

The Search for North Carolina Audiobooks: A Directory of Sources

by Melody Moxley

Audiobooks are becoming increasingly popular with the public, and libraries that provide them have proof that more people are listening, and people are listening to more ... and more. As with any materials that are popular, it can be difficult for libraries to keep pace with demand.

Establishing and maintaining a collection with a good mix of fiction genres and nonfiction subjects are fairly easy given adequate funding. Library vendors and audiobook distributors offer recently published mass-market titles (mostly abridged) which publishers produce for the retail consumer market.

A growing number of unabridged audiobook publishers offer a wide selection of titles. At the same time, increased competition among publishers has resulted in unabridged audio productions of high-demand titles being available much closer to book publication date than before. Now libraries can make either (or both) the abridged and unabridged audio versions of a popular title available to library customers, in addition to the print version.

Now titles often are available from more than one source in unabridged format, giving the selector a choice of narrators. Suppliers also are providing leasing programs, as well as a variety of standing order plans for both abridged and unabridged titles.

Assistance in identifying well-produced audiobooks is readily available in a variety of periodical review sources, including *AudioFile*, *Booklist*, *Kliatt*, and *Library Journal*. *AudioFile* is unique in that it is devoted solely to reviews of articles and information about audiobooks. *AudioFile* also publishes, annually, the *Audiobook Reference Guide: Information and Services Guide to Audiobook Publishers, Distributors, and Support Resources*, a source of extensive information about the world of audiobooks. *Publisher's Weekly* has a periodic review column and publishes an "audio bestseller" list.

Fine. But what about audiobooks by North Carolina authors? Or about North Carolina? Here the answer is not nearly as straightforward.

As far as this writer can determine, no supplier currently focuses on identifying and supplying a wide variety of North Carolina fiction and nonfiction audiobooks. Audiobook publishers select titles to produce

based on a variety of factors, including rights availability and anticipated interest from buyers and renters — as, of course, do print publishers. Materials by North Carolina authors and about the state are available, but the selector must search review sources and publishers' catalogs for the desired titles. Additional sources of information include *Books in Print Plus* (on CD-ROM), which includes mass market titles, and *Words on Cassette*, which lists both mass market and unabridged titles. Both are published by R. R. Bowker.

Selectors who want to establish a North Carolina audiobook collection will find Broadfoot's of Wendell a good place to start. Broadfoot's maintains a small selection of North Carolina audio, with an emphasis on storytelling. These audiobooks provide a unique opportunity to hear gifted storytellers relate stories that capture the folklore and history of our state.

Building a broader collection of all types of books on audio is not an easy task. The information given below is intended to assist the audiobook selector in locating sources that can be consulted to determine if specific authors or subjects are available on audio and to provide a list of some audiobooks that may be of interest to selectors wishing to create a North Carolina "presence" in their audiobook collections. This list is neither exhaustive nor all-inclusive, but serves as a starting point. It is readily apparent that popular titles (as opposed to serious literary works) dominate; this is but a fact of life of all publishing, including the audio market.

Omissions and oversights are acknowledged, but not deliberate. Anyone finding an author or area not included is to be congratulated on skillful detective work. Do not let the difficulty of this quest become a roadblock; diligence and an alert eye for those names close to our hearts as followers of all things North Carolina can make the task an uplifting, perhaps even enjoyable, quest.

In the directory which follows, North Carolina authors and titles are classified as fiction, nonfiction, or storytellers, with the producer and/or distributor given in parentheses. A selected list of producers and distributors, and review sources previously mentioned, all with telephone numbers, follows the list of North Carolina-related authors and titles.

Fiction:

Chappell, Fred (Recorded Books)
Edgerton, Clyde (Recorded Books)
Gibbons, Kay (Simon and Schuster)
Gurganus, Allan (Random House)
Karon, Jan (Recorded Books; Penguin)
Maron, Margaret (Recorded Books)
Pearson, T. R. (Recorded Books)
Price, Reynolds (Simon and Schuster)
Tyler, Ann (Books on Tape, Chivers, Recorded Books, Random House)

Nonfiction:

Brinkley, David. *Everyone is Entitled to My Opinion* (Random House)
By the Way: Welcome Home to North Carolina (Broadfoot)
Graham, Ruth Bell. *Legacy of a Pack Rat* (Christians Listening)
Howard, Fred. *Wilbur and Orville: A Biography of the Wright Brothers*. (Books on Tape; Recorded Books)
Kuralt, Charles. *Charles Kuralt's America; Life on the Road* (both available from Simon and Schuster)
Martin, William. *Prophet with Honor: The Billy Graham Story* (Dove)
McGinnis, Joe. *Fatal Vision* (Simon and Schuster)
Ride with Me, North Carolina (Ride with Me)
Valvano, Jim. *They Gave Me a Life Contract, Then They Declared Me Dead* (Simon and Schuster)

Storytellers:

Davis, Donald. *Jack's First Job and other Jack Tales; The Southern Bells* (both available from Broadfoot); plus several other titles available from August House
Hider, Sam. *The Rabbit and the Bear & Why the Hog's Tail is Flat* (Broadfoot)
Holt, David. *Mostly Ghostly Stories* (High Windy Audio)
Littlejohn, Kathi Smith. *Cherokee Legends 2* (Broadfoot)
Roberts, Nancy. *Six North Carolina Ghost Stories* (Broadfoot)
Ross, Gayle. *How Rabbit Tricked Otter and other Cherokee Animal Stories* (Harper Audio)
Smith, Kathi. *Cherokee Legends 1* (Broadfoot)
Torrence, Jackie. *Country Characters* (Earwig Music); *Legends from the Black Tradition* (Broadfoot); *My Grandmother's Treasure* (August House; Broadfoot); *Potpourri of Tales* (Rounder Records)

Publishers and Distributors:

Audio Book Contractors: 202-363-3429
August House: 1-800-284-8784
Books on Tape: 1-800-541-5525
Brilliance Corporation/Nova: 1-800-222-3225
Broadfoot's of Wendell: 1-800-444-6963
Chivers Audio Books: 1-800-621-0182
Christians Listening: 1-800-522-2979
Earwig Music Company: 312-262-0278
Harper Audio: 1-800-242-7737
High Windy Audio: 1-800-637-8679
Penguin Audiobooks: 1-800-546-0275
Random House Audiobooks: 1-800-733-3000
Recorded Books: 1-800-840-7433
Ride with Me: 1-800-752-3195

Review Sources:

AudioFile: 1-800-506-1212
Booklist: 1-800-545-2433
Kliatt: 617-237-7577
Library Journal: 212-645-0067
Publisher's Weekly: 212-645-0067

ABOUT THE AUTHORS ...

Robert Galbreath

Education: B.A., University of Michigan; M.S., Harvard University; Ph.D., University of Michigan; M.L.I.S., University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee
Position: Assistant Director for Collection Development, Jackson Library, UNC-G

Araby Greene

Education: B.A., M.A., UCLA; M.S.L.S., UNC-CH
Position: Associate Systems & Bibliographic Access Librarian, Ramsey Library, UNC-A

Joe Hewitt

Education: B.A., M.S.L.S., UNC-CH; Ph.D., University of Colorado at Boulder
Position: Director, Academic Affairs Library, UNC-CH

Martha Kreszock

Education: B.A., Emory and Henry College; M.A., Appalachian State University; Ed.D., University of Tennessee at Knoxville
Position: Assistant Professor and Reference and Instruction Librarian, Appalachian State University

Ann Miller

Education: B.A., Goshen College; A.M.L.S., University of Michigan
Position: U.S. Government Documents Librarian, Perkins Library, Duke University

Melody Moxley

Education: B.A., Lenoir-Rhyne College; M.S.L.S., University of Tennessee-Knoxville
Position: Administrative Services Manager, Rowan Public Library

Jennifer Pratt

Education: B.A., University of Florida; M.L.S., University of South Florida
Position: Public Services Librarian, Haywood County Public Library

Carol Truett

Education: B.A., M.L.S., Ph.D., University of Texas-Austin
Position: Professor of Library Science and Program Coordinator, Department of Leadership and Educational Studies, Appalachian State University

Milt Warden

Education: B.S., Michigan State University; M.U.P., University of Michigan; Ed.S., Appalachian State University
Position: Media Specialist, T.C. Roberson High School

Suzanne Wise

Education: B.A. University of South Carolina; M.S.L.S., University of Kentucky; M.A., Appalachian State University
Position: Professor and Collection Development Coordinator, University Libraries, Appalachian State University