

CGA FORUM



John Ott '67
CGA President

Leadership, professionalism, and education are goals of the Cooperstown Graduate Program, and **Barbara Franco '66** exemplifies the achievement of these attributes. Barbara began her career as a curator and has worked in education and administration at several well-known institutions including the Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute, the National Heritage Museum, the Minnesota Historical Society and the Historical Society of Washington, DC. She has brought innovative methods of interpreting American history collections to each of these institutions often accompanied by award winning educational initiatives. Throughout her career she has brought her considerable professional and intellectual talents to bear on efforts to improve the museum field. From publications on Masonic aprons to essays on the responsibility of museums to reconnect history to the concept of citizenship, her writings have helped many of us find new meaning and insights into our work.

A simple "Google" search of her name shows a breadth of interests, publications, volunteer service and awards that make our Graduate Association proud to call her one of our own. Today, through her latest job as Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and most importantly as the chair of the Council of the American Association for State and Local History, she quietly carries on her work of introducing change and sharing her gifts. Our hats are off to Barbara and the enormous credibility her name and reputation bring to our Cooperstown Graduate Program.

Congratulations
Barbara Franco,
Class of 1966!



ANN STEINBERG/STILL ANNY

CGA FORUM

New York State Historical Association
PO Box 800, Cooperstown, New York 13326

Practicum week gives students the opportunity to learn exhibition skills including photography, design, matting and framing.

SAVE THE DATE

APRIL 4TH
CGA BOARD MEETING
Cooperstown Graduate Program
4:00 pm

APRIL 10
BRUCE BUCKLEY LECTURE
Poetry Duels in the Americas: From Trinidadian Extempo to Freestyle Rap
Fenimore Art Museum Auditorium
7:30 pm

APRIL 29TH
AAM RECEPTION
Hyatt Regency Denver
Colorado Convention Center
5:00-6:30 pm

WEDDED TO FOLKLORE

BY LORI WHITE '08



Amanda Dargan and Steve Zeitlin

Steve Zeitlin, co-founder of City Lore, discovered the poem on the right in a copy of *New York City Folklore*, as a graduate student in Literature at Bucknell University. Charmed by the short verse, Zeitlin recalled thinking, "Wouldn't this be a great job for me: going around collecting other people's stories?"

Poetry and story telling have fascinated him ever since. Zeitlin joins his wife and City Lore colleague, Amanda Dargan, as the 2008 Bruce Buckley lecturers.

On Thursday, April 10, Amanda Dargan and Steve Zeitlin of City Lore will present *Poetry Duels in the Americas*. The lecture focuses on the oral tradition of poetry contests, as practiced in Trinidad. Participants perform improvised poems in musical form to ridicule or challenge their competitor and win the title of master poet. Sometimes called extempo, zajal, décima, or poetry slam, poetry contests have been practiced throughout the world for thousands of years. The lecture will be interspersed with footage of interviews with Trinidadian extempo masters and actual performances.

**I should worry,
I should care,
I should marry
a millionaire.**

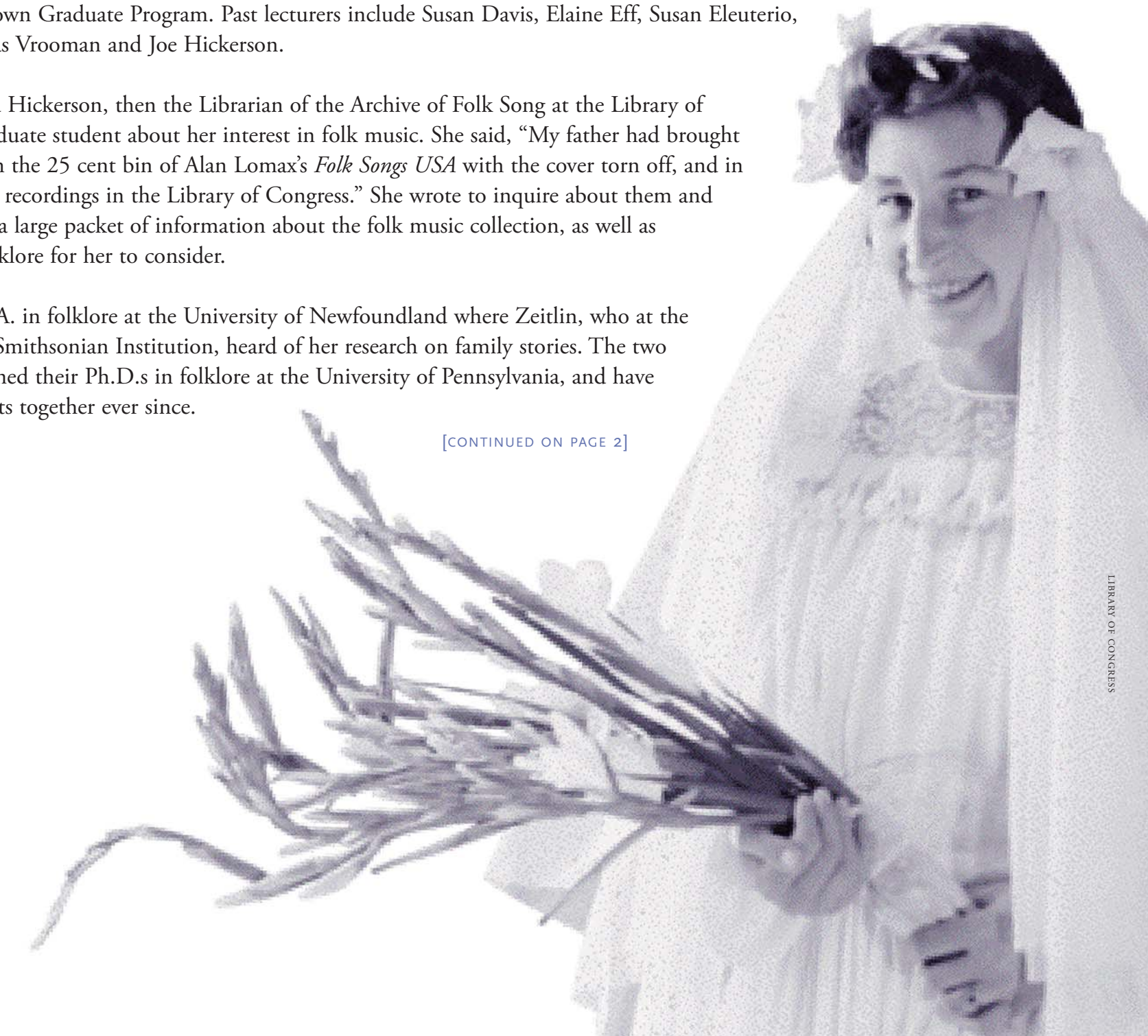
**If he should die,
I would cry,
I should marry
another guy.**

Each year, the Cooperstown Graduate Program recognizes the contributions of nationally important folklorists through the Bruce Buckley Lectureship award. Awardees share their research, experiences, and advice in a free public presentation and share their wisdom and research methodologies the following day in a professional seminar for students in the Cooperstown Graduate Program. Past lecturers include Susan Davis, Elaine Eff, Susan Eleuterio, William McNeil, Nicholas Vrooman and Joe Hickerson.

In fact, Dargan contacted Hickerson, then the Librarian of the Archive of Folk Song at the Library of Congress, as an undergraduate student about her interest in folk music. She said, "My father had brought home a book for me from the 25 cent bin of Alan Lomax's *Folk Songs USA* with the cover torn off, and in the back it listed all these recordings in the Library of Congress." She wrote to inquire about them and Hickerson sent in return a large packet of information about the folk music collection, as well as academic programs in folklore for her to consider.

She later received her M.A. in folklore at the University of Newfoundland where Zeitlin, who at the time was working at the Smithsonian Institution, heard of her research on family stories. The two eventually married, obtained their Ph.D.s in folklore at the University of Pennsylvania, and have worked on various projects together ever since.

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LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

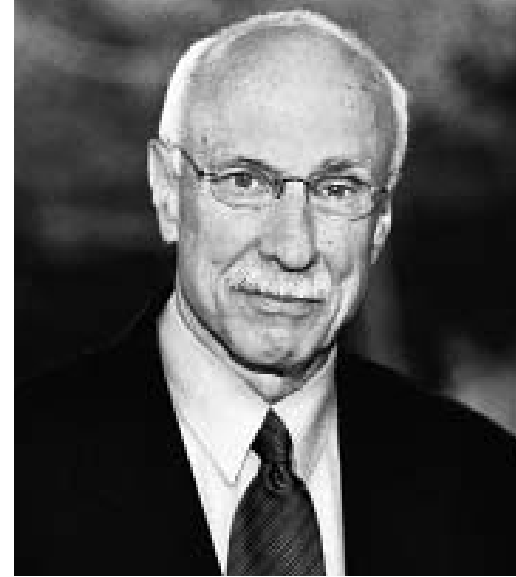
When my daughter, Meredith, identified colleges in 1998 SUNY Oneonta was not even on her list. Ten years later, as her brother, Greg, prepares to go off to school, Oneonta is certainly one of the possibilities. In ten years, the College has transformed itself. The College at Oneonta is now a college of first choice, competing with other fine liberal arts schools for valedictorians and salutatorians and other great students. Fundraising has been particularly vigorous with more than 900 scholarships being offered annually. The endowment has grown to 32 million dollars. Dozens of young, energetic faculty have been hired and while there is still a focus on teaching, scholarship and research are flourishing and supported. New dormitories, a beautiful new field house, modern computer labs, plus the renovation of many academic buildings make the campus a very attractive place particularly in the spring when flowers abound. I detect a much more contented faculty than the one I found when I started here thirteen years ago. This transformation has been on Alan Donovan's watch and the result of his leadership.



Gretchen Sullivan Sorin '75
CGP Director

During these years CGP has benefited from this leadership as well. For those of you who graduated before the year 2000, you wouldn't know the place. Technology at CGP is impressive. A modern new computer lab with a design station, large format printers, and vinyl cutters enables students to experiment with a variety of exhibition and presentation techniques. An exhibition laboratory stocked with tools and materials for matting, framing, model making and dry mounting enables students to practice their skills as they hone their ability to research and write. Students in the material culture class have microscopes to examine textiles, paper, and wood and can photograph their projects with a special microscopic digital camera. And, we have replaced the old cassette recorders with digital Marantz recorders that transfer the sounds directly into a computer for oral history work. Although we fought it for many years, the cameras gave way to digital technology as well. An additional faculty line next fall will enable us to take another important step forward. The new faculty member will work closely with NYSHA faculty Stephen Elliott and John Carnahan in teaching museum administration, finance, planning, development and leadership. Most exciting of all is the planned renovation of the CGP building into a state-of-the-art museum training facility. (We'll give you more details about that exciting news in the next issue of *Forum*).

Alan Donovan has been a cheerleader, supporter, and friend working with us to keep CGP a strong program and a national model. He always provided generous financial support when we needed it for special projects and made every CGP student feel that the president of the college was his or her personal advocate. He helped us throughout the successful NEH challenge grant process providing the funding to print all of the materials we needed for the campaign. As Alan leaves us this summer, the partnership between the New York State Historical Association and the College at Oneonta has never been stronger. I feel particularly fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with Alan Donovan and will miss him and his wife, Anne, terribly. Happily, they've built a house in Oneonta. I can't imagine that they will sit and rock on the porch. It just isn't their style.



Congratulations to Dr. Alan Donovan, a jewel in our crown.

WEDDED TO...

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1]

Now Zeitlin serves as Executive Director and Dargan as Education Director at City Lore, a New York City based cultural heritage organization. Founded in 1986, City Lore presents programs and projects dedicated to documenting the living cultural heritage of New York City and the United States. Here too they have pursued their interest in poetry and have offered programs, such as the People's Poetry Gathering, a biennial poetry festival in lower Manhattan.

Please join us for this exciting and informative event at the Fenimore Art Museum Auditorium at 7:30 pm. It is free and open to the public.

TRANSITIONS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mary-Ellen Earl Perry '65 is a consultant for Big Springs Historical Society, Caledonia, NY.

John H. Ott '67 received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Lexington Chamber of Commerce in Lexington, MA, recognizing his leadership in the arts, history, tourism and economic development. The local paper, *The Colonial Times*, noted, "Rarely does an individual come to a community and leave the kind of lasting impression John Ott has left here." Recently retired, Ott served as Executive Director of the National Heritage Museum from 1999 to 2007.

Salvatore Cilella, Jr. '70 is the President and CEO of the Atlanta Historical Society. He formerly served as the Director of the Northern Indiana Historical Society, South Bend, IN, and Historic Bethlehem, Bethlehem, PA.

Allan Montgomery '71 is a cultural resource specialist for his own company, AK Montgomery Associates, LLC in Edinboro, PA.

J. Ritchie Garrison '74, Professor and Director of the Winterthur Program in Early American Culture, has recently been awarded the 13th annual Historic New England Book Prize for *Two Carpenters: Architecture and Building in Early New England, 1799-1859*. The book also won the Abbott Lowell Cummings Award from the Vernacular Architecture Forum.

Paula Mohr '86 received her Ph.D. in architectural history from the University of Virginia in Charlottesville in May 2007.

Elise Schebler Roberts '87 is a humanities instructor at the Minnesota School of Business in Plymouth, MN.

Anna Tobin D'Ambrosio, '89 has become the Assistant Director at Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute Museum of Art in Utica, NY. She will continue her duties as the Curator of Decorative Arts, a position she has held since 1989.



Second year students Stephen Light and Carolyn Lane prepare a white model for exhibition class.



David Lewis '98 keeps the conversation flowing as moderator of CGP's Listserv.



An exhibit, created by first year students for Interview Weekend, introduces the strengths of CGP.

Matthew Wilson '88 is the Fee Compliance Coordinator for the National Park Service.

Many thanks to **David April '89** for serving as CGP Listserv moderator since its inception in 2005. He passes the baton to **David Lewis '98**.

Elizabeth Nosek '90 has been named Senior Curator of Collections and Education at the Mission Houses Museum in Honolulu, HI. She previously served as the Associate Curator of Education at the Winterthur Museum.

Lisa Craig Brisson '93 is a freelance educator in Michigan.

Kathleen Mulvaney '97 has recently accepted the position of Program Officer at the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Susan Fonda '99 is the Manager of School Group Learning at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, MA.

Jane Woolsey Hedeon '01 has accepted a position as Coordinator of Student and Educator Programs at the Indiana Historical Society.

Lesley Poling '07 is now working as an English Language Learner Tutor at the Elyria City Schools in Ohio.

PERSONAL NOTES

Jodi Polsgrove '00 and Dennis Polsgrove introduce the newest member of their family, Jacob Noah Polsgrove, born on January 24.

Congratulations to **Sarah Blannett Pharon '02** who was married this past September. **Laura Hertz '02** and **Julie Frey '02** were in attendance.

Trisha Maust-Blosser '04 and Jeremy Blosser announce the birth of their son Dylan James Blosser, born on May 5, 2007.

CALL FOR ENTRIES

Proposals are now being accepted for papers to be presented at the conference *Heritage: Past, Present, and Future*, to be held at CGP, October 3-4, 2008, marking the centennial of the birth of Louis C. Jones.

Presentations should explore the history, current state, and/or future of the heritage preservation field, with special emphasis on the ideals espoused by Dr. Jones, including the perpetuation of traditional craft, study of material culture and commitment to the common folk. Submissions are requested from all areas of heritage preservation, including museums, archives, historic preservation, documentary film, public archeology, and folklore. Proposals that directly address Dr. Jones's pioneering contributions are encouraged, as are those that examine new ways to preserve

elements of the past and to make them accessible and relevant to audiences today.

Twenty-minute presentations, panels, workshops, films or alternative formats will be considered. List audio-visual equipment or other needs at the conclusion of the proposal. Send a one-page proposal and brief resume, in Word 2004 format to fallcg@oneonta.edu, or send hard copies to Cynthia Falk, at CGP. Deadline: April 1, 2008. CGP cannot pay travel costs or honoraria for speakers.

IN MEMORY OF CAROLINE K. KECK

BY C. R. JONES

She was known to NYSHA Seminarists, museum studies graduate students, and many of her friends as "Mrs. Keck." To some of her conservation students she was "Ma Keck," a demanding teacher, a harsh critic if you messed up, a shrewd advisor, and ultimately a defender and friend. *The New York Times* noted that "she was well known for her strong opinions, irreverent manner, and salty language." Most of all, she was a professional partner with her husband, Sheldon Keck; two pioneers in the formation of the profession of conservation in the United States.

The Kecks established an art conservation laboratory at the Brooklyn Museum in 1934 and consulted on the creation of many other labs. In 1960 they founded the Conservation Center at NYU's Institute of Fine Arts where Sheldon was director. I first met him at an eye-opening lecture he gave to the IFA museology class in 1964. For several years before their 1963 move to Cooperstown, the partners had presented Seminar courses on the care of paintings. Mrs. Keck was the conservator for NYSHA. In 1964 she organized a symposium on museum security (later published) and I joined the first class of the Cooperstown Graduate Program that fall. Mrs. Keck became a memorable visiting lecturer to the museum students. When you left Cooperstown you knew about the importance of conservation and you enthusiastically promoted it as an essential function of museums.

Caroline and Sheldon Keck, in their studio in Cooperstown, ca. 1970

MILO V. STEWART

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CGA Forum, the newsletter of the Cooperstown Graduate Association, is published four times a year. CGA welcomes comments from its readers.

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CGA Forum

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