ENGLISH DEPARTMENT CLUBS IN MIDLANDER

The Midlander, the yearbook for Middle Tennessee State Teachers College, began in 1926 and by 1929 the Writer’s Club was a popular organization. The Writer’s Club continued until the early 1940’s. For several years in the 1930’s the Dromgoole Literary Society, a women’s literary club named for the Murfreesboro female author and poet who published under the name Will Allen Dromgoole, was a popular organization. The 1956 Midlander contains a photograph of the Language Department, and the 1983 Midstater, a publication of the university, contained an article by William Beasley, then the chair of the English department, about the Frazier Writing Award, named for Neal Douglas Frazier, Who taught and led the English department from 1923 to 1945.

The following entries illustrate these organizations and awards.
The Writer's Club

Officers

Annette Gannaway ........................................ President
Christine Rollins .......................................... Secretary
Phillip Mankin ............................................ Sponsor

Roll

Dorothy Bachtel
MRS. James A. Clark
Ruth DeFries
Marion Edney
Annette Gannaway
Miss John Hash
Neal Frazier
William Hunter
Elizabeth Forbes Hill
Phillip Mankin
Christine Rollins
Ruth Shields
Rual Stephens
Louise Read
Elsie Vickers

Waiting

In the cool dim of the morning,
Up the walk the mail man coming;
And a heart is fiercely pounding,
Trembling hands the notes are sifting,
Hunting for a well-known writing.
Waiting—
For a line that never comes.

Waiting—
In the hot sun of the mid-day,
Eager crowds are quickly passing;
Earnest eyes are always searching;
Always wondering why they never
Find the one that they are seeking.
Waiting—
For the face that's never found.

Waiting—
In the twilight of the evening,
Summer winds begin their whispering,
With soft hands the cheek caressing.
Time is ripe for love and wooing
And the ear is ever listening.
Waiting—
For the word that's never heard.

—Louise Read

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Writers' Club

Officers
Jane Ellen Mankin .................................................. President
J. B. Peyton ............................................................... Secretary
Philip Mankin .......................................................... Sponsor

Members
Christine Stroop
Florence McCaslin
Martha Cooper
Abe Mason
Frank McGavock
Robert Mason
Eloise Morton
Reed Hooper
Morse Reding
Etta Trapp
John Sims

Blakemore Overall
Frances Sweeney
Martha Gray
Elizabeth McClearen
Wilford Brandon
Dromgoole Literary Society

OFFICERS

RUTH LANIUS ............................................. President
LYDA STILES ............................................. Vice-President
ROBBYE HALL ............................................ Secretary
MARY ELIZABETH GRAHAM .............................. Treasurer

MEMBERS

HAZEL ARLEDGE
PATTI ATTWOOD
PAULINE BARKER
ANNIE BAKER
ANNABEL COX
CATHERINE CHAMBERS
RUBERTA COOP
GLADYS DAVIDSON
RUBYE DAVIDSON
MARGARET S. GALBREATH
LILLIAN GONCE
MARY E. GRAHAM
ROZELLE HOLMES
VIRGINIA HARNED
ROBBYE HALL
NANCY JONES
MILDRED KEMMER
IRIS KINNINGHAM
PEARLE LAMB
LUCILE LAFERRY
ALBERTA LIGGITT
RUTH LANIUS
RUBY McELROY
IVA MAY MCROMURY
LULA McGUFFIN
MARY WILSON PAYNE
MATTIE PATTON
LOUISE ROBERTS
ROBERT RANSOM
ALBERTA ROWLAND
ISABELLE RIPPEY
CAROLINE RICHARDSON
LYDA STILES
JULIA MOORE
LAURA MAE SMITH
ESTHER TALLEY
WILMA TOWRY
GEORGE LEE THOMPSON
CLAARA VERNON
FRANCES VESTAL
CORNELIA WILLIAMS
WILLIE WOODS
DOROTHY WOODWARD
ANNIE RUTH STRoud
JESSIE WOcAK
MARGIE WOcACK
ROBBYE WEBB
ELLOUSE WATKS
ANNE STONE
REBA STROther
LUCILLE HALL
VIRGINIA DRYDEN
LILLIAN GUGELMAN
RUTH DARNELL
MATTIE REE HOLT
GRETCHEN GONCE
AMANDA EDMONDSON
MARThA CLENDEnIN
VERNON JOHNSON
AGNes KINGREE
NANCY WEBB KELLY
BESS PALMER
ALICE SAVAGE
CARRIE MAE SMITH
ELIZABETH SPROUSE
FLUELLA SMITH
MAUDIE PROSSER
FLORENCE VANDERVOORT
MATTIE F. CHEATHAM
Reading, Writing and Speaking Are Found In

LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

"Basic training is necessary in college, too. In the Department of Languages, all who come this way must face indoctrination. To meet the requirements for a B. S. degree one must complete 18 hours in English. For the B. A. degree, additional English and a minimum of 18 hours in foreign languages must be completed.

"The volunteer for regular duty as an English major must present a minimum of 45 hours in English and must pass a 'comprehensive' written and oral examination in his senior year. This examination will not be required after this year.

"Through the division of speech those interested in forensics and the drama gain valuable experience in inter-collegiate competition with practical experience in all phases of radio and theater.

"Courses in journalism round out the offerings in the field of communications. In these courses theory is combined with experience, the results appearing in the SIDELINES, the college newspaper, and the MID-LANDER, the yearbook."
Editor's Note: Students and teachers have always had very special relationships. At the lowest level there is a grudging respect and at the highest plateau a meeting of mind and spirit. The best teachers inspire learning, and the best students remember what they have been taught.

Paul and Kate Gore Farmer remember what they learned of life and literature over fifty-seven years ago from their teacher, Neal Douglas Frazier. They wrote to the chairman of MTSU's English Department expressing a desire to memorialize Frazier, and the following article by William Beasley, professor of English, describes the result.

Convocation 1983 will conclude our seventy-first academic year. It will also be the fifty-seventh anniversary of our conferring the baccalaureate degree, for the first such were conferred at the May 1926 graduation. Volume one of the Midlander was published that year; it pictures twenty-one students who were to receive their degrees at the May convocation.

Two of those students, who later married, were Kate Gore of Moore County and Paul Farmer, from Cleveland. She was vice-president of the class, he the secretary. She had chosen the most versatile student; he had been the editor of that first Midlander and the winner of the English medal in 1925. P.A. Lyon was president of STC, and Neal D. Frazier was acting dean and chairman of the English Department.

One of the courses which Mr. Frazier taught, a course in which Paul Farmer and Kate Gore were enrolled, was "The Bible as Literature." The text used was the relatively new Moultos' The Modern Reader's Bible. The course was justly popular, and Mr. Frazier was a justly popular man and teacher.

This year Paul and Kate Gore Farmer are establishing and underwriting the Neal D. Frazier Writing Award, in honor of their former teacher and friend and inspirer. Over a twenty-year period at STC, Mr. Frazier taught and was friend to and inspired many such young men and young women, most of them fresh (or raw) off the farm, but wanting to avail themselves of a college education and to make a good way in whatever future they could develop.

The award will be given to the MTSU student who submits the best original essay on some aspect of the use of the Bible in literature or some other area of the humanities. A panel of teachers from the English department will serve as judges. The basis of judgment will be the appropriateness of the topic and the quality with which it is developed. In addition to recognition at the annual Academic Awards banquet, the winner will receive a stipend of $300.00, a bequest of the Farmers.

Neal Douglas Frazier, the man for whom this award is given, came to STC in the fall of 1923 after several years of teaching in area preparatory and public high schools. He had taught at Brandon School, Columbia Military Academy, and Lebanon High. During World War I he had been with the YMCA. Upon finishing his M.A. degree at Peabody, Mr. Frazier came to STC where he taught until his death in 1945.

Mr. Frazier was committed to the institution and to the community. He was one of those few people about whom you could say, "He was a teacher." He was unsurpassed at sensing qualities in his students unrealized by them, which he helped them to discover. Outside the classroom but on campus he founded the Sigma Club, the men's honorary scholastic society, still highly esteemed today. In town, he helped to form College Place Methodist Church, which subsequently has become St. Mark's.

He was a Methodist minister, but his classes were never narrow or sectarian; they were a true expression, in the tradition of the humanities, of open-minded inquiry and understanding.

Neal Frazier was a gentle man, with kind eyes and manner. Annie Murphy Frazier was a perfect match for him, also kind in look and manner, and like him an inspiring teacher. Her gracious vivacity was complement to his bemused attachment. They lived, in the midst of the vicissitudes we are all heir to, a quietly joyous life together on South Boulevard, their home a gathering place of friends for afternoon or evening tea, or for sessions of the Baconian Society, a community men's club which he founded, dedicated to the pursuit of ideas.

The donors of the Neal D. Frazier Award, the Paul Farmers, have been for over fifty years associated with schools in Atlanta and the state of Georgia. Paul Farmer was for many years head of the English department of the esteemed Atlanta Boys High School and then he was coordinator of Language Arts for the Atlanta Public Schools. On the national level, he was president of the National Council of Teachers of English, chairman of the Board of Trustees for the Council in the 1960's, and founder of the NCTE Achievement Awards, which provide recognition for outstanding high school English students from every state.

Paul and Kate Gore Farmer, and hundreds of others of us who responded to Mr. Frazier and in some measure continue what he was, ensure that Mr. Frazier is a man who, out of the past, touches the present—and the future. His monument is not a Frazier Hall on campus, but the lives of the persons he taught. Therefore, the Neal D. Frazier Writing Award befittingly commemorates a man whose influence has been national in scope; and it continues to widen.