PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

During the last couple of years, RAPS has been working on the preservation and celebration of the history of Portland State University. Under the leadership of Steve Brannan, we have taken a leadership role in working with a University-wide ad hoc history preservation committee. As we reported earlier, one of the outcomes is a guide for academic and administrative units developed by consultant Geoffrey Wexler. A copy of the guide is available through the RAPS Office. We are excited about continuing our efforts and are proceeding by developing strategies for how RAPS can assist the University in history preservation. One idea is that interested RAPS members can assist their former departments and offices in these efforts. In concert with the goal of the preservation and celebration of PSU history, we are continuing to move forward in the PSU Informal History Picture Book project. As you may recall, it is proposed that the 144-page book will be published by Ooligan Press. The next steps involve the collection of funds to carry out the project and setting up mechanisms for coordinating this project. You will be hearing more about history preservation and welcome your interest, participation, and ideas in this arena.

Our By-Laws Ad Hoc Committee chaired by Richard Brinkman proposed some changes to the current by-laws. We are reviewing the objectives of RAPS as well as the committee structure. We also are exploring how best to involve members in the business of RAPS. You will have the opportunity to vote on the recommended changes in 2006. Contact Darshana Patel, our Office Manager, if you would like to have a copy of the current by-laws. Let Darshana know if you have any recommendations for our consideration.

Several members and guests enjoyed the Hesse exhibit at the Portland Art Museum on November 3rd and the PSU Bookstore tour on November 17, including the 15% discount on most purchases. You should have received the flyer for the holiday dinner on December 14th to be held at the Multnomah Athletic Club. It will be an elegant evening with good friends, food, and entertainment.

As always, we like hearing from you. Let us know about your ideas for how RAPS can better accommodate your interests and how you would like to be involved in our projects, committees, or activities.

Mary Brannan
OUR ACTIVE RETIREES - MARY HALL KOGEN

Mary Kogen retired in 2003 as Professor of Music, having joined the Music Faculty at Portland State in 1979. She came with a Bachelor’s and Master’s degree in piano performance from Northwestern University and with nine years of experience as a teacher of piano. She was hired to create the program in piano pedagogy and class piano. In addition to her teaching duties, she donated her lunch hour to supervise, at no cost to the University, a workshop program in class piano that she had created. She appointed the teachers in the program, some of who were students in the music program, and she observed and critiqued their work.

While at Portland State, she established important links between the University and the city. In 1992, in response to a call from President Judith Ramaley to develop programs that would bring children onto the campus, she organized the PSU/SEI Summer Music Camp for thirty inner-city children. She was able to found a scholarship that provided a piano and an individual teacher for one student. This program has changed the lives of many students. For example, one student earned a scholarship to Catlin Gable and went on to Oberlin College, a school long noted for its music programs. She created and has maintained connections with piano teachers in the region, offering workshops in piano pedagogy. Years ago, she was written up in *The Oregonian* by David Stabler, the paper’s music critic, who referred to her as “the piano teacher’s teacher.”

Since retirement, she has continued to work with many of the region’s piano teachers, both teaching privately and presenting workshops. A little over ten years ago, she added an important new interest that she has kept up ever since. It began when someone suggested that she attend a workshop on rhythm. The experience stimulated her interest in rhythm and led her to study Ta Ke Ti Na, a way of studying and practicing rhythm founded by the Austrian pianist and percussionist Reinhard Flatischler. It is a system that is concerned with much more than rhythm and that is nearly impossible to categorize. Participants learn to practice a variety of rhythms, even to carry on different rhythms by stepping, clapping and chanting simultaneously. The result is a therapeutic change in consciousness in the individual and a connectedness among individuals. Having taken the full five-year program, Mary Kogen is now a certified Advanced Ta Ke Ti Na teacher. She has conducted with beneficial effects Ta Ke Ti Na workshops for an extraordinary range of persons, from prisoners, to troubled adolescents, high-school students with learning problems, and corporate executives. In her workshops, she employs a variety of exotic instruments, such as a Surdo, a Brazilian bass drum and a Berimbau, or Brazilian music bow. She is shown playing the Berimbau.

Like the other active retirees celebrated in this series, Mary Kogen has used the freedom of retirement to continue to use her professional knowledge in the service of the community. She is like the other active retirees that I have interviewed in this series in another way. They talk animatedly about what they are doing, not out of vanity but rather out of a deep belief in its value and a desire to share it with others. They speak with an enthusiasm that I can best describe as youthful.

John Cooper

Welcome to New Members of RAPS
Barbara Becker, Library
Ruth Falco, Education
Clarence Hein, University Relations
Yitai Liu, Biology
Donna Schaeffer, Development
Carrol Tama, Education
Rosalind Wang, Library
RAPS ACTIVITIES

RAPS BRIDGE CLUB
At our last gathering on November 15th, we discussed the nonfiction best seller, *Krakatoa: The Day the World Exploded: August 27, 1883* by Simon Winchester. This was about the destruction of the volcanic island of Krakatoa in which 40,000 people were killed by a tsunami following the eruption. Winchester describes the history of the area around the island prior to and following the eruption. We agreed that we learned much about that part of the world from reading the book. We were fortunate that Larry Sawyer, a geology major, attended the meeting and provided us with much information about phenomena such as volcanoes, earthquakes, and tsunamis. He also described the earthquake situation in the Pacific Northwest. We valued his expertise.

Since we will not meet in December, our next gathering will be on Tuesday, January 17th at the home of Prue Douglas to talk about *Becoming Madame Mao* by Anchee Min. Prue lives at Terwilliger Plaza. Call her at 503-299-4928 for directions and to RSVP.

Anchee Min, the author of our next selection, was born in Shanghai and was sent to a labor collective at the age of seventeen years. The following is the description of the book as it appears on the back cover:

From the best-selling author of *Red Azalia*, this extraordinary novel tells the stirring, erotically charged story of Madame Mao Zedong, the woman almost universally known as the “white-boned demon,” whom many hold directly responsible for the excesses of the cultural Revolution. Bringing her lush psychological insight to bear on the facts of history, Min penetrates the myth surrounding this woman and provides a “convincing, nuanced portrait of a damaged personality” (*Entertainment Weekly*) driven by ambition, betrayal, and a never-to-be-fulfilled need to be loved. With all the compressed drama and high lyrical poetry of great opera, *Becoming Madame Mao* is a “remarkable accomplishment. . . Madame Mao is finally given her own voice” (*Ha Jin*).

Our February selection is *Eventide* written by Kent Haruf, who was the author of *Plainsong*.

Finally, it may be of interest to some of you that authors talk about their recent books on C-SPAN during the weekends. A listing of the times can be found at www.booktv.org.

Mary Brannan

RAPS BOOK CLUB
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Mary Brannan

RAPS HIKERS
Because of the holidays, there will be no December hike. On January 27th, we will hike some of the small loop trails in the Tualatin Hills Nature Park and Interpretive Center. Meet at the interpretive center at the park entrance off of Millikan Blvd. at 9:30 am. The address is 15655 SW Millikan Blvd.

Please confirm your participation to Larry Sawyer by the Thursday before the hike. (503-771-1616 or larry_sawyer@comcast.net)

Larry Sawyer
On Thursday, November 3rd, at 1:30 p.m. several RAPS members toured the Portland Art Museum’s exhibition entitled “Hesse: A Princely German Collection.” It included over 400 pieces of Baroque furniture and silver, German paintings and portraits, a Russian dowry, German Art Nouveau, and classical antiques. The collection provided history and visual insights into how the royalty in Hesse lived.

Our second November program took place on Thursday the 17th at the PSU Bookstore. Ken Brown, our bookstore manager, first hosted us to a wonderful buffet lunch. After that, Ken provided a brief history of the PSU Bookstore – taking us from the Vanport days up to the present. After the Vanport flood, the bookstore occupied several locations on and around the PSU campus. The PSU Bookstore moved into its present location in November of 2000. The current square footage is 23,233 and is spread across three levels. Annual sales are just a shade below $10 million, and the bookstore employs nearly 50 full- and part-time staff.

Earlier this year, the bookstore members voted to change from a Co-op structure to a non-profit organization. Now the funds that had gone to taxes are able to be used to reduce the cost of textbooks and to provide book scholarships to needy students.

Faculty, students, staff, and Professor Emeriti are eligible to become members of the PSU Bookstore. There is no cost to sign up, but there are benefits such as a 10% discount off all general books and art supplies, advance notification of member events and special sales, and in-store promotions and giveaways. If you have not already joined, please do so the next time you visit campus.

All attendees at the November program received a 15% discount coupon that can be used at the PSU Bookstore through the end of January 2006. That should help with holiday shopping.

After the lunch and briefing, Ken was thanked and given a token of our appreciation (2 bottles of Cotes du Rhone). Normally our speakers receive a gift card from the PSU Bookstore (which are donated by Ken), but we decided to avoid the potential conflict of interest and give him something that we know he enjoys. Ken, then, proceeded to give us a tour of the bookstore’s retail space and then the back area where the administrative offices, receiving and shipping, storage, and electronic nerve center are located.

We thank Ken Brown for both his hospitality and valuable information about the store. RAPS encourages you to patronize the PSU Bookstore -- starting with your shopping for the upcoming holiday season.

Bruce Stern
OUR TRAVELING RETIREES
Charles White takes the Empire Builder to Minnesota

My World War II ship’s crew (USS LST 568) held its reunion in Minnesota. Dawn and I decided to go by way of the Empire Builder. We took the train from Portland to Seattle in order to have a diner with us all the way. The train is in two sections as far as Spokane, and the diner is on the Seattle section. In Seattle we transferred to the waiting Empire Builder. We liked our digs – an overstuffed chair, a couch, a small closet, a washstand, and a private toilet and shower. Soon after Seattle, the steward appeared with champagne. The route tunnels under Seattle, surfaces before the ship canal, and then hugs Puget Sound. The sun shone on the water, the Olympic Mountains loomed brightly above the far shore, ferries were plying their routes, birds were everywhere, and many sailboarders were only a few rods from our window.

At Everett we turned eastward and started up the Snohomish and then the Skykomish rivers. Meals are included with the sleeper ticket, and passengers select their times with the dining car stewardess. The coffee was excellent (as it had been on the Cascade to Seattle), and the apple pie delicious.

While we were eating, the train entered the mountains. We climbed, with the cliffs ever higher beside us, with the Skykomish River often hundreds of feet below us. After Index, we entered the Cascade Tunnel. Index is nearly a ghost town now, but in pre-tunnel days it was a busy railroad town, with several engines always ready to help pull the trains over the pass. Even though we may have been going a mile a minute, it took us fourteen minutes to go through the tunnel. It was night when we emerged. Our beds had been made while we dined, so we turned in at 9:30, setting our clocks to 10:30, Mountain time. The roadbed was smooth, and perhaps the slight swaying induced sleep.

I got up a little after 7:00 Portland time, when I normally would be cooking our breakfast. Freshly brewed coffee and orange juice were just outside the door. With coffee cup in hand, I joined a few early risers in the lounge car and sat for a while with a New Zealander. We saw pristine mountain lakes, the first rays of the sun lighting the early morning mist rising from surfaces. Venus was still visible in the clear sky, and on the ground deer were browsing. The train whistle echoed in the mountains. Whitefish is a service stop; and the smokers poured out of the train and smoked as fast as they could – smoking is absolutely forbidden on the entire train, even in private compartments. The steward delivered our morning paper, the Daily Interlake, published in Kalispell, which allowed us to keep up on the latest Bush folly. We proceeded up the middle fork of the Flathead River, with the pale granite cliffs of the mountains in Glacier National Park looming ever larger and higher.

Soon we entered the lightly populated Montana plains. Small towns were far apart, many of them with weather-beaten and deteriorating houses. Our route paralleled US 2, but few vehicles were on the road. There were so many abandoned autos that the town and the countryside often resembled wrecking yards. Wagner had a vacant and crumbling school, two boarded up two-story buildings, and fifteen or so houses, many vacant, and most deteriorating badly. In Poplar, however we saw several well-kept houses around what appeared to be two two-story working hotels.

Continued on page 6

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Be sure not to miss the following events sponsored by RAPS. Detailed information for our December event is in this newsletter. Information for other events will be forthcoming.

Thursday, December 14, 6:00 p.m.
Multnomah Athletic Club, Lownsdale Room, 2nd Floor
RAPS Annual Holiday Dinner
Reservations due by December 6th

Thursday, January 5, 1:00 p.m.
Featured speaker, Provost Roy Koch
Topic: Sustainabilitiy
The Empire Builder continued from page 5
The Montana journey was highlighted by a wine tasting, while the huge wheat fields stretched to the horizon. In the badlands of eastern Montana and western North Dakota, we saw strangely shaped sandstone formations. There were irregular columns with tops like Chines hats, blocks of rock sticking up from the circular bases, some resembling animals, especially dinosaurs. In fact, this was where a Portland State summer class dug up a triceratops. Near the Dakotas, we followed the muddy Missouri and the Yellowstone rivers quite closely.

I had hoped the train would be late in Minneapolis, as it was due at 7:04, and I wanted to have a leisurely breakfast, but we had to rise early and breakfast shortly after six. We arrived at the station four minutes ahead of schedule.

We really enjoyed the trip. The compartment was fine, the track smooth, the fellow travelers compatible, the food good. Best of all, we had time to relax, to enjoy the scenery, to read, and even to nap. Union Station’s tower sign, Go by Train is really good advice.

Charles White

DECEMBER RAPS EVENTS

On Thursday, December 14th RAPS members and their guests will gather to celebrate the upcoming holiday season at a dinner to be held at the Multnomah Athletic Club, 1849 SW Salmon Street, in the Lownsdale Room on the 2nd Floor.

Our Annual Holiday Dinner will begin with a no-host reception at 6:00 p.m., followed by a sumptuous dinner at 7:00 p.m. Following dinner we will be entertained by the music of “Youth and Ages,” a local award-winning barbershop quartet. It should be a fun, relaxing evening, so please plan to attend.

You should have received a flyer in the mail about this event. Reservations need to be received in the RAPS Office no later than December 6th. A selection of entrées will be available, and the cost is $27.50 per person. In an effort to keep the per-person fee at a manageable level, RAPS is underwriting some costs for the event.

Bruce Stern