

ABC NEWSLETTER

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1998-99 Officers and Committees

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1998-1999 ABC Calendar

- Oct. 28 William Wondriska, graphic designer, will speak on his early picture books and collecting interests at his graphic design studio, Farmington, CT, 7:00 P.M.
- Nov. 14–15 The Connecticut Children’s Book Fair, Bishop Center, University of CT, Storrs, 10:00 A.M.–5:00 P.M.
- Dec. Society of Illustrators, New York City.
“The Original Art” for children’s books, Society of Illustrators;
“Babar,” 50 years of studies by Laurent de Brunhoff, Mary Ryan Gallery; “Victorian Fairy Painting,” The Frick Collection.
- Jan. 13 Michelle Palmer, “Jewish Ghost Stories for Children,” Dodd Research Center, University of CT, Storrs, 1:30 P.M.
- Feb. 10 Gary Wait will speak on “Nineteenth Century Holidays” at the Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, 7:00 P.M.
- Mar. 13 A visit to the studio of author/illustrator Anita Riggio after a lunch in Wethersfield, CT.
- Apr. 27–29 Trip to visit the Lloyd Cotsen Collection of Children’s Books at Princeton University and to the Zimmerli Collection at Rutgers University.
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A Message from the President

Norman D. Stevens

Greetings to all members. In May of 1998 I was elected President of the Connecticut Chapter of the ABCs and, at the same time, my wife, Nora, was elected Vice-President. We are pleased to have been afforded this opportunity to help share and promote our enthusiasm for children's books. Both Nora and I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible. We also welcome your suggestions as to how to help develop and promote our work. In particular we encourage you to get other collectors to join us.

We hope, in conjunction with the Program Committee, to develop some new ventures. We are currently working with Thomas Wilsted, Director of the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center at the University of Connecticut on the co-sponsorship of a two or three day trip to the Cotsen Children's Library at Princeton University in the spring of 1999. That will probably include visits to one or more other collections or museums in the area.

We are already looking ahead to the spring of 2000! In May of this year, Nora and I had the good fortune to attend the Second Great Goose Egg Auction in Hanover, NH. Organized, in large part, by Trina Schart Hyman, and designed to benefit the Open Fields School, this was an auction of 89 goose eggs, and one emu egg, that had been decorated by a wide range of artists and authors including Lloyd Alexander, Malcolm Bird, Ashley Bryan, Barbara Cooney, Tomie dePaola, Leonard Everett Fisher, Gail Gibbons, Trina Schart Hyman, Steven Kellogg, Hilary Knight, Lois Lowry, Peter Sis, Cindy Szekeres, and Ed Young. It was great fun. We hope to plan a special ABCs trip to the bigger and better Third Great Goose Egg Auction in May of 2000.

Norman Stevens is former director of university libraries, the University of Connecticut.

1999 Antiquarian Book Fairs

Jan. 23–24	Fort Lauderdale Ant. Bk Fr	Fort Lauderdale, FL
Jan. 29–30	Books at the 25th Street Armory	New York, NY
Jan. 30–31	Paper & Collectible Show	Boxborough, MA
Feb. 7	Westchester Ant. Bk & Ephemera Fr	Tarrytown, NY
Feb. 12–14	CA International Ant. Bk Fr	San Francisco, CA
Feb 20–21	Ant. Bk, Print & Paper Fr	Pasadena, CA
Mar. 5–7	WA Ant. Bk Fr	Washington, D.C.
Mar. 19–20	MA and RI Ant. Bk Fr (MARIAB)	Boston, MA
Apr. 15–18	NY Ant. Bk Fr	New York, NY

Listings by Barbara and Rocco Verrilli

Exhibitions

Sept. 20– Oct. 23, 1998	“Beyond Once Upon a Time; A Celebration of Contemporary Children’s Book Illustrations,” Creative Arts Workshop, 80 Audubon St., New Haven, CT, curated by ABC members Roger Crossgrove and Bina Williams, 1:00–5:00 P.M.
Oct. 1– Dec. 31, 1998	“The Fine Art of Book Illustration: An Exhibition by Wendell Minor,” Homer Babbidge Library, University of Connecticut, Storrs.
Dec.	“Children’s Book Illustration,” The Society of Illustrators, New York City.
Jan 25– Mar. 15, 1999	“Down Under and Over Here: Children’s Book Illustration from Australia and America,” Dodd Research Center, University of Connecticut, Storrs.

Research in Children's Books at the American Antiquarian Society

Verne Mahoney

On September 16, 1998 the ABCs traveled to the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, MA. We had asked for the Reference Specialist for Children's Literature and Graphic Arts, Laura Wasowicz, to give a program on researching the difficult books in our collections. Little did we realize what a treat was in store for us.

Joanne Chaison, the Research Librarian of the American Antiquarian Society, introduced the program with a discussion of the projects and research topics that are in progress at the Society. We met in their magnificent Council Room and heard of the men who had the foresight to collect children's literature. The Mather family, the most prominent family in the Puritan period, had a library that was the first major purchase of Isaiah Thomas in 1812. We were surrounded by other rare collections of books, as well as furnishings with great historical significance. The atmosphere was a book lover's dream.

Laura Wasowicz introduced her program with a quote from Karl Zamboni: "To successfully catalogue any item, the very first thing is that the book should tell you everything it possibly can, and that should be your first source of information." We were then introduced to five children's books that had been a problem to catalogue and heard Laura's different approaches to each one, keeping Zamboni's advice in mind.

The book titles included *The Two Orphans, A Story for Little Children*, by Eliza M. French, published between 1849 and 1956. Research began by using the *Bibliography of American Directories Through 1860*, catalogued by Dorothy N. Spear at The American Antiquarian Society (AAS). This pointed to the city directories of New York City and New London, CT. Because it was very unusual for a woman to write using her own name at that time, *The American Genealogical-Biographical Index to American Genealogical, Biographical and Local History Materials*, contained in many volumes, was used to provide the genealogical background to trace Eliza M. French to the city of

New London where the book was printed. *The Hale Index to Headstones in the State of Connecticut* provided details of where she was buried and her full name, Eliza Wiley French Sage.

Other books that were presented included *Little Julia: A Memorial of Julia Breath of Oroomiah, Persia Who Died at the Age of Five Years*, by Her Mother; *Cinderella and the Little Glass Slipper*, published by McLoughlin Bros. (in their *Fairy Moonbeam* series published between 1863 and 1866); a second *Cinderella* published by McLoughlin (in their *Fairy Moonbeam* series published not before 1876?); and *A Child's History of England*, by Charles Dickens. *The McLoughlin Bros. Catalogue of Toy Books, Paper Dolls, ABC Blocks, Games, Valentines, &c. for 1875-'76* aided her in identifying the *Cinderella* books. Laura was able to trace the name of the Mother and Father in the first book also. Her diligence in researching these books was incredible. Listening to the stories of the ways in which she was able to find difficult information was both instructive and inspiring.

We were especially fortunate to receive an article written by Laura Wasowicz as Senior Cataloguer of the Antiquarian Society's American Children's Books Project in November 1990. The article was called "Notes on Research Tools: A Child's Garden of Reference Sources," and it stated that "Project records from the NEH-funded project in 1985 have been loaded into the Research Libraries Information Network data base (RLIN), which provides computerized access for subject, genre, publisher, printer, illustrator, engraver, physical characteristics (e.g., signed bindings), and the place of imprint, along with the traditional entries for author and title. . . . At present, 5,400 records catalogued in the first phase of the project are not available in RLIN. This number will grow as records are now being produced for the later juvenile fiction titles published through 1876. NEH funding has been approved for cataloguing the Society's McLoughlin picture books and pedagogical titles."

A list of research books recommended by Laura Wasowicz in the above article include the two standard bibliographies of early American children's books:

1. *Early American Children's Books*, by A. S. W. Rosenbach (New York: Kraus Reprint Corp., 1966).
2. *Bibliography of American Children's Books Printed Prior to 1821*, by d'Alte A. Welch (Worcester, MA: American Antiquarian Society, 1972)

Catalogues of three major institutional collections and basic information about institutions with smaller, more specialized collections of juvenile literature:

1. *Children's Books in the Rare Book Division of the Library of Congress* (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1975)
2. *Index to the Baldwin Library of Books in English Before 1900, Primarily for Children* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1981)
3. *Osborne Collection of Early Children's Books* (Toronto Public Library, vol. I, 1958; vol. 2, 1968)
4. *Special Collections in Children's Literature* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1982)

Pedagogical literature "to give the researcher a fuller picture of societal perceptions and expectations of young learners:"

1. *The New-England Primer Issued Prior to 1830* (New York: R. R. Bowker Co., 1934) and *American Primers, Indian Primers, Royal Primers. . . . Issued Prior to 1830* (Highland Park, N. J.: Harry B. Weiss, 1935) give "a fuller picture of societal perceptions and expectations of young learners."
2. *Early American Textbooks: 1775-1900* (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Dept.. of Education, 1985) and *American Primers*, the microfiche set, issued by University Publications of America (Bethesda, Md.)

Two sources give information on eighteenth and nineteenth-century writers:

1. *The Oxford Companion to Children's Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984)
2. *American Writers for Children Before 1900* (Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1985)

Historical studies on the writing, reading, publication, and illustration of children's books:

1. *Children's Books in England*, 3rd. ed., by F. J. Harvey Darton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982)
2. *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*, by J. S. Bratton (London: Croom Helm, 1981)
3. *Childhood's Pattern*, by Gillian Avery (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1975)
4. *A Moral Tale: Children's Fiction and American Culture*, by Anne Scott MacLeod (Ham-

den, CT: Archon Books, 1975)

5. *Guardians of Tradition*, by Ruth Miller Elson (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964)

Juvenile periodicals:

1. *English Children and Their Magazines, 1751-1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988)
2. *Children's Periodicals of the United States* (Westport, CT.: Greenwood Press, 1984)

Nursery rhyme references:

1. *The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes*, edited by Peter and Iona Opie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952)
2. *Mother Goose: From Nursery to Literature* (Jefferson, N. C.: McFarland and Co., 1987)

The Illustration of children's books:

1. *Victorian Book Illustration*, by Geoffrey Wakeman (Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1973)
2. *Sing a Song for Sixpence: The English Picture-Book Tradition and Randolph Caldecott* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986)
3. *Early Children's Books and Their Illustration* (New York: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1975)
4. *American Picture Books*, by Barbara Bader (New York: Macmillan, 1976)

Our visit to the American Antiquarian Society was not only a delightful experience, but the information gleaned from Laura Wasowicz will enlighten our researching efforts long into the future. Don't miss the opportunity to visit the American Antiquarian Society. In order to do research there, one must fill out a reader's application and present two forms of I. D., at least one of them being a picture I. D. The address of the American Antiquarian Society is 185 Salisbury Street, Worcester, MA 01609-1634; telephone: (508) 752-5813.

ABC member Verne Mahoney is a collector of Christmas books for children.

Children's Books:
Their Creators and Collectors
WHC-TV, Channel 5, West Hartford, CT
Hosted by Billie M. Levy

- Dec. 1997 "Barry Moser's Illustrations for the Bible"
Jan. 1998 "Cartoonist Brad Gilchrist"
Feb. 1998 "Illustrator Cyndy Szekeres"
Apr. 1998 "Author Polly Allen: Rojankovsky"
May 1998 "Author Barbara Rogasky: *The Golem*"
July 1998 "Editor Ole Risom: *The Busy, Busy World of Richard Scarry*"
Aug. 1998 Re-runs
Sept. 1998 "Author Clavin Fisher: *A Spy at Ticonderoga*"
Oct. 1998 "Author Edith Tarbescue: *Annuska's Voyage*"
Nov. 1998 "Betsy and Guilio Maestro: Working Together"
Dec. 1998 "Marc Simont: Caldecott Medal Winner"
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Tapes of some of the television programs are available at the Dodd Research Center, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT.

The H.A. and Margret Rey Legacy

Dee Jones

On March 30, 1966, Dr. Lena de Grummond sent a letter to H.A. and Margret Rey, creators of the famous *Curious George* series, inviting them to become contributors to her newly founded children's literature collection. Little did she know, her initial inquiry would lead to numerous contacts with the creative couple over the next 32 years.

H.A. Rey responded to Dr. de Grummond's letter, saying that he would send a rough sketch of George about to swallow a piece of jigsaw puzzle and other materials. This gracious letter was made all the more valuable by an original drawing in the bottom corner showing George with a mailing tube under his arm next to a signpost for Hattiesburg.

This first donation was followed by several letters and then a second contribution in 1972 of two original illustrations for *Curious George*. Although the Reys and Dr. de Grummond continued to correspond, there was not another contribution until 1990. H.A. Rey had passed away in 1977, and in 1989, contact was made with Margret Rey regarding an additional contribution. In 1990, the Collection received an outstanding group of materials. Included were color separations for *Curious George*, *Curious George Takes a Job*, *Zozo Gets a Medal*, *Curious George Learns the Alphabet*, *Curious George Rides a Bike*, and *Curious George Flies a Kite*. In addition, full-color illustrations for *Zebrology*, *Katy No-Pocket*, *Billy's Picture*, and *We Three Kings* were also contributed. A very interesting group of materials are full-color dummies for unpublished works including *Nonsense ABC*, *Whiteblack the Penguin Sees the World*, *The Water Cure*, and *The Street*.

Once again, we kept in contact with Margret Rey over the next seven years. She generously allowed us to use the image showing George with the mailing tube on his way to Hattiesburg as part of our web page logo:

<<http://www.lib.usm.edu/~degrum>>

In 1996, Margret Rey celebrated her 90th birthday at a festive party hosted by

Houghton Mifflin, publishers of the *Curious George* books. A short time later, on December 21, 1996, Margret Rey succumbed to her fight with heart disease and cancer. Early in 1998, The University of Southern Mississippi was notified that Mrs. Rey had stipulated in her will that the remaining original materials and books were to be placed in the de Grummond Collection along with their other materials.

We visited the Rey home in February 1998 and again in October, to meet with the coexecutor of the estate, Lay Lee Ong. Ms. Ong was a very close friend of Mrs. Rey and has remained at their home in Cambridge along with Mrs. Rey's cocker spaniel, Jeannie. The home was alive with *Curious George* memorabilia and original artwork. Hundreds of stuffed Curious George dolls in all sizes adorned the window seat and stairway landings.

With the assistance of Ms. Ong we chose materials that would be appropriate for inclusion in the de Grummond Collection. We returned to Hattiesburg laden with preliminary sketches, notebooks of ideas, full-color dummies, original illustrations, photographs, press sheets, reviews, fan mail and books. Much of the early work created by the Reys is included. Of particular interest are original illustrations and dummy pages for *Cecily G. and the 9 Monkeys*, the book in which Curious George first appeared, as one of the nine monkeys. We also have the original title page with the caption "Fifi: The Adventures of a Monkey," for the book that became *Curious George*. Twenty original illustrations from *Curious George* now join the two illustrations given by H.A. Rey 26 years earlier. There are extensive preliminary materials for *Curious George Goes to the Hospital* and *Curious George Learns the Alphabet* that reveal the tedious creative process.

H.A. Rey had an intense interest in astronomy and produced two books on the subject. *The Stars: A New Way to See Them* (1952) was written for an adult audience and provided a new method of star recognition. Still in print after 46 years, *The Stars* is considered by many to be the best reference work in the field. The large amount of preparatory materials that exist for this title reflect Rey's dedication to this book. There are original manuscripts, star charts and calendar charts hand-lettered in painstaking detail, original art for the dust jacket and for charts of the seasonal skies. A unique item is a large black circle with hand-drawn stars that is mounted on a wooden post in such a way that the circle can be moved to an appropriate position for each page of the book.

Find the Constellations is directed at children and uses a simplified version of the

star recognition method developed by Rey. This title is represented with typescripts, numerous preliminary illustrations, color separations, a dummy, fan mail, and reviews.

Rare items include children's pages from *Good Housekeeping* magazine, with short stories created by the Reys featuring characters such as Pretzel, Zozo, the Frivolous Firefly, and Sammy the Spider. A number of outstanding full-color dummies for unpublished books include *Indian Tortoise Stories*, *My Circus*, *Wheres Mommy?*, and *The Cigar Tree*. H.A. Rey was also quite interested in history and evolution and had prepared a number of full-color charts depicting historical events and life through the ages.

Materials in the collection also document the very early professional work of both Margret and H.A. Rey. Margret trained as a photographer, and we have 29 examples of her black-and-white photographs. As is true of many children's book illustrators, H.A. Rey first earned a living through commercial art. We have many examples of the advertising campaigns that he created for pharmaceutical companies Hoffmann-LaRoche in Basel and Roche in Brazil. Other examples of commercial art include elaborate and decorative maps of Africa, Brazil, São Paulo, and the Leopoldina Railway line.

Margret's creativity was not limited to photography and writing, but included pottery and needlepoint as well. Numerous examples of her earthenware pots and whimsical statues are now a part of our holdings. She designed, charted, and executed needlepoint scenes representative of people, places and events important in her life.

We now possess the definitive collection of books created by the Reys. More than 400 books represent numerous printings in a myriad of languages. First editions of their earliest books like *Elizabete*, *Anybody at Home?*, and *The Street* are now available to researchers.

The de Grummond Collection is very excited to have these additional materials from the Rey Estate and want to share them with interested students, teachers, librarians, and scholars everywhere. We are planning a major exhibition of Rey materials at the de Grummond Collection from September 1999 through April 2000. We will be involving area schools and public libraries, as well as bookstores and others interested in children's literature.

We will be cataloging all of the published books created by H.A. and Margret Rey that are held in our Collection and will soon be adding the newest version of the detailed listing of original materials to the de Grummond Collection web page. There is a version of the listing currently available via the Internet, but it does not include these latest additions.

The staff of the de Grummond Collection is indebted to the executors of the Rey estate for all of their assistance in arranging for the transfer of materials. We know that the creative efforts of Margret and H.A. Rey will live on to inform and delight new generations of scholars and readers.

Dee Jones is curator of the de Grummond Collection, University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg.

Down Under and Over Here: An Exhibit of Children's Book Illustration from Australia and America

David Kapp

This show is the first time original art for children's book illustrations from Australia and America have been featured in a major, traveling art exhibition. Assembled by the staff of the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, the exhibit includes work from American artists and collectors and Australian art from the Dromkeen Collection, that country's largest collection of children's book illustration.

The exhibit illuminates the cross cultural connections between the two continents as well as the rich diversity that makes each country unique. Although both have roots as British colonies, the British influence on children's books has manifested itself in different ways. In Australia early picture books strongly reflected English and European flora and fauna, evident in Outhwaite and Maltby. The pictures portrayed a romanticized version of what was seen. In America, however; European influence is represented by the importation of foreign books, including elaborately illustrated "gift" books by Rackham, Dula and Nielsen. N. C. Wyeth was the first illustrator to depict American settings with the same romance, richness and sense of drama as the European "classics" in books like *The Last of the Mohicans* and *Rip Van Winkle*.

A significant change took place in both Australian and American children's books in the 1940s. Picture books began primarily to reflect the native landscape and people of each country in everyday settings—in a meadow, on Main Street, at the public garden. Instead of offering children romanticized and exotic views of the world, they could now see and read about people and animals "in their own backyard." Dorothy Wall stands out as an early pioneer in these indigenous reflections of Australian settings. In America, Robert McCloskey and Lois Lenski lov-

ingly portrayed a variety of settings across the country. This appreciation for domestic, regional settings has continued with many contemporary American and Australian illustrators like Barbara Cooney, Wendell Minor, Tomie De Paola, Alice and Martin Provensen, Julie Vivas, and Robert Ingpen.

In the 1960s, for the first time, a few books began to portray racially mixed neighborhoods or focused on families from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, reflecting significant social movements that were taking place at the time. Another noteworthy trend has occurred in the last decade with a virtual explosion of books reflecting a wide range of cultures within each country. Not only is there an awareness of people from different backgrounds but, more significantly, an appreciation and celebration of the rich tapestry of a multicultural society. In the work of Brian Pinkney, Carmen Lomas Garza, Lin Onus, and Pat Torres, one can see a pride in both contemporary and traditional life styles.

The exhibit offers an intercontinental journey through the rich heritage of children's book illustration in Australia and America, featuring intimate moments and vast landscapes, the quiet beauty of rural settings and the vitality of city life, and even some fantasy places that exist only in the artist's imagination.

Exhibit Opening Reception

Sunday, January 24, 1999

2:00–4:00 p.m.

Babbidge Library Plaza

Babbidge Library Hours

Monday–Thursday: 8:00 a.m.–midnight

Friday: 8:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m.

Saturday: 10:00 a.m.– 6:00 p.m.

Sunday: noon–midnight

Dodd Research Center Hours

Monday: 8:30 a.m.–7:00 p.m.

Tuesday–Friday: 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Information

www.lib.uconn.edu/exhibits/

Terri Goldich: (860) 486–3646

Adventures in Storrs, Connecticut (of all Places)

Terri J. Goldich

One of the best things about being a curator for a children's literature collection is that I get to spend other peoples' money on children's books. (And one of the worst things is that I have to spend other peoples' money, because I have to be more careful than I am with my own. Really.) Recently I was able to fill in a conspicuous gap in our holdings and purchase a fine first edition of Anna Sewell's classic, *Black Beauty*. A first British edition, mind you, which even as far from the original as State C still needed a significant piece of the collection development pie. Just before this edition became available, I had the exciting opportunity to place an absentee bid on a State B first edition on the block at Sotheby's in London. As Max Smart used to say, "I missed it by that much," even though I nearly doubled the anticipated sale price published in Sotheby's posh pre-sale catalogue. But just having the fun of completing the bid form, faxing to another country, calling back and forth and trying to remember how many hours earlier they are, was worth missing it by that much. Some days later a call came from the Heritage Bookshop, offering the State C: "Octavo, with a black and white frontispiece in the original publisher's cloth, Carter's variant 'C' binding, terracotta cloth blocked in black and gilt. Brown coated endpapers, inner hinges expertly and invisibly repaired. Ink inscription on front free endpaper dated July 1878. Small, unobtrusive colored floral decal on verso of title page. Slight rubbing at extremities and to gilt. Slightly skewed" That, in book dealer's terms, describes a beautiful little book, published just shortly before Anna Sewell's death in 1878. She died too soon to know how well-loved her story would be by the world's children. And I wish she knew that here in the Northeast Children's Literature Collection, we have over 400 separate editions of her enduring classic. And one very nice, very British first edition.

Ms. Goldich is the curator for the Northeast Children's Literature Collection at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, University of Connecticut, Storrs.

Robert Lawson: Connecticut Author and Illustrator

Brian Rogers

It is not hard to understand why so many children's book illustrators and authors have chosen to make their homes in Connecticut. To live in the bucolic western hills or in one of the attractive shoreline communities, in proximity to the cultural and publishing mecca of New York is, for many, the best of all possible worlds. So it was for Robert Lawson, whose most famous book, *Rabbit Hill*, is named for his Westport property. Or perhaps it was the other way around. In any case, Lawson lived and worked in Westport from 1923 until his death in 1957. He may have been drawn to Connecticut because it was near the metropolis where he was born in 1892 and later attended art school, and not far from Montclair, New Jersey, where he grew up. And he was almost certainly attracted to New England by the beauty of its landscape and because of his keen interest in the nation's origins. New England figures prominently in several of his best known books: *Mr. Revere and I*, *Watchwords of Liberty*, *Rabbit Hill*, *The Tough Winter*, and his adult parody, *Country Colic*.

Robert Lawson was a great favorite of the late Helen O. Gildersleeve, and in the more than twenty years since she gave her children's literature collection to Connecticut College the Library has added numerous titles and editions to the Lawson holdings. The first British edition of *Rabbit Hill* was very recently found in the excellent Much Ado bookshop in Marblehead, Massachusetts, together with a jacketed copy of *Mr. Twigg's Mistake* (1947).

One of the attractions of Lawson for adult collectors of children's literature is the distinctive geographic element in his work. At the end of the twentieth century, when the teaching of geography has long been given short shrift in most of our schools, this emphasis is all the more striking. His books are filled with dramatic vistas and memorable bird's eye views, stage settings which elicit a powerful sense of place where the stories are played out. The first page of Munro Leaf's *The Story of Ferdinand* (1936)—one of the very great beginnings in the history of the illustrated

story—depicts a distant castle rising into the clouds, a highly theatrical backdrop pulling us into the narrative at once with only six words: “Once upon a time in Spain.”

In another Lawson/Leaf collaboration, Wee Gillis is shown journeying out of the Highlands of Scotland “to live in the Lowlands with his mother’s relations.” A winding road, lined with stone walls recedes behind him into the distant, dark Highland mountains in a scene as atmospheric as the castle in Ferdinand’s Spain. A similar road appears in *The Crock of Gold* by James Stephens, published in 1942 by the Limited Editions Club, and the reverse view is shown as well: an old man pauses on a road at the point where it descends from the Irish hills into a vast landscape spreading out below his gaze. The sense of place is palpable. A road of a very different sort defines an illustration from *Mr. Revere and I* (1953): Paul has paused in his breathless ride to look back across the hills at the glowing dots of bonfires lit after he had warned that the redcoats were coming.

Aerial views abound in Lawson, most obviously in *The Fabulous Flight* (1949) in which a boy rides on the back of gull above the Atlantic Ocean, London, Paris, and many other recognizable locations. In *Watchwords of Liberty*, the driving of the Golden Spike at Promontory, Utah, is seen from high above the Utah desert, the eastward and westward tracks joined at last, the locomotives standing nose to nose with the small crowd in the vastness that the railroad will now conquer. It is the sense of place and space that strikes the reader in this picture, not the puny locomotives or spindly rails. Lawson has ingeniously conveyed the immensity of western America and, by implication, the enormous changes looming on the horizon now that the primitive ox-drawn wagon has been replaced by the efficient railroad.

The sky itself is prominent in Lawson’s work, and one of the reasons why can be found in his own words. Chapter five of his 1947 memoir, *At That Time*, called “Eyes on the Sky,” is about the thrill of flying kites in a time before the Wright Brothers became airborne for a few minutes at Kitty Hawk, before anyone could quite imagine looking down on the world from an airplane. Yes, people ascended in balloons at county fairs, that was not really flying. “We with our kites came much closer to the Great Secret. . . . There was, to us, something almost breath-taking in this accomplishment of launching a man-made contraption into the clear and unexplored realm of the air, of controlling its flight, of jockeying it up and up until it

was almost a companion of the clouds. . . . And when at last, reluctantly brought to earth, I laid gentle hands on this fragile thing of sticks, string and newspaper, I always did so with a feeling almost of awe. For it had gazed down from the heights upon the world, as I had always hoped to do and never would. It had seen woods, fields, streets and towns laid out in a fascinating miniature mosaic. It had seen the Jersey Meadows, so ugly close to, as lush as a green table, marked by winding, silvered rivers. It had seen the fairy towers of New York. . . .”

Not surprisingly, Lawson occasionally combined the aerial view with a map, as in Mary Godolphin’s retelling of *Pilgrim’s Progress* (1939). Christian’s journey is laid out on a two-page “map” locating the Slough of Despond, the Fort of Beelzebub, the House Beautiful, the Land of Beulah and the Celestial City, yet another castle in the clouds. In the Newbery Award-winning *Adam of the Road* (1942) by Elizabeth Janet Gray (Vining), Lawson provides “A Map of the Travels of Adam,” anchored by London, linked by the Rivers Thames, Coln, and Wey, and illustrating key points along the way such as St. Alban’s, Oxford, Winchester and Guildford. This not only conveys the feeling of a journey, but is a geography lesson in miniature, as entrancing in its accuracy as Pilgrim’s imagined Progress.

And when we have descended from the airy heights to *terra firma*, and have seen (and felt) the hot, arid mountains and plains of Spain, and the cool mountains and stony roads of Scotland and Ireland, we find the trees. Trees are as important in Lawson’s landscapes as topography and are nowhere more memorably drawn than on the title page of *The Crock of Gold*, where from high in the crown of the pine forest we look down with the birds, between tall trunks, to a tiny thatched cottage in a clearing. Once again we are drawn irresistibly into the place of the story. In *Adam of the Road* a deer watches in the shadows behind the silhouette of a great oak as a procession of horses and riders passes through the dense forest on a sunny path. And with their bold trunks supporting a mass of leafy filigree, the silhouetted trees on the endpapers of Arthur Mason’s *The Wee Men of Ballywooden* (1930), almost certainly inspired by Arthur Rackham, do not overwhelm the busy figures gathering in the moonlight, but provide, rather, a sheltering, dramatic setting for their mischievous activities. In such a convincing place there is no question but that the story is, at some level, true.

Rabbit Hill combines all of the characteristic elements of Lawson’s imagery. And

like *Adam of the Road* and *Pilgrim's Progress*, it graphically encapsulates the story on the endpapers with an aerial view of The Hill, its characters and landmarks. When *Rabbit Hill* won the Newbery Medal in 1945, *The New Yorker* wrote: "The small creatures of the Connecticut countryside who live on Rabbit Hill form one of the most ingratiating communities of animals to appear between covers since . . . *The Wind in the Willows*."

While claiming that *Rabbit Hill* is Lawson's best book, Jane Bingham's useful *Writers for Children* forthrightly acknowledges the less attractive aspects of Lawson's work—the occasional ethnic slur, the mean streak, the sometimes chauvinist treatment of female characters. (Lawson's wife, Marie, was a talented illustrator in her own right, but unlike the Petershams, the Haders, the d'Aulaires, there is no evidence that Robert and Marie were artistic partners after the first years of their marriage when they designed greeting cards together. But that is the subject of another study.) *Writers for Children* puts the matter in perspective, for the time being at least, by saying that Lawson was a major contributor to children's literature of the mid-twentieth century whose "strengths and faults as a writer may be seen as representative of the period."

Brian Rogers is head of special collections, Charles E. Shain Library, Connecticut College, New London.

ABC Meeting of October 29, 1998

Susan Aller

Many people in the Hartford area know the graphic wizardry of William Wondriska's posters and logos: a swirl here, a dash of color there, and he has created a memorable image that forever after symbolizes the organization or event. (His is the design for the University of Connecticut Children's Book Fair, for example.)

But relatively few of the ABCs knew the depth of Bill's involvement with children's books and the art of serial comic strips until our meeting on October 28 at the Farmington studios of WondriskaRusso Associates, Communication Design.

In 1955, while working on an MFA at Yale, Bill designed and produced a children's book he called *The Sound of Things* as a final assignment. The book was chosen for the AIGA Children's Book Show in 1957 and was commercially published by Pantheon in 1958 as *Toot*. Bill revealed that he offered Pantheon his book because the first editor he called—Margaret McElderry—was out to lunch and didn't answer the phone! (Ursula Nordstrom would have been next, he said.)

Other books followed in rapid succession and for more than a decade appeared in prestigious AIGA shows and won awards. The latest book for children was *The Stop* in 1972—Bill won't say it's his last because he still “has ideas for a couple more.”

“The story is the thing,” he emphasizes, even though his genius is primarily in the visual arts. “The story is always the thing.”

Who is his all-time favorite illustrator for children? “John R. Neil,” he says without hesitation. And Bill has assembled a large collection of mostly first-edition books that carry the evocative color and black-and-white work of Neil.

Beyond the Neil collection—and the usual serendipitous accumulation of the true book lover—Bill is a collector of original panels of serial comics. He shared his great knowledge of the artists and let us learn by looking at the detailed pen and ink drawings that were printed, for the most part pretty badly, in our weekly comic pages in bygone years. The freshness and originality of works by Milt Can-

iff, Hal Foster, and others gave us renewed appreciation for the art of comic strips.

Does he still read the comics? “Without fail, every Sunday,” he says, “and so do millions of other people. When you think that a children’s book may sell five or 10,000 copies, comics are where the really big audiences are!”

Susan Aller, author of children’s books as well as many articles and essays, lives in West Hartford, Connecticut.

The Twelfth Annual Institute of Children's Literature, August 1998

Elizabeth Moody

“Let the Wild Rumpus Start: Play in Children's Books” was the theme of the twelfth annual Institute of Children's Literature New England, August 16–22, 1998, at Newnham College, Cambridge University, England. ABC members Jane and Bill McCullam, Verne Mahoney, and Elizabeth Moody were among the 200 participants.

Play was loosely and creatively interpreted by the authors who spoke. Susan Cooper talked about the theatre and actors. Russell Hoban started by showing Punch and Judy puppets and a short film about them. Alan Garner talked about Lewis Carroll and the Cheshire language. Jan Ormerod, illustrator, encouraged us all to play with an idea—take it further.

A few of the more dramatic story tellers had us laughing at their antics: John Agard, a poet born in Guyana; Gregory Maguire; David Lloyd, who as the chairman of Walker Books gave the Ethel Heins Memorial Lecture—but whose manner reminded us all that he had toured with a circus as a clown for seven years. The most entertaining performer of all was Margaret Mahy, who included in her after-the-banquet speech two hilarious tongue-twisting tales of her own. There were other speakers, poetry, tours for a few lucky people, a wine-and-cheese party at Heffer's (who also had a superior book store for us on site,) tea in the garden, small groups for discussing the lengthy book list, breakfast with Anne Fine, Tim Wynne Jones, Philipa Pearce, and singing with John Langstaff. More talks. People to meet and reunions from other places, other times. And outside, all of Cambridge, all of England.

For Carol Docheff (bookseller) from California, who also spent weeks in London, it was the trip of a lifetime. The range and the depth and the caliber of the speakers was incredible.

The absolute highlight was getting to go to Green Knowe at Hemmingford Grey. Magical. The whole week really was.

Comment from *Sally Derby*, author of
Jacob and the Stranger and other books, from Ohio

Susan Cooper, Philip Pullman, Sylvia Waugh, Margaret Mahy—as soon as I read the list of the names of the presenters for the 1998 CLNE conference, I knew that I would do whatever it took to attend. Reading that list of names was for me the same spine-tingling thrill a move-goer might experience if invited to attend the Academy Awards. Still, I was afraid—not afraid that the conference wouldn't live up to my expectations, but that being among such stellar talents would make me hesitant to write again when I was back home. I am thankful to report that it was entirely otherwise. All the writers I met and talked to (and what a joy to be able to have a personal exchange with writers you revere!) were so approachable, so honest about their own fears and self-questioning that just being at the conference took away some of the loneliness and self-doubt that seems innate in most writers. Instead of feeling inferior, I came home feeling energized and hopeful. And richer, by far, for the new friendships that resulted from the week. I can't imagine that next year's conference could be half as impressive as this year's, but I know I wouldn't miss it for the world.

Comment from *Jane and Bill McCullam*

Bill and I arrived on Saturday afternoon and took possession of our flat about a mile from Newnham College. It was a perfect base of operations, central to the city of Cambridge but quiet and cheaper than two single rooms at Newnham College. The first thing we did was walk to the bicycle shop where we had reserved our transportation for the next week. The next day we were out early and on our bikes, going to visit Green Knowe at Hemmingford Grey, just off the edge of our map. Though it was farther off the edge than we expected, the ride was wonderful. Bill worked out a way through back roads bordered by freshly harvested wheat fields,

with thatched cottages and Thelwell ponies all along the way. We arrived in the village as the Sunday service was about to start in the local ancient church, heralded by change-ringing. We went along the path by the river only a few hundred feet to Lucy Boston's house, where we were fortunate to find the young woman who guided the tours just arriving and willing to squeeze us in early on a personal tour. The house is just as it is described in the Green Knowe stories, and awesome. It is much smaller than I had imagined. In Tolly's top floor bedroom, the rocking horse and the doll house are right there, large as life, as well as almost everything mentioned in all the stories. The rose gardens are spectacular.

We arrived back in Cambridge in time to get a cab to take us to the opening reception at Newnham College, along with the three large boxes of books we brought with us. Ruth Allen and Peter Hubbard of Bufo Books (used and rare books) were kind enough to share their tables with us next to Herrer's Children's Books (new books only) in an airy, light space overlooking the quad.

The reception was held outdoors on the lawn in the quad, and it was heavy with famous writers, critics, and teachers of children's literature, all of whom we would get to know and to hear at length later in the week.

The lectures throughout the week were wonderful. We had all (maybe) read the 70 books on the reading list, and the five core lecturers brought them all into focus with each other and with the conference theme—play. Most afternoons there were smaller group meetings to discuss the books and what we had heard. There were special lectures by some of today's brightest lights in children's literature: Susan Cooper, Anne Fine, Alan Garner, Russell Hoban, Margaret Mahy, and Philip Pullman. And to add the sauce, there was the opportunity to talk to knowledgeable and totally approachable professionals in the field. To gild the lily, there was the lure of the old city of Cambridge itself, with its ancient buildings and wonderful shops.

One of the hot spots of the city was The Haunted Bookshop where Sarah Key, children's book specialist, has amassed an irresistible and vast array of British children's books.

Our only disappointment was in the pubs. They have caved in to Americanism, and most of them serve only burgers and fries instead of meat pasties and steak-and-kidney pudding. However, there were lots of good restaurants to make up for it.

Notes from a New England Journal, Summer of 1998

Roger Crossgrove

*M*onday, 27 April

I finally finished packing, banking, putting gas in the car and left Storrs at 12:00 p.m. for my annual working vacation in Waldoboro, Maine. It doesn't seem possible that I've been coming here for ten years. The drive through Massachusetts, a corner of New Hampshire, up the Maine Turnpike and up Route One to Waldoboro is always a pleasant trip, even when the seasons are between changes. As I drove through town, I noticed that one of my favorite places to eat—the Pine Cone—would open the next day; so I went to Moody's Diner for dinner and a quick review of local listings of upcoming events. There it was: "Barbara Cooney, Maine's award-winning children's book author and illustrator, will give a talk about her book, *Miss Rumphius* . . . Curtis Memorial Library, Brunswick . . . a part of the library's annual "TV Turnoff week" . . . seating limited . . . come early."

*T*hursday, 30 April

Went to Barbara's reading and slide talk in Brunswick—got there early and all but the back rows were filled. The librarian asked the entire audience to move back two rows to make room for the crowd of children already filling the space around the screen and podium. After a brief, no-nonsense, friend-of-the-family, down home Maine introduction, Barbara took her place at the podium. She looked over the audience that was now filling the room with many standees, thanked everyone for coming and then, before launching into her presentation, announced—in a firm but friendly voice—that although *Miss Rumphius* is one of her most popular and well-loved works, as well as a favorite of hers, she has "done *Miss Rumphius* too many times now, for too long, and I always say that this is the last time. (Pause) Well, this is the last time—*And I mean it!*" When her presentation was finished and all questions were answered, the sight of a long line of adults as well as children

winding through two rooms and a long hallway sent me to my car and back to Waldoboro. I'll see Barbara next week.

Friday, 1 May

Went to Camden with Bill. Antique shops and bookstores—found a beautiful *The Cat Who Went to Heaven*, illustrated by Lynd Ward.

Wednesday, 6 May

My second visit to Fawcett's Toy Museum, an unbelievable collection, "The finest collection of antique cowboy, space and cartoon character toys and original comic art in the U.S." It is good to see Jackie and John [former UConn professor of art] doing so well and looking so good. I'm telling everyone to be sure and stop by for a visit.

Thursday, 7 May

I picked up scones and lemon squares for my 10:00 a.m. coffee date with Barbara at her water's edge studio just outside of Damariscotta. We were talking about her new book when her publisher called. The call finished, she moved quickly to the planning for the new library for Damariscotta. Her gift of more than half a million dollars would get the building fund started, and the auction to be held in early August would raise additional money. Barbara has invited a veritable Who's Who of New England prizewinning authors and illustrators to contribute original art, and some of them to participate in a Children's Book Day of presentations and signings: Maurice Sendak, Paul O. Zelinsky, Jamie Wyeth, Lane Smith, Jon Scieszka, Trina Schart Hyman, Ed Emberly, Peter Parnall, Jim Arnosky, Tomie dePaola, Steven Kellogg, Chris Van Alsbury, David Macaulay—the list goes on and on, including Holly Berry of Waldoboro. Made plans with Barbara to attend the auction and bring friends from the Northeast Children's Literature Collections.

Saturday, 9 May

Coffee, scones and giant blueberries with Holly Berry at her studio just outside of Waldoboro. She is working on her fifth book, somewhat different from the earlier ones which were so strong graphically. The new ones are more painterly. She is on my list for next year's book fair!

Wednesday, 13 May

Home in Connecticut again, went to New Haven to the Creative Arts Workshop for a meeting of the committee for the Children's Book Illustration Exhibition in September, with Bina Williams, my co-curator. We must cut our list of nearly 100 artists to about 20 or 25, focusing on Connecticut as much as possible.

Friday, 15 May

Dick [Schimmelpfeng] drives us to Northampton to visit Eric Carle in his studio. He won't be able to be in the C.A.W. Show—major traveling exhibit, studio inventory, etc. We saw his Gehenna Press Book of decorated papers and toured the studio, walking over the floor literally covered with new papers to see his latest work in stained and fused glass.

Wednesday, 20 May

The ABCs annual spring meeting took place at Billie Levy's—bring a salad, many guests: Esphyr Slobodkina, Barbara Rogaski, Bina Williams, Kathy Lyons, the new director of the Connecticut Chapter of the Center for the Book.

Saturday, 30 May

ABCs to Conn College to see the exhibition of children's books, many from the Gildersleeve Collection, and to hear Trinka Clark's illustrated lecture on the Chrysler Museum Exhibit that she, her husband and Michael Patrick Hearn had curated. [Michael came to the lecture as a guest of Billie Levy to surprise Trinka.]

Sunday, 14 June

Weekend in New London, New Hampshire with Tomie [dePaola] and Bob. Photos and notes for my contribution to the Barbara Elleman book on Tomie. He made a wonderful dinner and we talked about Pratt and Pratt people on into the night.

Saturday, 18 July

Tomie's pool party—bring back four framed originals from Tomie's Country Christmas Angel book for the C.A.W. show.

Friday, 31 July

Pick up Elizabeth at 7:00 a.m. and drive to Boston; Billie drives us on to Maine. We arrive in Damariscotta at 4:00 p.m. and have an hour to view the exhibition of auction art before it comes down. Beautiful show! It's going to make money for the library fund! Dinner at the Pine Cone in Waldoboro.

Saturday, 1 August

Children's Book Day and Auction at Round Top Center for the Arts. Beautiful weather; Jamie Wyeth, Jerry and Gloria Pinkney, Peter Parnall among those signing in the tent, while Paul Zelinsky, Trina Schart Hyman, Ed Emberly and Jon Scieszka gave slide presentations inside. Early dinner, then back to the auction; the room is jam-packed, people standing along the sides and in the back, but Elizabeth found seats for the three of us in the front row! The auctioneer was very professional, giving enough time for bidding on the seventy-seven items, but he kept the young helpers busy hauling each item up front again for a final look, and generating some very spirited bidding. It was a truly memorable event, and the unofficial announcement at the end of the evening was that over \$109,000.00 had been raised. We talked with Barbara afterward and she most graciously thanked us for coming up and representing the Dodd Center, bidding and buying. (Billie got the Barry Moser!)

Sunday 2 August

Ida prepared a typical Maine breakfast, complete with blueberries and cream, then Jim led us to Cushing and the Olsen House, where we did the tourist thing, photos and all. Enjoyed a quiet, reflective stroll down to the family cemetery by the sound and a tour of the house itself, winding up with a photo op outside—we met a lazy old workhorse standing near the back door, waiting to be photographed. On to Rockland and the Farnsworth Museum to complete our "Wyeth Day." The old church, which is now completely restored, is the perfect setting for the exhibition of all three Wyeth works—pictures we hadn't seen before, plus some of the old favorites, so well arranged and well lighted. Got to Portland late afternoon and had a nice visit with Elizabeth's niece and her family. The last leg of our trip coincided with a long, long traffic back-up on the Maine Turnpike (4 miles in one hour!) Ar-

rived Boston very late; Igor awake with one of the twins, Diane with the other. [Diane Levy, ABC Newsletter designer, and Igor Tepermeister are new parents of twins Sophia and Maxwell, grandchildren of Billie Levy.] Elizabeth and I head for Connecticut, I'm home by 4:00 a.m.—Great trip!

Thursday, 20 August

Terri [Goldich, NCLC curator at the Dodd Center] and I package works for the C.A.W. show—Ed Young, James Marshall, Barbara Cooney and Marc Simont from the Northeast Children's Literature Collections.

Thursday, 17 August

Dick and I travel to Northampton to pick up work from the Michaelson Gallery for the C.A.W. show: Lauren Mills, Barry Moser and Dennis Nolan. Nice chat with Richard Michaelson and Barry Moser, who came in as we were loading up—update on the [NCLC] *Tikvah* book and the *Bible* [Barry is illustrating].

Thursday, 3 September

Meet Bina in New Haven at 8:00 a.m., she drives us to New York—short studio visits picking up work for C.A.W. show from Javaka Steptoe, Peter Sis and Brian Pinkney.

Wednesday, 16 September

ABCs to Worcester, to the American Antiquarian Society and an extremely interesting and detailed presentation by Laura Wasowicz and Joanne Chaison: Reading Room Policies and Researching Early American Children's Literature.

Sunday, 20 September

“Beyond Once Upon A Time: A Celebration of Contemporary Children's Book Illustration” exhibition opens at the Creative Arts Workshop [in New Haven, CT.] A very good crowd, youth choir singing in the courtyard. Chat with Sally Mavor, Moira Fain, Lynn Reiser, Kate Duke, Anita Riggio, Loretta Krupinski, Helena Estes, Kay Kudlinski, Pat Hubbell, Jean Day Zallinger, Leonard Everett Fisher and Nancy Wallace. It is so rewarding to see this exhibition on the walls, beautifully hung with shelves for the books, as the culmination of a year's work, pulling it all together, and the lectures by four of the illustrators, noon hour presentations, course offerings and readings for school groups make it all worthwhile.

Thursday, 24 September

Obituary notices in the Hartford Courant and the Willimantic Chronicle announce the death of Francelia Butler [well-known UConn professor of children's literature] at age 83.

Friday, 25 September

Called Maurice [Sendak] to tell him of Francelia's death and he remarked how odd it was that he was thinking about and working on Jim Marshall's last book during the summer. He had promised Jim that he would see it through to production; so Storrs and UConn had been very much on his mind.

Thursday, 1 October

Tomie talks at C.A.W., we have dinner beforehand with Tomie and Bob, Betty, Gina and Bina. Tomie is in great form, with many lively, funny and heartwarming stories for an audience of over 100, signing for an hour afterward.

Friday, 20 October

Bina and I do the "Break for Lunch" at C.A.W.

Saturday, 3 October

Memorial service for Francelia.

Roger Crossgrove is emeritus professor of art at the University of Connecticut.

Guidelines for ABC Newsletter Submission

Although we accept typewritten manuscripts, someone on the newsletter staff must input the material into a computer word-processing program in order for the material to be usable by us. Consequently, it is greatly appreciated when submissions are made on a computer disk. Disks will be returned promptly, but please keep a backup of your file. They may be formatted for the PC or for the Macintosh. Any common word processing program that has word-wrap capabilities may be used, but WordPerfect or Word is strongly preferred. A printout of all submitted files should be included, as well as a note explaining what application was used. To make our job a little easier, please use one space only between sentences, and paragraph indents rather than extra lines between paragraphs.

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