After three years of sustained effort, the Monadnock Institute has collected over thirty-five essays focused on North County themes that feature “dirt under their nails.” Guided by North Country bookstore owner and anthology editor Mike Dickerman, along with project coordinator Kay Morgan, *Beyond the Notches* chronicles the history and heritage of farming, logging, hiking, millwork, hotel culture, recreation, and conservation in New Hampshire’s northern region. The volume, scheduled to appear in 2011, will include original artwork as well as maps and more than one hundred color photographs. An outline of the table of contents is included with this newsletter (see page 5).

**Oral History Conference Presentation**

Institute director John Harris and public history professor Melinda Jetté, along with FPU graduate Alex DiCicco and senior Corey Atkinson, will be presenting at the Oral History Association’s annual meeting (October 27-31) in Atlanta.

The Reflections Documentary Project: A Model for Community-Based Oral History will highlight the project partnership and showcase segments from three of the films. The panel presentation is one of more than ninety panels during the four-day conference.

*For more information about the project, see story on page 6. To learn more about the Institute’s other education, research, and program initiatives, turn to page 7.*
Climate Change: Taking Action for a Cause

In anticipation of the Copenhagen climate summit last December, the Monadnock Institute, in partnership with the Franklin Pierce University environmental science department, sponsored a two-day symposium in October designed to educate students and community members about climate destabilization. Building on an international day of climate action organized by 350.org, Monadnock Institute committee members and FPU sustainability coordinator Michelle Comeau encouraged students to exchange incandescent lightbulbs for compact fluorescent bulbs, step up recycling efforts, and produce artwork that addresses climate action. More than three hundred FPU students participated in these activities.

The culmination of Friday’s activities was a presentation by renowned polar explorer Will Steger. Steger showed dramatic footage of his journeys by dogsled across the North and South poles, and he pointed out the changes in glacial ice he has witnessed in these locations during his lifetime. Several of the significant ice shelves Steger crossed only five years ago have virtually vanished as a result of warming temperatures. Steger also outlined his goals for the climate summit in Copenhagen.

On Saturday, the Monadnock Institute organized a half-day symposium for students as well as the general public focused on regional solutions designed to address climate destabilization. Steger delivered a dramatic keynote address reiterating his direct experience witnessing the monumental collapse of ice in the polar regions. Using film footage of his polar adventures, Steger underscored the potential catastrophic effects of rising sea levels, and urged Americans to make their views known to elected officials ahead of the climate negotiations in Copenhagen.

In addition to Steger, Saturday’s symposium featured a panel of local individuals who have been active in addressing climate change. Steven Mueller, president of International Woodfuels, summarized his company’s efforts to supply biomass to replace petroleum as a heat source in New England. He applauded Franklin Pierce University’s effort to install wood pellet furnaces for the dormitories and athletic center on the Rindge campus. Expanding on the advantages of renewable technologies for power generation, Rindge resident Patricia Martin summarized the regional efforts to study and make available wind power alternatives. Martin pointed out the benefits and drawbacks of current wind technology, and urged participants to support efforts to erect a pilot wind turbine in Rindge or elsewhere in the Monadnock region. The final speaker, Rhett Lamb, director of planning for the city of Keene, summarized the state’s effort to combat climate destabilization and highlighted the progress Keene has made in 2009.

Keene has enacted policies designed to enhance public transportation, has undertaken a citywide energy audit, and has offered a woodstove exchange program designed to replace inefficient stoves with clean-burning alternatives. The final hour of the symposium was devoted to American Studies student presentations focused on the natural, cultural, and conservation potential of campus lands located across from the University entrance on Route 119.
Michelle Comeau was hired as FPU’s first sustainability coordinator in Fall 2009.

“I am very grateful to have this opportunity. I have been blessed with excited, determined students that are really working hard at creating a sustainable FPU. It is amazing to witness the exploring of the issues (personal, community, and global) by my students, peers and self, in order to implement sustainable environmental changes through action,” said Comeau.

One objective of the sustainability coordinator is to connect students with real-world issues in regard to climate and resource sustainability.

For instance the Sustainability Certificate allows students of any major to have an “edge” within their future careers due to having real-world experience on creating and implementing active change within their community. Students begin by identifying a problem or issue they would like to explore and then design a project around their major (marketing, psychology, mass communications, etc.). The Sustainability Coordinator acts as a facilitator and guide, giving resources, advice and aids in connecting with the community and local governments in order for students to fulfill their chosen pilot programs and psychological research, or educating the student body through resident hall programs and seminars on campus. Other projects reach out to the Rindge community, like aiding in the creation of a new community garden through offering landscape design, marketing, and organic gardening expertise.

Other objectives of the sustainability coordinator are to be a support for staff and faculty who have environmental concerns and/or are looking to implement their own sustainability actions on campus. With the help of the Sustainability Council, Comeau has created a Campus Action Plan that will target and reduce FPU’s greenhouse gas emissions by 58 percent by 2020 through conservation, efficiency upgrades, and education.

Comeau holds a master’s of science in environmental studies from Antioch University, where she studied education and environmental science. Presently, she is pursuing her doctorate of education from NOVA Southeastern University. She has been a visiting professor, instructor, and lecturer at FPU in the Natural Science Department for a total of three years, teaching such courses as environmental science, Integrated Science—Global Change, and IC101 (with a focus on energy and politics).

Earth Week Celebration

Sustainability coordinator Michelle Comeau helped organize this year’s Earth Week. Franklin Pierce University celebrated Earth Day on Wednesday, April 21, with a keynote address by author-explorer Sy Montgomery. According to Montgomery, “We are on the cusp of either destroying this sweet, green Earth or revolutionizing the way we understand the rest of animate creation. It’s an important time to be writing about the connections we share with our fellow creatures. It’s a great time to be alive.”

The April 21 celebration also featured a presentation by Comeau about the FPU Climate Action Plan, as well as a Sustainability Fair with information and exhibits about nontoxic plastics, organic farming, climate change, native plants, and nontoxic living. Other Earth Week events at FPU included the ECO Club “Outdoor Day,” a presentation on “Sustainability of Wood Biomass Fuels,” and planting native perennials in the ECO Club garden outside Pierce Hall.
**North Country Project Shifts Gears, from Working to Celebrating**

The “Collecting Stories and Connecting Communities” project in New Hampshire’s North Country completed its third year of work this spring.

Over the course of this initiative, project coordinator Kay Morgan worked with teachers in eleven high schools and two middle schools developing teaching methods and curriculum materials to help document community heritage north of the notches. In addition, historical societies, communities, and writers in the North Country have come together with teachers and project staff to develop the themes that resonate with residents throughout the region. All the threads of the project are coming together in the publication of the anthology *Beyond the Notches: Stories of Place in New Hampshire’s North Country*.

Looking back over the three years, Morgan reflects on the highlights of her North Country work: “Though several events come to mind, perhaps the culmination of my work involved organizing and planning a workshop day for high school students with a keynote by noted New Hampshire author Ernest Hebert, and student participation in two out of six available workshops. The day represented an opportunity for one hundred and thirty students and teachers to think about their lives in the North Country using the lenses of journaling, poetry, oral history, music, photography, and comics. Out of that day grew several student essays, which will be featured online and in the anthology.”

Other significant events during the project period have included a Writer’s Workshop at the Highland Center, a summer institute for teachers and community members held at The White Mountain School in Bethlehem, an Oral History training day held in Lancaster in collaboration with the Arts Alliance of Northern New Hampshire, and story circles in Stark and Bethlehem.

As the anthology moves toward publication, a celebration of student writing, slated for May 7, 2010, at the Highland Center in Crawford Notch, will feature North Country writer Jack McEnany sharing his techniques of writing about place with high school essay writers and their teachers. This will begin the celebratory phase of the project, which will continue into spring 2011, when project staff will present the anthology at community gatherings, honoring the writers who have made the book possible.
Beyond the Notches: Stories of Place in New Hampshire’s North Country

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Section 1: First Stories

“The land was ours before we were the land’s”
— *The Gift Outright*

Essays:
  - Paleoindian Life and Landscape – Richard Boisvert
  - Contact Period Native Americans – Robert Goodby
  - Intervale Abenakis – Alan Leveillee
  - Indian Stream Republic – Edie Clark
  - Settlement in Lancaster – Rebecca More
  - Among the Notches – Tom Wessels
  - Notchism – Suzanne Moberly
  - Cupcakes in Colebrook – Alex DiCicco
  - The Last Great Place – John Harrigan

Reflections:
  - Franconia – Maggie North (Profile High School)

Section 2: Transformation and Change

“So dawn goes down to day/Nothing gold can stay”
— *Nothing Gold Can Stay*

Essays:
  - It Felt Like Death – Rebecca Rule
  - Pathways to the Top of Mount Washington – Peter Crane
  - Boom Times – Kim Nilsen
  - Changing Landscapes, Changing Lives – Fran Lavoie
  - Legacy of Franconia College – Jeff Woodburn
  - Four Town Sketches – Paul Hertneky
  - Patterns in the Landscape – Robert Cottrell

Reflections:
  - My First Deer – Jon Leveille (Berlin High School)

Section 3: Working the Land

“Of apple picking: I am overtired/
Of the great harvest I myself desired”
— *After Apple-Picking*

Essays:
  - The Man Who Wrote the Book – Edie Clark
  - Voices from the Forest – Sylvia Smith
  - Leather Boots and Double-bits – Douglas Connelly
  - Prisoners and Pulpwood – Allen Koop
  - A Tale of Two Farms – Eileen Alexander
  - My Grandfather’s House – Jeff Woodburn
  - Saranac Gloves – Fran Lavoie

Reflections:
  - Old Flumer – Josh Clark (Littleton High School)

Section 4: Conservation and Recreation

“So was I once myself a swinger of birches/
And so I dream of going back to be”
— *Birches*

Essays:
  - Finding One’s Way – Pavel Cenkl
  - The Public Forest – Marcia Schmidt Blaine
  - Whose Woods These Are – Kay Morgan
  - Lake Umbagog – Emma Rous
  - History Lives on at Cannon Mountain – Megan McPhaul
  - Camp Diamond – Adair Mulligan
  - Lure and Lore of the Kilkenny – Steve Smith

Reflections:
  - Where Fantasy Lives – Sarah Goodby-Botting (Mount Holyoke College)

Section 5: Competing Visions

“Before I built a wall, I’d ask to know/
What I was walling in or walling out”
— *Mending Wall*

Essays:
  - Three Grand Schemes – Barbara Tetreault
  - All He Needed to Know – Katrina Farmer
  - View from the 45 Parallel – Susan Zizza
  - Off the Grid – Jessica Willis
  - Controversy of the Bethlehem Landfill – Kathy Cox
  - Summer at the Rocks – Taylor Kalloch
  - Grand Adventure – Roger Brooks
  - North Country at a Crossroads – Laura Alexander

Reflections:
  - My Back Trail – Kristina Temple (White Mountains Community College)
The Reflections Project, an oral history study of the Monadnock region, provides a model for collecting, preserving, and celebrating community stories. The success of the five documentary films—which focus on the Hurricane of 1938, rail travel in the region, Pisgah State Park, the Cheshire County Complex (jail, nursing home, and farm), and the region’s textile mills—offer lessons for other regions interested in utilizing community memory to honor past achievements, inform potential decision-makers, and educate local citizenry. More than three thousand local residents attended the Reflections documentaries, which premiered at the Colonial Theatre in Keene over the past two years. Institute director John Harris and public history professor Melinda Jetté interviewed participants and wrote scripts for several of the films. Franklin Pierce research interns Corey Atkinson, Maribeth Côté, and Cara Tamiso conducted archival research, while FPU graduate Alex DiCicco composed and produced the music for all five films.

Several of the hour-long documentaries included in the Reflections Project focus on pressing environmental and social service challenges. The documentary film on Pisgah State Park, for example, includes personal stories focused on land features, as well as specific recommendations by regional ecologists indicating which portions of the park should be protected from future logging. The Cheshire County Complex documentary highlights the changing attitudes regarding correctional philosophies and procedures at this multi-campus facility that includes a house of corrections, a working dairy farm, and a nursing home. “Flannels to Fuses,” the film on textile mills in the Monadnock region, concludes the series on a thoughtful note, highlighting the important connections between historic preservation and community in the emerging post-industrial era.

The selection and coordination among regional partners in this initiative—a public library, an academic institute, a local historical society, a community access television station, and a local daily newspaper—might serve as a national model for cities and towns interested in utilizing community memories to instruct and engage its citizens.

All five films are available in a boxed set, which can be checked out at the Keene Public Library or purchased at the Historical Society of Cheshire County and at Toadstool Bookshops.

The film about Pisgah State Park highlights the unique old growth forest that still remains in southwestern New Hampshire.

At left: The film on textile mills includes history about complexes such as this one on Colony Pond in Keene.
**Place-Focused Learning Community**

Institute director John Harris and environmental science professor Catherine Koning will offer a learning community for FPU freshmen who are interested in environmental themes and outdoor experiences. The pilot program will connect a freshmen seminar and college writing course around the themes of place and land history. Participants will explore sites on campus as well as Converse Meadow, a protected aquifer in Rindge. In partnership with the Rindge Conservation Commission and the Monadnock Conservancy, this new program will introduce and explore how documentary studies can add value to local environmental projects.

**Fort Hinsdale Archaeological Site**

The reported location of Col. Ebenezer Hinsdale’s 1742 fort and trading post was recently the site of survey work by FPU students. Under the direction of associate professor of anthropology Robert Goodby and in partnership with the Hinsdale Historical Society, the students conducted a preliminary archaeological survey in the fall of 2009. The goal of the survey was to evaluate whether this was the actual location of the fort. The excavation of shovel test pits produced mid-18th-century Westerwald ceramics, kaolin pipe stems and bowls, and musket flints contemporaneous with the dates of Hinsdale’s occupation.

**Nature and Culture in the Northern Forest**


**Leopold Faculty Institute**

Monadnock Institute director John Harris spent four weeks this past summer in Prescott, Arizona, steeped in the life and work of conservationist Aldo Leopold. As a participant in the NEH-sponsored institute “A Fierce Green Fire at 100,” Harris got to learn from core faculty and guest speakers such as Leopold biographer Curt Meine, ecologist Julianne Lutz Newton, environmental philosopher J. Baird Callicott, historian Susan Flader, and writer Scott Russell Sanders. Participants visited numerous sites in Arizona where Leopold worked for the U.S. Forest Service. They also created several undergraduate curriculum outlines designed to highlight Leopold’s innovative thinking about man’s relationship to the land. To see work developed during this program and for further information about the Leopold institute, go to http://ihr.asu.edu/leopold/home.

**Institute Explores an Expanded Documentary Focus**

Based on the success of the Reflections Project and on the production of more recent student vignettes for the Franklin Pierce Web site, the Monadnock Institute is exploring the possibility of developing a documentary studies certificate for FPU undergraduates. Modeled after the work of the Salt Institute in Maine, our documentary program would be organized around the theme of place, including land history, local ethnography, and stories of people and events in the Monadnock region. We welcome your thoughts about this potential new direction for the Institute.
Support the Monadnock Institute

The Monadnock Institute is supported in part by Franklin Pierce University, but the bulk of our operating funds come from grants and donations. You can help support the place-based educational work of the Institute with a tax-deductible donation. Please visit Franklin Pierce’s Web site at www.franklinpierce.edu/giving and follow the instructions to designate your gift to the Monadnock Institute, or you can send a check (payable to Monadnock Institute at FPU) to the address above.