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Sherry Austin. *The Days Between the Years*. Johnson City: The Overmountain Press, 2007. 200 pages. Hardback with dust jacket, \$16.95.

This novel centers on an epiphany experienced by the protagonist, Trixie Goforth, when the discovery of an old ornament releases a flood of memories about her youth during the Great Depression and ushers in new attitudes and relationships with others. “A winner of a book with heart and soul, and a revelation that carries its heroine homeward with joy.” – Dot Jackson. Sherry Austin is from North Carolina.

Sandra L. Ballard and Leila E. Weinstein, editors. *Neighbor to Neighbor: A Memoir of Family, Community, and Civil War in Appalachian North Carolina*. Boone: Appalachian State University Center for Appalachian Studies, 179 pages with photos, tables, and maps. Trade paperback, \$25.00.

Ashe County is the north westernmost in North Carolina bordering on both Tennessee and Virginia. It is the focus of this essay collection that centers on the Civil War era. Sandy Ballard is the editor of *Appalachian Journal*, and Leila Weinstein is her graduate assistant.

Laura Benedict and Pinckney Benedict, editors. *Surreal South: An Anthology of Short Fiction and Poetry*. Winston-Salem: Press 53, 2007. 378 pages. Trade paperback, \$19.95.

Pinckney Benedict is widely known as a superior short story artist, and his wife, Laura, is a successful first novelist. The respect they enjoy and their circle of contacts is evident in this anthology which includes the work of Ron Rash, Ann Pancake, Chris Offutt, and George Singleton. The title of the collection is no fluke. These stories are both Southern and surreal, with plenty of dream and dream-like scenes.

Elisabeth Bumiller. *Condoleezza Rice: An American Life, A Biography*. New York: Random House, 2007. 400 pages with photos. Hardback with dust jacket, \$27.95.

Yes, one of the most powerful actors on the world scene, Condoleezza Rice, is from Birmingham. In fact, one of her childhood friends was killed in the infamous church bombing there in 1963. "When a first rate journalist possesses a terrific sense of history and a superb narrative style, the result is magic. This powerful work not only offers an intimate portrait of Condoleezza Rice that will set the standard for all future writing about this fascinating and complex woman, but it takes us into the highest levels of the inner workings of the Bush administration." – Doris Kearns Goodwin.

John R. Burch, Jr. *Owsley County, Kentucky, and the Perpetuation of Poverty*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Company, 2008. 221 pages with maps and tables. Trade paperback, \$35.00.

This book is based on a Ph.D. dissertation done at the University of Kentucky under the guidance of Dr. Ronald Eller, one of the foremost contemporary historians of the mountain South. It uses one of Kentucky's poorest counties as a microcosm to squarely confront the causes of poverty.

Shirley Stewart Burns. *Bringing Down the Mountains: The Impact of Mountaintop Removal on Southern West Virginia Communities*. Morgantown: University of West Virginia Press, 2007. 213 pages with photos. Trade paperback, \$27.50.

This book is based on a Ph.D. dissertation completed under the guidance of Ron Lewis, an outstanding contemporary historian. "While the analyses of community and environmental impacts represent the core of this book, chapters on the United Mine Workers' role in promoting MTR; the history of legal challenges by citizens; and the relationship between the coal lobby, West Virginia's political leaders, and campaign finances are also indispensable sources of insight and information for scholars, activists and students. This book is a must-read for anyone who loves the Appalachian Mountains or is

concerned about the American environment” – Dwight B. Billings. Shirley Stewart Burns is a native of Wyoming County in the southern West Virginia coalfields. She now lives in Charleston.

Robert J. Conley. *A Cherokee Encyclopedia*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007. 278 pages with photos and illustrations. Hardback with dust jacket, \$24.95.

Robert J. Conley is the author of more than seventy books, including the official history of the Cherokee nation. The combination of impressive background knowledge and the novelist’s eye for detail and style make this the kind of encyclopedia that deserves a place on your shelf but is likely to spend almost as much time in your hands.

Robert D. Denham. *Charles Wright: A Companion to the Late Poetry, 1988–2007*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2008. 260 pages. Trade paperback, \$39.95.

Charles Wright is the only Pulitzer-Prize winning poet who not only grew up primarily in the region—Oak Ridge and Kingsport, Tennessee—but also maintains his primary residence here—in Charlottesville after a distinguished career as a professor at UV. This book is comprised of annotated commentary on each of the 230 poems in the last seven collections that Wright has published, ending with *Scar Tissue* (2006) and *Littlefoot* (2007), both of which included poems first published in *Appalachian Heritage*. Robert D. Denham is retired from a distinguished career at Emory & Henry College and Roanoke College.

Thomas W. Dixon, Jr., compiler. *Chessie System: Railroads in West Virginia*. Clifton Forge, Va.: The Chesapeake & Ohio Historical Society, 2007. 64 pages with photos. Trade paperback, \$22.95.

The Chessie system of railroads consists of The Chesapeake & Ohio, the Baltimore & Ohio and The Western Maryland. This book is most striking for its stirring photos, but the substantive captions and commentary are equally worthwhile.

Rand Dotson. *Roanoke, Virginia, 1882–1912: Magic City of the New South*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2007. 338 pages with photos and maps. Hardback with dust jacket, \$42.00.

Originally known as “Big Lick,” the community that became Roanoke was the fastest-growing southern city in the 1880s, spurred on by the decision to make it a railroad hub. The Depression and the race riots of the nineteen-nineties led into the more controlled and less dramatic coming of age of the city at the beginning of the twentieth century. “This is a thoughtful, deeply researched, and particularly well-written book. Dotson maintains control over a significant body of research, never letting himself get overwhelmed by the details. He strikes a fine balance between discussions of social history, economic change and local politics.” – Louis Kyriakoudes.

Julia Nunnally Duncan. *An Endless Tapestry*. Greensboro: March Street Press, 2007. 59 pages with photos. Trade paperback, \$9.00.

Two of these poems appeared first in *Appalachian Heritage*. “In *An Endless Tapestry*, Julia Nunnally Duncan renders the past with a specificity that is both immediate and timeless. These poems of longing and memory are beautifully written and perfectly recalled. The world she creates has a sweep of understanding of the human grain, and she deftly records both the vulnerabilities and the strengths of the figures who populate this collection.” – John Skoyles. The author lives in Marion, North Carolina, and is the author of previous story collections.

Phyllis M. EagleTree. *Roll the Wheel: The Abundant Life and Wisdom of Mae Phillips*. Louisville: ForSight, 2007. 135 pages with foreword by N. Scott Momaday and photos. Trade paperback, \$24.95.

Perhaps not since the Foxfire kids created *Aunt Arie* has such a striking portrait in words and photos been drawn of an old-fashioned mountain woman. Mae Phillips (1912–2006) lived an outwardly common life in rural Harlan County, Kentucky, but Phyllis M. EagleTree has illuminated the uncommon wisdom and fortitude that made it possible. “It is a wholly original work that is aesthetically pleasing, astounding in many ways, and bears important meanings for

our times. I am deeply pleased by the presence of human truth in this book.” – Gurney Norman.

David P. Elkinton. *Fighting to Protect the Highlands: The First Forty Years of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy*. Blacksburg: Pocahontas Press, Inc., 2007. 517 pages with a foreword by Ken Hechler, photos, and map. Trade paperback, \$24.95.

David Elkinton was not only deeply involved in the Highlands Conservancy, he also possesses the quiet intelligence and eloquence that make him an excellent choice to tell the history of West Virginia’s premier environmental organization. The official who most effectively supported their work, former U.S. Congressman Ken Hechler of Huntington, has written a splendid foreword to Elkinton’s magnificent 517-page tome.

Gilbert Elliott. *Shattered Dawn*. Parsons, W.Va.: McClain Printing Company, 2007. 165 pages. Trade paperback, \$15.00.

Sam and Rose Ellis, natives of the Tug Fork Valley on the Kentucky–West Virginia line, raised five children before they were murdered when visiting a Philippine community where they had done missionary work. All five of their children embarked on military careers. This book is the story of the various ways that international terrorism has impacted one American family.

Krista Fink. *Silent No More: Speaking out about Domestic Violence*. Terra Alta, W.Va.: Headline Books, Inc., 2007. 171 pages. Trade paperback, \$19.95.

Here is a harrowing memoir of how Krista Fink’s life skittered out-of-control at the hands of a physically abusive husband, and how she gained the courage to not only confront her predicament but also to become an activist in the cause of deterring domestic violence. A West Virginian, Krista Fink currently works as a high school teacher.

William H. Rice. *Elkins, West Virginia, 1889: The Magic City of the Wilderness*. Parsons, W.Va.: McClain Printing Company, 2007. 256 pages with tables, maps and photos. Trade paperback, \$35.00.

What an exhaustive treatment of Elkins, West Virginia, in 1889! It is divided into three sections. The first provides a chronology of events. The second annotates every single lot in the town. The third illuminates the people who lived there then. This is the fifth book, based on primary sources, written by the author, a resident of Elkins.

Mary Lee Settle. *Learning to Fly: A Writer's Memoir*. Edited by Anne Hobson Freeman. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2007. 224 pages with photos. Hardback with dust jacket, \$24.95.

Part of this book first appeared in the Winter 2006 issue of *Appalachian Heritage* honoring Mary Lee Settle (1919–2005), one of the most distinguished West Virginia authors of the twentieth century. The *Washington Post's* review by Jonathan Yardley ends by saying, "That her life ended with this quite wonderful little book, with . . . its keen observations about the writer's life and craft, makes for a happy ending indeed."

Michael Shnayerson. *Coal River: How a Few Brave Americans Took on a Powerful Company—and the Federal Government—to Save the Land they Love*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2008. 321 pages. Hardback with dust jacket, \$25.00.

The brave Americans in the subtitle are the Coal River Mountain Watch in Boone County, West Virginia, and the "powerful company" is the Massey Energy Corporation. The conflict is over mountaintop removal strip mining for coal. The author is a contributing editor to *Vanity Fair*. "*Coal River* is the dismaying story of Armageddon in Appalachia. Together, the powerful forces of ignorance and greed are dooming America's landscapes, our culture, and our democracy." – Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. "This damning account of mountaintop beheading and rampant watershed destruction in four states of Appalachia should be obligatory reading. . . . Uncommonly well-written and well-researched, *Coal River* is an enthralling story of the

few Americans courageous enough to ‘tell truth to power’ and oppose the crudest sort of environmental destruction and pollution for profit.”
– Peter Matthiessen.

Barbara Smith. *Judge Ira Ellsworth Robinson: West Virginia Statesman and Man of Letters*. Frederick, Md.: PublishAmerica, 2007. 477 pages with photos. Trade paperback, \$29.95.

Judge Ira Robinson left 28,393 pieces of memorabilia that are now housed at West Virginia University. This biography not only tells the story of an influential West Virginian, but also privileges the reader to the sense of discovery and excitement that the biographer felt in exploring this treasure-trove. The author is the retired chair of humanities at Alderson-Broaddus College and still a Phillipi, West Virginia, resident. She has been active in practically every writers group in West Virginia for the last several decades.

Tammy Robinson Smith, editor. *Self-Rising Flowers*. Bristol, Va.: Mountain Girl Press, 2007. 201 pages. Trade paperback, \$12.95.

This book follows up on *The Zinnia Tales* published earlier in 2007. Both are anthologies of short stories by Appalachian women. Most of the authors here are at the beginning of their writing careers. “The indomitable spirit and tenacity of mountain women flows through this entire book.” – Adda Leah Davis.

Young Smith. *In a City You Will Never Visit*. No date given, but known to be 2007, San Francisco: California Institute of Arts and Letters. 56 pages. Trade paperback, \$14.95.

Young Smith teaches at Eastern Kentucky University and is a recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship. The chief persona of this outstanding collection of poetry is Mrs. Morninghouse, who is attempting to deal with the unexpected suicide of her husband. “*In a City You Will Never Visit* threads two long sequences (a suicide story, and a metaphysical meditation on light) among individual poems of tantalizing variety.” – Rosanna Warren.

REPRINTS

F. Keith Davis. *The Secret Life and Brutal Death of Mamie Thurman*. Charleston: Quarrier Press, a 2007 second edition of an unstated 2001 release. 205 pages with photos. Trade paperback, \$15.95.

Mamie Thurman was murdered on a rainy night in June 1932 near Logan, West Virginia. In 2001, Keith Davis put together a book about not just her murder but the subsequent sightings of her ghost. This new edition of that book contains new interviews and new photos as well as new information.

Martin Wach and Delia Wach. *The Great West Virginia Snow Adventure: Teddy Bear Guardians of the Rain Forest*. Terra Alta, W.Va.: Headline Books, Inc., a 2008 reprint of a 2007 original. 30 pages with illustrations by Delia Wach. Oversized hardback with pictorial cover, \$16.95.

The Waches run a Bed and Breakfast at Davis, West Virginia, and often do school visits. Delia is a watercolorist and mixed media artist. Despite the side-journeys of snow and teddy bears and the rain forest, the heart of this book is a month-by-month rendition of family activities as recited by West Virginia school children. It is profusely illustrated by Delia Wach.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Kerry Madden. *Louisiana's Song*. New York: Penguin Group, 2007. 278 pages. Hardback with dust jacket, \$16.99.

This book is the second of three "chapter books" set in Maggie Valley in the North Carolina Smoky Mountains. The third is still being written, and the first was *Gentle's Holler*, which got starred reviews from both *Kirkus* and *Publishers Weekly*. The plot centers around the disappearance on a hike up to Waterrock Knob of the father of ten and the head of the Weems family.

Martin Wach and Delia Wach. *An Adventure in Writing*. Terra Alta, W.Va.: Headline Books, Inc., 2007. 32 pages with full-color illustrations. Trade paperback, \$14.95.

The first part of this book is a story about teddy bears having a picnic. The second part is a step-by-step guide for beginners to writing a book.

Martin Wach and Delia Wach with 2nd and 4th Grade Franklin Elementary Center Students. *The Cat Has Class!* Terra Alta, W.Va.: Headline Books, Inc., 2008. 32 pages with full-color illustrations. Oversized hardback with pictorial cover, \$16.95.

Parkersburg, West Virginia, students put this book together with the help of an artist and author husband-and-wife team.

Martin Wach and Delia Wach with the children of Appalachia. *Teddy Bear Helps on the Farm*. Terra Alta, W.Va.: Headline Books, Inc., 2008. 64 pages with full-color illustrations. Oversized trade paperback, \$14.95.

This book was created mostly by children who attended a workshop at the Mountain State Art and Craft Fair in Ripley, West Virginia.