Miss Christine Vaughan 1900-1982

The many friends of Miss Christine Vaughan were saddened by her death just as the fall semester of 1982 was beginning. Miss Christine, as she was affectionately known, was assistant professor of English from 1939 until her retirement in 1970. Prior to her association with MTSU, Miss Vaughan taught in elementary and secondary schools in Tennessee, beginning in 1919. She was a past president of the Middle Tennessee Council of Teachers of English, Delta chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma, and the Tennessee Education Association.

Miss Vaughan was listed in many Who's Who publications, served as a delegate to two White House conferences, and, in 1978, was one of eight national 4-H alumni presented the Golden Key award at the 57th National 4-H Congress in Chicago.

None of these accomplishments meant as much to Miss Vaughan as did her association with the Main Street Church of Christ in Manchester, where she taught classes for many years. And nothing meant as much to her as her friendships. No one who was in her presence for any length of time could help but be impressed by her sweet demeanor, her dedication, her intelligence, and her love for the whole of God's creation.

When Miss Christine retired in 1970, some of her friends worried that retirement would be too unsettling for such an active person. The worry was for naught. If anything, she became even more active. Speaking at various gatherings, entertaining family and friends, working with hobbies, travelling around the world, advising and comforting those in need, Miss Vaughan stayed young in heart and mind by staying in motion. Her family home in Manchester became the focal point of community activity. Waiting for her friends to come to take her to the hospital a few days before her death, she was busy making Christmas decorations. Never idle hands, never an idle mind. We loved Miss Christine dearly, and we count ourselves blessed to have been her friends.

A memorial scholarship fund has been established at MTSU in Miss Vaughan's name. Interest from the fund will be used to award scholarships to outstanding English majors, with preference given to those from Coffee County. If you would like to contribute, mail your check to the MTSU Foundation and mark it for the Christine Vaughan Scholarship Fund.

Karen Armstrong of Manchester is the winner of the first Christine Vaughan Scholarship. A junior and a transfer student from UTK, Karen is working on a double major in English and French. It is particularly appropriate that our first winner knew Miss Christine personally. They attended the same church, and when Christmas came each year and Karen went carolling with others from her church, Miss Christine's house was always the last to be visited. The carollers were always invited in for hot chocolate and all those many treats for which Miss Christine was so famous. Having known her hospitality and love, Karen was particularly touched when she was notified of her good fortune.

New Faculty

Jill Hague joined the English department faculty in the fall semester of 1981. A native of Jacksonville, Florida, Jill graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Florida State University in 1972, received an M.A. in English from the University of Florida in 1975, and completed her Ph.D. at Florida State in 1979. Subsequently, she was awarded a Rotary International Fellowship and did post-doctoral work at the University of Sussex (England), from which she received an M.A. in Modern British Literature in 1981.

Jill's major areas of interest are modern British literature, the development of the novel, and film studies.

We now publicly welcome you to the department, Jill.
Peck Fund

The 1982-83 scholarship recipients are, seated from left, Jean Yarbrough, Dr. Peck, Beth Edwards and Teresa Stricklen. In the back are Nancy Little, Robert Allen Alexander, Jim Beasley, and David Moody.

The Richard C. and Virginia L. Peck Scholarship Fund continues to grow, thanks to the generous contributions of family and friends of the Pecks. At the beginning of the 1982-83 school year, the fund was the largest scholarship fund administered by the MTSU Foundation.

During the past two years $13,000 has been awarded to the following English majors and graduate students: Allen Alexander, Jim Allen Beasley, Christie Brookhart, Beth Edwards, Nancy Little, David Moody, Jill Ross, Teresa Stricklen, Branson Woodard, Maurita Jean Yarbrough, and Laura York. In addition Daphne Dannreuther and Alice Nunery were named Peck Scholars (without stipend). Jean Yarbrough and Gwen Murphree were each given $250.00 academic awards as the graduating English majors with the highest grade average.

As of this academic year, the Peck Fund has awarded over $40,000 to outstanding students in our department. Your contributions to the fund should be sent directly to the MTSU Foundation or to the English Department. (Mark your check clearly for the Peck Fund.)

The Mid-South Humanities Project: Phase II

The Mid-South Humanities Project moved, in Phase II (1981-83), to efforts involving materials development, continuing research, and a series of state teacher-training workshops. The manual was refined to include not only the best "how to do it" articles as field tested by the Institute personnel, but also worksheets and activity suggestions prepared by the original institute participants and other teachers from their own classroom experiences. A new architecture section was prepared for use by teachers and students.

A major effort of Phase II, which concludes in 1983, was directed toward expanding and supporting the original teams of teachers through a series of two-day workshops held in project states. The workshops were designed to introduce teachers, at all levels of education, to the variety of easily accessible and available resources in their community and to ideas for their use in the classroom and supportive educational programs. Participants, selected from applications submitted to the project, received a variety of materials, including the revised 200-page manual.

The workshops all had similar formats. Topics considered during the course of the workshop usually included historic architecture, family history, oral history, old photographs, folk culture, printed sources, cemeteries, use of material culture, and the museum and historic house as a resource. One session was devoted to the teaching of English through community resources, primarily as they relate to composition.

Participants attending the workshop submitted a brief proposal for incorporating the ideas and materials of the workshop into the classroom or educational program of the organization that they represented. Reports and projects that have been submitted to the project to date indicate how very successful this approach is with students at all levels.
New Courses

In efforts to offer students a wider range of attractive and relevant courses and to use faculty areas of interest and expertise, the English Department has approved several new courses as part of our curriculum. In the lower division, a new general education sophomore literature course has been developed: English 224: “Major Themes in British Literature,” replacing English 222: “Non-fiction Literature of the Twentieth Century,” which has not been taught in several years. English 224 will be offered beginning in the Spring 1984 semester and provides an alternative to English 221: “Major Themes in American Literature.” Additional new lower-division courses have been developed by English Department faculty. English 222: “The Contemporary World in Literature” class offers an alternative to English 221 and 224, and several faculty members have submitted proposals that have been approved.

Recently, Dr. Linda Badley developed a 223 course entitled “The Contemporary World in Literature: Gothic and Horror,” which covers topics such as the Gothic novel and its evolution, major archetypes from folklore and the occult as they appear in literature, the Satanic hero, and contemporary manifestation of the Gothic in various modes of literature.

Dr. William Holland developed “Contemporary Detective Fiction” for inclusion under English 223. The course covers such topics as the detective story genre, the evolution of a major fictional character, the detective story as an individual art form, the use of cues and clues as guides to reading and analyzing stories, and reflections of Sherlock Holmes in later detective fiction.

Dr. Jill Hague proposed several new courses that were approved, one being an English 223 course entitled “The Rogue in Literature,” which covers topics such as the rogue and the beginning of the novel, the rogue as impersonator and confidence man, the female rogue, and the appeal of the rogue.

Dr. Hague also developed two upper division courses: English 370: “British Popular Culture” and English 465: “Film Theory and Criticism.” English 370 is an introductory course in understanding, analyzing, and interpreting the popular arts in the United Kingdom after World War Two. In this course students become acquainted with the historical, social, and cultural milieu of post-war Britain and learn how popular arts (literature, film, music, and drama) reveal and reflect the economic and social concerns of Britain in the 50’s, 60’s, 70’s, and 80’s. English 465 is an introductory course in analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating film as an art form as well as studying ideas of major film theorists, such as the formative and realist theorists, and contemporary French film theory.

In the graduate program English 650: “Selected Topics in Literature and Language” provides seminars in which various faculty members pursue topics not treated in our regular offerings. In Summer 1983, such a course will be offered, “Basic Writing for High School Students,” a five-week course which will be conducted as a workshop with an emphasis on practical aspects of teaching writing. This course evolved from the writing workshop sponsored by the English Department, Peck Fund, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs office and responds to the growing interest in teaching writing.

In Spring 1984, Dr. Ayne Durham will offer the English 650 special topics course “Literary Existentialism: Themes and Techniques,” which will cover topics such as existential philosophy, literary existentialism, the expression of the absurd, and denial of existentialism.

We hope that these new courses and additional ones in the future will continue to expand the curriculum and attract the best MTSU students to our program.

Women’s Studies Minor

The English Department has recently assumed administrative responsibilities for the Women’s Studies Program. This interdisciplinary minor will be coordinated by Ayne C. Durham, who teaches Women in Literature, one of the department’s course offerings for the minor.

The Women’s Studies Program is designed to inform and enlighten students about the accomplishments of women and to promote research in and discussion of the problems, attitudes, and aspirations concerning women and their relationship to each other as well as to the men in their lives. Students electing the minor may select courses from a variety of disciplines: English, anthropology, home economics, history, political science, business, art, mass communications, and psychology.

According to Dr. Durham, “Women’s Studies is a new, exciting field of study that attempts to correct the impression that women have contributed insignificantly to world history. Women’s Studies is not just for women. Men need to have the opportunity to expand their images and perceptions. The insight gained from these studies will provide a deeper understanding and appreciation of women.”

Since the program began two years ago, the English Department has supported the minor, offering Women in Literature (taught by Durham and Virginia Derryberry) and Children’s Literature (taught by Margaret Ondoubadian). With its new administrative responsibilities, the department looks forward to a more active role in Women’s Studies.

Tennessee Folklore Society

The forty-eighth annual meeting of the Tennessee Folklore Society was held on the campus of MTSU on October 29 and 30, 1982. David Holt, a traditional instrumentalist and storyteller from North Carolina, opened the meeting with a delightful two-hour concert on Friday evening. Saturday’s schedule was a full one, featuring ten papers and presentations on topics ranging from “Black Country Music” to “A Survivor’s View of the 1982 World’s Fair Folk Festival.” The meeting—one of the better attended in recent years—was chaired by Society president Michael LoFarco (UTK) and secretary Charles Wolfe (MTSU). Local arrangements were handled by Guy Anderson (MTSU). Wolfe and Anderson are editors of the Tennessee Folklore Society Bulletin, which is headquartered in the MTSU English Department.
Faculty Affairs


Linda Badley: paper on Italo Calvino, Twentieth-Century Literature Conference; paper on Roland Barthes, Florida State University Conference on Literature and Film; article on modern parody accepted by The Compositor; articles on Lewis Carroll and Italo Calvino published in Critical Surveys by Salem Press.

Bill Connolly: revision of sections in the 8th edition of The Prentice-Hall Handbook for Writers; paper on training graduate teaching assistants to teach, Conference on College Composition and Communication, San Francisco; National Endowment for the Humanities Grant to attend the Institute for the Teaching of Medieval Civilization, Mt. Holyoke College; paper on Arthurian romance, International Medieval Congress.

Bene (Scanlon) Cox: paper on collaborative learning in advanced composition classes, Conference on College Composition and Communication, Detroit; paper on developing the writer's authority, Tennessee Council of Teachers of English; article on writing centers published in Writing Centers: Theory and Administration, edited by Gary Olson.


Ayne (Venanzio) Durham: paper on teaching literature through creative drama, Tennessee Creative Dramatics Association; MTSU Instructional Grant to attend The Penn State Conference on Rhetoric and Composition; president of the Concerned Faculty and Administrative Women, MTSU; coordinator for Women's Studies, MTSU; director of Ibsen's A Doll's House, Murfreesboro Little Theatre.


Jill Hague: articles on Iris Murdoch, Joe Orten, and Muriel Spark published in the Critical Survey series of Salem Press; article on writing published in The Writing Lab Newsletter of Purdue University; article on the film Ragtime, North Dakota Quarterly; paper on John Fowles and Iris Murdoch, Florida State University Conference on Literature and Film; paper on picaresque structure in contemporary British novels, Carolinas Symposium on British Studies; book entitled Iris Murdoch's Comic Vision published by Associated University Press.

Tom Harris: director of Alan Ayckbourn's Absurd Person Singular, Murfreesboro Little Theatre; “Torvald” in Ibsen's A Doll's House, Murfreesboro Little Theatre.

Bob Herring: selected from competition by the Tennessee Literary Arts Association as one of two touring writers to hold three-day workshops in Memphis, Chattanooga, and Clarksville.


Larry Mapp: article entitled “Thinking about Thinking: Basic Writers and Heuristics,” The Writing Instructor, the University of Southern California.


New Directorships

In keeping with departmental policy that directorships of division committees be five-year appointments, new directors have been named to begin work with the Fall 1983 semester. Bill Connolly (lower-division), Frank Ginanni (upper-division), and Michael Dunne (graduate) were thanked publicly by department chairman John McDaniel for their superb work over the past five years.

The new directors will be Larry Mapp (lower-division), Ayne Durham (upper-division), and Bill Wolfe (graduate).

Elaine Ware will take on Larry's duties in the Writing Center.
Bob Herring and Hub

In July of 1981 Viking Press published Bob Herring's first novel Hub, the story of two boys stranded on an island in the Mississippi with a brutish killer and a wise old man who lives in harmony with the rhythms of the natural world. Uncle Ethel and the two boys, Hub and Hitys, find their lives threatened by the presence of Lute, who is driven by the most primitive instincts of predation and survival. Since the novel's publication, Bob, like the boys and Uncle Ethel, has had to cope with a world suddenly topsy-turvy. But unlike his characters, Bob has had only pleasant experiences, the pleasing consequences of publishing a novel that everyone seems to like. In fact, Hub and Bob began receiving awards almost immediately after the novel's publication.

First the American Library Association named Hub to its list of 100 best books for young adults. Shortly thereafter the Tennessee Arts Commission chose Bob as one of its 1982 fellows, and recently the Commission asked Bob to give a creative writing workshop this spring at the Knoxville campus of the University of Tennessee. The Tennessee Literary Arts Association, using funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities, has named Bob one of two touring writers to conduct workshops during 1983 in Chattanooga, Memphis, and Clarksville. Bob sold the paperback rights to Ace Publishers, and Hub is now a commonly assigned novel in our classes. He has also sold the movie rights to Network Art Incorporated, for whom producer Richard Feldman plans to make a PG film.

Hub's success has also created a great demand for Bob as the subject of interviews. Reporters from newspapers and radio often call for interviews, and Bob appeared on John Siegenthaler's A Word on Words, the PBS program that originates in Nashville. And, of course, he has signed countless copies of the novel at autograph parties. All the awards and personal attention simply demonstrate that in Hub Bob told a story that appeals to audiences of varied ages and backgrounds. The readers have been eager to meet the creator of a story that so sensitively portrays a small Southern town, the lives of two adolescent boys from contrasting backgrounds, and that occasional but apparently inevitable intrusion of violence into the lives of ordinary people.

In a recent interview Bob revealed that he is working on a new novel, this one set entirely in Tennessee. We eagerly await its appearance and wish it the success of Hub.

Increase in Upper Division Students

The 1982-83 academic year marked the highest overall total of student credit hours (SCH) in the English Department for the last ten years, and the department's curriculum and program improvement efforts contributed to this increase. During the period of 1978 to 1982, the department's total SCH's increased from 12,670 to 14,076, and in particular, the upper division program's overall SCH growth increased 74.73 percent. The following list reflects yearly growth in upper division SCH's: 1978—1025 SCH, 1979—1160 SCH, 1980—1241 SCH, 1981—1407 SCH, 1982—1791 SCH. Since 1978 the department strengthened the minor by requiring an additional three hours of upper-division coursework. This change helped increase the number of upper division students in classes and attracted students seriously interested in earning the minor while weeding out those who saw the minor program as "an easy way out".

You can help our Alumni File by completing the following and mailing it to the English Department, Box 70, MTSU.

Name __________________________ Title of current position __________________________

Current academic or business address __________________________

Pertinent information such as recent personal or professional activities and achievements:

Spring, 1983
Departmental Readings

At one point last year we thought the departmental readings had pretty much exhausted our energies for a while. However, it turns out, because of all the readings being done elsewhere by faculty and graduate students, that there were a number of requests for the opportunity to read.

Thanks to Charley and Ayne Durham, the first semester’s readings were held in the luxuriously appointed party room of their condominium. But the readings were too rowdy for the management, so during the second semester the readings had no choice but to return to William Wolfe’s seedy digs.

Graduate student readers this year were Joe Stinson, Teresa Stricklen, Jackie Christian, and David Moody. Lesser readers have been John McDaniel, Michael Dunne, Larry Gentry, and Bill Holland. When Gentry read his “Nick Carraway and the Homosexual Motif in The Great Gatsby,” it was roundly attacked as precious and ingenious. But Dr. Gentry is a seasoned scholar and knows how to make the best of his research. Later this spring he read the same paper, with only the names changed: “Nick’s Descriptions of Daisy: Fitzgerald as Satyr in The Great Gatsby.” Thus, in three ways the theme of the readings this year has been mutatis mutandis.

The Neal D. Frazier Writing Award

In February, Paul and Kate Gore Farmer of Atlanta established a new award to honor the first chairman of the MTSU English Department, Mr. Neal D. Frazier, who held the chair from 1923 until his death in 1944. Mr. and Mrs. Farmer distinguished themselves as members of the university’s first baccalaureate class of 1926, she being the best all-around student and he winning the English medal. The Farmers recall with fondness that when they were students of Mr. Frazier, he taught a course entitled “The Literature of the Bible,” a course which has been extremely valuable to them across the years of their own teaching careers. Consequently, the annual award of $300 will be given for the best original essay on some aspect of the use or influence of the Bible in literature or in some other of the humanities (i.e., art, music, language, history, philosophy). Any MTSU graduate or undergraduate is eligible, and papers are judged on appropriateness of topic, quality of development, and quality of writing. The winning paper for 1983 was written by Teresa Stricklen, a graduate teaching assistant in the D.A. program. Her paper entitled “Malory’s Inclusion of the Biblical Abraham Story in Le Morte D’Arthur” was chosen from a field of twelve entries.