

Special People and Special Collections

by Margaret D. Bauer, Editor

I have long known the value of a strong mentor, and I never pass up an opportunity (like right now) to express my appreciation of Dorothy Scura, who guided me as I launched my PhD program and then my career. I recognized similar appreciation of Betty Adcock expressed at the 2016 North Carolina Writers Conference, held in Greensboro last July. I asked the speakers, Noel Crook and Al Maginnes, if *NCLR* could publish their remarks. No one who knows Betty Adcock will be surprised by these descriptions of her mentoring, which hearkens back to the theme found throughout *NCLR*'s last issue, the supportive community of writers here in North Carolina. To read more about Betty Adcock, you can still get a copy of *NCLR* 2009, which includes an interview with her.

We are pleased to publish Lee Bridgers's essay, which received Honorable Mention in the 2016 Alex Albright Creative Nonfiction Prize competition. The winner, published in the special feature section, and two honorable mentions (the other one, by Suzy T. Kane, appearing in *NCLR Online* 2017) were selected by Jim Grimsley, whose recent memoir, *How I Shed My Skin*, has been lauded since its publication in 2015. Lee Bridgers's recollection of a chance encounter with Chapel Hill resident Betty Smith, author of *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, recalls several references to Smith's generosity toward other writers mentioned by writers in last year's issue content.

Also reminiscent of content we published just last year is Mary Kathryn Thornton's essay inspired by Greenville book clubs' collections in J.Y. Joyner Library at East Carolina University. When we were working on Cynthia Lewis's essay about North Carolina book clubs last year, I asked Mary Kathryn, a Greenville resident who told me about these papers in Special Collections, if she would write a sidebar for the essay, but when I read what she found, I realized the materials in the numerous collections of papers and photographs from the book clubs were the subject of a whole article, and I thank Mary Kathryn for taking me up on writing that article. I also thank the staff at Joyner Library for always so generously sharing their time and service when one of Joyner's many valuable collections plays a role in an *NCLR* article. And I encourage our readers to let us know if your favorite "special collection" inspires an essay that is appropriate for *NCLR*. We've covered quite a few treasures found in ECU's Joyner Library over the years, and we know there are many more jewels yet to be found there and in other libraries and museums. ■

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ABOVE Left to right, *NCLR* Editor Margaret Bauer, Founding Editor Alex Albright, 2016 Albright Prize winner Trace Ramsey, final judge Jim Grimsley, and honorable mention recipients Lee Bridgers and Suzy T. Kane, at the Greenville Museum of Art, Greenville, NC, 22 Sept. 2016

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