

UMAR News Spring 2004

Newsletter of The University of Memphis Association of Retirees

2004 Executive Committee

President	Bill Crump
Vice President	Frank Dyer
Secretary	Janell Rudolph
Treasurer	Bob Tvedt
Past Presidents	David Collins Les Pourciau
<i>Members at Large</i>	
2004 faculty	Dot Arata
2004 staff	Carolyn Zoccola
2005 faculty	Charles Stagg
2005 staff	Bert Merrill
<i>Committee Chairs</i>	
Membership	Frank Dyer
Memorial	Bert Merrill
Heritage Room	Doug Mayo
Program	Dot Arata
Constitution & By Laws	Bob Yates
Nomination	Frank Dyer
Institutional Loyalty	Dot Arata
Scholarship	Bob Boone
2004 Holiday Luncheon Meeting	Frank Dyer
Newsletter	Janell Rudolph
Historian	Fred Bellott
<i>Ex-officio</i>	
U of M liaison	Holly Smothers/TBA

2003 Holiday Lunch and Annual Meeting

The Wilson Holiday Inn on campus was the perfect spot for the Holiday lunch meeting. At least the sixty people who came seemed to be in a holiday mood. A reception area was set up prior to the luncheon for those who wanted to mingle, sip hot beverages and view the Heritage Room display items. The festive mood continued in the luncheon area, where seasonal music provided by a harpist filled the room and merry conversation abounded at each of the round dining tables. The bountiful buffet provided fast service for the luncheon and a variety of good food.

A brief business meeting followed the luncheon, at which members elected the 2004 slate of officers and approved the revised Constitution and Bylaws. Dot Arata presented the concept of the Institutional Loyalty Committee and encouraged retirees to donate time and use their collective expertise in service to the University.

Bob Yates presented the first Traces Awards to Lasley Dameron for 2002 and to Les Pourciau for 2003. The meeting ended with a "command performance" by Les Pourciau reciting "The Cajun Night Before Christmas."

Upcoming Programs

Dot Arata, Chair of the Program Committee, is working toward another year of excellent programming for UMAR. The Spring Coffee and Conversation program on March 16 will feature musical selections from an opera by Dr. John Baur of the U of M Scheidt School of Music. Dr. Baur will discuss the process of composition and present excerpts from *The Promise*, an opera honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., beginning at 9 a.m. in the Alumni Center. Dr. Shirley Raines and her husband, Dr. Bob Canady, will be presented Honorary Life Memberships.

A showing of *Hoxie: The First Stand* is scheduled on April 13 at 10:00 a.m. in the Methodist Presentation Theatre of the Fed Ex Institute. The film, directed by David Appleby, Professor in the Department of Communication, has won national recognition, including the CINE Golden Eagle award. Hoxie, a small town close to Marked Tree, Arkansas, was the site of one of the earliest school integration battles in South—before Little Rock—where brave men and women of both races struggled "to do the right thing." Dr. Appleby will lead a discussion after the film showing. The event is free and refreshments will be served.

Scholarships and Memorials

In the past, the Emeriti Club (now UMAR) gave a gift bookplate to the University Libraries to place in selected books to honor deceased members. The UMAR Executive Committee has voted to discontinue this practice. Future memorial donations will be directed toward the UMAR Scholarship Program when it is in place. The Scholarship Committee, chaired by Bob Boone, is working with University officials in the Office of Advancement to develop the Scholarship Program.

Retirement Beckons

Holly Smothers, the University liaison with UMAR, will become a retiree at the end of March. Currently an employee in the Office of University Advancement, she has been a mainstay on the Executive Council, providing personal as well as institutional support for the retiree organization. Her steady presence at UMAR meetings and events has helped bridge the transition between each annual change in leadership, and her cheerful disposition has eased the way through many UMAR projects.

After retirement, Holly, an employee since 1986, will move with her husband to Ripley, TN, where they plan to fish, travel in their RV, and spend lots of time with family and friends. Holly envisions "needlework, reading, gardening, sitting on my screened porch with my husband, listening to music and sipping a cold beverage."

The Heritage Room Preserves University Memorabilia

By Lester J. Pourciau, Jr.

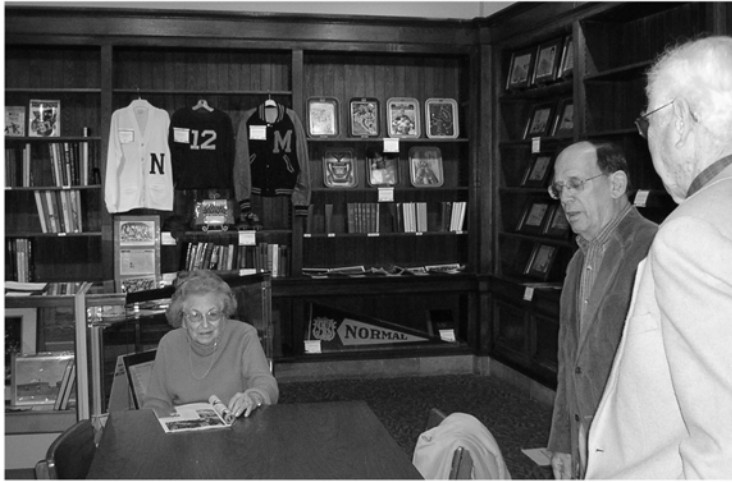
In October, 2003, the University of Memphis celebrated the grand opening of the Heritage Room in Brister Hall, formerly the John Willard Brister Library. This Heritage Room was essentially the brainchild of Dr. Douglas Mayo, a 1939 graduate of the institution, then known as the West Tennessee State Teachers College, Memphis. The room displays approximately 150 items which reflect the history of the University, dating back to 1912.

The first effort to preserve historical memorabilia of the University was the Columns Gallery. This small museum, in the Administration Building, was open for several years in the 1970s. When the museum space was needed for other purposes, the collection went into storage.

In 1989, an Emeriti Club (now UMAR) committee on preservation of (what was then) Memphis State University historical artifacts joined forces with a similar committee of the University "M" Lettermen's Club for the purpose of re-establishing the historical collection. Plans for an addition to the Alumni Center were drawn, but, as it turned out, anticipated financial support was not forthcoming.

The concept which became the Heritage Room had been supported by the University administration for a number of years, but allocation of appropriate space for the Room did not occur until firm plans for the renovation of the historic Brister Library (the only building on the campus on the National Register of Historic Places) became a reality.

Approximately two years ago, the UMAR Executive Committee issued a call to its membership for donations of artifacts, and this call resulted in a variety of important items. The Heritage Room is now very much a reality and continues to receive



Les Pourciau (center) talks with Guy and Marla Treece, two of the UMAR volunteers who staff the Heritage Room.

donations of artifacts for the collection from retirees and friends. It is open on Monday and Thursday from 1:30 to 4:00 when the University is in session.

Memories for an alumnus

I met Dr. David Robinson following a slide presentation I made in December at the Ave Maria Assisted Living Center. Upon learning that he was a 1940 graduate of our university, I asked if he knew about the Heritage Room. He responded that he did not and asked what it was. I explained it to him and then offered to pick him up the next morning to take him to the Heritage Room, an offer which he

accepted enthusiastically.

The next day he spent the better part of an hour browsing through the Room, focusing on the main displays of artifacts from the 1930s and making several comments about remembering this or that. On the trip back to Ave Maria, he asked me if I were acquainted with Doug Mayo. I told him that I most certainly was and asked in what capacity he knew Doug. He responded that he and Doug had been fraternity brothers. I was delighted to have been able to escort this gentleman to the Heritage Room and have every reason to believe that this experience was a pleasurable one for him.

Retirees Contribute Time and Expertise to the U of M

Members of UMAR have an opportunity to use their experience and skills in service to the University. About twenty members have signed up to staff the Heritage Room for two and a half hours each week on a rotating basis. These volunteers greet visitors and provide information about the collection. It has also been a quiet retreat for volunteers when there are no visitors. (One volunteer asserts he was able to catch up on some reading.)

In addition to staffing the Heritage Room, UMAR members can volunteer for other tasks to aid and support the University. The Institutional Loyalty Committee (ILC) has been formed to provide leadership and training in this endeavor. Along with this newsletter, all members are being sent a memo from ILC Chair Dot Arata "to assess your interest in participating in this project." Included with the memo is a volunteer application form which lists areas in which service is needed. Volunteerism is a way to stay connected to the academic community and specifically to friends and associates still working at the University of Memphis. Through the ILC, UMAR members can also help one another in volunteer service.



The UMAR Mailbox We Have Mail!

Dr. Helen M. Sawyer (Political Science 1962-1980)
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I retired from a tenured position at Memphis State University in 1980 but continued to teach for a few years in the University College Open Learning for Firefighters Program. When my husband retired from IBM in 1986, I left the University College so that we might travel in the United States, Canada, the British Isles, Australia and New Zealand. My husband died in November 1996 and I moved to McKendree Village, a retirement community in Hermitage, TN, the last week of May 1999. As I write this, I can look out the window and see the home of Andrew Jackson.

I am pleased to be nearer members of my family, but I miss being able to attend the UMAR activities and visit with dear friends from my years at Memphis State.

The McKendree Village Activities Calendar each month provides a variety of things residents may participate in if they so choose. One of the activities that I participate in is a creative writing class. Currently, we are writing our memoirs, and our instructor is looking into the possibilities for publication. I have participated in a variety of activities as a member of the volunteer organization. I served a two-year term with the McKendree Towers Resident Advisory Council.

I transferred my church membership to Hermitage United Methodist Church, next door to McKendree Towers. In addition to attending Sunday School, church and UMW circle meetings regularly, I attend the Wednesday night family dinners and special classes afterwards. I completed a thirty-week class, "Christian Believer," and am now studying "Priorities for Faithful Living," a ten-week study.

These are just a sampling of the things I am involved in since I moved to McKendree Village Retirement Community. I found David Collins' message in the September 2003 *UMAR News* very interesting. I tell my friends that when I came to McKendree I did not go into retirement. I came out of retirement.

Please send news about your current activities and interests to share with Association members. Include your name, former U of M department, address, phone, e-mail address, and, if you wish, a photo to: Janell Rudolph, UMAR News Editor, 8952 E. Glendale Ct., Cordova, TN 38018 (nrudolph@memphis.edu). Letters may be edited to fit the space limitations of the newsletter.

UMAR Initiates the Traces Award

By Charles Stagg

UMAR has established an award to recognize individuals who, though retired from The University of Memphis, have remained "in the traces" by continuing to contribute to the academic community through scholarship or to the local community through service.

At the December 16, 2003, UMAR Annual Meeting and Holiday Luncheon at the Wilson Holiday Inn, 3700 Central Avenue, UMAR members Professors Les Pourciau and J. Lasley Dameron each received an In the Traces Award for excellence in their respective academic areas though they are retired.

Professor Dameron, U of M Professor Emeritus in English (American Literature), the 2002 winner, is a world-renowned Edgar Allan Poe scholar who continues to publish critical articles on Poe and also assists critical journals by evaluating articles on Poe by others for possible publication. Among other things, he recently helped bring a direct descendant of Poe's family to Memphis for a Public Program on Poe's life and work, sponsored by the Friends of the U of M Libraries.

Professor Pourciau, Emeritus Director of the U of M Libraries and the 2003 winner, has established and continued to build on a worldwide reputation for helping Central and Eastern European and Asian libraries successfully move into the 20th/21st century information age. Professor Pourciau leads groups to these libraries where he then works to help them adapt to present-day communication and information needs, and also has a major office in an international organization which has this as its chief purpose. He also documents not only his work with the libraries as such but also the life, culture, terrain, etc. where they are located, by excellently-made color slides, which he then uses in public programs in the US to educate people here as to the work his group does, and the cultures of the areas involved.



Lasley Dameron (left) and Les Pourciau (right), display the framed prints that represent the Traces Award.

A 17TH CENTURY NUN'S PRAYER

Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking that I must say something on every subject and on every occasion

Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. With my vast store of wisdom, it seems a pity not to use it all, but You know Lord that I want a few friends at the end.

Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details; give me wings to get to the point.

Seal my lips on my aches and pains. They are increasing, and love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by.

I dare not ask for grace enough to enjoy the tales of others' pains, but help me to endure them with patience.

I dare not ask for improved memory, but for a growing humility when my memory seems to clash with the memories of others.

Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be mistaken. Keep me reasonable sweet; I do not want to be a saint—some of them are so hard to live with—but a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the devil.

Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places, and talents in unexpected people. And, give me, O Lord, the grace to tell them so.

Future Events

How would you like to go to the Memphis Zoo in May? Visit historic Elmwood Cemetery in June? Go to the next Wonders exhibit in July? All of these events are in your future if you want to join other UMAR members on these organized outings.

Program Chair Dot Arata is working on the details for these member events. Mark your calendars now (May 11, June 15, and July 13) and wait for details to arrive in the mail.



UMAR

635 Normal Street
The University of Memphis
Memphis, TN 38152

Ever growing, ever learning ~

UMAR News is the newsletter for the University of Memphis Association of Retirees, formerly the Emeriti Club.

The University of Memphis. A Tennessee Board of Regents Institution. An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action University

In Memoriam

Octavia Kealhofer "Tobie" Adkins, 11/03
Harvey Lee Alcorn, 10/03
Max Ballard, 8/03
Purnell Blackwell, 2/03/04
Edell Evans, 9/03
Virginia Sims Foreman, 11/03
Howard E. Frye, 11/03
Burl E. Gilliland, 1/04
Francis T. Howick, 1/16/04
Elmore Lewis, 10/03
*Percy Lowe, Jr., 10/03
Everlina M. Martin, 9/03
Virginia Nichol, 8/03
Beverly J. Riggins, 1/04
*Charles Edward Rinehart, 8/03
Martha R. Schirmer, 1/04
Linda M. Scott, 10/03
Philip Smith, 1/04
Walter Wade, 1/04
Emma Ruth Ward, 1/04
Eva Dell Williams, 8/03
Ruth G. Woodbury, 1/04

* Employee at time of death

Have you forgotten something?

If you have not done so already, now is the time to renew your UMAR membership. Annual membership dues are \$10 for individuals and \$20 for joint memberships. Life Membership is \$75 for single or joint membership.

As a retiree of the University of Memphis, you:

- Keep official University I.D.
- Park free (with general parking permit)
- Use recreation facilities free
- Get discounts at the University Store
- Are listed in the U of M campus directory

Membership in UMAR provides extra benefits. As a member of UMAR, you:

- Get invitations to all UMAR functions
- Get notice of UMAR's special programs
- Receive the UMAR newsletter
- Keep in contact with Uof M friends and associates

If you have not received your renewal letter, contact the UMAR office in the Alumni Center (901-678-4378) or call Frank Dyer, Chair of the Membership Committee, at 901-758-2884.