Memorial services

Asher B. Wilson

A memorial service for Asher B. Wilson, professor emeritus of theater arts, will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 21, at the First Baptist Church in Portland.

Professor Wilson died in early December, 2006, after an illness. He came to Portland State in 1959 and founded the Department of Theater Arts. An extended obituary notice will appear in a later edition of The RAPS Sheet.

Whitney K. Bates

A memorial service for Whitney K. Bates, professor emeritus of history, will be held from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 27, in the Cascade Room, 236 Smith Memorial Student Union, on the PSU campus. Professor Bates died Dec. 9, shortly after having been diagnosed with lung cancer.

Professor Bates came to PSU in 1961 and served as a professor of history and as assistant to the dean of Social Science. An extended obituary notice will appear in a later edition of The RAPS Sheet.

Club reports... continued from page 2

Hikers stride on Jan. 26

The next hike will be on Friday, Jan. 26. We will hike a section of the Springwater Corridor from SE 136th Ave. to Gresham. This is approximately from mile post 12 at SE 136th to mile post 16.5 at Gresham City Center Park. This is an asphalt bike path about 8 to 10 feet wide located on the old Portland Traction Company streetcar line. Any elevation gain is not perceptible. Lunch will be at a restaurant in the Gresham area. We will walk only one way and car shuttle.

This corridor follows Johnson Creek and passes by Raymond. It is also slightly north of Foster Road. There is a slight dip and an old store. You will see road signs warning of pedestrian and bike traffic. Park on the shoulder of 136th. We will shuttle one car to the Gresham city park or another crossing. The trail crosses several streets.

Confirm your participation with Larry Sawyer at 503-771-1616 or larry_sawyer@comcast.net by Thursday, Jan. 25.

—Larry Sawyer

From the new editor

A few weeks ago I received a call from Mary Brannan, who asked if I would take over editing The RAPS Sheet.

I hesitated, imagining all those professors emeriti of English pointing out my embarrassing mistakes and major blunders. I pictured myself reading emails saying, “I do not exaggerate, Doug, when I tell you that even my standard poodle edits better than you.”

I pictured myself responding, “So does my Newfoundland, so there!” Then I pictured myself realizing that the reputation of the Algonquin Round Table has nothing to fear from me.

It was about then that Mary said that Jack Cooper recommended me for the job. Jack is, of course, a professor emeritus of English. Bolstered by that news, I told Mary that I’ll be happy to help out.

My first order of business as editor is to thank Jack Cooper for editing The RAPS Sheet these past three years. My second is to assure you that the RAPS Owl logo will be restored to its rightful place in the title of our newsletter.

A friend of mine (and RAPS member) recently sent me an email with a number of witty quotes—several about aging. I’d like to pass on a few of them.

•  “I don’t feel old. I don’t feel anything until noon, then it’s time for my nap.” —Bob Hope
•  “Maybe it’s true that life begins at 50 . . . but everything else starts to wear out, fall out, or spread out.” —Phyllis Diller

•  “By the time a man is wise enough to watch his step, he’s too old to go anywhere.” —Billy Crystal

•  “Be careful about reading health books. You might die of a misprint.” —Mark Twain

•  “We could certainly slow the aging process down if it had to work its way through Congress.” —Will Rogers

Perhaps we could delay the “aging process” even further by introducing it to the Oregon Legislature. Seriously, enjoy your holiday, handle the aging process with humor, and don’t stop your intellectual endeavors. I hope to see you at the January 18 tour of PSU’s new Engineering complex.

Sincerely,

Bruce Stern

President’s Message

Although I am writing this column late on Christmas Eve (while waiting for Kris Kringle . . . or was that UPS?) you will receive this in early 2007. As a result, I wish you a belated happy holiday and offer you wishes for a happy, healthy, and satisfying new year.

December’s featured event was the RAPS Annual Holiday Dinner, held Thursday, December 21, at the Multnomah Athletic Club. This event provided an opportunity to socialize, enjoy good food, and listen to a jazz trio led by renowned jazz pianist and Portland State professor Darrell Grant.

Although the title of Darrell’s first number implied that retired people were dodder, he was surprised at the conversations he overheard about far-away travels and challenging projects that engage our retirees. That is another crimp in the “old folks at home” mentality. Thank goodness!

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Sincerely,

Bruce Stern

THE RAPS SHEET JANUARY 2007

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RAPS club reports

Book Club meets Jan. 16

Please join us in January for a discussion of the Blind Assassin by Margaret Atwood. This book, a winner of the Booker Prize, was suggested by Sally Jacobson, who will lead us in our discussion on Tuesday, Jan. 16, at 1:30 p.m. Sally will host us in her home at 2184 NW Kearney St. (accessible by the Portland Streetcar at NW Lovejoy). Contact her at jacobson_sally@msn.com or by phone at 971-576-2922 to RSVP and for directions.

Blind Assassin is described on the back cover: The Booker Prize-winning sensation from the incomparable Margaret Atwood—a novel that combines elements of gothic drama, romantic suspense, and science fantasy in a spellbinding narrative.

The Blind Assassin opens with these simple, resonant words: “Ten days after the war ended, my sister Laura drove a car off a bridge.” They are spoken by Iris Chase proclaiming the death accidental. But just as the reader expects to settle into Laura’s story, Atwood introduces a parable Margaret Atwood—a novel that combines elements of gothic drama, romantic suspense, and science fantasy in a spellbinding narrative.

We usually meet from 1:30 to 5:00 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month. Members take turns hosting meetings in their homes. At the end of each meeting we plan the meeting place for the next session.

We have grown from nine to 17 listed members. We expect to continue to grow but increased membership will cause a few changes.

It is difficult to host more than three tables (i.e., 12 members at a time) in most homes. On two or three recent occasions the host has been able to invite the first 12 to call but regrettably tell several callers that there are no more places.

We are contemplating ways of getting around this. For the present we will let all the later callers know who has called and, if there are four of them, invite one of them to host this extra group. If this turns out to be a regular occurrence, we will plan ahead to meet in two locations—maybe on the same day or maybe on a different day.

No matter what we do, because the game requires a table of four players, there is always a chance of someone who would like to play being left out. So far we have agreed that our suggestions are preferable to inviting extra people and having members take turns sitting out.

If you have any questions please give me a call at 503-292-0838 or send an email to colin_dd@oryxnet.com. If you would like to join, let us know. We will add your name to the list and you can help us grow.

—Colin Dunkeld

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Upcoming programs

January 18: Engineering tour
We will tour the new engineering building, the MacEwan College of Engineering and Computer Science, 1930 SW Fourth Ave. at SW College St., at 1:00 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 18. Please meet in the atrium. This facility opened its doors last winter term. Light refreshments will follow the tour.

February 15: Economist Tom Potiowsky
Our speaker will be Thomas Potiowsky, professor of economics, PSU. He will talk on state economics. He has been chair of PSU Department of Economics, state economist from 1999 to 2006, and a consultant. Please mark Thursday, February 15, at 1:00 p.m.

March 15: Potluck
March is our Lunch Potluck, so mark March 15. Speaker is to be announced.

April 12: President’s Luncheon
April is our annual President’s Luncheon and awards event. Please mark Thursday, April 12, at noon. Note: This is the second Thursday of the month.

May 17: Psychologist Leif Terdal
Our speaker will be Leif Terdal, Ph.D., clinical psychologist and professor emeritus at Oregon Health & Science University. He will present a talk and a slideshow entitled “Escape from Nazi-Occupied Norway: A Mother and Three Boys.” Please mark Thursday, May 17, at 1:00 p.m. This meeting is also our ice cream social event.

Holiday Dinner includes surprise for Fiascas
Seventy RAPS members and guests attended the Annual Holiday Dinner on the evening of December 21 in the MAC club’s Louwesdale Room. Attendees enjoyed celebrating the holidays and the fellowship of friends and colleagues. There was a no-host bar and social hour at 6:00 p.m., followed by dinner and entertainment.

During dinner, Michael and Marjorie Fiasca were surprised when their children presented them with a corsage and boutonniere in celebration of their 60th wedding anniversary. President Bruce Stern had the pleasure of introducing the family.

Darrell Grant, jazz pianist, composer, and professor of jazz studies at Portland State, provided the entertainment with two of his PSU jazz studies students. Joaquin Toler played bass and Kyle Williams played guitar, both are seniors at PSU and come from local high schools.

The trio began with some traditional jazz pieces and then played a medley of holiday music. And then there was a special treat: Darrell, solo, played a medley of African spirituals passed on by his mother.

Mike Fiasca (left) gets a boutonniere and Marjorie Fiasca a corsage at RAPS’ Annual Holiday Dinner.

Darrell Grant (piano) and students Kyle Williams (guitar) and Joaquin Toler (bass) entertained RAPS members at the dinner.

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