North Carolina Books

Robert G. Anthony, Jr., Compiler

Jim L. Sumner. ***A History of Sports in North Carolina.*** Raleigh: Division of Archives and History, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1990. 119 pp. $6.00, plus $2.00 postage and handling. ISBN 0-86526-241-1 (paper).

To those prospective readers who are willing to concede that there may have been sports in the Tar Heel state before Everett Case arrived in Raleigh in 1946 or even before the Pinehurst Course No. 2 (golf) was completed in 1907, Jim Sumner's ***A History of Sports in North Carolina*** will still be a welcome surprise. Sumner, a historian for the North Carolina Division of Archives and History, has investigated sports from the colonial period through the coming of the Charlotte Hornets and has presented the results of his research in lucid, readable prose.

Arranged chronologically in six chapters and highlighted by over fifty illustrations, ***A History of Sports in North Carolina*** describes which sports were popular when and with whom. Sumner also provides a social and economic context, thus enabling the reader to see sports as an integral part of Tar Heel life. Popular in the antebellum period, for example, were horse racing, cockfighting, hunting, and fishing—all agriculture-based, all "predominantly individual and participant oriented," and all limited for the most part to white males.

After the Civil War, as transportation and communication improved and as people began to perceive sports as benefitting participantas and society as a whole, team sports began to develop, although still more concerned with participants than with spectators. As Sumner notes, "Big time spectator sports depend on urbanization, and—New South rhetoric notwithstanding—North Carolina was overwhelmingly rural in the late nineteenth century."

In the twentieth century, Sumner traces the growth of minor league baseball, the rise of college sports (often against the wishes of the faculty), the slow acceptance of the idea of public recreation, and the lack of sports opportunities for women. Careful to relate the state to the national scene, Sumner also deals with effects on North Carolina sports of racial integration, television, and Title IX of the 1972 Educational Act which outlawed sexual discrimination by educational institutions receiving federal funds.

Although ***A History of Sports in North Carolina*** is serious in purpose and scholarly in method, it is not dull. Within his analysis of sports and society, Sumner includes the details so dear to the hearts of sports trivia lovers: N.C.'s first formal sports organization was the Wilmington Jockey Club, founded in 1774. Benjamin Rippay (playing under the pseudonym Charles Wesley Jones), the first North Carolinian to play major league baseball, was also the first player to hit two home runs in a single major league game. It was in Rocky Mount that Jim Thorpe played the professional minor league baseball that cost him his Olympic gold medal. UNC football player Choo Choo Justice's second place in the 1948 and 1949 Heisman Trophy balloting is the highest finish by a North Carolina native. N.C. State's 1974 victory over UCLA in the national basketball semifinals in Greensboro ended at seven the Bruins' consecutive national championships.

In just over a hundred pages, Sumner examines sports in North Carolina from colonial times to the 1990s, and he includes the minor as well as major sports and sports figures. Well indexed, the book also provides a selected bibliography of books and articles. It would be an appropriate addition to any public or academic library and also to a middle school or high school library media center.

Mary Ann Brown, Mangum Primary School Durham County

Robert Morgan. ***The Blue Valleys: A Collection of Stories.*** Atlanta: Peachtree Publishers, 1989. 168 pp. $15.95. ISBN 0-934601-71-2.

Good family reunions, often held at the old homeplace, ignite fires of kinship and commonality which otherwise lie smoldering beneath the surface of everyday existence. Tales told there of great-grandfather's service in the Confederate

Army, of grandma's work on an heirloom quilt, or even of Uncle Joe's tribulations during the Depression make the family unique, tie it to the house and the land long after the ancestor has gone, and embody a sense of family pride. Author Robert Morgan, whose vignettes could easily have passed the lips of a talented family storyteller, mirrors this abiding sense of time, place, and belonging in his own stories.

Morgan's thirteen tales, revealed almost as personal recollections, root themselves firmly in mountainous western North Carolina. Arranged chronologically, the stories move through time, reflect varying degrees of kinship with the land, and result in the realization that the land endures even though people do not. "A Brightness New and Welcoming," for example, replete with visual poetic imagery, relates the feverish remembrances of a southern prisoner of war in Illinois. John Powell lies dying of dysentery, but thinks about the sparkling spring back home. A gold watch, kept hidden from the Yankees, symbolizes his yearning to return. "Pisgah" tells of a little brother and sister who quit school because the other children ridicule their poor homemade lunches. In a fortuitous moment, however, the land redeems the siblings with a startled fawn.

Other offerings visualize the importance of land as possession. In "Family Land," the wife of a man arrested for child molestation rather matter-of-factly decides that holding on to the family land means more than raising bail for her husband. Three brothers travel to Florida for construction jobs in "Crossties," but after spending time in jail for allegedly causing a traffic fatality, they return to their North Carolina land for support. Another man, a successful artist featured in "Blinding Daylight," journeys back to the hills, where, despite changes in the land since his father's death, he feels "at ease" enough to commit suicide.

Morgan endows his stories with realistic detail, a pervasive sense of mood, and a seemingly straightforward objective. While most of them reach for quiet, down-home truths, they do so without bombast or braggadocio. At their best, these stories leave the reader with a satisfying feeling of kinship, a deep-seated love of place, and an earnest desire for belonging.

North Carolina academic, public, and school libraries should acquire this book, not only because the author grew up in the North Carolina mountains, but also because his stories quietly celebrate the land, its people, and its heritage. As the first story collection of a prize-winning poet, this insightful effort delivers much and promises more.

Rex Klett, Sandhill Regional Library System

Donna J. Spindel. ***Crime and Society in North Carolina, 1663-1776.*** Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989. 171 pp. $25.00. ISBN 0-8071-1467-7.

For the casual reader this study of crime and punishment and of the racial and social divisions in the colony of North Carolina will prove fascinating. The variety of crime and the forms of punishment and how they were viewed by the courts, often depending upon the status of the accused, will help explain much about human relations during the first century of the colony. The author has examined all of the surviving records of cases heard in courts at all levels, and, through computer analysis, determined what they reveal about the various people of North Carolina—the elite, laborers, blacks, and women—and about the development of law and courts.

There is a chapter devoted to a description of the assorted crimes; and others on criminals, the disposition of cases, and punishment. At various points throughout her work, Spindel compares North Carolina with Massachusetts, New York, and Virginia, states for which similar books exist. Finally, there is a summary review of the whole subject in which the author points out what she believes her findings reveal about North Carolina.

In some of the generalizations, it is apparent that the author is unfamiliar with the early history of North Carolina. It also is clear that the records often are so limited that just a few more cases might easily change the conclusions suggested by the computer. Much of what is presented is objective, yet in dealing with cases pertaining to women and blacks the choice of words is occasionally pejorative. While authors sometimes are not responsible for the index to their books, this one fails to bring out much in the text that would be useful: carting, castration, and outlawry, for example, do not appear. Other entries, such as Benefit of clergy, are incomplete.

There are thirty tables of figures arranged in a variety of categories, with percentages indicated. A classified bibliography, identifying both manuscript and printed sources, will be found useful by readers interested in specific courts or counties in North Carolina.

William S. Powell, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Bland Simpson. ***The Great Dismal: a Carolinian's Swamp Memoir.*** Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990. 185 pp. $16.95. ISBN 0-8078-1873-9.

In 1973, Union Camp, a timber and paper company, donated the Great Dismal Swamp to the United States Department of the Interior. The 106,000 acres of cypress, juniper, peat, and water —lots of water—would be preserved from then on as the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. Now Bland Simpson assures the preservation of the history of man's life in the Swamp with the publication of ***The Great Dismal: a Carolinian's Swamp Memoir.***

In his research, Simpson uncovered numerous accounts of the Swamp, both published and unpublished. The book's excellent bibliography attests to the ingenuity of his research, for in it he cites technical reports, diaries, newspaper stories, journals, government reports, master's theses, and magazine articles. Add to these sources Simpson's own memories and interviews with rangers, game wardens, naturalists, hunters, trappers, and miscellaneous Swampers. Add again—a ballad here, a poem or two, the schedule of rates from a nineteenth-century canalbank hotel. Illustrate the whole with some forty woodcuts, lithographs, maps, and photographs. The result is a portrait of the Great Dismal that is as rich and diverse as the Swamp itself.

Much of the richness of the book comes from Simpson's skill in presenting the material, much of it from primary sources. Simpson knows when to let the Swamper have his say and when to step in and hurry things along a little with paraphrasing. For example, a game warden's moonshiner story runs almost uninterrupted for a few pages. But in the recounting of William Byrd's survey tale, Simpson mixes direct quotes from Byrd's *History of the Dividing Line* with his own narration. This is done so smoothly that not only is the reader unaware of the transitions, but he also happily reads six pages of eighteenth-century prose without balking at the archaic language.

The diverseness of ***The Great Dismal*** comes from the many subjects covered: runaway slaves, logging, George Washington, bears, and birds. Ironically, it is the very quantity of material that leads to the book's main weakness. Any author, especially one working with such a mixed bag of sources as these, must carefully choose what he

will include in the final version. This selectivity is essential to the production of a strong work. But Simpson seems to have been unable to leave out any anecdote or bit of information, relevant or irrelevant. The result is a good deal of superfluous (and often extraneous) material that interrupts the narrative and weakens the prose.

Criticism of excess aside, Bland Simpson deserves much praise for his fascinating portrait of the Swamp. May he pass many more times through that "dense curtain of green, reeds and maples and big pines" and bring back to us more of the adventure, history, and beauty of his beloved Great Dismal.

Becky Kornegay, Western Carolina University

Jerry Bledsoe. ***Country Cured: Reflections from the Heart.*** Atlanta: Longstreet Press, 1989. 196 pp. $14.95. ISBN 0-92964-63-0.

According to Thomas Wolfe, we can't go home again; but Jerry Bledsoe not only believes we can, but also that we should go home again, at least in our memories. As Bledsoe says:

> That trip—back to a place, *the* place we remember as home—is one we've all made. Whether the neighborhood is changed or remains basically the same, whether the house is still there or long gone, the place holds us, draws us backward to the people and events that define it, to the years that make us what we are.

Bledsoe's journey into the past takes us to the Thomasville of the late forties and early fifties where he delivered newspapers on his J.C. Higgins Special bicycle and spent his hard-earned nickels and dimes on candy and soda pop at Noah Ledford's neighborhood store; where his attempt to sneak into a hootchy kootchy show was thwarted by an alert roustabout; and where he suffered through a hot, boring session of summer school to become the last to graduate from the old Main Street High School.

Throughout ***Country Cured,*** Jerry Bledsoe explores the theme of connections: to the past that "make(s) us what we are;" to nature that so directly affects the country dweller; and to our fellow man. The title, ***Country Cured,*** refers to Bledsoe's idea that memories seasoned with country living can be compared to the process of curing ham—that the memories are "richer, deeper, tastier" just as country hams have a "unique tang, that regular hams just don't have."

Bledsoe's memories do have a distinctive flavor and the real strength of ***Country Cured*** lies in his ability to tell a good story. His folksy, rambling style will be familiar to regular readers of the *Greensboro News and Record* and the *Charlotte Observer*, especially since some of the material in the books has appeared in those papers in slightly different form. Unfortunately, Bledsoe's editors allowed him to ramble a bit too much in ***Country Cured.*** Awkward phrases and poorly chosen words (i.e., "ardent bachelor") are evident in some sections, leaving the quality of writing somewhat uneven. Nevertheless, this book will be enjoyed by a sizable segment of public library patrons whether they are loyal Bledsoe fans or not. Anyone expecting a page turner such as Bledsoe's last book, the best-selling *Bitter Blood*, however, will be sadly disappointed.

Katherine R. Cagle, R.J. Reynolds High School Library, Winston-Salem

Ruth Moose. ***Dreaming in Color.*** Little Rock, Ark.: August House, 1989. 199 pp. $15.95. ISBN 0-87483-078-8.

Ruth Moose's latest book, ***Dreaming in Color,*** is a collection of short stories. Like her earlier work, *The Wreath Ribbon Quilt*, these stories are about the lives and feelings of girls and women. The characters are ordinary, well-known types—housewives, teachers, small town society ladies, and teenage girls experiencing the pain of growing up.

One of the most appealing stories is "Peanut Dreams and the Blue-Eyed Jesus." Shelby Jean Foster, the thirteen-year-old main character, becomes friends with Ellis Nickerson, a sixteen-year-old pregnant dropout. One afternoon, Ellis shows up at the drugstore while Shelby is there with her friends having a Coke. When Ellis sees Shelby and goes over to speak to her, Shelby does not introduce her because she is ashamed of her. In "Wooden Apples," Patsy, a teenager, discovers "little things you didn't really want to know, things that hurt and made you worry if the world was all right."

"The Green Car" tells of a woman who left the city and moved to a mountain seventeen miles from town, and how she deals with loneliness and fear out on the mountain after someone breaks into her neighbor's house. In other stories, Moose writes about a broken relationship, women being bossed around by husbands and other relatives, neighbors in a nice suburban area, adultery, secrets, and vanishing friends. Her stories are humorous and simple; ones to which we can all relate.

Ruth Moose is currently a reference librarian at Pfeiffer College in Misenheimer, N.C. She is the

author of two collections of poetry, *To Survive* and *Finding Things in the Dark*; and her short stories have appeared in *Atlantic Monthly, Redbook, Ladies Home Journal, Ohio Review, New Delta Review*, and other publications. Mrs. Moose has won a Pen Award for Short Fiction and a writing fellowship from the North Carolina Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Dreaming in Color is well written and entertaining and is suitable for academic and public libraries.

Lula Avent, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Roger Manley. ***Signs and Wonders: Outsider Art Inside North Carolina.*** Chapel Hill: Distributed for North Carolina Museum of Art by University of North Carolina Press, 1989. 135 pp. $19.95. ISBN 0-88259-957-7 (paper).

A typical exhibition catalog offers a visual reminder of an artistic event. ***Signs and Wonders*** was created to document a 1989 exhibition at the North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh, but it is far more than merely pictures of pictures. It is an introductory guide to the "Third World" of the mind—a personal and visionary world in which ordinary objects can take on new and disturbing forms.

"Outsider" art resists definition. "Primitive" or "folk" may begin to hint at the style, but the term carries an extra and intense dimension of separateness. Richard Schneiderman, director of the museum, admits that the works on display were never intended to be shown in a formal exhibition. This beautifully produced catalog provides the possibility for private communication with the artists and, if studied in depth, may well have a greater impact on the reader than could have been gained by attendance at the exhibit.

Roger Manley, co-curator of the exhibition and author of the excellent text, obviously expended enormous effort in researching his subject. His approach is as much sociological as artistic, as witnessed by the detailed attention he pays to the everyday lives of the artists. The photographs of the creators themselves are as impressive as those of the startling "environments" or surrealistic landscapes that they have created. The catalog cover is a striking example of how castoff materials can combine in extraordinary ways. It is an arresting image of enormous "whirlygigs," or wind-propelled machines, at an eastern North Carolina crossroads. The scene cannot be analyzed, but only experienced, as is the case with much in this catalog. Illustrations range from a demonic vision of the Apocalypse, worthy of Bosch, to a charmingly self-conscious cement angel, holding anybody's ordinary mailbox.

Artistic style is not in question here. Any material is fair game for consideration, and any media is appropriate for artistic expression. This may lead to combinations that defy categorizing, such as wood sculptures in a whisky bottle, or colored pencil on a cereal box. What might seem strange or simplistic at first often shows, upon examination, an unconscious power that can be deeply moving.

Signs and Wonders is an obvious labor of love. It is handsomely laid out and fascinatingly written, with a generous supply of illustrations, many in color. The reader will be left with new appreciation for the special magic that can reside in seemingly trivial things. Highly recommended for any library, public or academic, with interest in folk art or North Caroliniana.

Gene Leonardi, North Carolina Central University

John Foster West. ***The Summer People.*** Boone, N.C.: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1990. 243 pp. $14.95. ISBN 0-913239-65-8.

John Foster West's third novel, ***The Summer People,*** is the winner of the first Appalachian Consortium Fiction Award. If that, and a strikingly beautiful cover, are not enough to recommend this small gem to any North Carolina reader, the description of Anna DeVoss's first encounter with the Appalachian Mountains is:

> The Appalachians rolled away toward the Piedmont to the south-east, blue and misty, ridge beyond ridge, mountain dome after mountain dome, fading out in haze along the horizon. The farthest range she could discern appeared higher than the Blue Ridge, but she knew it was an illusion. The mountains were actually stepping downward toward the foothills, toward the rolling landscape of the western North Carolina Piedmont and the flatlands beyond.

From here, throughout the book, the reader is treated to endless portraits of the world's most magnificent wonders: summer in northwestern North Carolina. The lushness, the coolness, the greenness are a constant reminder of just why there is an entire class, a population, of summer people who inhabit large portions of our state.

And this is what Anna DeVoss is—summer people. Newly, but inevitably widowed (her husband had been missing in action six years before his body was returned to the states), Anna has retreated to her in-laws' summer place in Holy Rood Valley outside Boone to try to gain some

perspective in her life. Her mother-in-law has urged Anna to stay for as long as she needs, confessing to the curative powers of the mountains. And one can almost feel the grieving young woman's challenge to her peaceful surroundings—a dare to help her accept and begin a life, a future.

This gradual acceptance does soothe her inner turmoil. Accustomed to hiding behind her wedding band and Pete's whispered plea "Promise you'll wait till I return," Anna has never even considered the amorous advances of the men around her. But here, in her lush, sensuous surroundings, she begins to respond to her need for conversation, companionship, and love. While her head indicates that she should encourage the rich "summer people" executive who would be emotionally safe, her heart is drawn to Jay, a young mountain man who had been her husband's friend.

The story of Anna DeVoss's search for self is a love story, the gradual friendship and eventual love of Anna and Jay. Yet it is more. The true essence of this love story is John Foster West's love for northwestern North Carolina, its mountains, its traditions, its people. For what is truly memorable about ***The Summer People*** are West's descriptions of the mountains, including even the picture of burgeoning university-centered Boone and the inevitable tourist/developer rape of the countryside. The traditional, but tourist-battered, Highland Games and the Singing on the Mountain are carefully and frustratingly described. And yet, the focal point of all is the mountains—the waterfalls, the black leaf-covered earth, the echoing thunder of the storm, the overwhelming greenness, the calm and stillness. Every tree, every peak, every valley is painted in its rich glory with loving detail, so much so that those of us who have been there know exactly where West and his characters are; those who have never visited will be there, as summer people, if only in their mind's eye.

Frances Bryant Bradburn, East Carolina University

Other Publications of Interest

Since 1933, *The State* magazine has delighted readers with its unique mix of North Carolina history, personalities, humor, and nostalgia. Its articles, by both amateur and professional writers, frequently offer the only available printed information on many Tar Heel events, people, and traditions. Thus, librarians—and their patrons—will be pleased with the improved access to recent years of the magazine now available with ***The State Magazine Index, June 1966-May 1987, Vol. 34-Vol. 54.*** (1989; Broadfoot's of Wendell, 6624 Robertson Pond Road, Wendell, N.C. 27591; 648 pp.; cloth; $49.50; ISBN 0-916107-75-2). Indexing is considerably more comprehensive than that in three older indexes for 1933-1960; and coverage is also superior to the semi-annual indexes currently published in the magazine. It is hard to imagine any library with the relevant issues of *The State* not finding this newest index invaluable.

In his ***Francis Preston Venable of the University of North Carolina,*** author Maurice Bursey portrays the life a major figure in the history of Tar Heel education. Venable, appointed professor of chemistry in 1880, was the first Ph.D. degree holder on the Chapel Hill teaching faculty and brought vigor and enthusiasm to scientific research at the campus. A highly respected professor and founder of the pioneering Elisha Mitchell Scientific Society, he became university president in 1900, a position he held until 1913. Bursey traces Venable's life from childhood in South Carolina and Virginia, through studies in Germany, and fifty years as chemistry professor and fourteen as president, to his final days as respected professor emeritus. It was Venable, Bursey concludes, who "by example and force of character ... had raised the University of North Carolina from a comfortable Southern college to a center for scholarship, and so poised it for greatness." (1989; Chapel Hill Historical Society, P.O. Box 503, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27515; 111 pp.; cloth; $12.00, plus $1.00 shipping; ISBN 0-940715-09-7).

Even longtime Civil War buffs will likely garner new knowledge about the last days of that conflict from ***Dawn of Peace: The Bennett Place State Historic Site,*** by William M. Vatavuk. It was at the home of James Bennitt (now spelled "Bennett") five miles west of Durham's Station, N.C., that Union General William T. Sherman and Confederate General Joseph E. Johnston negotiated the surrender of the latter's army of 40,000 in late April 1865. This surrender—which has been overshadowed by events at Appomattox, Va., where two weeks earlier Robert E. Lee's 28,000 men laid down their arms—removed the last sizable Southern army that diehard Confederate leaders believed capable of continuing the war. Vatavuk carefully outlines the events leading up to the Bennett Place meetings, discusses the negotiations, and describes the immediate aftermath of the April 26 surrender. Photographs, maps, footnotes, bibliography, and document texts accompany this introduction to one of the most significant Tar Heel historic sites. (1989; 30 pp.; paper; Bennett Place, 4409 Bennett Memorial Road,

Durham, N.C. 27705; $4.95).

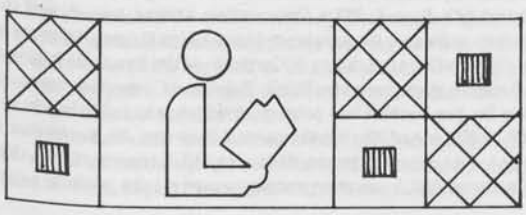
Now available in a revised second edition, ***The Pelican Guide to Hillsborough, Historic Orange County, North Carolina,*** captures the charm of one of North Carolina's most important eighteenth-century communities. Author Lucile Noell Dula combines a short history of the town with brief discussions of sixteen historic houses, public buildings, and other sites. Also included is a walking tour guide, with descriptions of over fifty additional sites, many shown in black-and-white photographs. The 128-page paperbound book is indexed and has a brief bibliography. (1989; Pelican Publishing Co., 1101 Monroe Street, Gretna, La., 70053; $6.95; ISBN 0-88289-719-5).

Locating Cartographic Information
(Continued from page 137)

Weyerhaeuser Company
Aerial Photo Sales Department
P. O. Box 1391
New Bern, NC 28560

References

1. Robert O. Walton, III, NCGS, Letter to author, 2 November 1989.
2. U.S. National Archives. *Guide to Cartographic Records in the National Archives*, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1971).
U.S. National Archives. Cartographic Branch. *Cartogrrphic and architectural branch*, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1984).
3. U.S. Library of Congress. Geography and Map Division. *Geography and map division*, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1984).
4. Robert W. Marx, "The TIGER system: Automating the geographic structure of the United States Census," *Government Publications Review*, 13 (March-April 1986): 181-201.
U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Census Tract Manual*, 5th ed., (Washington, D.C., GPO, 1966): 2-3.
5. U.S. Library of Congress. Geography and Map Division. *Fire insurance maps in the Library of Congress*, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1981).
6. George Stevenson, *Maps and other Cartographic Records in the NC State Archives, Information Circular 12*, (Raleigh, N.C.: Archives and History, 1974).
7. William S. Powell, *The North Carolina Gazetteer*, (Chapel Hill, N.C.: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968).
8. David Sanders Clark, *Index to maps of North Carolina in books and periodicals*, (Fayetteville, N.C.: [the author], 1976).
9. William P. Cumming, *Mapping the North Carolina Coast*, (Raleigh, N.C.: Archives and History, 1988).



Upcoming Issues

Fall 1990	-Performance Measures *Jinnie Davis, Guest Editor*
Winter 1990	-Supporting the Support Staff *Harry Tuchmayer, Guest Editor*
Spring 1991	-Law and the Library *Tim Coggins, Guest Editor*
Summer 1991	-Young Adult Services *Rebecca Taylor and Gayle Keresey, Guest Editors*
Fall 1991	-Library Buildings *Philip Barton and John Welch, Guest Editors*
Winter 1991	-Conference Issue
Spring 1992	-Anniversary Issue: History of Libraries in N.C. *Robert Anthony, Guest Editor*
Summer 1992	-Libraries and the Political Process
Fall 1992	-Telecommunications *Bil Stahl, Guest Editor*

Unsolicited articles dealing with the above themes or on any issue of interest to North Carolina librarians are welcomed. Please follow manuscript guidelines delineated elsewhere in this issue.