Cain. *Quiet* deals with introversion and was mentioned in the NYTimes Book Review section at the end of May. I have not read either but trust the taste of people who buy at the Gulf of Maine bookstore.

Finally, I must include a poetry book I was particularly struck by this year and recommend enthusiastically to poetry readers. The book is *Looking for the Gulf Motel*, by our own inaugural poet Richard Blanco. The poems trace Blanco’s journey from Cuba to Florida to Maine. They especially sparkle when focused on family and family roots. I think this is the best of Blanco’s books to date.

Mark Smith is the spouse of Judy Smith, our ongoing fiction contributor. He has served as President of the Board of Directors and remains active with Senior College.

