

Alumnus Donation Means Poetic Revival for UNH

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DURHAM, N.H. -- A University of New Hampshire alumnus from Stratford, Conn., is waxing poetic these days, having donated 478 books of poetry to his alma mater's Dimond Library. It's a collection he built over three decades as editor of a literary review magazine.

Napoleon St. Cyr, a 1953 business administration graduate who also taught in public schools for 25 years, met with University Librarian Claudia Morner to present the collection, which features contemporary poets such as Octavio Paz, Rene Char, Robert Duncan and James Laughlin.

St. Cyr, who dabbled in poetry himself, says "the muse disappeared" around 1969. "With all the mail I was getting (for critical review in the magazine), I saw poems much better than mine." Despite his modesty, St. Cyr calls it "a nice scapegoat."

The collection had been on loan to his local town library, but hadn't been catalogued or actively circulated. "I wanted the collection to be useful; then I got sentimental and thought 'what about UNH?'"

Morner is glad he did, noting that the university will add the mint condition small press publications to its expanding poetry stacks. "We teach poetry, and there is certainly a demand for these books, but we have not been able to afford them; and many go out of print quickly, making them even more scarce," she explains. "This will certainly fill a gap and add to the value of our collection."

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