

Fall 2012

Caroliniana Columns - Fall 2012

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HENRY G. FULMER NAMED DIRECTOR OF SOUTH CAROLINIANA LIBRARY



Henry G. Fulmer

BY KATHY DOWELL

Henry G. Fulmer has been named Director of the South Caroliniana Library, located on the University of South Carolina's historic Horseshoe. A three-time USC graduate and thirty-year USC Libraries employee, Fulmer began his new duties January 2.

"Henry is the perfect candidate to lead South Caroliniana Library," said USC Libraries Dean Tom McNally. "He has thirty years of experience, combined with knowledge of not just the library's collections but also the individuals who support the library. He's been instrumental in the success of the library in the past, and he can now take the library to the next level."

Fulmer is the fifth person to serve as director of South Caroliniana Library since it was established in 1940. Previous directors were Dr. R.L. Meriwether, E.L. Inabinett, Dr. Allen H. Stokes and Herbert J. Hartsook.

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LIBRARY ACQUIRES JACOB MARLING PORTRAIT OF KEZIAH BREVARD

BY HENRY FULMER

Dr. & Mrs. Edward Darrell Hopkins, Jr., of Columbia have recently presented the South Caroliniana Library with a framed portrait of Dr. Hopkins' ancestor Keziah Goodwyn Hopkins Brevard (1803-1886). The portrait was painted about 1827-28.

THE PORTRAIT

Long thought to be the work of an itinerant artist who added face and hands to a pre-painted torso, the painting, though unsigned, has been identified as the work of Raleigh, N.C., painter Jacob Marling (1774-1831), whose compositional format often consisted of placing his subject, seated in a chair, against an atmospheric backdrop in the neo-classical style. A single column is often depicted, draped with a festooned curtain, drawn back slightly to give a brief glimpse of the vague landscape beyond.

Continued on page 3

*Dr. & Mrs. Edward Darrell Hopkins, Jr.,
at the South Caroliniana Library with
the Keziah Brevard portrait*





Jacob Marling's portrait of Keziah Goodwyn Hopkins Brevard painted about 1827-28

PORTRAIT *Continued from page 1*

The portrait, which was passed down through succeeding generations of the Hopkins family, was cleaned and repaired ten years ago by conservator Ginny Newell of ReNewell, Inc., Fine Art Conservation.

KEZIAH GOODWYN HOPKINS BREVARD

Keziah Goodwyn Hopkins was born in 1803, the daughter of Keziah and James Hopkins of the Richland District. Although trained as a physician, Mr. Hopkins never practiced medicine, pursuing instead the life of a planter. Mrs. Hopkins previously was married to Jesse Goodwyn, by whom she had three children. Although Keziah was one of five Hopkins children, only she and her sister Caroline survived infancy. Among her half-siblings, Keziah was closest to Sarah Goodwyn Hall, wife of Columbia merchant Ainsley Hall.

In 1827 Keziah married Alexander Joseph McLean Brevard,

a North Carolinian who had attended South Carolina College from 1818 to 1820, and who served one term in the North Carolina legislature. Caroline Hopkins, who had married Joseph's brother Theodore Brevard, died in 1829, leaving Keziah as the only heir to her father's substantial wealth and land holdings. In 1835 Joseph Brevard was consigned to the South Carolina Lunatic Asylum where he died in 1842. Keziah's mother died in 1840 and her father in 1844. From that time Keziah Brevard was the sole owner of her father's land, a rare female plantation owner and operator.

Keziah Brevard's manuscript diary is owned by the South Caroliniana Library and was edited for publication in 1992 by John Hammond Moore as *A Plantation Mistress on the Eve of the Civil War*.

— Henry Fulmer is Director of the South Caroliniana Library

FULMER *Continued from page 1*

NEW DIRECTOR COMMENTS

Fulmer might have stuck with his original plan to pursue a doctorate in music – if he hadn't taken a part-time job as a graduate student assistant in the library's Manuscripts Division.

"I felt at home the moment I walked into the library," said Fulmer, a native of Fountain Inn, S.C. "My paternal grandmother had been the child of a Civil War veteran. As a young child, the tales I wanted to be told were not the classic imaginary fairy tales but stories about how things were done in the past. My grandmother also was the collector and preserver of family artifacts, so I grew up surrounded by historic items, just as I am here at the South Caroliniana Library. Feeling that connection to the past, to history, has always been a part of my life. At USC, I'm helping to collect and preserve the state's heritage for future generations of citizens and scholars.

"My abiding interest in and concern for the conservation treatment of archival and special collections materials also began at USC," Fulmer said. "When I was a graduate student assistant my primary task was to carry out the hands-on preservation work then done exclusively in-house on manuscript collections. After becoming a permanent staff member in 1981, I had the responsibility for training student workers in those delicate tasks. And for years afterward, I participated in bench work conservation demonstrations."

CREDENTIALS

Since 1992, Fulmer has been the library's Curator of Manuscripts. He has seen the addition and acquisition of numerous materials,

including the papers of General William C. Westmoreland and, most recently, Mary Boykin Chesnut's Civil War photograph albums.

Fulmer has a bachelor's degree in applied music, a master's degree in English, and a master's degree in library and information science from the University of South Carolina. He is active in a number of professional organizations, including the South Carolina Archival Association. He currently serves as treasurer on the Board of Governors of the South Carolina Academy of Authors. He also is the organist-choirmaster at the Lutheran Church of the Reformation in Columbia.

"I have appreciated the opportunity to work with Henry, beginning when he first came to the library as a graduate student," said Allen Stokes, who has served the library's director for more than a quarter of a century. "Henry's been a great colleague; he is wonderful with donors, wonderful with the collections, and much admired by the staff. I can't think of any other person that I would want to succeed me as director."

The South Caroliniana Library is the repository of the Palmetto State's documented history, literature, and culture. Students and faculty of the University, as well as researchers from around the world, visit the library to study the books, newspapers, manuscripts, pamphlets, maps, audio recordings and visual images preserved there. Its five major research divisions are Published Materials, Manuscripts, University Archives, Oral History and Visual Materials.

— Kathy Dowell is a communications associate with the University Libraries.

Retiring Report from the Director

BY ALLEN STOKES



Allen Stokes with Van High, proprietor of the Barony House Restaurant.



Allen Stokes receives historical materials from Mrs. Bonnie Gayle Weeks Baggett.

There have been many special and memorable days over the forty years that I have been associated with the South Caroliniana Library.

MONCK'S CORNER, MACBETH, AND PINOPOLIS

One such day recently occurred on Friday, November 2nd. I drove to Moncks Corner that morning to meet Dr. Norman ("Pard") Sinkler Walsh at the Barony House Restaurant. Pard's latest book, *Macbeth, South Carolina: People and Places, 1811-2011*, has just been published. It is a marvelous local history that literally does reveal the lives of the people and places in a community whose boundaries are obscured and whose history might well have been lost except for the diligence of persons who saved records and recorded the memories of individuals who lived there. I highly recommend this book for anyone interested in local history or for anyone contemplating writing local history. To get a copy, send a check for \$35.00 (made out to the Berkeley County Historical Society) to Dr. Norman S. Walsh, 414 Country Club Rd., Summerville, S.C. 29483.

Pard and I first visited with Bonnie Gayle Weeks Baggett, whose mother, Ernestine Tyler Weeks, saved all manner of material about the community, including the history of Rehoboth United Methodist Church, which has been attended by five generations of her family. We left Mrs. Baggett's home with a large, heavy suitcase full of documentation. Before returning to Barony House, we toured around the community of Macbeth, which to a stranger is only identified by a modest sign on the side of the road. At one time the largest property in the area was 2,000-acre Tiverton plantation.

We lunched at Barony House with owner Van High, who turned over the records of Trinity Episcopal Church, Pinopolis to be microfilmed and scanned. Lunch was followed by Pard's guided tour of Pinopolis which was the subject of an earlier book. The tour included a visit to an expansive live oak which grew from an acorn that Pard planted in 1942.



CASSAT, MCBEE, AND SALLEY

There have been many memorable trips like the one to Berkeley County. I have been over all areas of Kershaw County as well as parts of Lancaster, Chesterfield, and Lee counties with Harvey Teal.

These trips usually included a stop at the Hard Times Cafe in Cassat and a visit to McLeod's in McBee when peaches were in season. I know where Sherman's army crossed Lynch's River and have seen the field where the Cash-Shannon duel was held. On the Wire Road is the site of a grist mill where Harvey's family took corn to be ground. And then there are those trips around Salley with Hink Salley as tour guide pointing out the site of businesses long gone, who lived where, and cemeteries in obscure places.

"THE STRENGTHS OF THE CAROLINIANA LIBRARY"

It has been my privilege to meet and work with so many persons who have allowed the South Caroliniana Library to preserve and to make available for research millions of documents, books and pamphlets, images, maps, oral histories, newspapers, and other materials that document several centuries and many aspects of South Carolina's history, literature, and culture. Many shelves would be required to house all the books, documentaries, and articles that have been published with the resources in the South Caroliniana Library.

Like the massive columns in front, the strengths of the Caroliniana Library are the support of individuals, funds provided by the University South Caroliniana Society and other private endowments, the breadth and depth of the collections, and the knowledgeable and dedicated staff, past and present, who richly deserve all the expressions of appreciation from those who have used our collections.

Report from the William Gilmore Simms Visiting Research Professor 2012

BY JEFF ROGERS

During the summer of 2012, I was extremely fortunate to serve as the William Gilmore Simms Visiting Research Professor at the South Caroliniana Library.

As a graduate student in history at the University of South Carolina, I had spent a great deal of my time exploring the rich collections of the South Caroliniana Library, and it was wonderful to once again be back on the USC campus, working in the library, renewing old friendships and starting new ones.

The South Caroliniana Library is a special place that attracts scholars from around the world, and it is always a privilege to have the opportunity to work there. Anyone dealing with the life and writings of William Gilmore Simms understands the vital role that this library has played and continues to play in promoting and sustaining research on one of 19th-century South Carolina's most important intellectual figures. The research I did could not have been conducted anywhere else.

Aiding me in my research were the superb staff members of both the Manuscripts and Published Materials Divisions of the library. Without their knowledge, patience and cheerfulness, successful completion of these projects would not have been possible. While the holdings of the library attract those interested in South Carolina history, it is the expert staff members of the Caroliniana who make exploring that interest possible and enjoyable. All who do research on William Gilmore Simms and in the field of Southern history owe them an immense debt of gratitude.



Jeff Rogers

SIMMS'S NOVEL, *THE LIFE OF THE CHEVALIER BAYARD*

I began the summer with two objectives in mind. The first was to gather the information necessary to prepare an introduction to a new edition of *The Life of the Chevalier Bayard*, Simms's 1847 biography of the famed French knight. This book is a planned publication by the University of South Carolina Press in conjunction with the Simms Initiatives of the University of South Carolina Libraries. Among the many resources essential to this project were the library's holdings of several copies of both the original 1847 Harper & Brothers edition and the 1860 edition. These resources allowed me to compare the two texts and to note any changes from the earlier edition to the later one. In this case, there were none.

SIMMS'S NEWSPAPER WRITINGS

My second project was to collect newspaper writings that Simms saw published over the course of his life. In addition to editing three newspapers during his writing career, Simms was also a frequent contributor to such Charleston newspapers as the *Mercury* and the *Southern Patriot*. These contributions ranged widely in content covering everything from observations on local weather and the state of agriculture near his plantation home Woodlands (located near Midway in Barnwell District) to extended essays on social, political, and philosophical topics. Simms's contributions to newspapers included accounts of his nearly-annual travels to New York and beyond to meet with publishers and with literary friends and associates. These writings alone provide valuable insights into 19th-century American life and to Simms's place within it. The articles range in chronology from 1826 to 1870, the year of Simms's death.

The aim of this project is to prepare a selected edition of these newspaper writings, both editorials as well as other contributions, to submit to USC Press for publication. Such a volume would offer a perspective on Simms that one cannot get from reading his literary works and letters alone. As such it would be a significant contribution to historical scholarship in Southern history and 19th-century American studies generally. The South Caroliniana Library's vast holdings of South Carolina newspapers were essential to accomplishing this project.

Database, Brochure, and Catalog Facilitate Access to LIBRARY'S PORTRAIT COLLECTION



BY KATHY DOWELL

With notebook in hand and reference books at the ready, Laura Hughes, a USC graduate student, spent hours in the South Caroliniana Library face-to-face with some of the state's best-known historical figures. She was studying the library's 18th- and 19th-century portraits, looking for clues that would help her add information to the library's files. There are 52 portraits in the collection and Hughes knows them all.

"It is a great collection and a really fun project," said Hughes, who completed the work as part of the requirements for her museum curator certificate. "I'm involved now in the lives of these people."

"This is Jonathan Maxcy, first president of South Carolina College," she said as she walked, pointing to the portraits on view in the first-floor Manuscripts Room and the second-floor Kendall Room. "Here's USC President James Rion McKissick, General Andrew Pickens, Governor John Hugh Means,

Governor David Rogerson Williams, Mrs. Robert Woodward (Eliza) Barnwell, Anna Jane White, James Woodrow (Woodrow Wilson's uncle and one-time president of USC), and James Hopkins Adams, a Lower Richland County planter."

BUILDING A DATABASE

"My job was to research and expand the information about all of the portraits," she said. "The information had last been updated in the 1940s, and some of the portraits were lacking important information, such as the artist's name."

According to Beth Bilderback, Curator of Visual Materials Collections and supervisor of the portrait project, a large part of the portrait project involved putting the information into a database

"This project has taken us from information on loose paper to a computerized database," Bilderback said. "Laura's first task was to take the information she had collected

and create adequate, uniform labeling for all of the portraits: subject's name, who they were, and who the artist was. That information went into a database, along with information about each portrait's condition and conservation needs that will be a great help to us in-house."

Hughes is now developing a brochure and a print catalog, which will be important resources for library visitors.

"We know we have a nice collection of artwork, but nothing had really been done in terms of research until now, and most of the time the focus is on the sitter rather than on the artist," said Henry Fulmer, Director of the South Caroliniana Library. "This project has provided us with a lot of information on our collection, and we feel it will greatly enhance future research into art in South Carolina. When we have people come into the library to see the portraits, we'll be able to give them information and hand them a brochure or catalog with details."

Far left, opposite page: Portrait of Richard Brockington painted by Scarborough about 1835-40

Left, opposite page: This is a portrait of Maria Bancroft Rivers painted about 1852 by George Whiting Flagg. Mrs. Rivers' husband, William James Rivers, was a professor of ancient languages at South Carolina College. Flagg was born in Boston, Mass., but moved to Charleston, S.C., with his family in 1824. In 1830 he returned to Boston to study with his uncle, the painter Washington Allston. Flagg also studied in London, Paris, and Italy. He was active in Charleston during the mid to late 1850s and is considered to be one of the most important and accomplished American portrait painters of the 19th century.

Right: The South Caroliniana Library's portrait of James Rion McKissick was painted in 1940 by Malcolm Rae. McKissick was born in Union, S.C., in 1884. He attended USC where he began his career as a journalist on The Carolinian and The Garnet and Black. He attended Harvard Law School and returned to South Carolina as editor of The Greenville News. In 1927 McKissick became Dean of the USC School of Journalism and in 1935 he was elected president of the University. He died while in office in 1944. His grave is just outside the South Caroliniana Library on the Horseshoe. McKissick Museum was named in his honor.



PORTRAITS AS HISTORY; PORTRAITS AS ART

Fulmer explained that not everyone looking at the collection is looking at it for a sort of “who’s who” of state history; many people have an interest in art collections or portraiture by specific artists.

“The portrait of President Maxcy was painted by John Trumbull, who also painted a famous George Washington portrait,” Fulmer said. “Among the most famous portraits we have are those painted by William Harrison Scarborough, a Tennessee native whose career escalated once he moved to Columbia in 1843. He painted the most prominent members of South Carolina society, including governors and high ranking military officials. He is considered one of the most prolific and accomplished American portrait painters of the 19th century. No one paints eyes and hands like Scarborough; he was a master. And eleven of his portraits hang in the South Caroliniana Library.”

—Kathy Dowell is a communications associate with the University Libraries.



Shown left to right are Beth Bilderback and Laura Hughes with the Scarborough portrait of Mary Hart Brockington and Peter Bacot (painted about 1835-40).

“Bricks, Fire, & Iron: The Highs and Lows of Carolina’s Historic Horseshoe Wall”

BY MARSHALL SWANSON

It’s older than most of the buildings on USC’s historic Horseshoe and has served as a silent sentinel of the University’s original campus for more than 175 years. And yet, the brick wall, built in 1836 to surround the original campus, has had a tendency to gradually disappear into the background of an expanding urban campus, though it never has been forgotten.

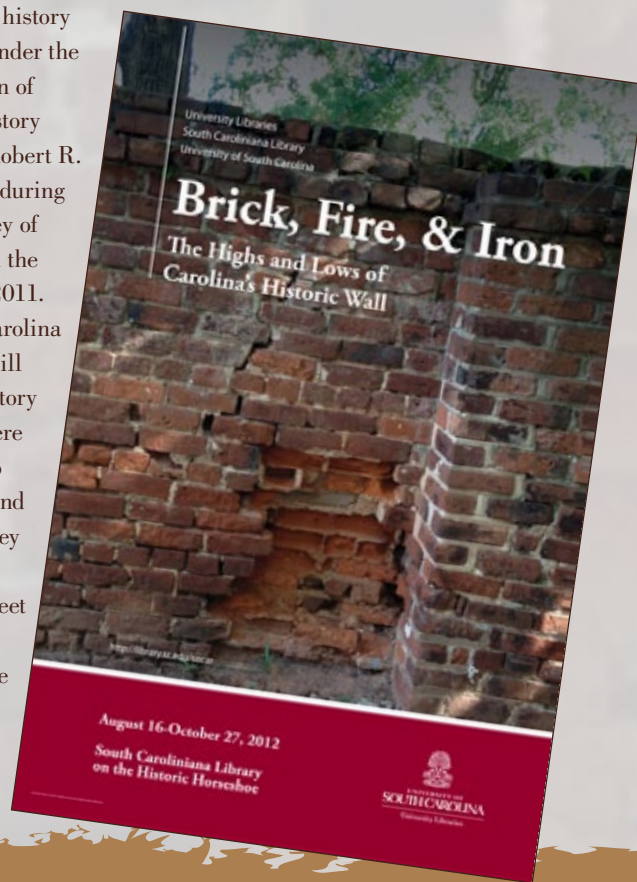
Proof that the wall is still remembered was shown in a detailed exhibit “Bricks, Fire, & Iron: The Highs and Lows of Carolina’s Historic Horseshoe Wall,” which was on display in the South Caroliniana Library’s Lumpkin Foyer in the fall of 2012. The exhibit was based, in part, on a study of the wall done by graduates of the Public History Program: Elizabeth Oswald, Jennifer Betsworth and JoAnn Zeise. When they were students, they conducted the survey as part of their public history course work, noting damage, repairs, and materials used in areas of the structure that had been rebuilt.

“REACH OUT AND TOUCH HISTORY”

Among findings of this, the first ever structural assessment of the wall, were the discovery of damaged bricks in nearly every section; the use of Portland cement for repairs, which caused stress on the historic bricks; plant roots growing into the bricks and mortar; nails and other intrusions, particularly on Sumter and Greene streets where generations of students had used the wall as a bulletin board; and other changes to accommodate wires and pipes.

Together, the study and exhibit rekindled an awareness of the

structure and will serve as guides to its restoration. “I’m pleased the exhibit and study are getting some attention,” said University Archivist Elizabeth West, who created the exhibit and worked with the public history students under the supervision of Public History Director Robert R. Weyeneth during their survey of the wall in the spring of 2011. “I hope Carolina students will realize history is right there for them to reach out and touch as they walk up Greene Street and other parts of the campus,” West added.



The University of South Carolina Horseshoe: Heart of the Campus

Interested in learning more about the history of USC’s Horseshoe? Visit the South Caroliniana Library and pick up a free copy of the booklet *The University of South Carolina Horseshoe: Heart of the Campus* written by Katherine Thompson Allen and edited by University Archivist Elizabeth Cassidy West.

The booklet outlines the structural history of the Horseshoe, the University’s oldest and most iconic space. Accompanied by images from University Archives collections, the text highlights the construction boom during the antebellum period, the campus wall, the Reconstruction University of the 1870s, and the extensive Horseshoe renovation

project of the 1970s. Although the majority of the structures discussed in the booklet remain intact, the booklet also brings attention to the razed outbuildings where African slaves lived and worked.

The booklet is an adaptation of a 2011 exhibit at the South Caroliniana Library entitled “The Horseshoe: Heart of the Campus.”

THEN AND NOW

Originally built as a way of keeping unruly students of South Carolina College from sneaking off campus to frequent taverns and other businesses of ill repute, the 6-foot, 9-inch high wall encompassed an area bounded by Sumter, Greene, Bull, and Pendleton Streets. It never was effective in keeping students on the campus. However, in February 1865 during the Civil War when Columbia burned during the occupation of the city by Union forces, the wall helped protect the campus from the conflagration and “never rendered finer service,” wrote the late Daniel W. Hollis in his two-volume history of the University.

According to West, the wall was significantly altered through the ensuing years and at other times was abused or ignored as the urban campus grew and the college underwent numerous periods of significant change.

Others on campus who took an interest in the study were Ben Coonrod, a former member of the Horseshoe Advisory Committee who recently retired, Tom Quasney, Director of University Facilities, and University Architect Derek Gruner, who “were a great help and great advocates for the wall,” West said.

As a result of the discovery of factors that could contribute to the wall’s future deterioration, the University’s five-year plan includes \$1.5 million over four years for preservation of the Horseshoe wall,



University Archivist Elizabeth West (left) and Public History Program graduates JoAnn Zeise and Jennifer Betsworth examine the Horseshoe wall that has been standing for 176 years. (Photo by Michael Brown)

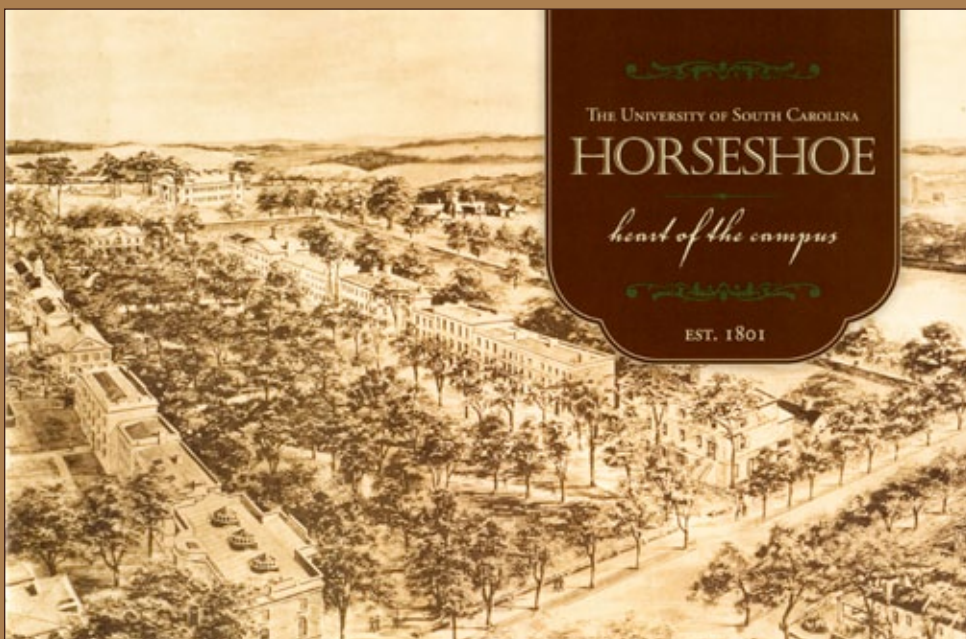
beginning in fiscal year 2013–2014. The maintenance plan under development will incorporate historically appropriate materials and repair methods that are essential to the wall’s future well-being, according to West.

“I’m really happy that the libraries and units like University Facilities can work with the academic units—in this case, the Public History Program—not only to produce a product that benefits students’ academic and professional development, but which also makes a lasting impact on the University itself,” West said. “The completed survey

of the wall is now part of the University’s permanent records. It was used to raise awareness by an administrative unit of what needed to be done to maintain the campus, and it’s been a great example of wide-ranging connections in different parts of the University from which everyone can benefit.”

The Horseshoe exhibit is now available for travel to different venues in the state.

— Marshall Swanson is a staff writer for University Creative Services for which this article was originally written.



*Illustration:
[Cover of The University of
South Carolina Horseshoe:
Heart of the Campus]*

THE SOUTH CAROLINIANA LIBRARY NEEDS YOU

University South Caroliniana Society members have always been generous to the library in the donation of both materials and funding. Library staff have recently identified several items in the collection that need conservation/restoration and Society members are invited to assist with these efforts as well. Some of these projects are listed below.

John Caldwell Calhoun Papers: Detailing the career of one of South Carolina's most important early political figures, this collection contains more than 3,000 items spanning the years 1743-1979. (Conservation treatment - \$7,500; student labor - \$6,400) Contact Director of the Library, Henry Fulmer at 803-777-5746.

South Carolina College Collection: Containing correspondence, student essays, and other documents from the 19th century, this collection details the history of faculty, students, and academics and includes materials relating to the use of the campus as a Civil War hospital and the Reconstruction University. (Conservation treatment - \$5,000; Student labor - \$4,000) Contact University Archivist Elizabeth West at 803-777-5158.

Fairfield County Map: This early map provides a detailed view of Fairfield County, South Carolina, ca. 1875. (Conservation treatment - \$800) Contact Curator of Published Materials Fritz Hamer at 803-777-1345.

Willie Earle Lynching Oral History Project: These sound recordings and field notes relate to the 1947 lynching of Willie Earle, the last recorded in South Carolina and one of the last in the South. (Conservation treatment - \$2,420) Contact Oral Historian Andrea L'Hommiedieu at 803-777-3133.

Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Herbemont Companion Portraits: Lawyer, Consul to Genoa, and Clerk of the South Carolina Court of Appeals, Herbemont and his wife, Martha Davis Bay, commissioned these pastel paintings during the 1850s, perhaps while residing in Italy. The artist is unknown. (Frame restoration - \$6,000; Portrait conservation - \$4,000) Contact Curator of Visual Materials Beth Bilderback at 803-777-7090.

The projects listed above represent just a few of the many items in the collections which need preservation and conservation. Society members are invited to contact library staff members to discuss projects which reflect their personal interests. Donors of \$1,000 or more in a calendar year are recognized through the University Libraries' Ex Libris Society. For further information about donation of library materials or funding, please contact the Libraries' Senior Director of Development Carol Benfield at benfield@mialbox.sc.edu or 803-777-1278.

For more information about the library and its collections, please see <http://library.sc.edu/socar/>



*The Board of Governors of
The South Carolina Academy of Authors
in partnership with
The University of South Carolina
extends to you a cordial invitation to join them for the*

2013 Induction Ceremony and Reception

Honoring






Jack Bass

Nikky Finney

Terrance Hayes

Eugene Robinson

April 27, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.
Ernest F. Hollings Special Collections Library ~ Program Room
(enter through main entrance of Thomas Cooper Library)
1322 Greene Street, Columbia, S.C.

Cost per person: \$35.00. Attendance is limited to the first 100 paid registrants. To make reservations, tear off the bottom portion of this form and mail, with a check payable to SCAA to Henry Fulmer, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC 29208. For further information, visit www.sccademyofauthors.org or contact Valinda W. Littlefield at littlevw@mailbox.sc.edu or 803-777-7248.

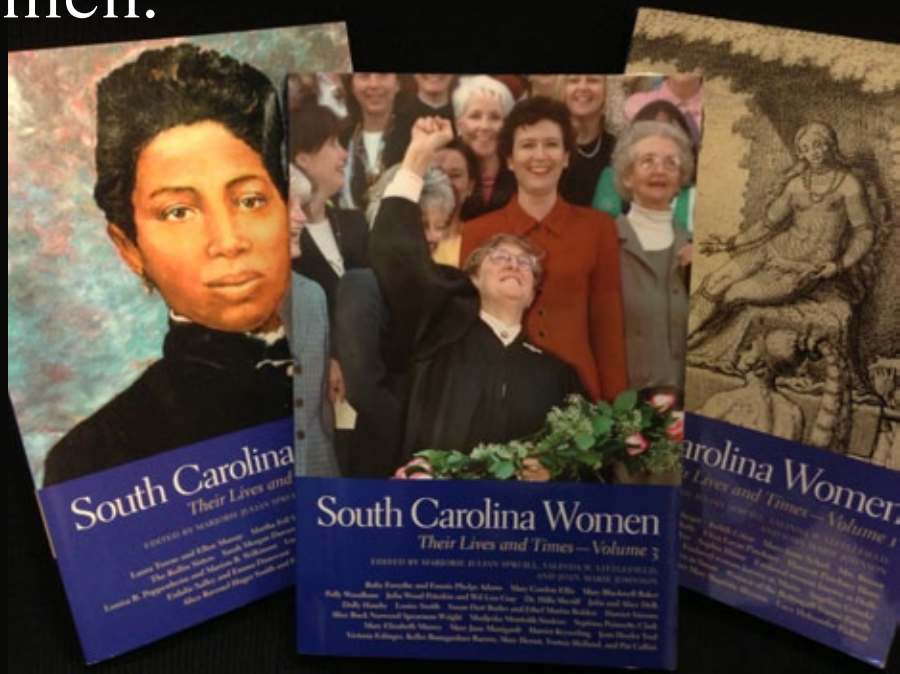
This project is funded in part by the South Carolina Arts Commission which receives support from the National Endowment for the Arts.



South Carolina Women: *Their Lives and Times*

A book-signing for the third and final volume of *South Carolina Women: Their Lives and Times* was held at the Hollings Library on December 6, 2012. The volume was edited by USC professors Marjorie J. Spruill and Valinda W. Littlefield, and by Joan Marie Johnson of Northeastern Illinois University. The series was published by the University of Georgia Press.

The South Caroliniana Library was one of the sponsors of the event and was the site where much of the research for the volume was conducted.



ANNUAL BOOK-SIGNING FOR SOUTH CAROLINA AUTHORS HELD IN DECEMBER



Shown, left to right, are the following South Carolina authors who were honored at a holiday book-signing and reception held at the South Caroliniana Library on December 6, 2012: Roy Talbert, Jack Roper, Alex Moore, Janna McMahan, Maureen Lee, Jim Harrison, Meggan Farish, and Dianne Johnson. The event is sponsored annually by the South Caroliniana Library, the University South Caroliniana Society, and the University of South Carolina Press.

SOUTH CAROLINIANA LIBRARY'S ORAL HISTORIAN ANDREA L'HOMMEDIU RECOGNIZED BY ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

BY KATHY DOWELL

Andrea L'Hommedieu, oral historian at the South Caroliniana Library, was recently recognized by the Oral History Association (OHA) as director of the George J. Mitchell Oral History Project at Bowdoin College which was named the Elizabeth B. Mason Major Project Award winner for 2012.

L'Hommedieu accepted the award at the OHA conference held in October 2012 in Cleveland, Oh.

According to the OHA Website, "The award recognizes projects of noteworthy scholarly and social value that also advance both the understanding of an important historical subject and the practice of oral history."

The award letter says, "The committee was impressed by the project's design, the conscious adherence to OHA's General Principles and Best Practices, the attention given to accessibility and preservation of the materials, the time devoted to the design and infrastructure of the website, and the manner in which the library collaborated and partnered with Senator Mitchell."

This is L'Hommedieu's second award-winning project. She also directed the Muskie Oral History Project at Bates College which won the award in 2008.

— Kathy Dowell is a communications associate with the University Libraries.



Andrea L'Hommedieu received a congratulatory bouquet on winning the Elizabeth B. Mason Award. (Photo by Elizabeth West)



Theaters of CARLISLE FLOYD

BY THOMAS HOLLIDAY

BROWN

CRADLES

Carlisle Sessions Floyd entered life in the South Carolina village of Latta in the wee hours of the sweltering night of June 11, 1926. In 1927, the family grew by one final child, Ermine, who, like her older brother, also manifested musical gifts.

Their young bank teller father, also C.S. Floyd, but called “Jack” by intimates, and his even younger bride, Ida Fenegan—whose genes contained the germs of Carlisle’s music and words—would soon embark upon the odyssey dictated by Jack’s eventual calling as a Methodist minister. Every four or five years, they moved for education and church postings through a network of South Carolina towns including Spartanburg, McClellanville, Jordan, Bethune, North, and Holly Hill.

Ida Floyd had studied piano at Coker College and Carlisle found himself naturally drawn to her playing of light classics at home. At the age of three, he expressed an ardent wish to emulate his mother's keyboard magic. Many years later, the composer acknowledged that his youthful attention span made him an abominable pupil.

For a time the family lived in Jordan, a not-so-wide place in the road south of Manning which is not shown on many modern maps. Carlisle and Ermine studied in a one-room school, and lived in a raw-board parsonage without the amenities of window glass or

screens. The yard was hard-packed dirt, needing sweeping rather than mowing. At most of their charges, the Floyds had substantial kitchen gardens and chickens.

Never the stereotypical “conservatory baby,” Carlisle’s serious interest in music took root in Bethune in the late 1930s and continued during his high school years in North. In both towns, he plied his eventual craft by acting and singing in school productions. Meanwhile, his father’s ministerial activities, including terrifying rounds of summer revival meetings, provided inspiration for such future works as *Susannah*.

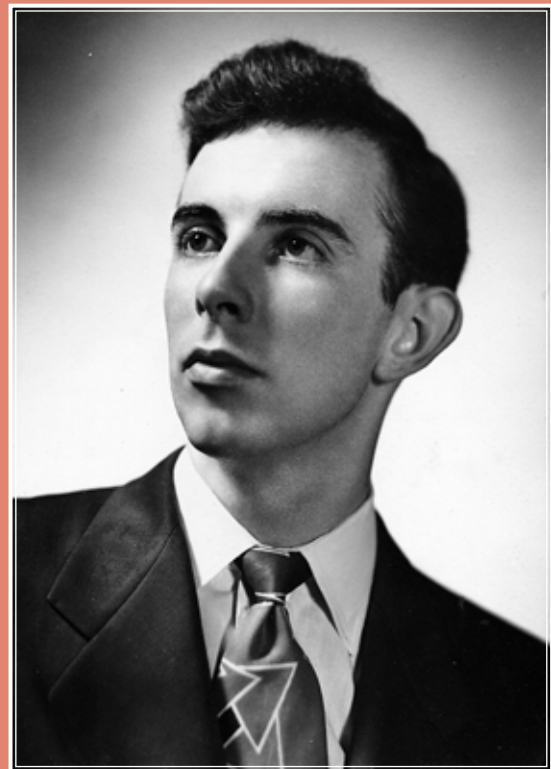
Just seventeen in the fall of 1943, Carlisle began higher education at Converse College in Spartanburg under the mentorship—at this point only on the keyboard—of American composer, pianist, writer and pedagogue Ernst Bacon. For a music theory class, he produced his first composition, a theme and variations for piano and string quartet. He honed his formidable literary skills under the tutelage of Converse’s Elizabeth Bearden who published his poetry, fiction and essays in various college literary journals. The following year, Ermine joined her brother in Spartanburg as a voice major.

When Ernst Bacon moved to a more powerful position with Syracuse University in 1945, Carlisle followed him to Yankeeland.

Left, opposite page: Oil portrait of Carlisle Floyd as a young man, signed “Brown” (From the South Caroliniana Library Carlisle Floyd Collection)



Carlisle and Ermine Floyd, ca. 1932 (Courtesy of Quarles Studio, Florence, S.C.)



Carlisle Floyd in Tallahassee, Fla. ca. 1944 (Courtesy of L'Avant Studios, Tallahassee, Fla.)

CARLISLE FLOYD

Here Carlisle cultivated (and was cultivated by) a fluid group of artists, actors and other serious musicians, and, with the slender means at his undergraduate disposal, he began to make addictive forays into New York's theater world.

Here he also learned to smoke and drink, acquisitions he wisely delayed sharing with his family.

MANHOOD


Floyd had yet to take a music composition lesson from anyone. With his figurative pockets holding a Bachelor's degree from Syracuse alongside a handful of songs, choral pieces, short stories, poems and plays, Floyd began to cast about for full-time work in years when returning GI's had already flooded the job market. An interview at Florida State University in Tallahassee, led to a modest opportunity, but continued employment depended upon his turning twenty-one, and receiving a Master's degree. In June 1947, just days after that momentous birthday, Floyd began as a lowly assistant instructor in piano and music theory at FSU's summer session. He lived in a succession of rented rooms and taught first in a re-

purposed church and then in former military barracks which were neither heated in winter nor cooled in summer. Despite his dislike of music theory at Syracuse, he now devoured library texts to stay a chapter or two ahead of his students, many older than he.

An inner muse kept spurring Floyd to compose: piano pieces, a chamber work for cello and piano, and more songs. He dated a succession of charming actresses and dancers, continued acting in college and community theaters, and accompanied recitals for faculty colleagues and university choral ensembles.


Fall 1948 found Floyd back in Syracuse doing graduate work in piano and writing more songs. Ernst Bacon, prolific in all genres but best known today as a composer of graceful vocal music (including opera), had admired Floyd's creative writing skills since their days together at Converse College. Bacon reminded Floyd that he needed a final project in lieu of a thesis, and encouraged him to write both the music and libretto for an opera. Modulating his initial suspicion of the larger-than-life medium of opera and taking his first (and only) short sequence of lessons in musical composition with Bacon, Floyd adapted one of his Converse stories, a star-crossed lovers' tale set in

For Carlisle's scrap-book - Love Phyllis Curtin




phyllis curtin
soprano
new york city opera


C.F. do another one soon - Mack Harrell



mack harrell
baritone
metropolitan opera



lynn e. orr
director



carlisle floyd
composer-librettist

the service league of tallahassee
presents

phyllis curtin mack harrell

in the world premiere of
carlisle floyd's
susannah

a new musical drama in
two acts and ten scenes
text and music by carlisle floyd
with the

state symphony of florida
karl kuersteiner, conductor

february 24, 1955 8:15 p. m.
westcott auditorium
florida state university

staged by lynn e. orr
settings by franklin adams
lighting by lynn e. orr
costumes by catherine murphy
musical direction _____ carlisle floyd
choral direction _____ wiley l. housewright
orchestra under direction of karl kuersteiner

Program for the world premiere of *Susannah* at FSU on February 24, 1955

Florida State University
School of Music and Department of Speech
present
**AN EVENING OF
EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE**
May 10, 11, 12, 1950 8:15 P.M.
Augusta Conradi Theatre

I.
THE ROMANCE of the WILLOW PATTERN
A one-act tragi-comedy in seven fragments
by

Ethel Beekman Van Der Ver
Directed by
Jane Hardacre

Cast in order of appearance

Chang	Charles High
Koon-See	Barbara Hudnall
Incense Burner	Bonnie Wilhelm
Property-man	Pat Richardson
Mandarin	Wendell Taylor

II.
SLOW DUSK
A music play in one act
by

Carlisle Floyd
Directed by
Dramatic Supervision
Musical Direction
Setting and Lights
Production Manager

Nellie-Bond Dickinson
George McCalmon
Mr. Floyd
Charles Reimer
Roslyn Clary

CAST *

Sadie	Paula Bailey, Joan Doye
Sue, her aunt	Barbara Masford, Velma Youmans
Jess, her brother	James Rolston, David Lowe
Mical	Walter James

Setting: The sandhill section of the Carolinas. The lowering of lights indicates a passing of time from late afternoon to early evening.

Note: The "Truelights" and "Disciples" are small religious sects found in the locale of the play.

Piano accompaniment by Mr. Floyd.
* The double cast will perform on alternate nights.

"An Evening of Experimental Theatre" presented at FSU in May 1950 included Carlisle Floyd's *Slow Dusk*. (From the South Caroliniana Library Carlisle Floyd Collection)



Phyllis Curtin and Mack Harrell in the February 24, 1955 production of *Susannah* at FSU
(Courtesy of the College of Music at FSU)

South Carolina's Sandhill country called "A Lengthening Shadow." Bacon further eased the project's birth by having the university's opera workshop produce the result: *Slow Dusk*, an opera in one act with piano accompaniment. The work created a local sensation in May 1949 and peers and mentors began to consider Floyd to be Puccini's American incarnation.

Back in Tallahassee for the 1949 summer session, the accredited and tenure-bound Floyd encountered a new mentor, virtuoso pianist and teacher Sidney Foster, with whom he rethought and reshaped his entire technical approach to the keyboard. The journey, while ultimately rewarding, proved anything but smooth. Nevertheless, Floyd adapted Foster's "drop-touch" for generations of his own students.

Of even greater significance to his composing career, was Floyd's collaboration with FSU's modern dance program on five choreographic works. One of these, *Theme and Variations* (1951), performed many times in different guises, became his first orchestrated music. Romantic interest in dancers and actresses

also led him to compose incidental music for the FSU theater department's production of Euripides' *Iphigenia Among the Taurians* (1950) and to act in the Tallahassee Little Theatre's mounting of Molnar's *The Guardsman*.

Slow Dusk had already been given an in-house performance at Columbia University toward the end of 1949; now Floyd lost no time in presenting the work to his peers and students at FSU in May 1950. Its success prompted him to broaden his operatic horizons with libretto and music—again with piano accompaniment—for a second musical drama, *Fugitives*. Like its predecessor, it was based on a Converse piece, his one-act play *Too Dear, the Price*. He described the result, performed just twice at FSU in April 1951, as "the biggest mystery in my life...totally interior, talky, violating every rule of what you should put on the opera stage." He buried the score in his remotest drawer, never revising or reviving it, or even showing it to his eventual publisher.

CARLISLE FLOYD

"THE OLD GIRL" AND OVERNIGHT FAME

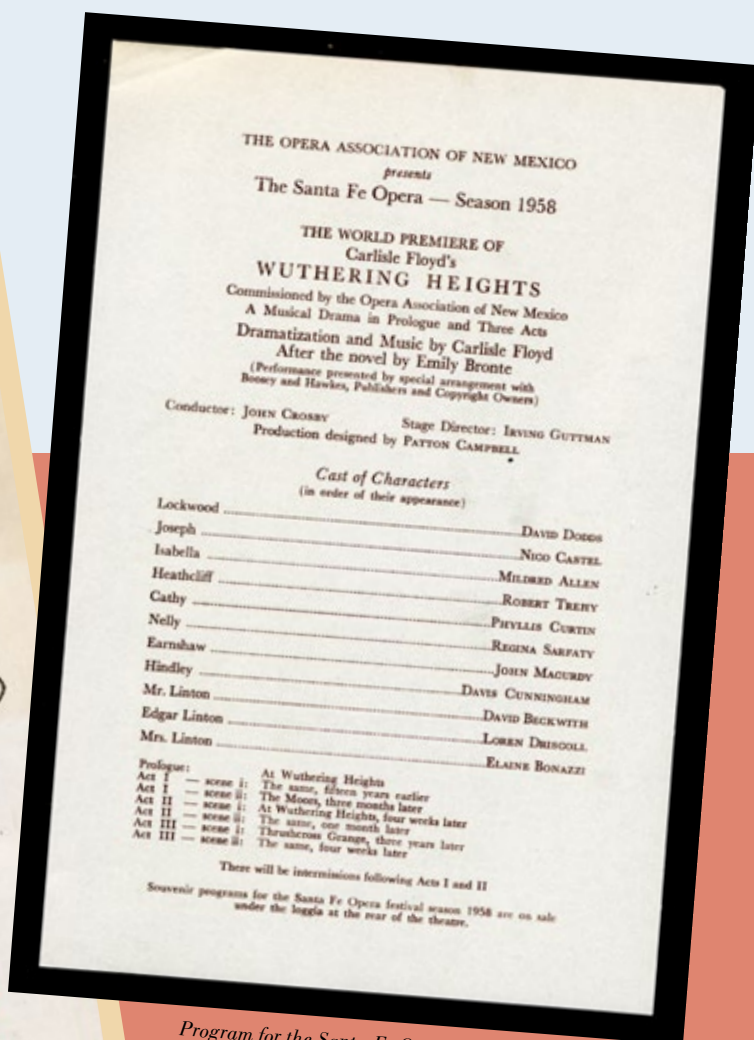
Floyd's individual style had begun to gel: music for the human voice most stirred his creativity, with long-limbed melodies that also inhabited his instrumental music. His most personal touch took the form of harmonic "stacking" of superimposed tonalities at the intervals of the fourth and fifth. In the spring of 1952, he read the Mannes College of Music's announcement of a competition for new operas (with a guarantee of a premiere performance in New York City), and he quickly dove into preparations for a third opera. His background in a Southern ministerial family had left an imprint of Biblical subjects, and he chose the Apocryphal story of Susanna and the elders. At first a friend agreed to write the libretto but Floyd needed to strike while the iron glowed. He again wrote his own text,

and gave the ancient tale of innocence betrayed, social ostracism, and pressure to conform (at the height of the contemporary figurative witch hunts spearheaded by Senator Joseph McCarthy) a Southern setting, during a church revival week. He personalized the female protagonist's name by adding an "h" – *Susannah* – and called it a musical drama in two acts.

Although occupied with lessons and other class teaching, his own and others' recitals, and new modern dance works, Floyd completed the text and piano/vocal score of his new opera by May 1954 and sent what he called his "old girl" off to New York. Mannes decided to award no prize that year, but singled *Susannah* out for honorable mention. Tamping down his disappointment, Floyd completed the orchestration and secured his Dean's agreement to



Program for Phyllis Curtin's Town Hall recital on February 24, 1957, featuring the premiere performance of "The Dream" from *Wuthering Heights* (From the South Caroliniana Library Carlisle Floyd Collection)



Program for the Santa Fe Opera production of *Wuthering Heights* in 1958 (From the South Caroliniana Library Carlisle Floyd Collection)

premiere the opera in Tallahassee. Soon he came to see that the two principal roles surpassed the abilities of any available FSU music students or faculty and he was empowered to audition and contract professionals for the roles of Susannah and the revivalist Olin Blitch. Having spent one summer studying with Czech-American pianist Rudolf Firkušný at the Aspen Institute in Colorado, Floyd now learned of the presence there of two ideal interpreters for his opera, soprano Phyllis Curtin and baritone Mack Harrell. When Floyd returned to Aspen that August, the stars drew into alignment: both singers had FSU's production weeks free, and both agreed to perform for vastly smaller-than-usual fees.

Susannah's premiere on February 24, 1955, swept Floyd into a larger world than any of which he had dreamt. Curtin and Harrell became his New York ambassadors and the opera was accepted for production at New York City Opera. Opening night was on September 27, 1956, with the company's new general director, Erich Leinsdorf, conducting. When contract negotiations with Harrell stalled, American bass-baritone Norman Treigle was cast as Blitch and Floyd gained another great advocate for the remainder of the singer's all-too-brief life. Critics outdid themselves in praise for this exciting new voice in American musical theater and *Susannah* won the Music Critic Circle's award for best new opera for 1956.

Phyllis Curtin used her connections to interest an agent/publisher for Floyd, Robert Holton, of the prestigious firm of Boosey and Hawkes, and plans were made to put *Susannah* into print as soon as possible. The soprano also asked Floyd for a concert aria for her upcoming Town Hall recital. Floyd responded with a monologue from *Wuthering Heights*. This led movers and shakers in the music

world to wonder about the rest of the opera (which did not then exist, except perhaps in Curtin's hopeful imagination). To thank Harrell for his support, Floyd wrote an ambitious song cycle called *Pilgrimage* which was based on serious religious texts.

"GALLEY YEARS"

Italian composer Giuseppe Verdi, one of Floyd's operatic idols, referred to the period of his relentless production of ten operas in the six years (between 1844 and 1850) while he was learning the commonplaces and ephemera of his craft as his "Galley Years." The decade between 1962 and 1972 gave Floyd a similar education as he strove with almost eerie diligence to educate others while creating an international artistic legacy of five operas and various nontheatrical works.

As the houseguest of Phyllis Curtin and her husband photographer, Eugene Cook, Floyd harvested the fruits of New York's cultural world with a respite from academic duties. Interviewers for national periodicals like *Time* began to marvel at his sudden ascent from Southern origins. Floyd could not help feeling that it was just a matter of time before someone tapped him on the shoulder to say, "Son, why don't you go on home, you don't have what we're looking for."

At Boosey and Hawkes, Robert Holton worked his net of opera world connections to secure a commission from the Santa Fe Opera for the summer of 1958: a complete and grand *Wuthering Heights* in an idiom that consciously superseded *Susannah's* folk-like atmosphere.

Floyd married the intellectually brilliant Kay Reeder late in 1957 and resumed full-time teaching at FSU in fall 1958,



Carlisle Floyd and Kay Reeder's wedding portrait taken in 1957 shows, left to right, J.W. Matheny, Ermine Floyd, Martha Matheny, Ida Floyd, the Rev. C.S. Floyd Sr., Carlisle Floyd, Kay Reeder, and Marguerite Reeder. (Courtesy Blackmon Studios, Florence, S.C.)

CARLISLE FLOYD



This image of Carlisle Floyd was done in 1983 by Patricia Windrow who recalls that "Mr. Floyd was amused and pleased with the 'irreverent' caricature I did of him." (Courtesy of the artist)

adding composition to his class load. *Slow Dusk* and *Susannah* gained exposure and popularity through nationwide productions and, in 1959, the latter's first European production took place in Oberhausen, Germany. Floyd composed an ambitious piano sonata at the behest of his Aspen teacher Rudolf Firkušný and wrote a song cycle titled *The Mystery*, for Phyllis Curtin via a Ford Foundation commission. The U.S. Junior Chamber of Commerce (Jaycees) honored Floyd as one of the Ten Outstanding Young Men of the Nation for 1959.

Meanwhile, the New York City Opera had alternately thrived and struggled under the artistic directorship of its conductor Julius Rudel, an ardent Floyd supporter. With massive underwriting by the Ford Foundation, Rudel presented seasons of all-American opera including multiple new productions of *Susannah*. The company took its definitive *Susannah*, under the direction of the great Frank Corsaro, to the Brussels World's Fair in the summer of 1958 and gave the New York premiere of *Wuthering Heights* (once Floyd rewrote and re-composed most of the opera's third act) in April 1959. Most critics puzzled over Floyd's new compositional manner, driving home the lesson that a second New York debut came with risks attached.

Floyd's bride Kay,—an English major whose knowledge of literature exceeded Floyd's own—helped him see that it was a little early in the game for towel-tossing. Thanks to the juggernaut of Rudel and the Ford Foundation, Floyd soon began work on the

grand tapestry of another original story, *The Passion of Jonathan Wade*, set in South Carolina's troubled Reconstruction years. Unfortunately, contemporary historical events—the heightening of racial tensions over integration, and the beginning of America's descent into the maelstrom of Southeast Asia—as well as the speed at which Floyd found himself forced to work while teaching a heavy load of pianists and composers, rendered the new work's path anything but smooth. A commission from Brown University Glee Club prompted his first exclusively choral work in years, a setting of James Auslander's *Death Came Knocking*. Another commission, this one from New York's Schola Cantorum motivated his arrangement of *Pilgrimage* for chorus and baritone soloist. Meanwhile, the growing renown and popularity of Floyd's works spurred Boosey and Hawkes to ask the composer to extract concert suites from *Susannah* and *Wuthering Heights*.

Further career expansion (and much-needed income) came from Floyd's burgeoning fame as the stage director of his own works, beginning with *Susannah* in New Orleans in March 1962.

The New York City Opera's *Jonathan Wade* rehearsal weeks generated boundless enthusiasm in the company. The opening night audience on October 11, 1962, applauded Floyd amply, but the next day's critical shellacking convinced him that his worst fears of inadequacy were coming true. The opera was performed just once more that season before being permanently shelved. Floyd returned to Tallahassee chastened but undefeated, still pulling at his galley's oars.

Poster for the production of *Susannah* at the University of Kansas Theatre in 1985
(From the South Caroliniana Library Carlisle Floyd Collection)



CARLISLE FLOYD

Coming months brought a contract from North Carolina's Tercentenary Commission for a one-act opera based on that state's colonial history; *The Sojourner and Mollie Sinclair*, a lighthearted glimpse into the lives and loves of Scottish settlers amid the storm clouds of America's separation from Great Britain, premiered in Raleigh on December 2, 1963. Another single-act work, *Markheim*, that Floyd considered a companion piece, grew from Norman Treigle's machinations with his hometown company, the New Orleans Opera Association. The opera, based on Robert Louis Stevenson's novella of murder and the macabre, successfully premiered on March 31, 1966, starring Treigle.

FULL STRIDE

The mid-1960s brought Floyd new high-water marks. The Metropolitan Opera's new National Company inaugurated its first season with a touring production of Floyd's "old girl," *Susannah*, in Indianapolis on September 20, 1965. Performances followed in twenty-five other American cities, as well as in Guadalajara, Mexico. The following year, the Juilliard School's Repertory Project for young musicians

commissioned Floyd to compose four choral pieces and Boosey and Hawkes published two volumes of his piano etudes, *Episodes*.

Floyd's greatest new challenge arose with a project he compares to the dismantling and reconstruction of his piano technique with Sidney Foster: the operatic adaptation of John Steinbeck's 1937 novella *Of Mice and Men*. In the planning stages for two years, the opera's projected premiere date was fall 1966 at the San Francisco Opera. By April of that year, Floyd had completed his libretto (with Steinbeck's approval) and the music for Act One, but a trip to San Francisco to "audition" the work dashed his hopes when the company demanded that he rewrite both text and music and moved the premiere ahead to August 1967. By the end of summer 1966, Floyd had completed both text and music with relative ease, but as always, he viewed as suspect anything accomplished without large helpings of time and grief. He reflected on his Steinbeckian struggles while completing the Juilliard commissions and a new orchestra piece, *Introduction, Aria and Dance*, for the New Orleans Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra.

When Floyd played his revised *Of Mice and Men* for the San



Score for *Susannah* (From the South Caroliniana Library Carlisle Floyd Collection)



Score for *Slow Dusk* (From the South Caroliniana Library Carlisle Floyd Collection)

Francisco Opera, the company reneged on its premiere rights. Floyd's publisher/agent Robert Holton canvassed other companies, including the New York City Opera, without securing a commitment. Toward the end of summer 1967, Floyd assembled a group of his most trusted advisers including his wife, Kay. All agreed that the work was overlong, too slavishly faithful to the letter of Steinbeck's original, and, worst of all, tedious.

Floyd overcame devastation through sheer determination, formulating a new technique for focusing an opera libretto: twenty-five words or fewer to encapsulate the principal action, or "theme." For *Of Mice and Men*, he only needed twenty-three words: "George's frantic efforts to keep Lennie out of trouble, until he can get him away from society, in a home of their own." This device got Floyd back on track as he rewrote and re-composed the entire piece. Another burst of synchronicity sped both process and product: American opera made a giant leap forward with the establishment of a central administrative and sponsoring organization, Opera America, in the first weeks of 1970. The entity's first annual meeting would be held in Seattle that January, and Glynn Ross, Seattle Opera's enterprising general director, seized the opportunity to give *Of Mice and Men* its tortuously-delayed world premiere on January 22, 1970. The press waxed euphoric,

declaring Floyd's latest as the best American opera in many years. It has remained, after *Susannah*, his most often-performed work.

Musical America named Floyd its Musician of the Month for February 1970. He returned from Seattle with two new commissions in hand: an orchestral overture, *In Celebration*, for South Carolina's Tricentennial in November 1970 and an ambitious choral work with theatrical elements, *The Martyr*, for the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music for 1972. Of even greater significance, Floyd's triumph with *Of Mice and Men* brought him into contact with Roger Stevens, Broadway producer and chairman of the not-yet-opened Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., and into discussions about a new opera commission. After Stevens formed the National Opera Institute, he appointed Julius Rudel chairman. In coming years, Floyd served on boards and panels of this and other national cultural organizations.

As *Of Mice and Men* productions sprouted like grain across America, Floyd took an intervening commission from the Jacksonville [Fla.] Symphony, for a vehicle crafted to honor his precious colleague Phyllis Curtin. It was *Flower and Hawk*, a one-act monodrama based on the volatile history of Eleanor of Aquitaine, her estranged husband, Henry II Plantagenet, and their children. Floyd finished the work



Shown at the National Endowment for the Arts Opera Honors in 2008 are, left to right, Marc Scorca; NEA Chairman Dana Gioia; award winners Leontyne Price, Carlisle Floyd, and Richard Geddes; and George Walker. (Courtesy National Endowment for the Arts)

CARLISLE FLOYD



Shown at the presentation ceremony for the National Medal of Arts in 2004 are, left to right, President George W. Bush, Carlisle Floyd, and Laura Bush. (Courtesy National Endowment for the Arts)

between spells of teaching and directing. Performances of the new work scored a triumph at its premiere on May 16, 1972. It was a *tour de force* for Curtin and for subsequent generations of performers who proved up to its vocal and histrionic challenges.

SEA CHANGE

After a quarter-century at FSU, Floyd still had regular pay-based reminders of his initial hiring at the lowest possible level in the university's system. For a year, he and David Gockley, the enterprising director of the Houston Grand Opera, had been discussing an innovative program for young singers, pianist/coaches, directors, and composers. Shared by Houston Grand and the University of Houston, to whose faculty Floyd was appointed as an endowed chair, the Houston Opera Studio began in the fall of 1977. Floyd had moved from Tallahassee to begin teaching at UH the preceding year. He stayed for twenty more years, serving as mentor for a rising generation of such musical/theatrical talents as Mark Adamo, Jake Heggie and Craig Bohmler. He also served as unofficial composer-in-residence for the opera and affiliated Houston musical organizations. Gockley further rewarded Floyd's loyalty by forming consortia of performing organizations, guaranteeing that each of Floyd's next three operas, after their world premieres in Houston, would be as widely-seen as possible.

Roger Stevens graciously put the Kennedy Center project on hold while Floyd revisited a subject he had considered in the years immediately following *Susannah*: a tale of New England witch hunts based on Esther Forbes's novel *A Mirror for Witches* which Floyd titled *Bilby's Doll*, and which became Houston Grand Opera's offering for America's Bicentennial.

Experimenting with exotic new orchestral colors, Floyd created a heroine who, like *Susannah*, becomes a victim of innocence betrayed by the surrounding community's moral and ethical hysteria. Despite perplexing many at its premiere in February 1976, the work remains one of the composer's personal favorites.

Turning to his Kennedy Center subject, Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men*—another exploration of moral dilemmas—Floyd renamed his new opera for its protagonist, *Willie Stark*. Co-produced by the Houston Grand Opera and the Kennedy Center and filmed as part of the PBS *Great Performances* series, it gained theatrical stature through the direction of Broadway legend Hal Prince, and through workshops involving the new Opera Studio. Despite a barrage of harsh press notices, Floyd once again confounded his critics in this thoughtful synthesis of opera and musical theater, which premiered in Houston on April 24, 1981.

DARKNESS, RESURRECTION, VINDICATION

On the heels of *Willie Stark's* critical donnybrook, a punishing sequence of events in Floyd's personal life unfolded. His mother, Ida, passed away in South Carolina at the end of July 1981 and his agent, publisher and friend Robert Holton died in early 1985. These events, combined with sharp declines in the serious music division of his new publisher, Belwin-Mills, left Floyd bereft of champions. He entered a period of clinical depression that lasted for the better part of seven years. During this time period, his musical output amounted to a nonetheless-brilliant song cycle, *Citizen of Paradise* (1983), based on poems and letters of Emily Dickinson, as well as a short orchestral work, *Flourishes*, for the Houston Symphony's "fanfare project" (1987).

Floyd and friends circled their wagons. Beginning in 1987, he succeeded in negotiations to return to Boosey and Hawkes. Then, acting on advice and encouragement from Julius Rudel, David Gockley commissioned a revival of *The Passion of Jonathan Wade*. The creative spark returned as Floyd realized how greatly his musical language had grown and changed since *Susannah*. *Wade* had never ceased to engage him, and he plunged back into the Reconstruction era with a will, rewriting (hence re-composing) over seventy-five percent of his 1962 score. The premiere in Houston (January 1991) which the composer directed, and later productions that Gockley had organized, earned triumphs. Carlisle Floyd was back. At the same time, he subjected his beloved *Bilby's Doll* to thorough revisions, giving it new afterlives.

The ensuing decade brought sweeping change. The University of Houston and Houston Grand Opera dissolved their official connection in 1992 and the Floyds moved back and forth between Houston and Tallahassee. That same year, at Houston University's request, Floyd composed a song cycle, *Soul of Heaven*, on the charms of music itself to honor the Cullen family's patronage of the arts at UH. The American Choral Directors Association commissioned *A Time to Dance*, a textual/musical reflection on aspects of mortality, for its 1993 convention.

Productions of *Susannah* and *Of Mice and Men* were mounted around the world, most visibly at the Metropolitan Opera in April 1999.

A first commercial recording of *Susannah*, which appeared on the

Virgin Classics label, won a Grammy as 1994's best opera recording. VAI released its recordings of New Orleans' 1962 *Susannah*, North Carolina's 1963 *The Sojourner and Mollie Sinclair*, and New Orleans' 1966 *Markheim*. Recordings of Houston's productions of *Of Mice and Men* and *Cold Sassy Tree* would appear on the Albany label in 2003 and 2005 respectively.

Floyd and David Gockley had one more world premiere up their sleeves: *Cold Sassy Tree*, based on Olive Ann Burns's bittersweet novelized recollections of her own family in the rural South. The work's Houston premiere in April 2000 and later performances in San Diego, Charlotte, Omaha, Austin, Salt Lake City, Atlanta, and Amarillo, confirmed Floyd's status as the greatest living American opera composer and librettist.

In May 2001, Floyd was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters. In November of 2004, he received the National Medal of Arts from President George W. Bush, and at the end of October 2008, he became one of the first recipients of the National Endowment for the Arts' Opera Honors awards.

As Floyd's operas flourished worldwide, he and Kay made a permanent move back to Tallahassee in fall 2003, more than anything to be near congenial old friends.

HERE AND NOW

The final reckoning of Floyd's quantity of operatic output remains open to discussion. On the face of it, he has to date written text and music for twelve operas, yet *Wuthering Heights*, *Of Mice and Men* and *The Passion of Jonathan Wade* exist in radically different versions so that a more accurate tabulation might allow him between thirteen and fifteen.

As of summer 2012, Floyd at 86 was poised to outdo Claudio Monteverdi and Giuseppe Verdi, who respectively composed their final operas at ages 75 and 80. Floyd has completed a libretto based on Jeffrey Hatcher's funny, sexy, sweet, sad play *Compleat Female Stage Beauty*, more widely known through the 2004 film *Stage Beauty*, starring Billy Crudup and Claire Danes.

Floyd's first new music in twelve years cannot be far behind.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

It came as almost a relief when Henry Fulmer suggested that I write a piece for *Caroliniana Columns*. He and the staff of the South Caroliniana Library have done heroic service in my behalf. As holders of the Carlisle Floyd Papers, they have afforded me a major resource in the research for and development of my biography of Carlisle Floyd, the first and only of its subject.

This was the first time in the six-year process that the Library asked me for anything (save copying fees) so, compliments.

The realities of time and space have not allowed me to include in this article much personal detail about Carlisle Floyd—those aspects that differentiate a life from a career—but the book, *Falling Up: The Days and Nights of Carlisle Floyd, the Authorized Biography*, is much more inclusive. It is available from Syracuse University Press. Anyone interested in reading the complete story—which, if I do say so myself, is a ripping good one—is encouraged to order from Longleaf Services, either by calling 800/848-6224; or by e-mailing customerservice@longleafservices.org.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Thomas Holliday, with a background in instrumental and vocal music, has directed extensively in both Europe and the United States, including engagements with Germany's Hamburg State Opera, Austria's Stadttheater Klagenfurt, and the American Institute of Musical Studies. In the United States, he has directed for the Pennsylvania Opera Theater, Glimmerglass Opera Theater, Central City Opera, Shreveport Opera, Sacramento Opera, Baton Rouge Opera, Opera Colorado and Knoxville Opera. Holliday has also worked as a composer/arranger, opera librettist, translator, opera educator, and writer and lecturer on operatic subjects.

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Correspondence may be addressed to the editor at Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC 29208.

77TH ANNUAL MEETING

SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 2013

Speaker: DR. EDNA GREENE MEDFORD,
Chair of the Department of History,
Howard University

Topic: "The Emancipation Proclamation" to
celebrate the 150th anniversary of this event

UPCOMING EXHIBITS

FEBRUARY 6 - APRIL 6

"Carlisle Floyd: A New Voice for American Opera"

Mounted in conjunction with the Music Library

APRIL - MAY 2013

Exhibition featuring inductees into the South Carolina Academy of Authors: Jack Bass, Nikky Finney, Terance Hayes and Eugene Robinson

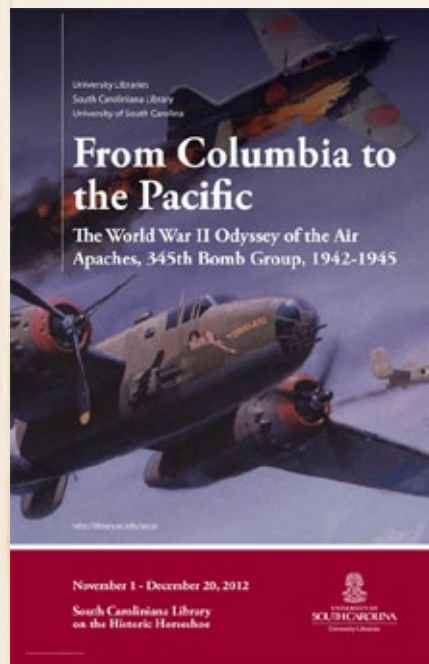
SUMMER 2013

Exhibition about the history of baseball in South Carolina

FALL 2013

50th anniversary of the desegregation of USC

50th anniversary of the assassination of John F. Kennedy



"From Columbia to the Pacific: The World War II Odyssey of the Air Apaches, 345th Bomb Group, 1942-1945" on display Nov. 1 - Dec. 20, 2012.

IN MEMORIAM

William Henry Jordan, long-time friend and donor to the South Caroliniana Library, passed away on December 18, 2012, in Greer, S.C.

A member of the prestigious Blue Jacket Choir at Great Lakes Naval Training Station, Jordan completed training at the Air Liaison School, Amphibious Training Base at Coronado, California, and ultimately served on the U.S.S. *Tolman* and the U.S.S. *Dunlin*. In later life he worked as a music educator and minister of music at West Market Street United Methodist Church in Greensboro, N.C.

Mr. Jordan, together with his wife, Dr. Rose Marie Cooper, donated a large collection of World War II letters from his family and friends to the Library. The collection was featured in the Spring 2012 issue of *Caroliniana Columns* and a book containing the letters will be published in the near future.

The University of South Carolina is an equal opportunity institution.

