



Number 1

(September 2001)



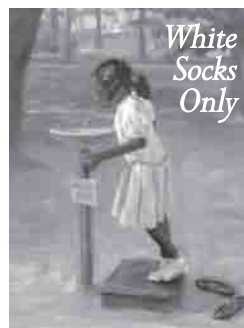
Arne J. Nixon taught children's literature and storytelling for many years at California State University, Fresno. In 1995 he gave 22,000 children's books to the Madden Library and when he died, in 1997, he left the Library a generous bequest to endow the Arne Nixon Center for the Study of Children's Literature.

"It is the function of some people to be a lamp and some to be a mirror. I have been very pleased to function as a mirror of others' work." — Arne Nixon.

ANCA hosts Evelyn Coleman

Author Evelyn Coleman will be the featured speaker at the first meeting of ANCA, the Arne Nixon Center Advocates. The public is invited to attend on Saturday, September 29, in Room 200 of the University Center on the Fresno State campus. Doors open at 9:00 a.m. with the meeting scheduled to begin at 9:30 a.m. Coffee and juice will be served. The program, with time for questions and answers, will last about an hour. Children are welcome. Admission is free for ANCA members, \$2 for non-members, and \$1 for students. Reservations are required: call (559) 278-8116 or address E-mail to jennifer_crow@csufresno.edu. Free parking is available in Lots D and E. From Shaw Avenue, enter the campus on Barton, then turn right on Keats: the lots are on the left. Ms. Coleman's books will be available for sale and autographing, and the Arne Nixon Center will be open for tours following the program.

Ms. Coleman's award-winning picture books include *To Be a Drum*; *The Foot Warmer and the Crow*; *The Glass Bottle Tree*; *The Riches of Osceola McCarty*; and *White Socks Only*. The last title is based on her own childhood experience, when she was too young to realize that some people hated her for the color of her skin. Many of her stories include supernatural elements. *Born in Sin*, her first young adult novel, stirred critical controversy with its theme of different kinds of prejudice and its hip-talking, "bilingual" heroine. The author has written two books for the American Girl History Series: *Mystery of the Dark Tower* and *Circle of Fire*.



White Socks Only

EVELYN COLEMAN

Karen Cushman opens Nixon Center

Newbery Award medalist Karen Cushman was the keynote speaker at opening ceremonies for the Arne Nixon Center on April 28, speaking for an audience of 200 at a public event and later at a party for donors and dignitaries. Arne Nixon had invited her to Fresno on several occasions, she told one audience, adding, "Arne, I'm here now."

Ms. Cushman's first talk described her writing career, from an unpublished, childhood story, "Jingle Bagels," in which Santa climbs down the chimney of a Jewish family, to her award-winning novels: *Catherine, Called Birdy*; *The Midwife's Apprentice*; *The Ballad of Lucy Whipple*; and *Matilda Bone*. Since much of published history emphasizes the accomplishments of men, Cushman said she takes pleasure in writing about the untold stories of girls and

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CALENDAR

2001

September 29

ANCA presents Evelyn Coleman, 9 a.m., Fresno State University Center, Room 200.

December 7

Angelica Carpenter with "Heather to Hibiscus: Robert Louis Stevenson from Scotland to the South Seas," slide-illustrated lecture, 1 p.m. Henry Madden Library.

Watch for details on coming events:

2002

March 8 & 9

Children's Literature Spring Festival

September

ANCA program

2003

April

Frances Hodgson Burnett Conference

May

Literary Gardens Tour to England

2004

June

Children's Literature Association annual conference.

AND MORE!

Donations of Materials

September 1999–July 2001

Gay Amend: 11 books.

Anonymous Donor: 1,557 historical children's books and periodicals.

Baldwin Collection: 13 books.

Shirley Canales: Leo Politi artwork and other materials.

Susan Cooper: 32 foreign language editions of her books.

Karen Cushman: 17 foreign editions of her books.

de Grummond Collection: 92 books and periodicals.

Dorling-Kindersley: 69 books.

Friends of the Fresno County Public Library: 20 books.

Ruth Gordon: 596 periodicals.

Joyce Hall: 115 periodicals and pamphlets.

Pamela Harer: 140 books and periodicals.

Holiday House: 35 books.

Houghton-Mifflin: 63 books.

Diane Iverson: original artwork for *My Favorite Tree*, papers.

Ruth LaRocca: 49 books.

Carol & Don Larson: 391 books.

Los Gatos Public Library: 6 bound volumes of periodicals.

Palm Springs (Florida) Public Library: 18 books.

Betty Jo Peterson: 30 periodicals (ongoing subscriptions)

Random House: 230 books.

The Sciandra Family: 30 books.

Tina Richter: 12 books.

Scholastic: 111 books.

Allan Shields: 20 books, AV equipment.

Vince Smith: 36 books.

Patricia and John Taylor:

Barry Moser woodcut.

To list every gift would overflow this newsletter. Thanks to all our donors!

Author Karen Cushman



Heather to Hibiscus

Curator Angelica Carpenter will present a literary travelogue entitled "Heather to Hibiscus: Robert Louis Stevenson from Scotland to the South Seas," on Friday, December 7, at 1:00 p.m. in the Henry Madden Library. The famous author of *Treasure Island*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and *A Child's Garden of Verses* was born in 1850 to a wealthy Edinburgh family. He met his American wife-to-be in France, and later traveled to America and on three famous voyages through the South Seas. This slide-illustrated tour shows historical photos and current views of Edinburgh, France, California, and Samoa. Ms. Carpenter's book, *Robert Louis Stevenson: Finding Treasure Island*, will be available for sale and autographing. This program, part of the Madden Library's Millionth Volume Lecture Series, is free and open to the public. For more information, call 278-8116.

Cushman, from page 1

and women. Her next book will be an Orphan Train novel with a Polish orphan from Chicago—an unlikely possibility, she conceded, but, after all, it is her story to write . . . and she is Polish, and from Chicago.

Her evening talk began with first lines from famous children's books. (These appear in this *Magic Mirror* in the form of a quiz.) Cushman quoted her fictional character, the mother of Lucy Whipple, offering advice to her teenaged daughter: "There are worms in apples and worms in radishes. The worm in the radish, he thinks the whole world is a radish."

"Those of us who read," concluded Cushman, "know the whole world is not a radish. It is a crabbing boat in Chesapeake Bay, the walls of medieval Krakow, and the place where the wild things are. It is Narnia and Brooklyn and Gold Rush California. It is the glory of the whirligigs in May's garden, the lonely anger of Heidi's grandfather, the warmth of the wind blowing through the willows, and the terror of a Nazi death camp. That is why you read. And why I write. And why we need a place like the Arne Nixon Center to preserve and protect these books—these treasures—for other generations. As Anna Quindlen said, even in this age of computers, 'It is not possible that the book is over. Too many people love it so'."

"Tails & Tidbits" from ANCA



By Denise Sciandra,
ANCA President

"Tales and Tidbits," as many of you may remember, was the name of a popular extension class taught by Arne Nixon in the 1980s. Here now is a version of "Tales and Tidbits" for the new millennium.

In January, after having volunteered at the Arne Nixon Center for more than a year, I agreed to become president of a then nameless, memberless, proposed support group for the Center. As a friend of Arne Nixon, a student of children's literature, and someone who wants to help perpetuate Nixon's work, I was pleased to accept this position. The group has come a long way since then. It has a name, the Arne Nixon Center Advocates (ANCA), a mission statement, a logo, and a strong, active board of directors including Laurel Ashlock, Ken Carrington, Jane Fischer, Audry Hanson, Nancy Hill, Jessica Kaiser, Betty Jo Peterson, Theresa Pallares, Jackie Sarkisian, Sandy Stubblefield, and Helen Teichman. Three board members attended the American Library Association conference recently held in San Francisco where they were pleased to talk to authors who are enthusiastic about Arne Nixon, the Center, and coming to Fresno.

Since the Center's official opening on April 28, 81 people have joined ANCA and \$8,645 has been donated and paid in memberships. Carmen Farr Gregory and Rosellen Kershaw became the first Life Members and the Fresno Area Reading Council donated \$2,000. Those joining through the end of 2001 will be considered founding members.

Arne Nixon's passion for children's literature was contagious. He shared that passion by hosting children's book festivals to which he invited authors, illustrators, and storytellers from across the country. ANCA hopes to perpetuate that same excitement through festivals and other literary events.

I look forward to a productive and exciting first year for ANCA! I welcome your ideas and input.

MAGIC MIRROR

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Study of Children's Literature
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and by appointment.

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Magic Mirror

Angelica Carpenter, Editor
Janet Bancroft, Designer & Co-Editor

by Angelica Carpenter

A friend, on hearing of my new job as Curator of the Arne Nixon Center, said, "You're working in children's literature? Isn't that a little like throwing Br'er Rabbit into the briar patch?" She was right—there is nowhere else I would rather be!

Two years have brought many achievements and even more dreams for the future. With help from other Library departments, the Center has catalogued more than 10,000 books from Arne Nixon's original donation of 22,000 volumes. For the coming year, cataloguing must continue to be our major focus.

The Center buys about 500 new books a year—multicultural titles selected to enhance the collection founded by Arne Nixon. Donors have given thousands of children's books, adding depth and breadth to this collection. Now we have a unique opportunity to buy a Lewis Carroll research collection of 2,000 items. Owning these materials would help to put the Arne Nixon Center on the international library map, but to do so, we need \$150,000.

We are very lucky that Karen Cushman has a soft spot in her heart for Arne Nixon and for libraries. We extend our thanks to her and to our other wonderful supporters: Michael Cart, the distinguished author and librarian, who gives his time and expertise as a member of the Center's Board of Directors, and his fellow Board members Tawfic Farah (Arne Nixon's "adopted" son), and Michael Gorman, Dean of Library Services. Our donors are too many to list, but special thanks are due to Carmen Farr Gregory, Marilyn Simons, an anonymous donor, and to everyone who gave money, books, or other materials and services.

Programming, fundraising, and many other functions will progress under the leadership of ANCA, the Arne Nixon Center Advocates. President Denise Sciandra has proved an outstanding spokesperson for the Center, an effective schmoozer of authors, and a dedicated recruiter of talented people for the ANCA Board of Directors. Thanks also go to our dedicated volunteers, led in hours worked by Karen Dennison, a future librarian, and Younghee Lim, a visiting librarian from Korea.

The Arne Nixon Center is one of just a few children's literature collections in the country. We thank curators Karen Nelson Hoyle of the Kerlan Collection at the University of Minnesota, Dee Jones of the de Grummond Collection at the University of Southern

Mississippi, and Rita Smith of the Baldwin Library of Historical Children's Literature at the University of Florida for advice, encouragement, and books. By following traditions in these established collections, and establishing some new traditions of our own, the Arne Nixon Center is well launched toward becoming a major West Coast resource for the study and celebration of children's literature.

See you in the briar patch!

Answers to quiz:

1. *Goodnight, Moon*
2. *The Diary of Anne Frank*
3. *Little Women*
4. *Horton Hatches the Egg*

—Arne Nixon Center— attracts generous endowment

Just months after its official opening, the Arne Nixon Center is proud to announce that it has received a generous gift from Carmen Farr Gregory, a former student and devoted friend and follower of Arne Nixon. The gift is in the form of an endowment that will fund the purchase of books and other materials for the Center.

Mrs. Gregory is a retired educator who studied children's literature under Professor Nixon at Fresno State and attended many of his programs featuring authors, illustrators, and storytellers. Perhaps inspired and encouraged by authors at these literary festivals, she has won numerous awards for her own writing. She has been influenced by many of Nixon's teachings, especially by his emphasis on the universal truths in children's literature—truths deepened by the simplicity of language and direct honesty that children respect.

The gift of the Carmen Farr Gregory Endowment will help enrich the collections of the Arne Nixon Center and preserve the best in children's and young adult literature for generations to come.



Frances Hodgson Burnett events

The Arne Nixon Center will host a conference on Frances Hodgson Burnett and her famous books (especially *The Secret Garden*) in the spring of 2003, and will sponsor a Literary Gardens Tour to England in May 2003 as a follow-up to the conference. Both events are still in the planning stages.

The conference will be a three-day event, co-sponsored by the Fresno Metropolitan Museum, Fresno Pacific University, local gardening groups, and other community sponsors to be announced. Events will include a slide show about Burnett's life, lectures by experts, and panel discussions on Burnett and her famous books, including *Little Lord Fauntleroy* and *A Little Princess*.

The Literary Gardens Tour will include sites such as Burnett's walled garden in Kent (she based *The Secret Garden* on her experiences there); Sissinghurst Castle, Kent, with its garden designed by authors Vita Sackville-West and Harold Nicholson; and Oxford's beautiful gardens, including the Deer Park at Magdalen College and the Botanic Garden, frequented by Lewis Carroll. Additional sites and talks related to gardens and children's literature will be added. For more information, call 278-8116.

The Arne Nixon Center for the Study of Children's Literature

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Winkies addressed

Curator Angelica Carpenter was recently elected to the Board of Directors of the International Wizard of Oz Club. A member since the 1970s, and a self-professed Oz nut since the 1950s, Ms. Carpenter serves also as contributing editor to the club's journal, *The Baum Bugle*. On July 15th she addressed the Winkie conference at Asilomar, on the Monterey Peninsula. (Reminder: Winkies live in the West, where they were formerly ruled by a wicked witch. After she melted, the Winkies invited the Tin Woodman to become their emperor.) Approximately 170 Winkies attended the three-day conference.



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Can you identify book titles from these famous lines?

(Answers on page 3)

Q1 In the great green room there was a telephone
and a red balloon and a picture of the cow
jumping over the moon.

Q3 Christmas won't be Christmas without any presents.

Q2 . . . In spite of everything I still believe
that people are really good at heart.

Q4 I meant what I said and I said what I meant . . .
An elephant's faithful one hundred percent.