

Letter from the Director

Talking about this school as much as I do, both publicly and privately, I am continually asked, "Who comes to Penland?" The fact that most of our classes are open to all levels is sometimes lost in the description of the program—the seriousness, intensity, and long hours may sound too challenging for beginners or even those with modest experience. However, a great deal of the energy at Penland comes directly from that mix of levels and ages which helps create an atmosphere of collaboration, exchange, and inclusion for over twelve hundred people each year.

Who are these people and why do they come here? Some are in the early stages of a career in crafts and use their time at Penland to focus this effort. Some are established professionals taking the opportunity to be a student again. Some are amateurs whose commitment to craft is real, although part time. There are collectors who wish to deepen their understanding of the field. Many are absolute beginners who long to make a connection with craft, and people often use a class at Penland as a focal point during a time of personal transition.

Our mission is to provide a learning environment that promotes personal growth through crafts and contributes to the larger field of craft practitioners. Our belief is that craft has the potential for transformation in a person's life, which directs us to support each and every person as a valid student at Penland.

To this end, we have become more active in attracting different types of students to the school, students who might not ordinarily come to Penland without some level of support. Lucy Morgan founded this school to bring people together and we continue that mission. Racial and cultural diversity is a priority as we cooperate with programs around the country. We are actively working with school teachers to combat the lack of support for arts education. New programs developed for our neighbor communities will bring low-income adults and high-school students into our studios for programs dedicated to enhancing lives through craft education.

Our work/study program provides reduced tuition to over three hundred students each year in exchange for a moderate amount of work. (In 1985 work/study tuition was \$200 for a two-week session. In 1996 it is \$290.) Three years ago we established a new level of work/study scholarship for the Concentrations which makes some positions available at just over half the regular work/study fee. This has dramatically increased opportunities for attending these unique eight-week sessions. We have expanded our work/study funds through solicitations and continue to develop that base of support which is so important to so many potential students.

The Core student program is one of our most successful educational opportunities. Nine students work at the school for one or two years in exchange for room, board, and tuition. A high percentage of former Core students are now running their own studios, and we find many of them teaching in ours.

When assessing our work we ask, Who do we serve, and How well do we serve them? We can answer that our commitment is to present a wide array of programs, to maintain our connection with the mix of students historically drawn to the school, and to reach out to those who have not been included in the past.

Many of the pages of this *Penland Line* describe our efforts to stimulate artistic and cultural interchange. Penland's vitality is maintained by challenging the individual, contributing to the larger dialogue on craft, and addressing issues affecting our community. It is with conscious intention that we ask ourselves, Who is Penland for?

—Ken Botnick



Dana Moore

PENLAND LINE

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The Penland Line is published twice a year to communicate thoughts about the programs, people, and philosophy of Penland and to keep in touch with several groups of people at once: craftspeople and friends living nearby, instructors, donors, and Friends of Penland. We invite you to share your news, opinions, and/or photographs with us.

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Dana Moore

Penland's studio coordinators maintain the studios and prepare them for each class. They also help plan studio improvements, order supplies, and supervise equipment maintenance. Left to right: (front row) Robert Chiarito, Photography; Louise Radochonski, Clay; Eileen Wallace, Books/Paper, Printmaking, Drawing; Robert Gardner, Glass; (back row) John Clark, Wood; Elizabeth Brim, Iron; Lilith Eberle, Metals; and Gregg Johnson, Textiles.

Editor's Note: *Editing the Penland Line is a collaborative effort. Many hands touch it in ways that can't be told by listing names on the masthead. Ken Botnick, Geraldine Plato, and Erika Sanger suggest general directions and specific stories. Dana Moore gives thoughtful, detailed, and invaluable editorial input. Eileen Wallace squares the edges and polishes the surfaces of our pages, and omits many needless words from our copy. Other staff members, Penland neighbors and trustees, my family and friends are always willing to try out an idea, hunt an obscure fact, or help find just the right word. This is a craft school, and we try to give the same care and attention to publications that our instructors and students give to their work in the studios. It's a pleasure to be a part of this process and a joy to have this kind of support.*

—Robin Dreyer