

B.I.L.L. BOARD

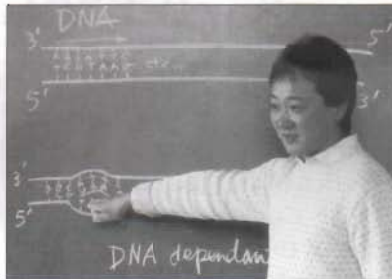
WINTER 2004/05
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NEWSLETTER OF THE BERKSHIRE INSTITUTE FOR LIFETIME LEARNING

Winter 2005 Semester

From January 10 through February 18 and from March 8 through March 29, B.I.L.L. will again be offering new and exciting courses for the Winter 2005 semester.

Whole Body Health 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. Thursday courses will be held at Hancock Shaker Village. 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.



Dr. Isaac Bao, Simon's Rock College,
Lecturer

BERKSHIRE SOUTH REGIONAL COMMUNITY CENTER

MONDAY

Today's Headlines — David L. Orenstein, Moderator

Henry James: The Wings of the Dove — James Kraft

Great American Speeches — James M. Cotter, Robert "Frank" Jakubowicz, Donald Lathrop, Sarah C. McFarland, Bill Vogt

TUESDAY

Conservatism and the Modern Era — Peter Cocks

Hawthorne Short Stories — Mario Caluori

Whales and Dolphins: A Natural History — Isaac Y. Bao

WEDNESDAY

The Smart House: Making Technology Work in Your Home — Lawrence B. Klein
Theater Production — Barbara (Bobbie) LaCascia

FRIDAY

Conversations With... — Barbara Greenbaum and Bill Vogt, Moderators

Looking Through the Tube: True Revolutions in History — Lauren Glazer

Bach and All That Jazz — Simon Wainrib

CANYON RANCH

WEDNESDAY

Whole Body Health — S. Beling, E. Boham, C. Geyer, M. Hyman, T. LePine, J. Rossman

HANCOCK SHAKER VILLAGE

THURSDAY

The Real Life of Vladimir Nabokov — Alexander (Sandy) Drescher

Stained Glass — Julie L. Sloan

Shaker History — T. Burdick, C. Goodwillie, M. Rentz, G. Wergland

NATIONAL ARCHIVES, 10 Conte Drive, Pittsfield

TUESDAYS — March 8 through March 29

Genealogy — Jean Nudd

Dates To Save

January 9: New Year's Brunch,
Berkshire Hills Country Club,
Pittsfield

January 23: *Kimberly Akimbo*,
TheaterWorks, Hartford, CT

WINTER FILM SERIES:

The Films of Robert Altman,
Triplex Theater, Great Barrington

January 4: *Nashville*

February 22: *Mash*

March 14: *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*

CLARK ART SERIES:

Every Picture Tells A Story

Clark Art Institute, Williamstown

March 10: *Every Picture Tells a Story*
March 17: *Making Faces – The Art
of Portraiture*

March 24: *Nature in the Raw –
The Art of Landscape*

March 31: *Bodylines – The Art of
Figure Painting*

New Year's Brunch

Sunday, January 9, 2005
11:30 am

BERKSHIRE HILLS COUNTRY CLUB

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

Entertainment by "Cabaret To Go"
from the Berkshire Music School



President's Message

This fall saw a number of landmark projects for B.I.L.L. Under the leadership of our Educational Assistance Committee, a mentoring session was arranged for students in the TRIO program at BCC. Members of B.I.L.L., who had volunteered to serve as mentors, met with about 30 students over lunch to provide insights into a variety of careers. We expect to expand this program and hope that even more of you will join us in this endeavor. Contact the office for further information.

In September, the Membership Committee organized an event called "Open Door to B.I.L.L." It provided an opportunity for members to find out more about how our organization works. Virtually everyone who attended is now actively involved. As always, new members will provide dynamic new ideas. If you would like to play a larger role in B.I.L.L., feel free to contact any of the chairs listed in the catalog. They will be more than happy to have you join their committees.

On September 12, the organization held its 10th Anniversary Celebration. As everyone who was present can attest, it was an evening of reminiscences, good fun and friendship.

As B.I.L.L. enters its second decade, the quality and diversity of its programs will continue to grow. With a membership of over 1,000, we are exploring a variety of ways to interest and enrich all of our members.

What will B.I.L.L. look like in another 10 years? While I do not know the specific details, I do know that B.I.L.L. will continue to provide knowledge and new experiences for all of its members.



**HAPPY HOLIDAYS
HAPPY NEW YEAR**

Membership Committee Update "Open Door to B.I.L.L."

The traditional charge of a membership committee is to solicit new members. This is not what we need to do. Membership is growing by word-of-mouth endorsements because of the excellence and diversity of the programs offered by the Curriculum Committee, the educational and entertainment opportunities offered by the Special Events Committee and the unique and interesting programs and lectures provided by Special Projects. The Membership Committee has a new "focus" — to encourage current members to participate more fully on committees.

The composition of the Membership Committee has changed. It consists of 15 members of which many are "new" faces to B.I.L.L. and have not served on committees while others are "old" members who bring with them a wealth of experience and talent.

The Committee's first program of the semester, an "Open Door to B.I.L.L.," was held on Tuesday, September 14, at 3 p.m. in the cafeteria at BCC. The entire membership was invited as well as anyone who was interested in learning about B.I.L.L. This was an opportunity to meet the Board of Directors and chairs of committees.



President Paul Flaum welcomed the participants, and the committee and subcommittee chairs made brief presentations. This was followed by a question and answer period. The "Open Door To B.I.L.L." program generated much interest. In addition to gaining three new members, most of those attending signed up to be a member of a committee.

We invite you to join the Membership Committee.

— Wilma Michaels, Chair, Membership Committee

Exploring Natural Places

On an early September morning, 13 B.I.L.L. members met at the Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary in Easthampton, Massachusetts, to begin a canoe trip under the guidance of naturalist Aimee Gelinas from the Massachusetts Audubon Society. The morning started out with a light rain, but as we entered the Mill River in the Sanctuary, the sun burned through and a brilliant day blossomed.

There were seven canoes, and much of the way we paddled single file through marshlands bordered by fields of wild rice and buttonbush. The entire marsh was flooded with about 2 feet of water so that the silver maple trees, normally on the edge of the bank, stood in the river itself.

Actually, the flooding helped our canoeing except when we had to pass under fallen trees. We made it, and a wonderful time was had by all!

— Norman Avnet

B.I.L.L. BOARD

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Berkshire Institute for Lifetime Learning

In the beginning . . .

It is not true that B.I.L.L. sprang forth from Judy's head like Minerva from Jupiter's, but there were similarities.

The original inspiration for B.I.L.L. came from Judy's and my desire to take some college courses. While we were at a party in Poughkeepsie, the conversation turned to an ILR sponsored by Vassar and Marist colleges. It offered college level courses with no grades or exams. We obtained the name of the founder/president of that group, whom we subsequently contacted, and learned how he had formed the Institute with the cooperation of Elderhostel as well as the two schools.

Next, we contacted Hank Payne, President of Williams College and Barbara Viniar, President of BCC. Both were extremely supportive and encouraged us to go forward. Thus we had our two "Angels." Nancy McIntire and Alexandra Warshaw became our liaisons to the colleges.

Informal discussions with friends in the Berkshires led to the first meeting of the Steering Committee of B.I.L.L. on June 16, 1994, at our home in Lenox. It was attended by Nancy, Alexandra and 30 enthusiastic supporters. At this meeting the building blocks for B.I.L.L. were established. A mission statement was formulated, and the goals and intentions for the group were set. Committees and chairpersons were appointed. The Berkshire Institute for Lifetime Learning was born.

To introduce B.I.L.L. to the community, we decided to hold a convocation on the BCC campus in the fall. Hundreds of mailed announcements, newspaper ads, interviews, and fliers posted throughout the area were part of the publicity program. The meeting was called for 2 p.m. on a perfect Indian summer afternoon in October. At 1:45 p.m. there were only about 25 people seated in BCC's huge auditorium. But then, the floodgates opened and people poured in. Thus B.I.L.L. began.

The selfless support, creativity and effort of so many of you make it impossible to name all involved, but it could not have happened without such a strong group effort, and of course, the idea conceived by Judy and Minerva!

— Tom Easton

Growing through the years . . .



Judy and Tom Easton, Founders of B.I.L.L.



First Logo, 1995



First Special Event, 1995
Tour of Williams College

1994-1996

TOM EASTON, President
Steering Committee meets
Sponsors – Williams College and BCC
B.I.L.L.BOARD, December 1994
General Membership meeting,
January 1995
Spring Catalog with eight courses
Special Event, April 1995 – Tour of Williams College



First B.I.L.L.BOARD, 1994

1996-1997

LEN STOLZBERG, President
Grant to Williams College for "America Reads"
Tapes of lectures for community outreach – Media Committee
Winter Lecture Series – Dr. Armand Feigenbaum, Tina Packer, Linda Ellerbee
Membership over 500

1995-1996 B.I.L.L. COUNCIL	
OFFICERS	
President	Tom Easton
Vice President	Len Stolzberg
Vice President	Sue Phillips
Treasurer	Dr. Norman Avnet
Secretary	Judy Easton
CHAIRPERSONS	
Finance	Walter Leon
Membership	Phil Knowles
Curriculum	Ilse Browner
Special Events	Chet Soling
Information	Ann Dulye
AT LARGE	
	David Hoadley
	George Harte
	Ron Gilbert
	Marie Feder
	Harlan Williams

1997-1999

ANN DULYE, President
At the Edge of the Sea with field trip to Cape Ann
New Year's Day Brunch – Berkshire Plaza Hotel, Pittsfield
Winter semester at two BCC campuses
Classes at other community venues
Fifth Anniversary documentary film – Media Committee

CATALOG OF PROGRAMS – SPRING 1999	
	New England Voices: Readings in Selected Poets
	Art, Mind, and Change: Three Interactions
	From Page to Stage: The Alchemy of Words in Action
	The Hollywood Musical
	Know Your Berkshire Opera
	Making Economic Sense of the News
	Who Are Our Leaders?
	Cosmos: A Six-Day Tour of the Universe



*First Special Project Lecturer
Roy Blount, Jr., 2002*

2001-2003

ART SHERMAN, President

Membership Committee events –

New Member Reception

Game Night

Tanglewood Picnic

Long Range Plan

Sponsor – Simon's Rock College

Annual Report – June 2002

Special Projects – July 2002

1999-2001

NORMAN AVNET, President

Tax-exempt status

Full-time Office Administrator

Special Event overnight trip to

Shelburne Museum, VT

Faculty Appreciation Dinner –

Country Club of Pittsfield



First Extended Travel Event, Ireland, 2003



*Overnight Special Event
Salem, MA, 2003
Plate from the Peabody Museum*

2003-2004

PAUL FLAUM, President

Trip to Ireland – Extended Travel
Committee

Membership over 1,000

Mentoring Program with BCC

Part-time Office Assistant

Committee Co-chairs



*First Convocation Speaker
Joe Thompson, 1995*

CONVOCATION SPEAKERS

1995 Joe Thompson, MASS MoCA

1996 Harry Payne, President of
Williams College

1997 Marge Champion, actress,
director, choreographer

1998 "Town Hall" Forum

1999 Leon Botstein, President of
Bard College

2000 Barbara Viniar, President of
BCC

2001 Evan Dobelle, President of
Trinity College

2002 Bernard Rodgers, Dean of
Simon's Rock College

2003 Morton Schapiro, President
of Williams College

2004 Bryan Blanchard, President
of BCC



Curriculum Field Trip, The Dynamic Earth, 2002



Membership Event, Game Night, 2002

*Tenth Anniversary
Celebration
September 12, 2004
Crowne Plaza, Pittsfield*



President Paul Flaum and Event Chair Marilyn Flaum



Past Presidents: Leonard Stolzberg, Art Sherman, Norman Avnet, Ann Dulye



American Stained Glass

Over a thousand years old, the art of stained glass has been practiced in America for almost 400 years. The history of stained glass in the United States is older than the nation, beginning in the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam in the 17th century. The craft was not widely practiced, however, until the popular Gothic Revival of the 1840s-70s when church architects returned to medieval styles considered more appropriate for religious buildings.

In the Gilded Age of the late 19th century, the medium became extraordinarily popular with its adoption for residential, civic and mercantile buildings. John La Farge and Louis Comfort Tiffany, America's best known stained-glass artists, revolu-

tionized the craft of stained glass by using opalescent glass, catapulting the medium to a height of popularity unknown since the Middle Ages. Fierce competitors, their clientele included the cream of American society, who decorated not only their churches with stained glass, but their houses, offices and mausoleums as well. Their success spawned hundreds of imitators, and by the 1890s, stained-glass windows were available through mail-order catalogs, a new marketing invention of the time.

Following World War I, a second Gothic Revival grew up as a reaction to the eclecticism of the Victorian era. The Neo-Gothic era created churches and colleges, in particular, that once again emulated medieval precedents. In stained glass, the Opalescent Era of the Gilded Age was considered old-fashioned, and a new generation of artists became skilled at reproducing

the look of medieval stained glass while incorporating modern images. The Great Depression saw the end of this era.

The modern age of stained glass began in Germany following the Second World War, and many American stained-glass artists of our time learned from the great German designers of the 1940s. Their style remains dominant to this day. In addition, the development of *dalle de verre* or "faceted glass" set thick chunks of richly colored glass into beds of concrete and, later, epoxy. These massive windows could be used as the walls of buildings. Although the technique is dying off now, windows of *dalle de verre* remain as evocative examples of late-20th century stained glass.

— Julie L. Sloan

Julie Sloan will be teaching a course entitled Stained Glass in the winter 2005 semester.

Planning Ahead

If you plan to register for the course *Jewish-American Fiction* which will be offered in the spring 2005 semester, please also plan to read *Yekl, A Tale of the NY Ghetto* by Abraham Cahan before the first class session. Mike Gold's *Jews Without Money* should be read next. *The Ghost Writer* by Philip Roth and *Seize the Day* by Saul Bellow are other required readings. All are available in paperback editions.

— Walter Bemak, Chair
Literature Subcommittee

Visit London

B.I.L.L. is planning a trip to London in fall 2005 with John Brooks of the Clark Art Institute. Not necessarily for first timers, the trip will include 8 exciting days of art, theater, music and literature for a maximum of 24 members. Look for more details in the spring issue of B.I.L.L.BOARD.

— Enid Michelman, Chair
Extended Travel Committee

Getting To Know You

ELLIOTT VINES

In 1994 Elliott Vines attended meetings in the home of Tom and Judy Easton which resulted in the formation of Berkshire Institute for Lifetime Learning. Beginning with co-chair of the first Curriculum Committee, his contributions to B.I.L.L. over the ensuing ten years are numerous. He has been involved in the development of special programs, including the Winter Film Series, Great Books/Great Films and Special Lecture Series. Elliott has worked on various committees, taught courses and served on the Board of Directors in various capacities, presently holding the position of Parliamentarian.

Being active in the community is very important to Elliott. He has served as ombudsman for nursing home patients and has picked up and delivered food to the Salvation Army and the American Red Cross to help those less fortunate. He presently does fundraising for Riverbrook Residence, a home for developmentally disabled women.

Elliott and his wife, Harriet, also active in B.I.L.L., became full-time Berkshire residents 13 years ago. He had been District Director of Health and Physical Education of the Herricks School System on Long Island after an active career in the New York City School System as teacher and coach. Earlier, he had received a football scholarship, attended New York University and completed graduate work in Administration at St. John's University.

Elliott is a theater buff and avid tennis player. Athletics has been a vital part of his life, not only for the physical aspects, but also because athletics offers great opportunities for socialization and friendships. Indeed, he strongly believes that the socialization opportunities that B.I.L.L. creates are as important for the members as are its educational programs.

— Karl Easton



Reverend Samuel Harrison

Reverend Samuel Harrison was a ferocious engine of democracy. An adopted son of Pittsfield, he was, throughout his adult life, an unyielding preacher and fighter for black racial equality. Born of slave parents in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on April 15, 1818, Harrison was educated in black schools in New York State and Ohio. His uncle taught him shoemaking, and he later used this trade to support his family. It was during this time that he had a religious conversion.

In 1847 Harrison married Ellen Rhodes and three years later achieved his goal of becoming a minister.

He was ordained in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, in January 1850 after an examination by white ministers of the Berkshire Association of Congregational Ministers. He took up residence



on Third Street becoming pastor of the Second Congregational Church.

Samuel Harrison joined the U.S. Army in 1863 as chaplain to the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer (Colored) Regiment. While serving in the regiment, he noticed that he was only going to be paid a simple black laborer's monthly wage — \$10 per month. An officer's pay in the Army was \$100 per month and that was the amount that the governor had promised when Harrison agreed to serve. The Army paymaster, however, offered him a laborer's pay based on a regulation that had nothing to do with army chaplaincy. Harrison petitioned Massachusetts Governor John Albion Andrew for assistance who, in turn, appealed to President Lincoln.

This equal pay question for blacks in the U.S. Army was the pivotal battle by which blacks would fight for rights equal to those of white soldiers. In 1863, President Lincoln felt that equal pay for blacks

was too controversial to try to make a proclamation or executive order so soon after the Emancipation Proclamation. Challenging a law that had just been passed one year before by wartime legislators could diminish Lincoln's authority and lead to a confrontation with the Legislature. Accordingly, the President chose to defer this decision and asked his conservative Attorney General for an interpretation.

In April 1864, Attorney General Edward Bates of Ohio issued a statement that held that the Contraband Law of 1862 gave President Lincoln the right to use blacks as soldiers, and this law required that blacks receive pay equal to white soldiers. The President asked Henry Wilson, Senator from Massachusetts, to lead legislation in late 1864 revoking unequal military pay for blacks. This law passed and Reverend Harrison finally received his long-awaited wages.

— Robert Harrison

In February 2005, a documentary will be broadcast on PBS entitled A Trumpet at the Walls of Jericho: The Untold Story of Reverend Harrison. The Harrison House on Third Street is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and will be renovated and opened as a museum.

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B.L.L.L. adheres to a policy of nondiscrimination and welcomes all people as members of our organization.

Website: www.berkshirrec.edu/life/long/bill.html

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