

B.I.L.L. BOARD

WINTER 2003/04
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NUMBER 2

NEWSLETTER OF THE BERKSHIRE INSTITUTE FOR LIFETIME LEARNING

Winter 2004 Semester

From January 12 through February 20 and from March 2 through March 23, B.I.L.L. will again be offering new and exciting courses for the Winter 2004 semester.

Healing Practices For Today will be held at Canyon Ranch in Lenox. *Genealogy* sessions will be held at the Silvio O. Conte Archives off Dan Fox Drive in Pittsfield. All other courses will be held at the Berkshire South Regional Community Center, 15 Crissey Road, off Route 7, north of Great Barrington. See the catalog for complete details.

JANUARY 12 – FEBRUARY 20

MONDAY

- 10 am to 11:30 am • *Remarkable Berkshire Artists* – K. Frelinghuysen, C. Gilder, M. Hickey, A. Jon, C. Parton, G. Wilmers
1 pm to 2:30 pm • *Great Personal Adventures* – Donald Calman, Helene Calman, Ted Davis, Sue Mead, Ann Mintz, Jay Pasachoff
3 pm to 4:30 pm • *First Person Singular: Readings of Dramatic Monologues by Robert Browning* – Walter Bemak

TUESDAY

- 10 am to 11:30 am • *King Philip's War* – Howard Smith
1 pm to 2:30 pm • *Violence and Political Order* – Peter Cocks
3 pm to 4:30 pm • *Automating Your Home* – Larry Klein

WEDNESDAY

- 10 am to 11:30 am • *The Illustration Arts: From Medieval Manuscript to Modern Magazine* – Laurie Norton Moffatt, Stephanie Plunkett
1 pm to 2:30 pm • *The Roots of Klezmer* – Simon Wainrib

THURSDAY

- 10:45 am to 12:15 pm • *Comedy Tonight* – Barbara LaCascia
1 pm to 2:45 pm • *Smallpox: Its History and Biology* – Norman Schnayer

THURSDAY – Canyon Ranch

- 2 pm to 3:30 pm • *Healing Practices for Today* – S. Beling, M. Benjamin, M. Hyman, M. Laponis, N. Molin, J. Rossman

FRIDAY

- 9:30 am to 10:50 am • *Today's Headlines* – D. Orenstein, Moderator
11 am to 12:30 pm • *Science of Imaging: From Camera to Computer* – Richard Degenhardt, Robert Desrosiers

MARCH 2 – MARCH 23

TUESDAYS – Held at the National Archives, 10 Conte Drive, Pittsfield

- 10 am to 11:30 am • *Genealogy* – Jean Nudd



Laurie Norton Moffatt, Lecturer



Larry Klein, Lecturer

Special Events For 2004

January 4: New Year's Brunch, Seven Hills Inn, Lenox

February 1: *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris*, Capital Repertory Theater, Albany, NY

April 18: Alvin Ailey Ballet, Wang Center, Boston

May 22: DIA Art Center, Beacon, NY

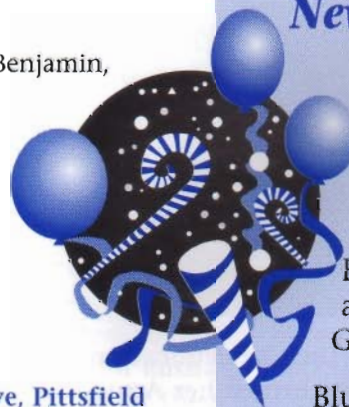
New Year's Brunch

Sunday
January 4, 2004
12 noon

Seven Hills Inn

Bring Friends, Children, and Grandchildren for a Gourmet Buffet and More!

Bluegrass Music by the Beartown Mountain Ramblers



President's Message

By the time you read this column, our fall 2003 semester will have ended. From Williamstown to Great Barrington, Berkshire County has been filled with over 500 members continuing to expand their horizons — the largest number ever. Compliments go to the Curriculum Committee chair and the subcommittees for developing these outstanding programs. As we approach the winter semester, I am confident that you will find these offerings as challenging and rewarding as those you have just taken.

I continue to be amazed by the wealth of talent in our membership. B.I.L.L. members taught more than half of the courses this fall. I am sure that many more of you have the requisite knowledge and skills to share your learning with others. Why not join our long list of teaching members? If you have an idea for a course, contact one of our curriculum subcommittee chairs or Norman Avnet, who oversees the entire curriculum operation. If you have ideas for courses but do not feel you can teach the subjects, join one of our subcommittees and help plan our program. The list of all of our committees appears in the Winter Catalog. We can continue to improve only if each of you makes a contribution.

Those of you who remain in the Berkshires throughout the winter can look forward to an exciting series of courses, special events and special programs. Those of you who leave for a while will return to another dynamic group of courses and activities in the spring. Meanwhile, I wish a healthy and happy holiday season to all of you.



B.I.L.L. Office Update

The B.I.L.L. office is the "lifeline" of the organization. With the dramatic increase in members, course offerings, special events and programs, registration numbers and financial records, the workload in the office has become enormous. Therefore, we are delighted to report that we have hired a part-time Office Assistant, Heidi Bailey, who started working for B.I.L.L. in July.

Heidi has been working at BCC since 1994 as a secretary in the Human Resources Office. Because of major cutbacks at the College, Heidi's position became part-time for BCC, and we were fortunate to be able to hire her part-

time for B.I.L.L. Heidi works from 12 noon to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. She will be working under the supervision of our Office Administrator, Sharon Mack.

Heidi lives in Adams with her children Trevor, 14, and Scott, 11. She was born in Heilsbronn, Germany, moved to North Adams in October 1960 and became a U.S. citizen



in 1982. She decided to further her education and went to Berkshire Community College where she earned her Associates Degree in Executive Secretary with a concentration in word processing in 1986.

When you call or visit the office, be sure to say "hello" to Heidi.

Office Volunteers Wanted

If you have a few hours a week to spare, good organizational skills and are willing to learn, we can use your help in the B.I.L.L. office. Computer skills are not necessary. Tasks range from filing, stuffing envelopes for mailings, answering phones and taking messages to covering the office in the absence of either the assistant or the office administrator.

If you are interested in joining our team, please call the office at (413) 499-4660, x456 or x496 or stop by the B.I.L.L. office at BCC, Room F233 or F234.

SPAM Alert

The B.I.L.L. office is seeing increased numbers of "bounced" emails, which have been rejected as SPAM. Some SPAM filters, employed by Internet service providers or by individuals, automatically reject email sent to large group mailings (as from B.I.L.L.).

If you wish to receive emails from B.I.L.L., you may need to adjust or update your SPAM filter preferences to allow them. Note that we keep your email addresses strictly private. Please call or email the B.I.L.L. office if you wish to be added or deleted from our members' email list.

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS!
HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

B.I.L.L. BOARD

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Getting To Know You

RON GILBERT

The old saying “if you want to get something done, give it to someone busy” leads straight to Ron Gilbert who embellishes the saying by being not only busy — but willing and creative. B.I.L.L. knows him as chair of the Media Committee. Most of us know him as the one to call if you want something taped or recorded. His friends know that if anyone needs a smile, a pat on the back or someone to party with, Ron will be there.

Born in Brooklyn and educated at Long Island University, Ron majored in physics and psychology. In the 30's the latter was considered a kind of voodoo so he concentrated on the former, becoming a metallurgist at an aircraft company. During WWII, he served in the Pacific as part of the Army Air Corp's Air-Sea Rescue squadron.

Not wanting to return to metallurgy, he started at Young and Rubicam after the war as a commercial checker for radio shows such as *Mary Small* and *Danger is My Business* (remember?). Working with Marty Stone at night on *Author Meets the Critic*, he developed enough skills to leave Y & R and join Century Productions which produced educational films and film strips. Still in radio, Ron produced *Room 416* for NBC and, TV at last, the program *Junior Reporter* with Ed Herlihy — one of the first TV shows to use remote facilities. Then, on to *Americana Quiz* with John Mason Brown and the earliest Howdy Doody programs, produced with Martin Stone and starring “Buffalo” Bob Smith.

Ron left the TV field after his uncle's death when he and his brother Bud took over his uncle's manufacturing business. He remained in NYC until his retirement and moved to the Berkshires more than a decade ago. He and his wife Arline have two sons — Franklin, a chiropractor, and Thom, a photographer. Hobbies? His grandchildren, planning celebrations with Arline and fishing (without Arline!).

— Marge Lewis

Civil War Trip

As an outgrowth of a course that was taught in the fall semester, an exciting trip has been planned to several key sites of the Civil War. B.I.L.L. and Elderhostel worked together to design this special charter program, *North and South: Perspectives on the Civil War*. Three nights will be spent in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, after which participants will travel through Harper's Ferry to Richmond, Virginia, and environs for an additional three nights.

The trip will take place from June 6 through June 12, 2004. There are a few spaces still available. For more information, please contact the B.I.L.L. office at 413-499-4660, Ext. 456, to receive an application.

Don't Forget

Are you leaving the Berkshires for the winter? To be sure your mail is forwarded, let the office know your temporary forwarding address with inclusive dates.

Please call the B.I.L.L. office at 413-499-4660, x456, or e-mail us at smack@berkshirecc.edu with your winter address information.

The Miniature Theater of Chester

A tiny stage in the Chester Town Hall. A dozen or so rows of old wooden folding chairs arranged as if for a town meeting. A luminous performance of *Mr. Dooley's America* starring Vincent Dowling, former director of the Abbey Theater in Dublin, Ireland. That night in 1990 a theater was born, The Miniature Theater of Chester.

Dowling founded the theater after he fell in love with the charming village and the town hall's intimate space. He served as its artistic director for six years, using the stage's physical constraints (no wings, no

flies, no trap doors, little depth and minimal playing area) the way a poet uses the constraints of the haiku form. From the outset, the theater specialized in innovative plays with single sets, small casts, rich language and intense meaning.

In October, B.I.L.L. members sampled a production, *Lovely Day*, under the aegis of our Special Events Committee. But the theater they visited is far different from those early years. Now, the audience sits on sturdy cushioned chairs on risers. Curtains black out exterior light. There's real stage lighting and — a major asset for a summer theater — air conditioning. All the accouterments come out at season's end except for the air conditioning; that, says the current artistic

director Byam Stevens, is the theater's gift to the town.

“It's one thing, when you're a young company, to ask people to come out and rough it,” he says. But The Miniature Theater of Chester has long been an award-winning and highly appreciated fixture of the area's cultural scene drawing audiences from the Berkshires, the five-college area and the Pioneer Valley. Its equity performers and professional staff are augmented by flocks of interns.

One thing has not changed. The Miniature Theater of Chester is still true to its initial vision, presenting adventurous and polished dramatic fare in a tiny package.

— Judy Katz

Historic Deerfield

On a lovely day, 53 B.I.L.L. members visited Old Deerfield, settled by English farmers in 1669. The village's main occupations are education and the presentation of the past. Fourteen houses built over three centuries have been faithfully restored with period furniture, textiles, paintings and ceramics based on original inventories of what each house contained.

Escorted by extremely knowledgeable docents, our group visited five of these houses. We observed magnificent floral designs painted directly on the original walls and wallpaper recreated from 17th and 18th century designs. All of the

furniture was made in New England; many of the ceramic pieces were imported from France and England over two centuries. In one house, the Wells-Thorn, many rooms were added to the original 1725 structure over a period of 110 years.

After lunch in the gracious atmosphere of the 1884 Deerfield Inn and a visit to the last two of the five houses, we ended our day at the Flynt Center of Early American Life. A self-guided museum, it was built in 1998 to display over 2,500 antiques, including a textile museum of quilts and a priceless collection of furniture, ceramics, toys and artifacts.

Old Deerfield is a National Historic Landmark only an hour away from Lee, MA.

— Lenore Rubin



Some "Very Special" Special Projects

The enormous success of the lecture series and panel discussions of last year is continuing, and B.I.L.L. members have in store many exciting programs in the months ahead.

In January, February and March at the Triplex Cinema in Great Barrington, we will once again be showing outstanding films with discussions moderated by Professor Larry Burke, Barney Edmonds and Jack Rubin.

March will also see a joint program with the Clark Art Institute featuring four separate lectures by Michael Cassin, the Clark Curator of Education and James Ganz, Clark Curator of Prints, Drawings and Photography. This program will look at the history and techniques of printmaking from early woodcuts to 19th century photography. The Print Room will be open so that members can take a "behind the scenes" look at related works from the Clark's permanent collection.

A program dealing with various aspects of American foreign policy is in development as is a summer speaker series featuring such notables as Susan Arbetter, host of WAMC's *The RoundTable*, author Simon Winchester and author Elizabeth Rubin.

— Mona Sherman, Chair
Special Projects

New President of BCC

Bryan K. Blanchard was recently appointed as the fifth President and Chief Executive Officer of Berkshire Community College. Before coming to BCC, he was President of Vincennes University in Indiana for two years. Prior to that, he served as Executive Vice President and Provost of the University of Maine at Augusta.

Dr. Blanchard has extensive experience in education at the community college level having held positions at Broome Community College in New York, Greenfield Community College in Massachusetts, Community College of Rhode Island and Northwestern Connecticut Community College.

He holds a Ph.D. in Higher Education: Management and Policy from the University of Colorado at Boulder. At the University of Minnesota, he was a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow, Department of History, and earned both his M.A. and B.A. in History from Wake Forest College in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Dr. Blanchard was introduced to the B.I.L.L. Board of Directors at their July meeting. He expressed delight with the organization and looks forward to working with B.I.L.L. and seeing us on campus.



President Blanchard talking to Lark Hiser,
a BCC staff member

New Member Reception

October 3, 2003

Barbara Caplin, Membership Chair



Save the Date

**B.I.L.L. BIRTHDAY
CELEBRATION**

Sunday, September 12, 2004
Crowne Plaza, Pittsfield
6 pm – Dinner and Music

The Japanese Connection

I was a 17-year-old army enlistee serving in the Japanese occupation at the end of World War II. Our infantry unit was located at a former seaplane base in the village of Otsu, one hour outside Kyoto. Except for that city, Nara, and a few ports and other facilities throughout the country, the devastation from allied incendiary and impact bombing was almost complete. Food for the local population was scarce and living conditions in the cities primitive.

We were responsible for “showing the flag” throughout our occupation area in Southern Honshu. The population remained passive even with the return of demobilized Japanese soldiers. Kyoto was our major recreation destination. At that time the city retained the charm of an ancient university, religious and cultural center with endless wooden houses and miles of narrow streets.

About six months after I arrived, an army chaplain visited our base. We spent a few hours talking about

family and home. A few days later, I received a phone call from a young lady who lived in Kobe with her parents and sister. The chaplain had visited their community, and after she heard the information I had given him about my family, she believed we might have a family connection.

The next week I was met at the Kobe railroad station by a girl about my age. We drove by taxi through the devastation of this major port city to the suburb of Kitano-Cho. It could have passed for Scarsdale, NY. Her family’s large Tudor style house, together with other mostly western style houses in this enclave of foreign residents, had suffered minimal bomb damage.

Ella, her older sister Isabel and their parents, Zinovy and Raya, held Russian passports. Since the 1930s they had lived in Japan where Zinovy ran his import business until Russia attacked Japan in August 1945. They were incarcerated with other foreign nationals for about a month until

freed by the American forces.

With a limited oral family history from my father who had died a few years earlier, we were able to establish the existence of a family link. I was warmly accepted on my regular visits to their home.

I returned to the U.S. a year later, graduated from college and married. Meanwhile, Ella had graduated from McGill and married a man who later headed the Physics Department at Brown University. When I visited Ella’s house in Providence, we discovered a number of parallels between our respective families not the least of which was that Ella’s three sons bore the same first names as my older sister’s three sons.

My father left Russia as a teenager at the end of World War I migrating through Hamburg to the U.S. Ella’s parents also left, traveling in the opposite direction. And I had the good fortune to make this extraordinary chance connection almost half a world away. — Hal Dynan

Great Barrington in King Philip's War

There's a marker at the south entrance of River Walk behind Searles School in Great Barrington. The marker says: *Twenty rods north of this stone was an old Indian Fordway on the middle of the trail from Westfield to the Hudson River. Nearby was the site of the Great Wigwam where Major John Talcott overtook and dispersed a party of Indians, August, 1676.*

The marker says nothing about King Philip's War. One might think the battle was with local Mohicans, but this foiled ambush was one of the concluding battles of a much larger,



crueler and deadlier war between Native Americans and the United Colonies of New England.

Philip was not a Spanish King. He was a sachem or chief whose Indian name was Metacomet. For fifty years the Native Americans and English colonists had gotten along peacefully, but conditions changed by the 1670s. The causes of war were many: broken promises, cultural misunderstandings, racism and greed. The war started on June 24, 1675, when the Wampanoags attacked Swansea, MA, and ended fourteen months later on August 12, 1676, when Philip was shot and beheaded in Rhode Island.

Despite the official ending of the war, sporadic fighting continued for several years. At that point Major John Talcott entered the story. He was born in England and came to Boston with his father in the 1630s as part of "The Great Migration." By 1660, Talcott was in the frontier village of Massacoh (Simsbury, CT) where he was eventually promoted to Major, commanding 200 Connecticut Militiamen and a contingent of friendly Indians.

On June 12, 1676, Major Talcott and his militia successfully defended the town of Hadley from one of the

last planned Indian attacks of the war. They arrived in Westfield early in August where local residents told them that a band of Indians had headed west a few days earlier.

Shortly before dawn on the morning of August 6, Talcott and his militiamen caught up to 300 Narragansett who were sleeping on the west bank of the Housatonic. His troops being exhausted, Talcott decided to deploy them and wait for dawn to attack. Fortunately for the Narragansett, one of the braves decided to go fishing just before daybreak. He spotted the English and shouted, "Anwauux!" "Anwauux!" (The English! The English!) The result was 20 Indians killed and about 70 captured. The main body of Indians, some 200 of them, managed to escape to New York where Governor Edmond Andros offered them amnesty.

Statistically, King Philip's War was the deadliest war in American history. In proportion to the population it was more destructive than the Civil War, and like the Korean War of 1950-53, it is often referred to as "America's Forgotten War." — Howard Smith

Howard Smith will be teaching a course entitled King Philip's War in the winter 2004 semester.

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B.L.L. adheres to a policy of nondiscrimination towards its members and students and will admit all those who apply regardless of race, religion, color or national origin.

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