FROM ONE CHAIR TO ANOTHER

Caroline McCracken-Flesher hands over as Chair to Peter Parolin this summer. Together, we thank all of you who think fondly of your alma mater and its English faculty, and who keep in touch.

In any university, time brings change. Students move on year to year, and even the most beloved professors eventually retire. Our creative writers aspire to separate department status. A Ph.D. may be on the horizon. As the university rises to meet the challenges of each new day, our alums gift us with memory and continuity.

For Caroline, “During my time as chair, one of the great pleasures has been to reconnect with past students, and get to know those who preceded me. E.K. Williams stands out. Though well into his nineties, this BA and MA responded to our requests for advice and for the stories that connect all of us who have taught and studied in English at UW. Once every few months, I would get a funny or helpful story from E.K., remembering colleagues like Clara McIntyre or Wilson Clough, who otherwise we know only as names attached to scholarships. We who care so much about English, all it has meant to past students, and what it can do for the future, need to stay in touch.”

Peter notes: “I am delighted to return to the role of head of the English department. It’s an exciting professional opportunity for me to work with so many talented colleagues and students in Laramie and around the state as together we lead English into a strong future. Initiatives immediately on the table include revising our major to equip our students well for the 21st-century world; hiring a new professor this year to administer writing programs within the department; getting English courses approved for the University’s new core curriculum (USP 2015); and considering instituting a Ph.D. based on the departmental proposal assembled under Caroline’s leadership. Further, I take seriously my major responsibility of articulating the value of the English department and of the humanities to the top administrators at UW, including our president, provost, and dean, who are all just starting their second years in UW administration. In carrying out my responsibilities, I know I can rely on the support of our superb community of friends and alumni. I thank you in advance (Continued on page 2)
McCONIGLEY WINS THE PEN OPEN BOOK AWARD

In her wonderful, complicated life, Casper girl Nina McConigley took time for a Wyoming MA in English. And my goodness—are we proud! Nina was born in Singapore to Irish and Indian parents who relocated to Casper when she was still an infant. She took a BA from St. Olaf and an MFA from Houston. But we know it’s the English MA that mattered most. Nina is already a celebrated author, having won the Barthelmé Memorial Award, and published in the New York Times. It’s for her volume of short stories, Cowboys and East Indians, that she is honored by PEN. An international organization of writers—from poets to critics to journalists—PEN is the preeminent writers’ organization, dedicated to advancing the written word and protecting those who write around the world. So this honor from PEN USA is both singular and best.

The judges wrote in their citation:

“In Cowboys and East Indians, Nina McConigley gives us Wyoming precisely the way we expect it—in landscape, sky, and animal life—and in ways we don’t. The inhabitants of this surprising, thrilling, and richly textured short story collection are unpredictable, both in their actions and identities. A cross-dresser, a kleptomaniacal foreign exchange student, a disabled mother, and others share a domestic setting—featuring trailers that look like dollhouses, motels whose rooms are identical, no matter the city they’re in—reflecting the stuckness and wanderlust of the collection’s characters, who are insider/outside in every sense. In these stories, McConigley has shaped a work destined to be a classic, like Sherwood Anderson’s Winesburg, Ohio. Its characters—Indians in America, Americans in India, and Indian-Americans in both places—echo Vonnegut’s statement that “Out on the edge you see all kinds of things you can’t see from the center.” It’s electrifying to be out on the edge with this book.”

Read more about the remarkable Nina at: http://www.ninamcconigley.com/biography/

FROM ONE CHAIR TO ANOTHER (continued from page 1)

for your help and I invite you to stay in regular touch in person, via email, and through our facebook page. Exciting times indeed.”

Together, our wish for the next year is that you continue to share with Peter the great gift you shared with Caroline: your help and advice as we work to bring opportunity to students, and make UW English a department of which you can be proud.

Contact us at (307) 766-6452, or join our facebook community: facebook.com/UWYOEnglish
“YOU SAY GOODBYE” . . .

We bid farewell this year to Ric Reverand and Duncan Harris, who have both retired.

Ric Reverand brought to the department a unique combination of artistic and scholarly leadership. A graduate of Yale and Cornell, and authority on Dryden, he is also an accomplished harpsichordist and photographer. He thus proved an inimitable director of UW’s Cultural Programs series, bringing artists like Bela Fleck, the dance company Pilobolus, and Actors from the London Stage to Laramie. Author of *Dryden’s Final Poetic Mode: The Fables*, and editor of *Queen Anne and the Arts*, in retirement, he continues work as editor for the renowned journal *Eighteenth-Century Life*. Students will long remember him constructing gothic cathedrals from massed undergraduates in his signature “Creative Impulse” class.

Duncan Harris is synonymous with Honors and the remarkable “Shakespeare in England and Italy” course that he has co-taught for the past many years. Hailing from Jackson by way of Stanford, Boston and Brandeis universities, Duncan has shepherded generations of students through English and Honors, bringing from them their best. His 1982 article “Tombs, Guidebooks, and Shakespearean Drama: Death in the Renaissance,” was seminal for the literary study of funerary practices, and he co-edited the important *Teaching Shakespeare* volume for Princeton in 1970. Duncan retires to enjoy life—and that best of hobbies, continuing to help UW students find their future.

English has lost two stalwarts—we wish them well, but we’re very glad they’re not going far away.

“AND I SAY HELLO!”

Michael Edson (Ph.D. Delaware, BA Virginia Tech) joins us from the University of Alaska at Fairbanks to teach eighteenth-century British and transatlantic literature. Michael’s particular interest is the language and practice of “retirement.” Writers of the period, he argues, favor a period of “abstraction,” meaning removal from the busy world, as part of their creative process. This is when the capacity for “abstract thought” gains cachet. With Michael, Wyoming students could be the new “abstract” generation—in a good way!

Arielle Zibrack (Ph.D. Boston University, BA Rochester) comes from Case Western as our new colleague at the University of Wyoming, Casper. An Americanist focused on the nineteenth century, she focuses on identity formation in a transatlantic context, and her work ranges from Kate Chopin to Thomas Hardy to Cormac McCarthy. In Casper, Arielle will work with the renowned Bruce Richardson. Ultimately, as “our woman in Casper,” she will lead and teach across the curriculum.

WE WELCOME ALSO:

Dan Keegan, as a visiting assistant professor. Dan earned his Ph.D. at the University of California-Irvine. He specializes in drama, theatre and theory, and will teach Shakespeare.

Pam Galbreath, MFA, returns as a temporary academic professional lecturer. Competition for these slots is fierce, and it requires a range of knowledge and teaching skills to meet our changing needs. We are happy to welcome Pam back for 2014–15.
In the Bakken Oil Field, Stuart Tanner thinks about his mother Jane, and his wife Daney, English teachers both. Over the past few years, the Tanners have steadily built the Jane Tanner Fund to support travel abroad for UW English majors. In the new Automotive Technologies building in Casper, Stuart tells us how little he wants to be honored. It’s all about the teachers—about Jane and Daney—and about the students.

Daney writes: “Our goal when we first established this fund was for students to have the opportunity to travel abroad and experience a new and fascinating culture. It is our belief, even though we have not traveled much outside of the states, that this is how the world will change.” Jane is adamant that travel changes character—and pleased to see characters change in the letters of thanks students write before and after their travels. In one lovely case, Daney says, they heard words of beauty from a student they, serendipitously, knew from Casper, and who had traveled with Tanner funding all the way to France. She hopes that “students will experience the life changing moments I had at the University of Wyoming. . . . What was most valuable was the time I spent with . . . people whose life experiences were so different from mine. I believe this class changed my perception of the world, and I believe the Jane Tanner Award will also change the perception of those who are recipients of this opportunity.”

We believe that too. Thank you, Stuart, Daney and Jane Tanner for helping us make English into the gateway to the world.

Lauren Perry writes: “The Tanner award allowed me to really enjoy and experience Scotland and England in their entirety. I was able to travel around Britain and Europe, making my studies abroad unforgettable and educational outside the classroom.” In her colorful blog, Lauren remembers arriving in Scotland: “I coudna understand a wee word from ma cabby’s mouth.” But she grew “weel accustomed to being called ‘hen’ and ‘love,’ sometimes ‘lass.’ By the time I left, six months later, even after roaming around Europe, I knew one thing for sure: Scotland canna be beat for beauty, history, or just plain spirit. Ye ken?”

—Lauren Perry, Northwest College

Connor Novotny says “The chance to study abroad radically changed my perspective on life. In uprooting from my supportive home state, and immersing myself in a different culture, I was able to gain an honest perspective on not only my personal life but also the environmental context which helped to form my self. Thanks to the Tanners, I had experiences that positioned me to appreciate wholeheartedly where I’d come from, and to understand where I wanted to go in the future. Study abroad in France completed the portrait that I’d always imagined of higher education—meant to form both the intellect and the soul of the student. Now I seek education (in all forms). I will always encourage and support students to study abroad, knowing the impact it had on my life, and the potential it might have for theirs.”

—Connor Novotny, where does he teach?
THE “COHORT” MA

Three years ago, the English department began its cohort MA degree, which teaches students across the state by compressed video. All around Wyoming there are English BAs doing important work in schools, business and government, but missing the discipline that speaks to intellect and heart. Our cohort MA aimed to provide opportunity, and to build community between these alums and colleagues, and today’s faculty and students in Laramie.

Led by Susan Frye, then Susan Aronstein, and now Caskey Russell, the cohort took one course each semester for three years—from Shakespeare to American Gothic. For the first course they gathered in Laramie for a week, meeting one another and us, and then finished the “semester” with weekly Outreach classes. Every summer they met again, until they graduated together in a flourish this May.

We were thrilled to see graduates who had worked from Sheridan and Casper, Rock Springs and Cody meet their campus colleagues. They all walked together at this year’s graduation. We hope campus and cohort graduates alike will return to us in future summers for writing colloquia. We know they all have a lot to say and to share!

THIS YEAR’S DEPARTMENTAL AWARD WINNERS

Andrew Award: Christina Bogdan, Eric Krszjzanek
Clough Award: Cady Favazzo, Sapphire Feltner
English Study Abroad Award & Harris Award: Danielle Wood
Merriam Award: Cady Favazzo
Kambouris Award: Courtney Holroyd, Acacia Ramirez, Christina Bogdan, Adrian Shirk
McIntyre Award: Cady Favazzo, Sapphire Feltner, Allison Cetak, Derek Piel, Kelli Price
Wilson Award: Allison Cetak
Tanner Award: ?????????????????????????
WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Our majors, and non-majors who fondly remember their English classes, are all over the world, doing remarkable things. Here’s a sampling.

**Chip and Jenny Gaudio** live in Stockholm, where Chip works in the computer industry, and Jenny for the Swedish government; **Jonathan Kawulok** is in his second year in the MD program at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons; **Jennifer Riley** is Chief of Marketing and Business Development at The Memorial Hospital in Craig, Colorado; **Kerry Luck-Torry** works as a lawyer in Dubai.

**Cody Hartley** is director of curatorial affairs at the Georgia O’Keeffe Museum in Santa Fe. He writes: Bouncing from Wyoming to the West Coast to complete a Ph.D. in art history and then to the East Coast to work in two great museums—the Clark, in Williamstown, MA, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston—my English degree has served me remarkably well. As Director of Curatorial Affairs at the Georgia O’Keeffe Museum, I’m back in my home time zone and using the intellectual skills honed in the classrooms of UW to understand and share the legacy of an American icon.

Jacklynn Pham (BA 2011) is in Carnegie Mellon’s Masters of Design program. We asked her to tell us how her worlds connect:

When we graduated in English, Peter Parolin told us all that we “would be English majors for life,” and I took that to heart. What I value most about English is that it changed the way I approach problems—and that transfers to whatever you’re passionate about. I majored in English and minored in graphic design and professional writing. I knew I wanted to pursue design as a career but I couldn’t give up the rich perspective from English—the communication and problem-solving aspects of my major complimented what I was doing in design. In literature class, we analyzed people’s circumstances and motivations. I try to bring this understanding of context and audience to my design work. The teams and clients I’ve worked with have noticed and appreciated this approach.

After two years working professionally in communication and visual design, I decided to go back to school. Knowing how much value English brings to design, I applied to Carnegie Mellon’s Communication Planning & Information Design Masters, a unique program located within English and Design. The MDes track brings in communication and emphasizes context, which I love. I have been pleasantly surprised by how similar these theory-focused classes have been to my professional writing studies. I just finished my first year and hope to connect language and interaction design in my thesis.

In life, school and my profession, things I learned at UW constantly pop up, making me truly thankful for my English classes. I learned about usability, new media, and rhetoric from professional writing and had a crash-course in philosophy during senior seminar. Both distinguish me from other visual designers. And when I think about the Grand Academy of Lagado as I read an obtuse academic paper for graduate work, I realize I might be a designer in practice, but I am an English major at heart.

STAY IN TOUCH!

Facebook: www.facebook.com/UWYOEnglish
Web: www.uwyo.edu/english

Have something to fill this space?
University teaching communicates knowledge, insights and skills at the cutting edge. To stand at that edge, faculty must research. We discover today what we teach tomorrow. In fact, when we’re not in the classroom, we’re researching, analyzing and writing. But that’s what we like. And our work can take us to exotic places as well as different intellectual spaces. From us to you: images from our Summer 2014 research album.

Susan Aronstein [write-up goes here: Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt anim id est laborum.] Her research was supported in part by the English department and International Programs.

Julia Obert researches in Ireland. Here, she is windswept at Malin Head. Her book Postcolonial Overtures: The Politics of Sound in Contemporary Northern Irish Poetry is forthcoming from Syracuse University Press. Julia’s research was supported in part by UW International Programs, the department, and a college Basic Research grant.

Caroline McCracken-Flesher studied “homecoming” during the anniversary of Bannockburn (the Robert the Bruce victory over the English 700 years ago) and Scotland’s upcoming independence vote. She is pictured with “Robert the Bruce” at the battle reenactment, and Blair Jenkins, CEO of the YES campaign. Caroline’s work was supported in part by the Wyoming Institute for Humanities Research.

Andy Fitch and Danielle Pafunda reenacted Sigmund Freud’s process of conducting in-depth, discussion-based inquiry while taking long mountain walks. They are at work on a book cataloguing post-Freudian theoretical reflection and hikes within range of Steamboat (where they set up “base camp” this summer, thanks to funding from the Wyoming Institute for Humanities Research).
ROBERT L. TORRY FUND IN ENGLISH HONORS AND LITERARY STUDIES

The Robert L. Torry Fund in English Honors and Literary Studies is building toward endowment. $25,000 produces $1000 a year that we can direct to scholarships and to support for Literary Studies. We have passed $11,000. We would very much appreciate your help to reach that $25,000 goal.

If your interest lies elsewhere, there are many further ways to help UW’s English department. The English Study Abroad fund supports students traveling abroad for short programs such as “Shakespeare in England and Italy”; if Professional Writing is your bliss, you can donate to that; and faculty could certainly use research support. There’s a lot to do in an English department. Perhaps you can help in a way no one else has yet imagined. Simply make your desires known to the UW Foundation, and you can boost tomorrow’s students and faculty on their way.

GIFT FORM

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Please accept my/our gift to UW Department of English in the amount of:

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