



Robin Dreyer



Wanda Levin

Instructors Richard Ritter and Doug Sigler along with Floss Perisho and Jessie McKinney blowing out the candles. Floss taught at Penland for many years; Jessie was the school's registrar. The cake was made by Chris Schwab.



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Rachel Sikorsky-Todd, daughter of Yaffa Sikorsky-Todd and Jeff Todd, making bubbles at the reunion.

Penland hosted a magical weekend in mid-May. It was a reunion in celebration of the school's 70th anniversary. Trustees Linda Darty and Laurel Radley, who led the volunteer committee that organized the event, felt it was important to have a gathering of close Penland friends while some of the eldest members of the community are still with us. The gathering was also an opportunity to dedicate the new archive, to invite community members to donate archive material, and to record oral histories.

About 150 people attended the event including relatives of directors Lucy Morgan and Bill Brown. A number of former resident artists and instructors were here including twelve members of the *Nifty Fifty*, a group of fifty artists who gathered for a short-term residency at Penland in 1971?

The weekend included tours of the campus, a wonderful poetry reading by Jonathan Williams, meals at the Pines, craft workshops, films from Penland's past, a stunning multi-media slide show by Dan Bailey, and many hours of video and audio taping of interviews.

Debra Frasier hosted a Dye Shed storytelling session, and Jane Brown gave a talk about the years that she and her husband Bill led the school. Kat Conley had spent countless hours assembling photo collages which were posted all over the school, and Suzanne Ford curated a memorable exhibition of crafts made during Penland's first fifty years. An evening square dance featured Red Wilson who fiddled for many Penland dances as a member of the Toe Valley Boys.

The archive was dedicated in memory of former trustee Jane Kessler. A highlight of the dedication was Paulus Berensohn's reading of a poem titled *A Craftsman's Creed*. The poem was written for Penland's tenth anniversary, and Paulus had elegantly updated it for this occasion.

At a Sunday morning memorial service, Jessie McKinney invited everyone to light candles and speak in memory of old friends who have passed on. The service was moving and fascinating and generated more laughter than tears.

The grand finale was a group photograph taken by Oscar Bailey with his panoramic camera (which is older than Penland). After the weekend, Jane Brown presented Director Jean McLaughlin with the handmade bell that Bill Brown had used for making announcements in the Pines. It was time, she said, for the bell to come home.

An upcoming issue will feature excerpts from some of the oral histories, including stories from the Morgan family and others.



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Metalsmith Robert Ebendorf and glass sculptor Mark Peiser talking before the memorial service.



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Photographer and neighbor Oscar Bailey preparing to take a group photo with his antique Cirkut camera. The camera travels in an arc while the film moves in the opposite direction. Oscar's son Dan Bailey and potter Cynthia Bringle led a charge of kids from one side of the arc to the other so they could appear twice in the photograph.

Alliance of Artists' Communities

On October 15 and 16 the Alliance of Artists' Communities held part of their annual meeting at Penland. The alliance is a national service organization that supports the work of artists' communities and residency programs. The alliance was formed in 1992 by eighteen organizations with seed money from the MacArthur Foundation and the NEA. The alliance has created a communication network for artists' communities that provides an exchange of information, ideas, and resources; it has compiled information and statistics on the field; established ties with international artists' communities; established field-wide standards; and launched a campaign to broaden the diversity of artists served by the communities.

The alliance has grown to include seventy institutional members and fifty individual members. Among these members are Anderson Ranch Arts Center, Archie Bray Foundation, Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, Hambidge Center, Headlands Center for the Arts, Millay Colony for the Arts, P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, Vermont Studio Center, and Virginia Center for the Creative Arts.

The first two days of the meeting took place at the newly-opened Tryon Center for Visual Art in Charlotte, NC. Attendees were treated to an opening reception at the Tryon Center's gallery and studios. The Thursday session focused on corporate support for artists' communities. That evening everyone attended dinner and a reception at the newly opened Mint Museum of Craft + Design. After lunch on Friday, alliance members boarded a bus and headed up to Penland for dinner at the Pines and an open house at the resident artist studios.

On Saturday, the group met in Northlight for a strategic planning session which was followed by brainstorming discussions on standards and practices in the field. The rest of the day was spent touring the Penland campus and local artists' studios to demonstrate the impact of the Penland program on the community at large. Since the conference Penland has received many thank-you letters from attendees who expressed deep interest in the school's extraordinary commitment to artists. —Erika Sanger