

# From the President

Plummer Alston 'Al' Jones, Jr., President

## Milestones in North Carolina Librarianship

Earlier this year, I received an e-mail message from Jordan Scepaniski at the Triangle Research Library Network. Jordan was concerned that many of the accomplishments of North Carolina libraries and librarians often go unnoticed due to a combination of poor communication within our profession and extreme modesty on the part of those worthy of the spotlight. I totally agreed with Jordan and broached the subject of using the President's column in each *North Carolina Libraries* issue as the forum for sharing the good news of our colleagues with Frances Bradburn, NCL Editor. Frances gave an enthusiastic nod. Here is the first installment of what I will refer to in subsequent issues as "Milestones in North Carolina Librarianship." Thanks, Jordan, for your thoughtful suggestion, and thanks, Frances, for your editorial support.

The Leadership Conference on Access to Special Collections was held March 1-2, 2000, in High Point. This most productive gathering of librarians, historians, archivists, genealogists, and museum curators was planned and organized by librarians David Ferriero (Duke), Chair, State Librarian Sandy Cooper, Kevin Cherry (Rowan Public Library), Steve Hensen (Duke), Robert Burgin (State Library), Eileen McGrath (UNC-CH), Julie Nye (State Library), and Helen Wykle (UNCA), four archivists from the Division of Archives and History, and representatives from the North Carolina Museum of Art and the Biltmore Company. There was every indication that this conference represented the beginning of the movement toward Web access to statewide special collections.

Our colleagues at North Carolina State University Libraries recently won the Excellence in Academic Libraries Award, a new award sponsored by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), Blackwell Books, and Blackwell Information Services. The award recognizes the staffs of a community college, a college, and a university library for innovative programs that deliver exemplary services and resources to further the educational mission of their respective institutions. Susan Nutter, Vice Provost and Director of NCSU Libraries, in the February 2000 issue of *ALA News Releases* <[www.ala.org/news](http://www.ala.org/news)>, gave all the credit to her staff and is convinced that the award recognized "the adoption of a fundamentally new culture and set of values" which made it possible "to create innovative library services that place the needs of the user first." Nutter won the 1999 Hugh C. Atkinson Memorial Award jointly sponsored by ACRL, the Library Administration and Management Association (LAMA), the Library and Information Technology Association (LITA), and the Association for Library Collections & Technical Services (ALCTS) (*College and Research Libraries News* (April 1999): 278, 280).

The Rowan Public Library, headed by NCLA Director Phil Barton, began a winning momentum back in 1997 when they won Special Mention in *Library Journal's* Library of the Year Award competition. In 1998 the RPL won the *ALA/Information Today* Library of the Future award. That same year, a series of articles on World War II written for the *Salisbury Post* by Kevin Cherry, Local History Librarian at RPL, received the first prize in Enterprise Reporting by the North Carolina Press Association. The oral history program on World War II won in October 1999 the North Carolina Association of County Commissions Outstanding Project Award and in February 2000 received Special Recognition in the 2nd Annual Culture and Arts Award competition of the National Association of Counties (NACo). Cherry is chair of the NCLA Round Table on Special Collections for the 1999-2001 biennium.

On February 2, 2000, Ridley Kessler, Documents Librarian at UNC-CH, testified before the House Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch, in support of the US GPO's budget request for fiscal year 2001. Ridley spoke in support of the Depository Library Program and on behalf of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), American Association of Law Librarians (AALL), American Library

Association (ALA), Medical Library Association (MLA), and Special Libraries Association (SLA). On March 1, 2000, Ridley was presented the UNC Mentor Ward for Lifetime Achievement in recognition of the fact that he has served as advisor to over 56 master's papers done in the UNC-CH School of Information and Library Science and mentor to countless students.

The cover of the January 2000 issue of *Library Journal* proudly proclaims North Carolina's own Jerry Thrasher as Librarian of the Year. Thrasher, library director of the Cumberland County Library and Information Center, won this well-deserved national recognition for his fight for intellectual freedom. Previously he was awarded the NCLA/SIRS Intellectual Freedom Award in September 1999 at the 53rd NCLA Biennial Conference. Thrasher's experience is proof positive that outstanding service in North Carolina will be recognized nationally as well. He has replaced the indefatigable Gene Lanier as chair of the NCLA Intellectual Freedom Committee for the 1999-2001 biennium.

Our colleagues at the Public Library of Charlotte/Mecklenburg County deserve several pats on the back for putting North Carolina on the library map. PLCMC has been Library of the Future for two years in recognition of its proactive innovative service to the Charlotte community through its electronic network known as Charlotte's Web. The March 3, 1999 issue of *American Libraries* features an article on a local history CD-ROM that PLCMC created in concert with the African American community of Charlotte. I was thrilled to see two of UNCG-DLIS students, Robin Bryan and Tony Tallent, hosting the PLCMC booth at the 2000 ALA Midwinter in San Antonio. In the April 2000 issue of *ALA News Releases*, Pamela Standhart of the PLCMC was one of four librarians named winners of the 2000 Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers Award administered by the ALA's Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC). She will receive a \$600 grant to attend the ALA Annual Conference in Chicago. Recipients of the annual award must have one to ten years of experience as a children's librarian, work directly with children, and have never attended an ALA Annual Conference.

Convention facilities in Charlotte were attractive to the planners of the Public Library Association (PLA) that held its national conference in Charlotte March 28-April 1, 2000. The "Datebook" column of the February 2000 issue of *American Libraries* announced that the Association for College and Research Libraries (ACRL) will hold its national conference there April 8-15, 2003. According to the March 2000 issue of *ALA News Releases*, PLA awarded one of ten Spectrum Scholar Conference Travel Grants for the March/April 2000 conference to Monecia Barry of Carrboro.

According to the March 2000 issue of *ALA News Releases*, ten members of the ALA will receive EBSCO ALA Conference Sponsorship Awards to assist them to attend the 2000 Annual Conference in Chicago. Leah G. McGinnis of Chapel Hill and Kathryn Leach of Fayetteville were two of the winners.

Congratulations go to East Carolina University's Elizabeth Smith and Mary Boccaccio for their creative responses to Hurricane Floyd. Smith has led the preservation efforts following Floyd. Recently the Southeast Journal section of the *Wall Street Journal*, January 26, 2000, page S4, applauded in its "Winners" column, Boccaccio's contribution as Interim Head of Special Collections and Manuscripts Curator. The citation reads: "Literary Treasures: Student essays from Bethel Elementary School in Bethel, NC, join a Hurricane Floyd manuscript collection at East Carolina University." Earlier on October 15-16, 1999, ECU used a North Carolina Humanities Council grant to present the symposium "Triumph of the Human Spirit: Friday Jones and His North Carolina Slave Narrative" (*C&RL News* (March 2000): 231).

Jerry Cotten, North Carolina Collection Photographic Archivist at UNC-CH, received the LoPresti Award for his recent book, *Light and Air: The Photography of Bayard Wooten* (UNC Press, 1999). Cotten's book was among four award-winning publications selected by the Art Libraries Society of North America/Southeast Chapter.

Mary Reichel, University Librarian at Appalachian State University, is the 1999 winner of the ACRL Instruction Section's Miriam Dudley Instruction Librarian Award. The Dudley Award "recognizes an individual librarian who has made an especially significant contribution to the advancement of instruction in a college or research library environment" (*C&RL News* (April 1999): 280-81).

Wake Forest University made the list of the 100 most wired campuses in a survey conducted by Yahoo.com (National Public Radio broadcast, April 11, 2000).

Frances Bradburn's *Output Measures for School Library Media Programs* was published in January 1999 by Neal-Schuman Publishing. James "Jim" V. Carmichael, Jr.'s *Daring to Find Our Names* was published in 1998 by Greenwood Press and my book *Libraries, Immigrants, and the American Experience* was published in 1999, also by Greenwood Press.

One of the nicest fringe benefits of serving as NCLA President is that I get to be the official cheerleader for your accomplishments! Please keep me posted about what's happening in the North Carolina library community so I can spread the good news!