



# FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

## Wellesley College

VOLUME 23 • SPRING 2007 • NUMBER 1

### Seeing the World Through Architecture

*Diane Speare Triant '68*

**L**ouren Enid Hernandez Rivera Cordero Caban Ponce Sanabria '08 (less elegantly known as Louren Hernandez) enjoys stealing away to her cubby in the Art Library. "It is my mini office," she says, "complete with pictures, books, messy piles of paper, post-its galore, and a box of tissues."

Once outside her library haven, though, this architecture and political science double major is anything but introverted. You may find her teaching aerobics (she is a certified instructor), editing the *International Relations Council Journal*, crafting her own jewelry, meeting with the Art Department Student Advisory Committee, or energetically playing the drums (she's studied percussion for eight years). Her pre-Wellesley life was no less busy.



Hernandez at Montmartre

"I am the eldest of five children," says Louren, who was born in Bayamon, Puerto Rico, but moved to Altamonte Springs, Florida, with her mother and two siblings in 1993. "My mom worked three jobs until two years ago, so I was put in charge of caring for my brother and sister, and later my cousins. Living in a single-parent home was challenging, but even more so with a parent who does not know

the language and with a special needs sister."

Nonetheless, Altamonte Springs offered an idyllic small-town upbringing of sorts. "My childhood was a mix of imaginary worlds, canoeing in the Wekiva River, chasing lizards, swinging in hammocks, drawing, and reading," Louren says. "I used to draw houses and buildings in a sketchpad. Later, I took drafting in high school and it renewed my childhood interest in architecture."

That latent interest followed her to Wellesley, surfacing when Louren happened upon an urban development project in Roxbury.

"I worked for an after-school tutoring program in Roxbury," she explains. "Returning from

*continued on page 8*

### A Two-Track Life: Rose Styron, April 25

*Julia Hanna Brown '88*

When she was a high school freshman, Rose Styron won a national poetry contest. She doesn't remember the name of the prize; in fact, she was too embarrassed to collect the honor—but the experience was rewarding in a different way. "It gave me enough of a feeling that the poetry was worth something," she recalls in a phone interview from her home in Connecticut.

Despite this early success, Styron, a Baltimore native, thought she might

follow a pre-med course at Wellesley. But a freshman English class with Professor Mary Sue Elkins convinced her otherwise. "She made me believe in myself as a writer," says Styron. "I dropped anything biological or scientific in a hurry and became an English major. There's always someone pivotal who wakes you up in that way."

On Wednesday, April 25, Styron will read from her poetry in the Clapp Library Lecture Room (reception,

4:15 p.m.; program, 4:45 p.m.) and answer questions more generally about her life as a writer and human rights activist. "I have something of a two-track life, if you will," she muses. "Occasionally, they converge and cross over. More recently, I've also been asked to speak on mental illness due to Bill's depression." (Styron raised four children with William Styron, author of *Lie Down in Darkness*, *The Confessions of Nat Turner*, *Sophie's Choice*, and

*continued on page 3*

## From the Librarian

*Micheline Jedrey, V.P. Information Services and College Librarian*

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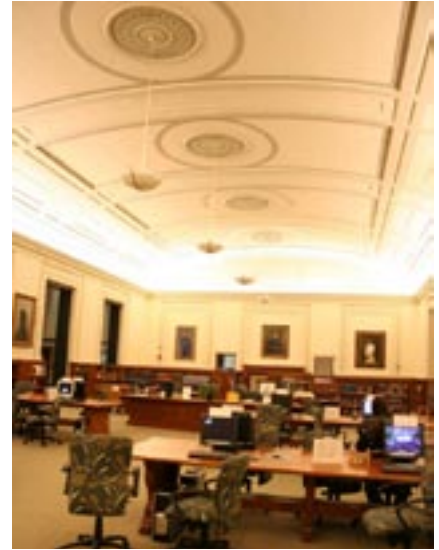
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Nearly twenty years ago, in July 1987, I joined the Wellesley College Library staff as the Associate Librarian for Technical Services. In my first months, my observations about Wellesley were usually made in contrast to MIT, where I had worked for the previous sixteen years in the Engineering Library and then the Rotch Library of Architecture and Urban Planning. For example: the size of the institution (Wellesley was smaller); organizational hierarchy (less bureaucratic); educational mission (undergraduate); composition of the student body (all women); the campus design (buildings were not connected by the infinite corridor); and parking (there was some)—all these differences made me realize I was not in Cambridge anymore. But there were also many similarities between the MIT Libraries and the Wellesley College Library, as we both were embarking at roughly the same time on the implementation of technology to support the delivery of library services.

Shortly after I arrived at Wellesley, we selected our first automated library system to eliminate the card catalog and to replace the ledger books where records of our library acquisitions were maintained. The College was about to initiate the installation of the first part of the “Local Area Network” that would provide the foundation for campus-wide communications by offering electronic mail and by providing access to the Library’s catalog from locations outside the library buildings. We could begin to imagine the ways in which our services might be influenced by these technological advances. But I think it is unlikely that any of us could have envisioned the enormity of the transformation in the ways we provide services today.

In August 1987, Wellesley chose the integrated library system provided by Innovative Interfaces, Inc.—the first liberal arts college to do so. Twenty years later, we are still with Innovative.



Last week we had a demonstration of the latest version of their online catalog, called Encore—a “discovery services platform” that takes full advantage of the latest Web technologies, offering many features such as “tag clouds” that present relevant search terms to help patrons refine their searches; the ability for patrons to link their own terms to catalog records to aid in future retrieval; and, the opportunity to incorporate tables of contents and book jackets as part of the information retrieved by patrons. This is an exciting new tool and one that we are likely to incorporate within the next year.

During this 20-year period of change, change and more change, it has sometimes been tempting to simply give in to the relentless pressure to adopt the latest technology. But as each new technological opportunity is presented to us, the Library staff thoroughly assesses the potential benefits and associated risks, guided by the College’s mission to “provide an excellent liberal arts education to women who will make a difference in the world” and with a deep understanding of the College’s commitment to student learning as the top priority. As we begin our third decade of delivering technology-enhanced library services, I am confident that we will continue to make the right choices for the Wellesley community. 

ROSE STYRON, continued from page 1

*Darkness Visible: A Memoir of Madness*. He died last November at the age of 81.)

Styron has published four books of poetry, the most recent being *By Vineyard Light*, a handsome volume that pairs her verse with photography by Craig Driggs of Martha's Vineyard, where the Styrons summered for over forty years. "I'm working on a new collection now, and have a few poems coming out in the spring issue of the *American Poetry Review*," she says. "I've just begun to send out my work again."

In addition to poetry, Styron has devoted much of her life to advocating for human rights around the globe. An early member of Amnesty International's U.S. group and PEN America's Freedom to Write committee, she has traveled around the world on behalf of political prisoners and persecuted writers. "I suppose 1968 was the year that real activism was born for me," says Styron, who protested against the Vietnam War.

From the 1970s onward she traveled to hot spots such as Northern Ireland, South Africa, Chile, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Poland, East and West Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Russia. In addition to the information she gathered behind the scenes, Styron met and befriended writers from around the world. A surprising number made the trip



to the United States for her husband's memorial service, which took place February 2 in New York.

Styron laughs when describing another unexpected benefit of her human rights work: a lifelong addiction to birding. "I needed it in 1977 as a cover for human rights travel," she says. "Some friends encouraged me to come along on a trip to Africa, and I've been hooked ever since. It's become a life enhancement that has nothing to do with my work—except poetry." As she looks forward to returning to Wellesley, Styron offers a reflection that hints at what promises to be a rich, interesting program in the Friends' series of events. "If you live long enough," she observes, "there are many parts to your life." 📖

## April is Poetry Month

Thursday, APRIL 5th, 7:00 pm, Wang Campus Center

Members of the Wellesley community will gather on Thursday, April 5th to celebrate National Poetry Month. In the tradition of the "Favorite Poem Project," a program founded by former Wellesley professor and Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky, students, faculty and staff will take turns sharing a poem of their choice with the audience. Participants include President Diana Chapman Walsh, Professor Marjorie Agosin, Sumita Chakraborty '08 and many others. Please join us for an evening of poetry.

Sponsored by the Friends of the Library. Refreshments will be served. Tishman Commons, Wang Campus Center. For more information contact (781) 283-2872.

## Calendar

April 5, 2007

### The Favorite Poem Project:

Sponsored by Friends of the Library  
Featuring President Diana Chapman Walsh  
and other members of the  
Wellesley community  
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.  
Wang Campus Center  
Tishman Commons  
Refreshments will be served.

April 25, 2007

### Guest Speaker: Rose Styron

Reception: 4:15 p.m.  
Program: 4:45 p.m.  
Margaret Clapp Library  
Library Lecture Room

May 1, 2007

### Authors on Stage

Celebrate May Day by attending the ever-popular Authors on Stage series:  
Authors: Judith Martin '59,  
*No Vulgar Hotel: The Desire and Pursuit of Venice*; plus two additional current authors to be announced.

Ticket: \$25

Coffee hour 9:45 a.m.

Program 10:30 a.m.

Wellesley College Club

For information call: (781) 237-5519

June 8, 2007

### In Praise of Wellesley Men

Exhibition featuring rare books and manuscripts donated to the Library by fathers, husbands, sons, brothers and professors of Wellesley alumnae.

Faculty gallery talk: 2:30 p.m.

Margaret Clapp Library  
Crozier Reference Rm., 2nd floor





## In Praise of Wellesley Men: An Exhibition

Ruth R. Rogers, Special Collections Librarian

Inside the covers of thousands of rare books and manuscripts in Special Collections are bookplates with the names of fathers, husbands, sons, brothers and professors of Wellesley alumnae. This spring, a major exhibition in the Clapp Library will pay tribute to the men who have given to Special Collections in honor of Wellesley women.

The first man to donate books for Wellesley women was the founder of the College himself, Henry F. Durant, who gave his personal library to the students and faculty as the foundation of the new College Library in 1875. Though the major part of the Durant library broadly reflected contemporary 19th century publishing, he purchased far more costly items for the collection as well. He believed firmly that the study of history required the use of primary sources, and that Wellesley women should have access to them, just as their male counterparts did at Harvard and other prestigious institutions. Among the unique items he gave are an ancient Egyptian papyrus fragment of the *Book of the Dead*, as well as 5,000-year-old Sumerian clay tablets, and a huge 15th century Italian Gradual. Of all the items Durant gave the Library, the most significant for its provenance is an enormous vellum charter, written in Latin and dated 996 C.E. It is signed by the Holy Roman Emperor Otto III, and still has its lead seal with his image.

Following Durant's example, George Herbert Palmer donated his extensive collection of English poetry and literature in memory



Babylonian clay tablet with cuneiform writing, ca. 3500 B.C.E.

of his beloved wife, second Wellesley College president Alice Freeman Palmer. With such rarities as William Blake's *Songs of Innocence* and the first printed edition of *King Lear*, Palmer was criticized by the bibliophile world when he gave this esteemed collection to Wellesley and not to Harvard, where he was a member of the Philosophy Department. In addition to the Blake on display is Richard Rolle's *The Pricke of Conscience*, a popular medieval morality tale. Palmer's copy is an early 15th century manuscript in wooden boards, with several pages of childish Elizabethan-era sketches and doodling that are more intriguing than the text itself! Palmer's generosity benefits the Library to this day, with an endowed fund for the purchase of rare books to augment his collection.

Not all of the donors represented are as well known as Durant and Palmer, though many of their gifts are of equal value to research and teaching. Dr. William C. Beck honored his wife, Jane Murray Beck, '30 by giving *De Humani Corporis Fabrica*, by Andreas Vesalius. This renowned 16th century anatomy text is prized for its accurate medical descriptions and

detailed woodcuts, including a morbid depiction which shows the skeletal structure of a cadaver still on the gallows.

The list of Wellesley men whose gifts have enriched the Library could go on for many pages, but one in particular must be mentioned for its ongoing legacy. In 1993, Walter C. Klein gave a gift to Special Collections that was not a book or a manuscript—it was the gift of conservation. Established in memory of his first wife, Mary Eddy Klein '42, and in honor of his daughter, Margaret Kennedy Klein '72, Mr. Klein gave an endowment to restore and preserve the precious materials in this library for generations of Wellesley students to come. His fund is used every year to repair and rebind fragile books and manuscripts so they may continue to be used by classes. In fact, the Otto III charter mentioned earlier was removed from its acidic backing and restored thanks to this fund. How fitting that a gift from the first 'Wellesley Man' was restored due to the generosity of another 'Wellesley Man' over 100 years later!

All are welcome to view the exhibition "In Praise of Wellesley Men," in Clapp Library during May and June, 2007. For more than a century, their generosity and support of Wellesley women has enriched the College Library immeasurably. 📖

**Exhibition location: Clapp Library Lobby and Reference Room, 2nd floor; Special Collections, 4th floor.**

**Faculty gallery talk, June 8th, 2:30. Crozier Reference Room, 2nd Floor. For more information, call (781) 283-3592.**

## From the Archives: The Story of Longfellow Pond

*Julia Hanna Brown '88*

More than a few Wellesley students have whiled away their study time staring out the west-facing windows of Clapp Library at the fountain just outside. Referred to as Longfellow Pond, the concrete-lined basin began its life as a natural pond named for the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, who visited the College on several occasions before his death in 1882.


Letters and news articles from the archives chronicle these visits in vivid detail, while Longfellow's own journals document his first visit, on October 25, 1875: "Drove with the Horsfords to Wellesley to see Mr. Durant's Female College. A fine building overlooking Lake Waban; three hundred pupils. After dinner we had a row on the lake in the College boat, the "Evangeline," with a crew of eight girls and the handsome captain, Miss E—. [Frances Emerson, daughter of a Unitarian minister in Dorchester and a professor at the

College] It was like sailing with the nine Muses."

In an account of Longfellow's second visit on October 11, 1876, the *Boston Journal* wrote of the fine weather and beautiful campus: "The gem of the college is the library [then located in College Hall], which is divided into spacious alcoves and finished in black walnut. There are accommodations for one hundred and thirty thousand volumes, and as there is only a collection of about ten thousand books—mostly the gift of Mr. Durant—donations to the library will be particularly appreciated." A repeat rowing performance, with singing, was a highlight of this visit as well: "The young ladies were adepts at the oar, fine vocalists, and looked very handsome in their jaunty boating suits."

Longfellow made a third, impromptu visit in 1877, and was expected for a fourth in 1878. A pageant was

planned in his honor, with students to be dressed as Minnehaha, Priscilla, and Evangeline. It was expected that the pond would be named in his honor, and that the fountain, in its own dramatic role, would spout forth at a key point in the proceedings. In the end, however, Longfellow was too ill to make the journey from Cambridge.

"Wellesley's first pageant was a pageant that never came off, yet to the two or three of us who remember it is more real than the most elaborate of all our campus spectacles since," wrote Katharine Lee Bates in the July 22, 1911 issue of the *Boston Evening Transcript*. "And Longfellow Fountain, which faithfully began to play at the hour set, still laughs softly in the sunshine at the memory of that christening it never had." 

*Many thanks to Wilma Slaight and Ian Graham of the Wellesley College Archives.*



An undated photo (above) shows Longfellow Pond with College Hall in the background. At right, Clapp Library in the 1970s. The new extension, added in 1975, overlooks the "pond," now a concrete-lined basin.



## Behind the Scenes

*Another in a series of Q&As with people who work in the Wellesley College Libraries*

As an undergraduate at Bryn Mawr College, Emily Bell majored in physics, thinking she might want to build spacecraft or airplanes one day. She went on to study materials science in graduate school, but dropped out after realizing that she would rather be in a field that involves more hands-on work. “I was always doing crafts in my spare time,” recalls Bell, a senior library associate in the conservation lab at Clapp since July 2006. “Knitting, photography, paper crafts of various sorts. At the time I hadn’t even heard of book conservation.”

### *How did you find out about conservation as a field?*

It was tricky. Whenever I worked on a craft project I tended to be very precise and I was still interested in the sciences, so I started to ask people what sort of work that suggested to them. Someone made an offhand comment along the lines of, ‘Isn’t there a field where you repair art?’



### *Did you get a certificate or do an internship?*

Historically speaking, conservation has always been learned by apprenticeship, although there are a few programs now. I volunteered for five months at the Textile Museum in Washington, D.C. as a way to get into the field and learn about it. I also came across a conservator for the library at the University of Maryland at College Park who was looking for a part-time technician. I spent five years there and was mostly taught on the job.

### *Can you talk a bit about conservation?*

Conservation is different from restoration, which primarily means

that you make something look like it did when it was new. In conservation, you don’t really want to alter the history of an object. You have to be able to open and close the cover of a book in order to get at the content inside. Over time, that wears on the various components. Conservation preserves the readability of the book but doesn’t try to disguise the fact that it’s been used. It’s a tricky balance, although a lot of this is more applicable to rare books. In a library context where the books circulate, you can be a little more invasive to restore a book’s functionality. That crosses over into book repair.

### *Can you talk a bit about a recent project you worked on?*

Archives had a couple of books in its collection that were owned by Vladimir Nabokov—*The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* and *Nikolai Gogol*. Both have illustrations on the end sheets drawn by Nabokov. On one, the cover was starting to warp and the cloth on the spine was fading. The other had a paper book jacket that had cracked along the spine. We needed to stabilize both in some way so the condition wouldn’t get any worse. Since it was a case where you didn’t really want to alter the original, I made clamshell boxes for the two books and a separate enclosure for the jacket.

### *What do you like about your work?*

I enjoy working with my hands and having a tangible result. I like the challenge of decision-making when you’re faced with a given book. Each book has its quirks, and what works well for one might not work well for another. I also enjoy teaching the students who help me in the lab—usually, when they learn more about conservation, they get pretty excited. That’s very gratifying. 📖

## Sarah Sentilles: Inside Teach for America

On October 18, the Friends of the Library welcomed guest speaker Sarah Sentilles, author of *Taught by America: A Story of Struggle and Hope in Compton*. The daughter of Ann Sherwood Sentilles ’69, Sentilles talked about her experience teaching elementary school in Compton, California, for two years in the Teach for America program. “I thought I would teach, then go on with my life,” said



Sentilles, a graduate of Yale University. Instead, the experience changed her life. In her book, Sentilles’ offers an on-the-ground account of what it was like to be dropped into one of the most underserved school districts in the country with little training and no supplies. “I had no idea what I was doing, and so much was at stake,” she said. In her comments, Sentilles critiqued Teach for America’s model of hiring recent college graduates for two-year stints as an unsustainable reform effort. “It creates a dependency on cheap, temporary, ill-prepared labor,” she observed. “It’s a short-term solution when long-term vision is needed.”



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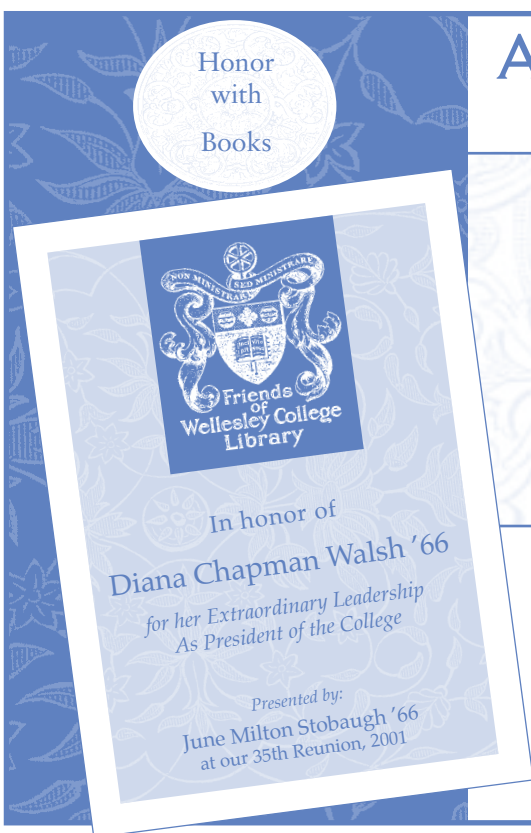
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LOUREN HERNANDEZ continued from page 1

one of the sessions, I stopped by the Boston Architectural College on Newbury Street, which has ground-floor exhibitions, and saw an advertisement by Discover Roxbury for students interested in doing historical research. It involved developing an architectural tour of the historic Roxbury area in order to promote cultural awareness and bring suburban families to visit urban areas.”

With the help of a Schiff Fellowship [a Wellesley Architecture Department grant], Louren was soon spending summer days indexing Roxbury and Dorchester area neighborhoods according to building design: Art Deco, French Academic, Greek Revival, High Italianate, Gothic Revival, Late Queen Anne, Second Empire—76 styles in all.

“I first went to [Art Librarian] Brooke Henderson, who helped me do preliminary research on the development of Boston in the 19th century,” Louren says. “We figured out that few works have been published on Roxbury, so the research would involve looking at records and public documents. I was happily surprised that Clapp had a copy of *Vital Records of Roxbury* from the 19th century and Francis Drake’s *The Town of Roxbury*.”

Through Wellesley’s primary-source resources and the use of interlibrary loan, Louren acquired the materials needed to expand her project into an independent study course, comparing Roxbury’s development efforts a century ago to present-day programs. “I reached the limit on books I could check out,” she says with a wide

smile. “I didn’t even know there was a limit!”

In the process, she became a strong proponent of historic preservation as an alternative to gentrification projects. Her architectural explorations are expanding abroad this semester to France, where Louren is studying at the University of Aix-en-Provence.

“I have come to love research,” she says. “Not just the architectural aspect of it, but the actual process of the research. Someone once told me that throwing yourself into work is dangerous. I never quite understood it until now: You risk falling in love with what you are doing. I think I have.” 