

Dorothy Hodder, Compiler

Enter the closeknit, claustrophobic world of Beryl Rosinsky, the protagonist of Ellyn Bache's third novel. The time is the early 1960s and the setting is our nation's capitol, Washington, D.C., and Chapel Hill. The Rosinsky family are secular Jews for whom belief in the possibilities of man is as important, if not more so, as belief in God.

Beryl, a high school senior anxiously making applications for college, and her older sister, Natalie, are inmates in what they consider a crazy house. Their father, Leonard, was a prominent architect until the McCarthy hearings reduced him to managing a dry-cleaning establishment operated by deaf attendants in a neighborhood near Gallaudet College. Leah, their radical socialist mother, mortifies her daughters by traveling

around the country organizing civil rights and feminist causes and getting her picture in *The Washington Post*; she has little time left over for family. Grandmother Miriam, a Russian immigrant, keeps house for the family in between caring for her sister Gussie, who has suffered from recurring crazy spells ever since losing her true love to a pogrom.

Ellyn Bache.

The Activist's Daughter.

Duluth, MN: Spinsters Ink, 1997. 264 pp.
\$10.95 paper. ISBN: 1-883523-18-4.

Distributed by InBook/LPC, 1436 W. Randolph St.,
Chicago, IL 60607, 1-800-243-0138.

Natalie escapes by marrying — to her family's amazement and with the assistance of a rabbi even — a nice young religious Jewish man named Barry, and moving to New York. Beryl's chance comes when Bubby Tsippi, Miriam and Gussie's mother, comes for her annual summer visit. The Rosinsky household is far from orthodox, but they make a pretense of keeping kosher whenever Bubby Tsippi visits. Beryl, however, absentmindedly serves her great-grandmother cottage cheese on a dish intended

for serving meat. When Bubby dies shortly thereafter, Beryl is naturally distraught. Her depression drags on until Miriam and Gussie, in Leah's absence, determine that Beryl needs to do what they did to escape unhappiness in Russia — emigrate to a foreign country. She has been accepted to attend the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, which might as well be a foreign country, but is thankfully only a six-hour ride by Trailways Bus from Washington. Although Beryl has realized that she did not kill Bubby Tsippi, she is all too happy to shock and punish her mother by attending a school in an area of the country unaffected by the racial and social progress to which Leah has dedicated her life.

What follows is undoubtedly a most credible example of autobiographical fiction. We are privy to the coming of age of Beryl Rosinsky (read, Ellyn Bache) during the fall semester of 1963 when she begins her studies at Chapel Hill. She has two Christian roommates who are actually cousins: Ashley, a devout Southern Baptist, who becomes pregnant, converts to Catholicism, and marries a South American diplomat's son (in that order); and Susan, a Whiskeypalian, who eventually confesses to Beryl that though she goes through the motions of dating, she's not sure she likes boys. She has a tortuous on-and-off-again romance with David, a victim of childhood polio with his own problems to sort out. As she confronts double standards for men and women, blacks and whites, Beryl becomes, albeit unwittingly, an activist herself.

Ellyn Bache makes her home in Wilmington, North Carolina. She has written two other novels, *Safe Passage* (Crown Books, 1988) made into a 1995 film starring Susan Sarandon and Sam Shepard, and *Festival in Fire Season* (August House Books, 1992), and a collection of short stories, *The Value of Kindness* (Helicon Nine Editions, 1993), for which she received a Willa Cather Fiction Prize. All four works should be in public and academic libraries throughout her adopted state.

— Plummer Alston Jones, Jr.
Catawba College

Departing from her highly popular Kay Scarpetta series, Edgar- and Creasey-winning author Patricia Cornwell's newest novel, *Hornet's Nest*, takes aim at cops and crime in Charlotte. Cornwell, a native of Montreat and a graduate of Davidson College, is no stranger to the Queen City, having worked several years as a crime reporter for *The Charlotte Observer*.

Hornet's Nest effectively capitalizes on the author's familiarity with the inner workings of a big-city police department. Two of the central characters are Cornwell stereotypes: pretty, pistol-packing chiefs of police who are competent and strong-willed. They variously interact with a talented, upstart newspaper reporter who is a part-time volunteer cop. The three protagonists take the reader on a stupefying exploration of everyday law enforcement in a thriving Southern metropolis.

There is plenty of local color here. The reader will recognize names and places, including not only descriptions of sleepy North Mecklenburg communities but also the provincial obsessions with barbecue, basketball, and stock car racing.

The typical Cornwell novel is a tightly constructed drama that focuses on the commission of a single crime and the ensuing dissection of forensic evidence that eventually reveals the identity of its perpetrator. In *Hornet's Nest*, she departs from this formula and offers a less methodical and somewhat cumbersome narrative that lacks the focus and cohesiveness of her earlier fiction. The style is halting and episodic, vaguely reminiscent of the plethora of "real life" cop shows that clog the cable television channels. This approach certainly will ensure the novel's mass marketability, but will do little to advance the author's credibility as a serious literary talent.

Still, there is plenty to interest the general reader. Cornwell's writing is lively and fastpaced, and an almost Dickensian array of quirky minor characters moves the narrative along. Though shocking at times, the novel's depictions of violent crime are no more graphic than any standard evening news account. Ironically, it is the book's sheer mediocrity — laced with just the right amount of violence and melodrama — that will keep it circulating for months.

— Gayle McManigle Fishel
Davidson College

Patricia D. Cornwell.

Hornet's Nest.

New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1997.
377 pp. \$25.95. ISBN 0-399-14228-2.

Sanctioned by the master of college basketball himself, *The Dean's List: A Celebration of Tar Heel Basketball and Dean Smith*, is an illustrated feast of Carolina basketball history. Celebrating my 30th anniversary as a diehard Carolina fan, I enjoyed every page of this obvious tribute to the record-breaking master and his record-breaking teams.

Author Art Chansky is the publisher of the annual magazine, *Carolina Court*, as well as two books, *March to the Top*, a summary of the 1982 NCAA championship, and *Return to the Top*, the story of the 1993 title champions. In the acknowledgements he says, "For me, writing a book about the last 35 years of Carolina basketball under Coach Dean Smith was not as difficult as one might imagine. You see, I have lived this story since arriving in Chapel Hill as a student in the 1960s." His Carolina blue loyalty is apparent throughout the book, but not dishonest. He reveals Smith's human side, reporting comments such as, "I'm not taking the blame for this loss," after the disappointing 1971 ACC championship game with South Carolina. On the whole, Chansky portrays Smith as a fiercely competitive coach with a propensity to protect his players, which is summed up well in the foreword by NBA superstar and former Tar Heel Michael Jordan. New information also is brought to light. Charlie Scott, UNC's first black player, almost boycotted the East Regional final because he believed his name was intentionally omitted from five all-ACC ballots because of his race.

For longtime Carolina fans, the best material is the coverage of seasons past. Fond memories are renewed in the first final four team of 1967, the 17 Atlantic Coast Conference titles, the 12 ACC tournament titles, the Olympic gold medal, and the unforgettable NCAA victories in 1982 over Georgetown and in 1993 over Michigan. Fans also will enjoy reminiscing about former teams and players, 38 of whom have joined the ranks of the National Basketball Association.

After devouring this feast of Tar Heel basketball history, I passed it on to my Dukie husband, who flipped through the book in about ten seconds, handed it back and said, "Oh yeah, what's for dinner." Recommended for all Tar Heel libraries with at least one Carolina fan.

— Beverly Tetterton
New Hanover County Public Library

Art Chansky.

The Dean's List: A Celebration of Tar Heel Basketball and Dean Smith.

New York: Warner Books, 1996.
160 pp. \$25.00. ISBN 0-446-52007-1.

Bob Garner has provided his reader with a movable feast on the subject of barbecue. The author is well-known to public television audiences for barbecue reports on *North Carolina Now*. His book is a treasury of folklore, political and social, about North Carolina's meal of choice for the past three hundred years.

Garner traces the history of barbecue from the Caribbean to the Indians and settlers of Tidewater Virginia, but says "Eastern North Carolina barbecue is the original American barbecue." Some aficionados of southern foods suggest that western (Lexington-style) barbecue is the superior style, since it contains all three Southern primary food groups: sugar, salt, and grease, while the eastern style has only salt and grease. Whether it's eastern whole hog without ketchup or western shoulders smothered in sugar and ketchup, it's simply wonderful food.

Garner observes that in the tobacco towns of Rocky Mount, Wilson, and Goldsboro, the tradition of barbecue as a celebration of the tobacco harvest is still enjoyed. Today it is no longer cooked and eaten under the shed or shelter of the tobacco barn, but is prepared and served in state inspected restaurants. The cooking is still generally a male art form, but the eating is now enjoyed by ladies as well.

Barbecue is like religion, family, and politics; it's learned best and deepest when one is young. A true connoisseur of the "other white meat" (the politically correct name for pig) finds the best barbecue to be that from one's hometown, or at least nearby. Before the family farm disappeared in this state, every farmer who raised hogs had his own family recipe and tradition of barbecue.

Garner is correct when he writes that Tar Heel barbecue is unique because *meat* is the centerpiece, not smoke and sauces. It must be noted that the rich sweet taste of our pig meat is impossible to produce on a

factory farm. The very best hog meat cannot be grown as a corporate product.

For those who are already partial to barbecue, Garner's book is like an old friend. Those who have not yet established a preference will enjoy trying out the recipes for barbecue and traditional side dishes in this book, and searching out the restaurants Garner describes. North Carolina barbecue lovers will appreciate his conclusion that here in North Carolina, "more than anywhere else, barbecue is food that bespeaks good times." Appropriate for public libraries.

— Lee Johnston
University of North Carolina at Wilmington

Bob Garner.
**North Carolina Barbecue:
Flavored by Time.**

Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, 1996. 160 pp.
\$19.95. ISBN 0-89587-152-1.

In a Men-are-from-Mars-Women-are-from-Venus kind of world, Fred Chappell has written a novel about women that will leave women readers feeling known and deeply appreciated. *Farewell, I'm Bound to Leave You* is the third in a planned quartet of novels tracing three generations of an Appalachian family, following *I Am One of You Forever* and *Brighten the Corner Where You Are*. While the first two focused on the antics of young Jess Kirkland and his father Joe Robert, this volume recounts the stories of the women in their extended family and community.

The framework for the novel is the deathbed of Jess's grandmother, Annie Barbara Sorrells. Her daughter, Cora, keeps watch by her bedside, while Joe Robert and Jess wait in the parlor. The opening and closing chapters are stream of consciousness, mostly unspoken dialogues between mother and daughter, taking leave of each other as death draws near. The intervening chapters are narrated by Jess, recalling the stories his mother and grandmother have told him about each other and various aunts and cousins, with the obvious purpose of raising him to cherish and look beneath the surfaces of the women in his life.

Where Chappell has mainly portrayed his women characters as strait-laced upholders of morals and manners in earlier stories about male mischief, here he rounds out their personalities, giving them their own brand of humor, their own dreams and ambitions, their own flaws, and their own awe-inspiring, almost mythic insight and skill in managing unruly, unsuspecting men. One of the best stories is the one Annie Barbara told Jess about how she coached Cora as to how to capture Joe Robert's attention with a red silk petticoat and a shotgun — Joe Robert told it in *Brighten the Corner Where You Are*, but he didn't know all the details. Cora told Jess about Ginger Summerell, the Feistiest Woman, who fought off all attacks on her virtue until she was ready to pick her mate, and then won him by defeating him in a duel.

Fred Chappell.
**Farewell,
I'm Bound to Leave You.**

New York: Picador USA, 1996. 228 pp. \$21.00.
ISBN 0-312-14600-0.

M

ax Childers has written a novel of disconnection, reconnection, and understanding in a style that is droll and underplayed, and yet which moves its story inexorably toward wisdom.

Walter Loomis has all but forgotten his father, Edgar, whom he last saw at the age of 11 when his parents divorced. Moving through childhood like a sleepwalker, Walter drifts into the "pleasant, calcified life" of academia, never achieving tenure, always moving on to the next third-string college. A lawyer's letter changes his life: Edgar Loomis has died, leaving Walter half interest in his farm and land down in Helmsville, North Carolina, and liquid assets in excess of \$800,000. Goodbye, English department.

Arriving in Helmsville, Walter takes possession of The Old Home Place, giddily buying new appliances and furniture and heaving out the rusty and mildewed relics. He meets Obie, the thoughtful and down-to-earth foreman who looks after the dozen horses the farm boards. And he meets the owner of the other half interest: Ricky Loomis, Edgar's son from his second marriage to Beatrice. The shock of meeting a half-brother Walter never knew he had is not assuaged by Ricky himself: exuberant, puppy-like, self-centered, clueless.

Despite the distractions of new relationships, Walter is nevertheless constantly aware of the undertow of Edgar, his unknown father. Who was he? How is Walter connected, truly, with him? In the aftermath of a calamity Walter later refers to simply as "The Event," he seizes the opportunity to understand his father and realizes that "I *am* connected, like it or not." But The Old Home Place has one more lesson to teach Edgar's first son.

Along the way toward understanding, Max Childers offers such social satire as the stunning intolerance of the truly ignorant: college students whose only frame of reference is themselves and their own ego-driven ideas. Similarly, Ricky's self-pitying rationalizations after "The Event" prompt Walter to dub him the completely modern man, expecting forgiveness and understanding if he only talks enough about how it wasn't his fault, really. Taking actual responsibility for one's actions, Walter reasons, involves more than simply adopting a TV talk show confessional mode.

The Congregation of the Dead tackles serious subjects and is thoughtful, beautifully written, and laugh-out-loud funny. Libraries — both public and academic — definitely should purchase this novel.

— Kristine Mahood
Rowan Public Library

Max Childers.
The Congregation of the Dead.

Charleston, SC: Wyrick & Company, 1996.
282 pp. \$21.95 ISBN 0-941711-32-3.

R

nown in the Wilmington area as "Dr. Plant," Henry Rehder has produced a gem of a gardener's guide. Henry Rehder is uniquely qualified to write about gardening in coastal Carolina. In addition to managing a family retail flower shop (which first opened its doors in 1872 and is the oldest in North Carolina), he owns a horticultural management organization, serves as adviser for his family's nationally known garden, and hosts radio and television garden shows in the Wilmington area.

Rehder has selected 94 plants that epitomize the quintessential southern garden. From abelias through crepe myrtles to spider lilies, the descriptions call forth wonderful childhood memories of sight and smell. Introductory chapters cover basic topics like choosing plants, selecting a site for them, planting techniques, and combatting weeds, pests, and diseases. The discussion of fertilizers is outstanding — in a brief and simple manner Rehder explains how to read a fertilizer label and summarizes which types are appropriate for specific plant needs.

The heart of the book is the plant guide. Rehder makes plant selection and cultivation child's play with his clear and practical gardening tips. Each variety is clearly described — size, bloom and foliage, growing requirements, pests, good and bad points, pruning, best garden placement. The most wonderful thing about this book is that every plant description includes an annual calendar with month-by-month cultivation guidance. The text is accompanied by a full-color photograph (sometimes two, showing the entire plant and a closeup of the leaf or bloom). Only a sample of the illustrations were available to the reviewer, but, if they are typical, the results are outstanding.

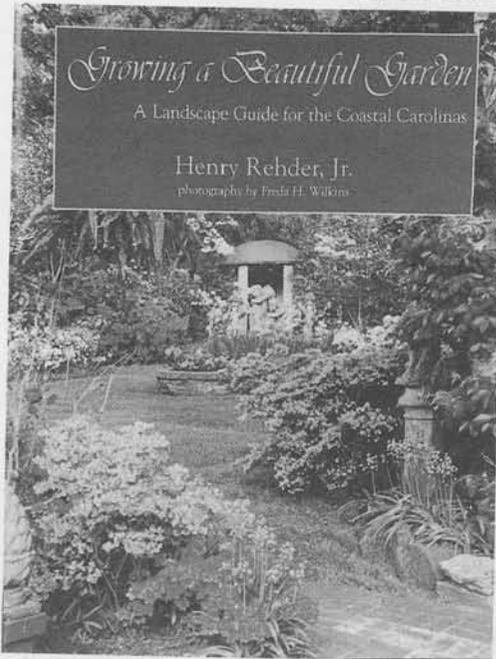
Rehder admits a bias towards shrubs and small ornamental trees,

Henry Rehder, Jr.
***Growing a Beautiful Garden:
A Landscape Guide for the
Coastal Carolinas.***

Photography by Freda H. Wilkins.

Wilmington: Banks Channel Books, 1997. 240
pp. \$34.95. ISBN 0-9635967-9-9.

and these plants comprise the greater portion of the plant selections. However, he includes a few full-size trees, such as the live oak and tulip poplar, as well as sections on perennials and lawn grasses. The grass descriptions are especially valuable, as he describes the pros and cons of growing a number of warm season varieties. The volume concludes with an excellent index listing both common and botanical names, and cultivars. The only weakness in the book is the lack of a pronouncing guide to the botanical names. How do you wrap your tongue around *Cupressocyparis leylandii*?



Growing a Beautiful Garden fills a void in the gardening literature. There are many fine titles on southern gardening, such as *A Southern Garden* by Elizabeth Lawrence (UNC Press, 1991), *Successful Southern Gardening: A Practical Guide for Year-Round Beauty* by Sandra F. Ladendorf (UNC Press, 1989), *Carolina Landscape Plants* by R. Gordon Halfacre (Sparks Press, 1979), and *Gardening in the Carolinas* by Arnold and Connie Krochmal (Doubleday, 1975). There are also many excellent guides to coastal gardening, including booklets published by garden clubs and state agricultural extension services; however, this is the first full-length work to focus on the tidewater region of the Carolinas.

While the book is intended for coastal residents who enjoy a long growing season, it will be very helpful to gardeners throughout the state. Most of the plants included can be grown in the Piedmont and foothills, and a quite a number will thrive in the mountains. *Growing a Beautiful Garden* is an ideal guide for neophytes, a good quick reference volume for experienced gardeners, and a fine complement to the excellent bimonthly gardening magazine *Carolina Gardener* (Carolina Gardener, Inc., Greensboro). If you live in the Carolinas, aspire to a truly southern garden, and can purchase only one gardening book this year, this is the one. All public and academic libraries should buy it.

— Suzanne Wise
Appalachian State University

OTHER PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST ...

Absent-minded sleuth Peaches Dann is back to untangling the murderous messes her hapless relatives stumble into up around Asheville. *Whose Death is it, Anyway?* is the fourth installment of Elizabeth Daniels Squires's series, and Peaches delves into the ancient art of handreading as well as her store of memory tricks to locate a cousin's missing daughter. Earlier titles in the series are *Who Killed What's-Her-Name?*, *Remember the Alibi*, and *Memory Can Be Murder*. (1997; Berkley Prime Crime, 200 Madison Ave, New York, NY 10016; 249 pp.; paper, \$5.99; ISBN 0425-15627-3.)

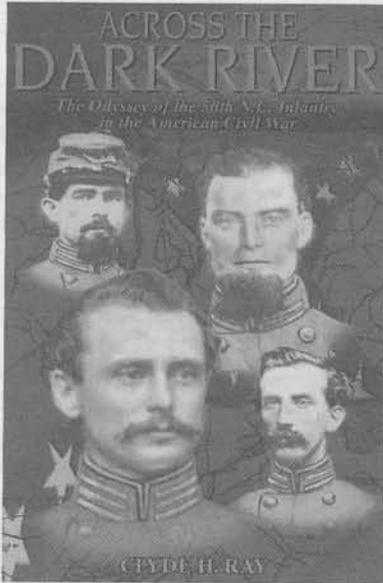
Life Without Water is Nancy Peacock's first novel, the story of a young woman whose life was tragically affected by her brother's death in Vietnam, as told by her daughter. A vivid portrait of hippie life in and around Chapel Hill in the sixties and seventies. (1996; Longstreet Press, 2140 Newmarket Parkway, Suite 122, Marietta, GA 30067; 182 pp.; \$16.95; ISBN 156352-337-X.)

Becoming Rosemary is a young adult novel by Frances M. Wood, a librarian with the Durham County Public Library. Twelve-year-old Rosemary's story is set in a farming village in North Carolina in 1790. Her routine of chores and rambling in the woods in search of herbs for her mother is brightened by her friendship with a new family in the community. As she becomes aware of some of her neighbors' superstitious fear of witchcraft, however, she must decide whether to pursue for herself the healing powers that her mother and sister share. (1997; Delacorte Press, 1540 Broadway, New York, NY 10036; 247 pp.; \$14.95; ISBN 0-385-32248-8.)

Blood Tells is a first thriller by Ray Saunders, author of the Fenwick Travers series of historical novels. Set on the Outer Banks, it features brutal murders and dismemberments, homosexual slavery and rape. Neither the setting nor the characters leap to life off the page. (1996; Lyford Books, Presidio Press, 505B San Marin Drive, Suite 300, Novato, CA 94945-1340; distributed by National Book Network, 4720 Boston Way, Lanham, MD 20706; 365 pp.; \$21.95; ISBN 0-89141-588-2.)

Close to Home: Revelations and Reminiscences by North Carolina Authors is a collection of short essays about living in the Tar Heel state, by a selection of its better-known authors. These include the likes of Lee Smith writing about Chapel Hill, Fred Chappell on gardens, and Jerry Bledsoe on slaw. It was compiled by Lee Harrison Child, former editor of *NC Home* magazine, where about half of the pieces originally appeared. (1996; John F. Blair, Publisher, 1406 Plaza Drive, Winston-Salem, NC 27103; 178 pp.; \$19.95; ISBN 0-89587-154-8.)

Two Revolutionary War standards are back in print. Hugh Rankin's *North Carolina in the American Revolution*, first published in 1959 and out of print since 1986, is available. (1996; Historical Publications Section, Division of Archives and History, 109 East Jones Street, Raleigh, NC 27601-2807; 74 pp.; paper, \$6.00 plus \$3.00 postage; ISBN 0-86526-091-5.) *Chain of Error and the Mecklenburg Declarations of Independence: A New Study of Manuscripts: Their Use, Abuse, and Neglect* by V.V. McNitt, originally published in 1960, also has been reprinted. (1996; Mecklenburg Historical Association, PO Box 35032, Charlotte, NC 28235; 145 pp.; \$25.00; no ISBN.)



Civil War collections will want to take notice of *Divided Allegiances: Bertie County During the Civil War*, by Gerald W. Thomas (1996; Historical Publications Section, Division of Archives and History, 109 East Jones Street, Raleigh, NC 27601-2807; 206 pp.; paper, \$ 11.00 plus \$3.00 postage; ISBN 0-86526-268-3) and *Across the Dark River: The Odyssey of the 56th N. C. Infantry in the American Civil War*, a blend of history and fiction by Clyde H. Ray. (1997; Parkway Publishers, Inc., Box 3678, Boone, NC 28607; 247 pp.; paper, \$18.95 plus \$3.00 shipping and 6% sales tax; ISBN 1-887905-04-9.) Also back in print is *North Carolina During Reconstruction* by Richard L. Zuber, originally published in 1969, reprinted in 1975, and out of print since 1987. (1996; Historical Publications Section, Division of Archives and History, 109 East Jones Street, Raleigh, NC 27601-2807; 67 pp.; paper, \$6.00 plus \$3.00 postage; ISBN 0-86526-089-3.)

Dr. Patrick M. Valentine, Director of the Wilson Public Library, has written a very thorough history of *The Episcopalians of Wilson County: A History of St. Timothy's and St. Mark's Churches in Wilson, North Carolina 1856-1995*. It is illustrated with over 90 black and white photographs, and is extensively indexed. (1996; Gateway Press; order from St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, PO Box 1527, Wilson, NC 27894-1527; 472 pp.; \$30.00 plus \$4.00 shipping; no ISBN.)

Charlotte and UNC Charlotte: Growing Up Together is a new history by Ken Sanford, published as part of UNC Charlotte's celebration of its fiftieth anniversary. (1996; University of North Carolina at Charlotte, 9201 University City Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28223; 356 pp.; \$24.95; ISBN 0-945344-02-3.)

Frank Tursi has followed up on his *Winston-Salem: A History*, with *The Winston-Salem Journal: Magnolia Trees and Pulitzer Prizes*, marking the newspaper's hundredth anniversary. (1996; John F. Blair, Publisher, 1406 Plaza Drive, Winston-Salem, NC 27103; 231 pp.; \$28.95; ISBN 0-89587-156-4.)

Where ghost stories are in demand, see *Haunted Asheville* by Joshua P. Warren, a self-published collection of eight local tales, illustrated with black and white photographs. (1996; Shadowbox Enterprises, PO Box 16801, Asheville, NC 28816; 173 pp.; paper, \$14.95; ISBN 0-9649370-2-6.)

Echoes of Topsail: Stories of the Island's Past is a very creditable local history by David Stallman. Since it went to press just before Hurricane Fran wiped out the island in the summer of 1996, hope for an early second edition. (1996; Rutledge Books, Inc., Box 315, 8 F J Clarke Circle, Bethel, CT 06801-0315; 276 pp.; \$22.95; ISBN 1-887750-33-9.)

The final word is on *Mayberry: The Definitive Andy Griffith Show Reference*, by Dale Robinson and David Fernandes, includes cast and production biographies and a guide to collectibles. (1996; McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640; 328 pp.; \$45.00 plus \$3.00 shipping; ISBN 0-7864-0136-2.)

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