



UNH Exhibit Highlights Study Abroad Experience

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Editors: A photo is available for download at http://www.unh.edu/news/img/DSC_2147.jpg

DURHAM, N.H. – Memorabilia from University of New Hampshire students and professors who traveled abroad in the early 20th century will be on display at the Museum of the Dimond Library on the UNH campus beginning Thursday, March 31, 2005. An exhibit opening and reception will begin at 5 p.m.

Organized in collaboration with UNH's Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures, the exhibit will also feature memorabilia from Mabel Ethelyn Spofford, who traveled to Spain in 1923 to study at the Residencia de Estudiantes. The Residencia was a leading cultural center and the first Spanish academic institution with a female branch. Some of the most famous Spanish artists, poets and filmmakers of the 20th century — Garcia Lorca, Salvador Dali and Luis Buñuel, to name a few — studied there as well.

“This exhibit will provide the UNH community with the opportunity to view a private cultural treasure and give us a chance to emphasize the educational importance of traveling and studying abroad as a way to promote international and inter-cultural contact and understanding,” says Carmen Garcia-Rasilla, assistant professor of Languages, Literatures and Cultures. The formal opening at 5 p.m. March 31 will include an introductory talk as well as a poetry reading from poets connected to the Residencia during Spofford's stay, and music from Manuel de Falla, interpreted by soprano Darby Tench and pianist Linda Chaston. Refreshments will be served. Spofford, a 1914 graduate of Wellesley College, went on to become an English teacher, spending five years in the Dover, N.H., schools. Items from her personal collection in the exhibit include a photo album, letters she wrote to family members while in Spain, and copies of speeches she gave about the trip when she returned.

“The year of Ethelyn's trip was also a turning point in the history of Spain,” Garcia-Rasilla says. “The dictatorship of Primo de Rivera put an end to parliamentary rule and paved the way for the Civil War. Some of her comments and photographs make explicit references to social conditions that help us understand the unstable political situation in Spain during that era.”

The exhibit is sponsored by the Center for the Humanities and UNH's Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures. For more information contact the Spanish program at 603-862-3121.