A Message from the President of the Porter Society

By Jerry Findley, Independent Scholar

The Covid pandemic of 2020 garnered Porter a lot of attention. Journalists and historians singled out “Pale Horse, Pale Rider” as the literary work most relevant to the pandemic wrecking untold death worldwide. No week went by without Google alerts of local, national, and international references to Porter and her short novel. Porter’s wish would be for this publicity to lead to a greater readership. Did the public take enough interest to get ahold of a copy of “Pale Horse, Pale Rider”? and, if so, did they read it? and, if they read it, did they find “Pale Horse, Pale Rider” engaging enough to read other stories and other works by Porter?

Porter took pride in her strategy and in her patience to find a readership. The appeal of her writing, in content and in style, Porter saw needing time to develop, and the right moment. The steady publicity of this past year may prod a potential readership to read something by Porter to find out if she is as good as she is alleged to be. This introduction to her work, Porter prepared for. She thought she might be the first writer to require her publishers to keep her work in print throughout her lifetime; and she counseled other writers with similar appeal to use the same ploy and make the same demand. Their publications would be there, in print, when the moment arrived. Porter never got an answer if she was the first to hit upon this strategy of winning a readership, at least, not that she cared to relate in any of her writings I have come across.
Now over forty years since her death released her publishers from their contractual obligation, her two major works, *Collected Stories* and *Ship of Fools*, have stayed and remain in print.

This past year, to continue my interest in Porter, I, like most of the world, have relied on resources that allow for social distancing. Foremost the Porter Archives. The project to get more materials on-line continues, for those who follow the life and career of Porter, the most important news this year and for years to come. To address questions and interests I have from reading materials already on-line, Beth Alvarez and Amber Kohl at the University of Maryland and anonymous library personnel at Indiana University have retrieved items from their collections; and once the Kinsey Institute, also at Indiana University, re-opens this summer, it may provide direction to questions I have about George Platt Lynes’s photographs of Porter and their correspondence. The Kinsey Institute, in addition to holding the most extensive collection of Lynes’s pioneering work in male nude photography, includes representative works in all the genres of Lynes’s career, including portraits of Porter.

[Continued on page 13]

The Year’s Work on Katherine Anne Porter: 2019-2020

By Christine Grogan, University of Delaware

Porter’s work was a topic of discussion in two book chapters and five articles, quite a few of which appropriately and unsurprisingly revisit “Pale Horse, Pale Rider.”

To compile this bibliography, I searched the MLA International Bibliography, ABELL, and the University of Delaware’s online catalog, using the term “Porter, Katherine Anne.” To find dissertations, I searched ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, using the term “Porter, Katherine Anne” and limiting the search to “abstract.” I did not include material that contained only passing reference of Porter. My annotations summarize instead of evaluate. Please send information on any additions for this bibliography to Christine Grogan at cgrogan@udel.edu that I may include the information in next year’s bibliography.

In *Viral Modernism: The Influenza Pandemic and Interwar Literature*, Columbia University Press, 2019, Elizabeth Outka places the 1918-1919
influenza pandemic at the center of modernist
texts, investigating the tension between its absence
and traces in the literature and culture of the
interwar period. Part 1, in which Outka
“establishes a literary pandemic paradigm for the
rest of the project,” includes the chapter
“Untangling War and Plague: Willa Cather and
Katherine Anne Porter.” This chapter begins with
a discussion of One of Ours and argues that
Cather’s work “replicates…the pandemic’s
subordinate position to the war.” Porter’s “Pale
Horse, Pale Rider,” on the other hand, structures
the narrative around the flu, relegating the war to
the background. Outka provides a close reading of
the four parts of “Pale Horse, Pale Rider,”
illustrating how the story “upended expectations
for both male and female bodies.”

Citing Outka’s book, Rachel Conrad Bracken’s
“Influenza and Embodied Sociality in Early
Twentieth-Century American Literature,”
American Literary History 32.3 (2020): 507-34,
identifies William Maxwell’s They Came Like
Swallows and “Pale Horse, Pale Rider” as “among
the few U.S. literary texts to directly thematize”
the 1918-1919 influenza pandemic. She maintains
that these two works blend the narrative traditions
of plague writing and autopathography, as they
show how the illness affected both the individual
self and the collective social body.

Arguing that plagues “reshape our sense and
experience of time,” Bryan Waterman’s brief
article, “Plague Time (Again),” American Literature
92.4 (2020): 759-66, discusses Porter’s “Pale
Horse, Pale Rider,” among other works by various
authors. In his discussion of Porter’s story,
Waterman notes that war time, with its “finite
fronts,” marks time much differently from plague
time, which can come at a moment’s notice and
disrupt life.

Michael Kaufmann’s “A War Story of One’s Own:
Katherine Anne Porter’s Re-Envisioning of
Hemingway’s A Farewell to Arms,” Critical
Approaches to Literature: Feminist, Ed. Robert C.
Evans, Salem Press, 2018, 216-32, argues that
Porter’s “Pale Horse, Pale Rider” resembles
Hemingway’s novel, especially in their exploration
of gender during wartime. Acknowledging the
reversal to the romantic relationship by having the
male, not female, die at the end, Kaufmann
suggests “the possibility that Porter was responding
to what she likely perceived as Hemingway’s more
typically masculine account of the war.” Depicting
war from the front and noncombatant perspective,
Porter highlights, he notes, the complicity created

Katherine Anne Porter Society
Graduate Student Paper Award

The Katherine Anne Porter Society is pleased to
invite submissions for its biannual Graduate
Student Paper Award. Interested applicants
should submit an article-length (15-25 page)
paper on any Katherine Anne Porter topic.

The winner, who will be announced on
December 1, 2022, will be invited to present a
shortened form of the paper at the annual
Katherine Anne Porter Society Session at the
2023 American Literature Association
Conference. The award-winning paper will be
featured in an article of the Katherine Anne
Porter Society Newsletter. The award also brings
a monetary prize of $500.

Please email submissions as Word attachments to
Jerry Findley at jerryfindley1@gmail.com by
June 30, 2022.
by the war unlike Frederic Henry’s personal disillusionment.

Like Outka’s book project, Melanie Benson Taylor’s *The Indian in American Southern Literature*, Cambridge University Press, 2020, investigates “absent presence”—but for Taylor, this is in reference to the depiction of Native Americans in American southern literature. Taylor’s work provides close readings of works by William Faulkner, Porter, and Barry Hannah, arguing that Native Americans represent a paradox as they embody the destruction and resilience of the South. Taylor explores how the three writers employ “tropes of Indigeneity” in the “white southern imagination,” stating that these tropes both “conceal and expose the tangle of land, labor, and race as formative, disruptive categories of being and meaning.” Chapter 2, “Confederate Spirits: Katherine Anne Porter’s Bewitching Indians,” discusses many works by Porter including the unfinished biography of Cotton Mather, “Magic,” “The Grave,” “Pale Horse, Pale Rider,” and *Ship of Fools*. These works, Taylor claims, cast Indians as proxies for modernity, as they simultaneously serve as heroes and victims.

Focusing on Porter’s and Anita Benner’s engagement with Indigenous Mexican artists, Tabitha Morgan’s “‘Inherited Images’: The Decolonialist Agenda of Katherine Anne Porter and Anita Benner,” *Erea* 16.2 (2019), discusses Porter’s *Outline of Mexican Popular Arts and Crafts* (1922) and Brenner’s *Idols behind Altars: The Story of the Mexican Spirit* (1929) (which Porter reviewed). Morgan illustrates how these two treatises on Mexican art “created a decolonizing framework through which viewers and readers could engage with Indigenous art and philosophies unmediated by colonialist intervention,” and, moreover how they “advance a working-class aesthetic and modern Mexican identity uniquely

---

**Annual American Literature Association Conference, 2020, 2021, 2022**

The 31st annual American Literature Association conference in San Diego, CA, scheduled for May 21-24, 2020, was cancelled because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The 32nd annual American Literature Association conference in Boston, MA, was postponed to July 2021. Because of health and travel concerns, the Executive Committee of the Katherine Anne Porter Society decided not to participate in 2021. The Society’s planned session, “Katherine Anne Porter: Out of the Archives,” will be presented at the 33rd conference in Chicago, IL, May 2022. The papers on the panel, chaired by Berth Alvarez, will include “The Correspondence between Katherine Anne Porter and Janice Biala” by Alice Cheylan, Université de Toulon, France; “Intuition and Telepathy: How the Chance Encounter of George Platt Lynes with Katherine Anne Porter Created the Iconic Image of Shared Artistry and Lasting Friendship” by Jerry Findley, Independent Scholar; and “The Ship of This World on Its Voyage to Eternity:” Allegories of Ecological Apocalypse in Katherine Anne Porter’s *Ship of Fools,*” by Lydia Nixon, Indiana University. Lydia Nixon was awarded the first Katherine Anne Porter Graduate Student Paper Award in 2020. Amber Kohl, University of Maryland, will serve as the respondent.

The Society intends to sponsor a second session at the May 2022 conference. Jerry Findley will chair this session and invites papers on any topic on Katherine Anne Porter. Please send a 200-word proposal and a brief biographical statement to Jerry Findley at jerryfindley1@gmail.com by December 1, 2021. Information about the Porter activities planned for the conference will be posted on the society’s Web site.
tied to indigeneity that was often neglected by other revolutionary efforts.”

In her introduction, Outka acknowledges the “transnational turn” in modernist studies (and how the pandemic as a global event fits this lens). Joseph Kuhn in “Weimar Migrations: Katherine Anne Porter in Berlin,” Transatlantica 1 (2018) contributes to this turn as he argues that Porter’s brief stay in Weimar Berlin from September 1931 to January 1932 had a profound impact on her fiction, as it shaped her œuvre’s focus on “good” people’s complicity in evil acts. Comparing Porter’s sensibilities to those of the Weimar philosopher Hannah Arendt, Kuhn examines Porter’s two Weimar works, Ship of Fools and “The Leaning Tower,” to show that these works illustrate political corruption as something insidious yet commonplace. In the article, there is also mention of Porter’s “Holiday,” “St. Augustine and the Bullfight,” “Theft,” and “The Wooden Umbrella.”

My Introduction to Katherine Anne Porter and Her Work
By Lydia Nixon, Indiana University

Editor’s note: Lydia Nixon, the recipient of the inaugural Katherine Anne Porter Graduate Student Paper Award, graciously agreed to provide the following account for the Katherine Anne Porter Society Newsletter.

I am currently a Ph. D. student at Indiana University in Bloomington, studying Twentieth and Twenty-First-Century American literature. I recently completed my Master’s degree at Angelo State University in Texas, and it was there that I first encountered Katherine Anne Porter’s work, under the mentorship of Dr. Linda Kornasky. In a conversation with Dr. Kornasky, I was lamenting a significant gap in my education—despite my interest in contemporary American literature, I was not familiar with many post-WWII women authors. Among her other recommendations, Dr. Kornasky singled out Katherine Anne Porter as perhaps being of particular interest to me, given my interest in authors whose writing evokes a clear sense of place.

In the years since, I have, of course, come to appreciate many aspects of Porter’s writing, but it was her rendering of life in rural Texas that first captivated me. I had recently moved to West Texas myself, and the harsh desert environment felt entirely foreign. Though I could never quite feel at home in Texas, Porter’s stories helped me feel a
different kind of connection to the area. As I began learning more about Porter herself, I was delighted to discover that she had spent much of her early life very close to where I lived: Kyle was less than four hours away (a short drive by Texas standards), and my own city of San Angelo was very near the tuberculosis sanatorium where she spent a brief period. This initial interest soon developed into a fascination with Porter in general—her travels, her relationships, her prolific letter writing, and, always, her evocative depictions of place.

Despite initially being drawn to Porter’s place-based stories (or, perhaps, because of this), it was *Ship of Fools* that interested me most. I didn’t particularly like it in the way I enjoyed reading her shorter works, but I was intrigued by this “unwieldy” novel, as she and other critics have aptly described it, and I wanted to try to understand what she was doing with it. I applied for, and was awarded, a research fellowship grant, which allowed me to spend the final year of my M. A. studying the novel. I used the resulting paper as my writing sample in my Ph. D. applications, so, in a way, I have Porter to thank for my admission to Indiana University and the opportunity to continue my graduate studies.

Though I have primarily spent this past year focusing on my coursework, Katherine Anne Porter and her work continues to be present in my life in different ways. Because of the COVID19 pandemic, I found myself rereading “Pale Horse, Pale Rider” for a kind of commiseration, feeling a strange connection to Porter through her own similar experience almost exactly a century ago. Porter was also the reason for my introduction to Beth Alvarez and Jerry Findley, with whom I had the pleasure of a delightful correspondence during a year of unusual isolation. I am honored to have this opportunity to share my interest in Porter with like-minded scholars, and I look forward to one day meeting the other Katherine Anne Porter Society members.

---

**Katherine Anne Porter Literary Center News**

By Beth Alvarez, University of Maryland

The Katherine Anne Porter Literary Center at 508 Center Street in Kyle, Texas, serves as a venue for readings and talks by visiting writers, a museum, and a home for writers-in-residence. During the 2020-2021 academic year, there were no public programs held at the house. For Texas State University’s MFA students, the Center hosted Zoom craft talks with authors Nikky Finney,
Valeria Luiselli, Tyehimba Jess, Lesley Nneka Arimah, and Jamel Brinkley. Programs are sponsored by Texas State University’s Department of English, the Lindsey Literary Series, the Burdine Johnson Foundation, and the Katherine Anne Porter Literary Center.

September 2020 marked the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the Katherine Anne Porter Literary Center. To celebrate the anniversary, Hilton Als participated in a Zoom presentation discussing the life, work, and legacy of Porter. Als’s “Enameled Lady: How Katherine Anne Porter Perfected Herself” was published in New Yorker on April 13, 2009. Als is a staff writer for the New Yorker as well as an associate professor of writing at Columbia University’s School of the Arts. Interviewed by writer-in-residence Jeremy Garrett, Als noted that he first encountered Porter in junior high, reading “The Leaning Tower.” In the interview, Als touched on “Noon Wine,” “Pale Horse, Pale Rider,” “The Jilting of Granny Weatherall,” and Ship of Fools. Als characterized Porter as a crafts-person and a classicist. Among his observations were that she created a world in a short story, maintained discipline and control in her work, and was a naturalistic writer. Als’s appearance was sponsored by the Burdine Johnson Foundation, and the Katherine Anne Porter Literary Center.

Until 2018, Texas State’s MFA program published an on-line literary journal, Front Porch (http://www.frontporchjournal.com), which included fiction, poetry, reviews, and nonfiction by emerging and established authors. Video of readings and Q&A sessions by distinguished writers who visited the KAP Literary Center are available on the Front Porch Web site (http://frontporchjournal.com/). Relaunched as Porter House Review (https://porterhousereview.org/) in November 2018, the online review is produced in conjunction with Texas State University’s MFA program in Creative Writing.

Inspired by the legacy of Katherine Anne Porter, the literary journal seeks to publish bold and incisive writing that interrogates not only the complexities of the human experience, but also the prevailing social challenges of our time. In support of this mission, the editors seek unique perspectives from both established, award-winning authors, as well as emerging and underrepresented voices from around the world. It will celebrate a wide range of literary forms and styles and is committed to paying a competitive rate for all published work.


The Writers-in-Residence at the KAP House since 2008 include Michael Noll, Katie Angermeier, and Jeremy Garrett. Funded by the Burdine Johnson Foundation, the Writer-in-Residence lives in the house and acts as curator of the museum and as the coordinator of the visiting writers series. The Katherine Anne Porter Literary Center is open to visitors and school groups by appointment. To arrange a visit, e-mail kapliterarycenter@gmail.com or call (512) 268-6637.

Plans for the 2021-2022 programs at the Katherine Anne Porter Literary Center are currently being finalized. Updated information will appear at http://www.kapliterarycenter.com/. Inquiries concerning Texas State’s MFA in Creative Writing can be made through the program’s Web site (http://www.english.txstate.edu/mfa/), via email at
KAP News from the University of Maryland Libraries

By Amber Kohl, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Maryland Libraries

Following a lengthy closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Special Collections and University Archives at the University of Maryland began accepting appointments to visit the Maryland Room for UMD students, faculty, and staff and remote reference services resumed for all researchers in May 2021. The University of Maryland Libraries are expected to offer more comprehensive in-person services as the University re-opens in August. Remote reference services continue to be available for all researchers. Contact Amber Kohl, amberk@umd.edu, Curator of Literature and Rare Books in Special Collections and University Archives, if you have any questions about the collections or planning a visit to the archives.

The Katherine Anne Porter Room will remain closed until further notice. Plans to open the room to visitors are expected to be finalized during the Fall semester.

While Special Collections and University Archives staff worked from home, updates were made to the finding aid for the Katherine Anne Porter papers (http://hdl.handle.net/1903.1/1532). The online finding aid now includes an inventory for the Katherine Anne Porter Library, which contains over 3800 titles from Katherine Anne Porter’s personal library. An itemized inventory for the Photographs series is also available. In other archival collection news, an abstract and inventory for the newly accessioned Ted Wojtasik papers (https://hdl.handle.net/1903.1/46719) has been made available online. New updates to the online exhibit Katherine Anne Porter: Correspondence from the Archives, 1912-1977 are also progress, including keyword searchable text for the correspondence.

During the pandemic, our two-part blog post on Katherine Anne Porter and “Pale Horse, Pale Rider, titled “Katherine Anne Porter & the 1918 Influenza Pandemic” (https://hornbakelibrary.wordpress.com/2020/05/28/katherine-anne-porter-and-the-1918-influenza-pandemic-part-i-the-spanish-flu/) proved to be our most viewed blog posts for Special Collections and University Archives in February and April this year, with a total of 1048 views since they were published in 2020.

As we begin returning to work under more normal circumstances, we anticipate resuming projects to enhance our Katherine Anne Porter holdings. This includes processing accessions to collections that
were received in 2020, enhancing the inventory for the Katherine Anne Porter Library with a comprehensive list of books annotated by Porter in the collection, and more social media posts and outreach.

Resources continue to be available online for those unable to make an appointment to visit Hornbake Library in person. This includes digitized photographs in our digital collections repository (http://digital.lib.umd.edu/), content on our blog (https://hornbakenlibrary.wordpress.com/), and approximately 3800 items of digitized correspondence in the online exhibit/database - Katherine Anne Porter: Correspondence from the Archives, 1912-1977 (www.go.umd.edu/KAP).

All inquiries about the Libraries’ Katherine Anne Porter holdings should be directed to Amber Kohl, Curator of Literature & Rare Books, at amberk@umd.edu, (301) 405-9214. Mailing address: 1202A Hornbake Library, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742.

Update on the Katherine Anne Porter Correspondence Project
By Beth Alvarez, University of Maryland

Since last reported in June 2020, there has been no progress on the correspondence project, another casualty of the pandemic. The online resources available on the project website remain the roughly 3,800 items comprising Phase One and Phase Two of the project: Porter’s family correspondence and that of her literary friends. The more than 2,400 items digitized in Phase Three that document Porter’s business dealings, relations with literary agents, and financial matters are still awaiting uploading to the website. Between March 2020 and May 2021, I was only able to set foot in Hornbake Library twice. However beginning in June, there was increased access for affiliates like myself. In addition, the University of Maryland plans to resume in-person classes in the Fall 2021 semester and to return to more normal operations, as long as conditions allow that to take place safely.

Curator Amber Kohl expects to recruit and hire a graduate student to support the project and to resume work on tasks planned before the hiatus. These include writing and compiling biographical information for significant correspondents featured in Phase Three, most notably Cyrilly Abels, Seymour Lawrence, and E. Barrett Prettyman. As soon as feasible, the digitized correspondence from
Phase Three, as well as these biographical materials, will be added to the project site. The graduate student will also be responsible for creating metadata for Phase Four of the project. Phase Four will digitize Porter’s personal correspondence that was not included in Phase Two as well as her correspondence relating to her professional activities, lectures, awards, and interviews. Porter’s personal correspondents to be included in Phase Four include musicians, artists, and photographers; political figures; aspiring writers; her students; individuals she nominated for fellowships and awards; scholars; suitors and lovers; and fans.

The second grouping of correspondence to be included in Phase Four documents the numerous activities in which Porter participated, some of which provided income: lecturing and teaching; the interviews she granted; awards she received for her writings; her membership in professional organizations; and her association with or interest in political organizations. The entities with which she conducted correspondence included colleges and universities, foundations, mass media, and scholarly and professional societies.

Before the work of creating metadata for Phase Four can begin, the relevant files are reviewed. Undated Porter correspondence is assigned dates, whether conjectural or certain, and the number of pages of her correspondence in each file is recorded. This work will resume and likely be completed during summer 2021.

For more frequent updates on the Project’s goings-on, follow the University of Maryland Special Collections and University Archives blog or follow the SCUA Twitter at @HornbakeLibrary. Feel free to contact Beth Alvarez, alvarez@umd.edu, or Amber Kohl, amberk@umd.edu, if you have questions.

Katherine Anne Porter Literary Trust
By Daniel C. Mack, Associate Dean of Libraries, University of Maryland Libraries

On behalf of the University of Maryland Libraries and the Katherine Anne Porter Literary Trust, greetings to all Porter fans, scholars, and admirers! I hope that you, your families, your friends, and your colleagues have made it through the past year as well as possible.

The University of Maryland College Park has been working primarily online since March 2020. Some classes, laboratories, and services opened selectively during the fall 2020 and spring 2021 semesters. The University of Maryland Libraries offered limited in-person services during the 2020-2021 academic year. Special Collections and University Archives also maintained a robust program of instruction, reference, and research support online via Zoom and other means. As of June 2021, the University and the Libraries plan to reopen for the fall 2021 semester. You can find up-to-date details about available services at https://www.lib.umd.edu/about/pandemic-recovery. The Porter finding aid, online at https://lib.guides.umd.edu/KatherineAnnePorter, provides access to the collection, including Porter’s digitized correspondence at https://www.lib.umd.edu/kaporter-correspondence. Please contact Amber Kohl, Curator for Literature and Rare Books, at amberk@umd.edu, for more information about the Porter collection at the University of Maryland.

During the past year the Trust has worked with rights holders and publishers and others for use of material from the Porter canon. “Pale Horse, Pale Rider,” with its setting during the influenza
pandemic of 1918-1919, has received considerable attention for obvious reasons. A request for translation rights for “Pale Horse, Pale Rider” is in the works, and the Trust also received an inquiry about a possible theatrical adaptation as well. Open Road Integrated Media’s digital edition of Ship of Fools continues to do well in the marketplace. The publisher has featured Ship of Fools in promotions during 2020 and 2021. Income from these works, as well as other Porter royalties, continue to grow the Trust.

Before the global shut-downs in response to the pandemic, the University of Maryland Libraries had been exploring several initiatives to promote the study and reading of Porter’s work. Once we have reopened to the public and are able once again to provide physical access to researchers, we hope to move forward with some of these plans using funds from the Trust. One project in the works is the creation of a visiting scholar’s program to fund researchers’ travel to College Park and to use Porter holdings on site. The Libraries have also explored the possibility of hosting a symposium in the next few years. These projects are of course on hold until the University and Libraries reopen to researchers, but planning continues, and we will report on them in the next issue.

With ongoing vaccinations and declining infection rates, it looks as if the United States have reached a turning point in the COVID-19 crisis. As we move forward, the University of Maryland Libraries and the Porter Literary Trust anticipate the time when researchers can once again use our collections and services on site in Hornbake Library. You can find the latest details about both in-person and virtual services for Special Collections and University Archives at https://www.lib.umd.edu/special. Meanwhile, take care, and stay safe and well. ☺️

In Memoriam
George Hendrick (1929-2021)
By Darlene Harbour Unrue, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

George Hendrick, esteemed author, teacher, and scholar, passed away peacefully at home on June 18, 2021. “He was neither ill, nor suffering,” his daughter, Sarah, wrote. “His heart simply came to the end of its time on Earth.” His ashes along with those of his late, beloved wife, Willene, will be buried in the family plot in Texas later this year.

Born March 30, 1929, in Stephenville, Texas, George was the oldest son of Hoyt and Bessie Sears Hendrick. Preceded in death by his parents in addition to Willene, he is survived by his brother, John Hendrick, daughter, Sarah Jourdain, son-in-law, Eric Jourdain, and two grandchildren, Emilie Jourdain and Dennis Jourdain.

George Hendrick earned a B.A. from Texas Christian University and an M.A. and a Ph.D. from the University of Texas in Austin. He held faculty positions at Southwest Texas State Teachers College, the University of Colorado in Boulder, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe University in Frankfurt, Germany, and the University of Illinois, first in Chicago and then in Urbana-Champaign, from which he retired in 1999 as professor emeritus and which is the repository of the George Hendrick Papers, 1840-1999.

Hendrick was the author, co-author, editor, co-editor, or translator of more than forty books. His early research concentrated on Transcendentalism and on American writers such as Henry David Thoreau, Carl Sandburg, Mark Twain, James Jones, and Katherine Anne Porter.
Hendrick’s *Katherine Anne Porter*, published in 1965 in Twayne’s United States Authors Series, was the earliest comprehensive study of Porter and her works. He dealt with the nonfiction as well as the fiction and focused on the importance of setting in her stories and novels, recognizing the autobiographical elements in the fiction and identifying Porter’s overarching theme as what she called “the terrible failure of the life of man in the Western world.” Hendrick declared that Porter’s stories in style and effect “are as subtle and perceptive as the best works of Joyce or James.”

Defending *Ship of Fools*, which had generated considerable critical controversy at the time of its publication, Hendrick said, “It is unfair to criticize the work for its pessimism”; a work emphasizing human nobility would not have given “a true picture of the 1930s or of much of man’s experience in the twentieth century.”

Hendrick lamented the absence of accurate biographical information about Porter when he began the book, but he and Willene, who was becoming his co-author and co-editor, contributed invaluable information to the biographical record by traveling to Porter’s birthplace, Indian Creek, Texas, and tracking down persons who had known the Porter family and were able to provide first-hand accounts of the family. By the time the Hendricks completed the revised edition of *Katherine Anne Porter* (1988), they incorporated their Indian Creek research and also benefited by Joan Givner’s 1982 publication of *Katherine Anne Porter: A Life* and numerous published interviews of Porter in the celebrity afterglow of the best-selling *Ship of Fools* and its 1965 award-winning film adaptation.

As a Porter scholar, I felt especially indebted to George Hendrick. I met him in 1987 when my husband, John, and I were at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign, where our daughter, Jane, was a student. I made an appointment to meet with George during his office hours in the English Department. I wanted to tell him how much I appreciated his book on Porter. Our long conversation that day was the beginning of an academic friendship that lasted his lifetime and initiated over thirty years of correspondence. In 1991, George agreed to serve with me, Virginia Spencer Carr, Janis Stout, and John Edward Hardy on the committee organized to establish the Katherine Anne Porter Society, which was officially founded May 15, 1993, the one hundred and third anniversary of Katherine Anne Porter’s birth.

When George retired from the University of Illinois in 1999, he gave almost all his papers to the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. He set aside, however, his collection of books by and about Porter; his correspondence with other Porter critics and with Porter’s friends and relatives; and the reviews of *Ship of Fools* that had appeared in German newspapers when he was on the faculty of the Johann Wolfgang von Goethe University. All of this trove of treasure he sent to me. I was and have continued to be immensely grateful. In due time his gift to me will be added to my papers at the University of Maryland, College Park, and will be identified as a gift to me from George Hendrick.

By the time of George’s retirement in 1999, he and Willene had moved on from Katherine Anne Porter and expanded their scholarly interests to include the history of slavery and forms of civil disobedience. In 2000, they published *Two Slave Rebellions at Sea: “The Heroic Slave,” by Frederick Douglass, and “Benito Cereno,” by Herman Melville.* In 2003, they published *The Creole Mutiny: A tale of Revolt Aboard a Slave Ship and Fleeing for Freedom: Stories of the Underground Railroad,* and,

At the time of his death, George had completed another manuscript, and several more were in progress. His daughter, Sarah, expressed the loss beautifully that legions of his friends, admirers, and grateful students also felt: “We wish that he had had more time to complete more work, but we are thankful for the time that we had with him.”

**A Message from the President of the Porter Society**

[Continued from page 2]

To riff on Mark Twain, one of the writers Porter most admired, since I first went to Indiana University over a half century ago, I never cease to be amazed at how the institution keeps up with my interest in Katherine Anne Porter! There are more than enough materials there to keep me (and anyone interested in Porter) busy.

In addition to the connection of Porter and Lynes, there is the connection of Porter and Upton Sinclair and the collection of his materials at the Lilly. Sinclair helped fund Sergei Eisenstein’s work in Mexico when Porter, like Eisenstein, was there observing the social and political unrest roiling the country. This collection has occasioned many screenings at IU Cinema of works that relate directly to “Hacienda,” giving new insight into the short novel many of Porter’s readers find the most challenging. May the time come when “Hacienda,” like “Pale Horse, Pale Rider,” gets another chance for a new appreciation—but may the new appreciation come without the world having to live through a replication of its history.

When the Society contacted Lydia Nixon to tell her she won the award for best graduate essay, I learned that she is a graduate student at Indiana University. Once the restrictions for the pandemic were eased, Beth Alvarez and I got to meet her. She plans to be on the Society’s panel at the American Literature Association Conference in Chicago next May. It will be three years since the Society last met. We have a lot to look forward to.