

Burroway aids students in writing fiction with reading, work-

LESLIE MAXWELL
Police Reporter

The intimacy and the ease between Janet Burroway and the people in her workshops and at the reading, as Writer-in-residence Suzanne Newton noted, was special and different. Burroway, an educator, writer and reader, held a reading and two workshops for writers, students, faculty and community members.

Burroway visited the campus last week, Apr. 5-7, as part of the Mary Lynch Johnson professorship. Newton helped bring Burroway to Meredith.

After arriving late Monday afternoon, Burroway and some English faculty members dined at the Mandarin House, a Chinese restaurant.

Tuesday, Newton organized a workshop for area writers, some of whom had attended the summer Writing Out workshops on Meredith's campus. In Tuesday's workshop, held from 9:30 a.m. to noon, 21 writers learned how to create characters and conflict in their stories.

Tuesday evening at 7:30 in

the Chapel Commons Room, Burroway read a personal essay that she said "wrote itself" in the form of a poem. She then read a short story that she said will become part of a novel. About 40 students, faculty and community members attended the reading. Quail Ridge Books sold copies of Burroway's fiction afterward, and Burroway was available to sign the books.

Wednesday, from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Newton organized another workshop for Burroway to lead. In Wednesday's workshop, students who took Newton's fiction writing class, both current students and alumnae, came to hear Burroway's response to their fiction. At the end of February, Newton asked the eight writers to submit a piece that they wanted help with. Burroway read the pieces, made suggestions and returned the stories at the workshop.

The writers that attended either of the two workshops were what Newton called "serious" writers.

Newton noted that Bur-

roway's visit was different from other authors' visit in that an emphasis was placed on the writing and not just the reading. "I liked having the focus on the craft," she said.

In a brief interview with Burroway, she said that at Meredith, she liked "the people that I've met—there just seems to be intelligence and goodwill on every side."

She said that George Eliot, Joseph Conrad and twentieth-century authors Margaret Atwood and Doris Lessing have been her biggest literary influences. Her life influences, she said, were her mother and author Sylvia Plath ("But not the suicide," Burroway said.) She called Plath "a paradigm for women who desperately wanted to write."

Burroway's advice to aspiring writers was "just keep at it." Then, upon reflection, she added, "The rewards of writing are the writing itself and if that seems true, it's the right life, and if it doesn't, it's not the right life."

Burroway said that she uses quotes from other writers to

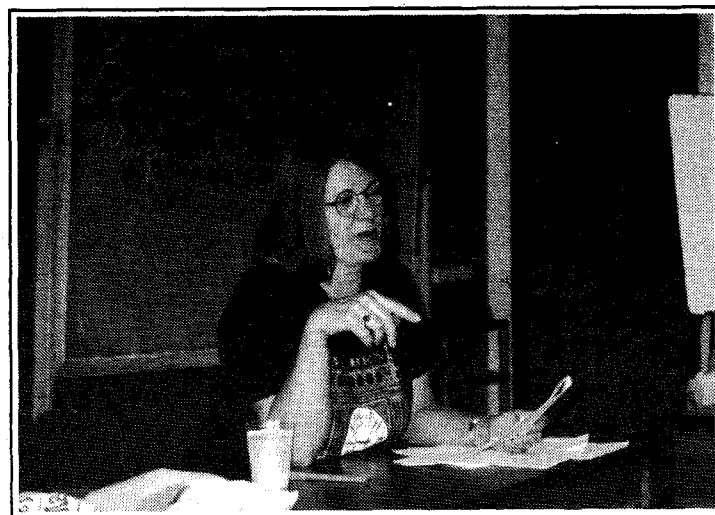
inspire and encourage her.

Newton commented on the positive response from both faculty and students. Faculty could relate to her because Burroway is also a professor. She is "scholarly but writerly," Newton said. Those who attended the workshops, Newton said, liked them and found them to be helpful.

Burroway is the author of seven novels. Her book *The Buzzards* was nominated for a

Pulitzer Prize, and her novel *Raw Silk* was a finalist for the National Book Award. She writes many in many genres, including fiction, poetry and essays. These works have been published in journals like *The Atlantic*, *Ms.* and *The New Statesman*.

Burroway is a professor at Florida State University in Tallahassee and has been there for 27 years.



Author Janet Burroway conducted a workshop for some of Suzanne Newton's students last Wednesday.

PHOTO BY LESLIE MAXWELL

Campus grieves loss of history professor Carolyn Grubbs

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Carolyn Barrington Grubbs, Meredith class of 1960 and professor emerita of history, died Tuesday morning of pneumonia, a

complication of her Parkinson's-like disease, an illness that she had for several years.

Grubbs received a B.A. in history from Meredith, then went on to receive her M.A.T. from Duke and a doctorate in education from NC State. In 1963, she returned to her Alma Mater as a history professor.

Upon her return to Meredith, Grubbs (then Barrington) dated and eventually married Frank Grubbs, also a history professor, who is now retired. She leaves behind two sons.

The Grubbs' courtship, Jean Jackson, vice president for student development, noted, "must have been carried out under the watchful eye of Meredith students."

Grubbs was promoted to assistant professor in 1973, to associate professor in 1983 and to full professor in 1989.

From 1992 to 1994, she was the second director of the Honors Program. She was the head of the department of history and politics from 1994 to 1995. However, in November of 1995, she retired for health reasons. At that time, the Board of Trustees named her a professor emerita.

Grubbs was freshman faculty adviser for Jackson, '75. Jackson remembered eating fried chicken in front of Stringfield with Grubbs and the rest of the advising group. Jackson recalled seeing the

ease of interaction between Grubbs and the students. Jackson noted that, when she began working at Meredith, "it took a long time for me to call her Carolyn."

"She was very involved in campus life, especially MRA," Jackson said. She said that Grubbs was always involved in Play Day, an event that used to be held every spring. Activities such as tug-of-war were held while afternoon classes were suspended.

Garry Walton, English department head, agreed that Grubbs was active on campus, calling her very athletic. He noted, "She loved teaching." He recalled that her lectures began from the moment a student walked in the door to the moment she walked out.

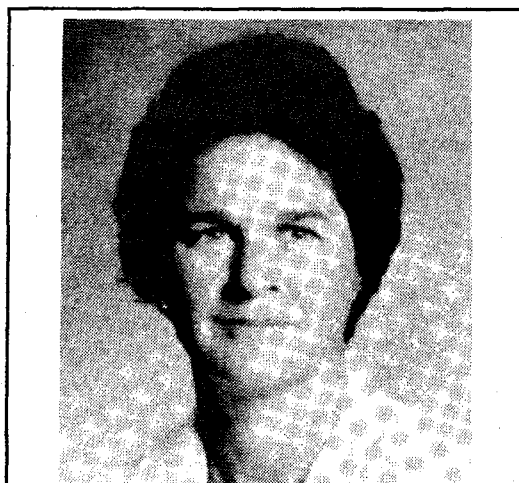
Michael Novak, history

and politics department head, said of Grubbs, "She's one of the most remarkable teachers I have ever known. Her contributions to the College, the department and especially to Meredith students across almost 30 years have enriched life at Meredith enormously."

"She loved her family. She loved her students," said Jackson. "She was a wonderful human being."

Visitation will be Thursday evening from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Brown-Wynne Funeral Home in Cary. The funeral will be Friday afternoon at 2 p.m. in the small chapel at Raleigh Memorial Park off Glenwood Avenue.

According to Campus Minister Sam Carothers, arrangements have not yet been made for a campus memorial service.



Meredith alumna and history professor emerita Carolyn Grubbs died Tuesday morning after retiring because of her illness in 1995.

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