



2002
Jefferson Cup

AWARD

U.S. HISTORY
HISTORICAL FICTION
BIOGRAPHY

Presented by
Youth Services Forum
of the
Virginia Library
Association

2002 Jefferson Cup Award

U.S. HISTORY • HISTORICAL FICTION • BIOGRAPHY

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Storm Warriors

by *Elisa Carbone* • Alfred A. Knopf Publishing • Grades 5-9

A ship has floundered off the North Carolina coast and it is up to the Pea Island Rescue Crew to rescue the men, women and children on board. The surf is raging. Nathan and his father race to the station. They join the crew in throwing open the doors and grabbing the towropes of the surfboat. Fighting the winds and the resistance of sand and surf, they finally launch the boat. Valiantly the crew rows toward the beached and listing vessel. Once along side the ship, the stranded sailors and their passengers are slowly transferred to the surfboat. As much as Nathan dreams of being a real member of the crew, not just an eager volunteer, he is only a boy. And... according to his father has little hope of ever joining the crew.

The year is 1895 and, though the Civil War ended thirty years ago, segregation still exists. Only the sons and nephews of the all African American Pea Island Rescue Crew can hope to join their ranks. Not to be daunted, Nathan drills with the crew, learns to "sneak through" the waves, and practices his first aid skills. One night, after a particularly harrowing rescue, Nathan realizes he is not cut out to be a member of this elite crew. He knows in his heart he could never plunge into the dangerous, angry surf the way the crewmen did on that night. His grandfather's words, "sometimes your dreams show up dressed a little different than you thought they'd be," echoes in his mind. Nathan knows that while he can't save lives on the water, he can save lives once the victims are brought to land.

Elisa Carbone skillfully weaves fictional characters into the unique history of the U.S. Lifesaving Service on Pea Island, North Carolina. Through extensive research, Ms. Carbone uses actual wrecks and rescues in creating the riveting plot. The characters are well developed and believable. Nathan, in particular, draws the reader into a time and place when many opportunities simply were not available to African Americans.

HONOR BOOKS

Freedom Summer

by *Deborah Wiles* • Atheneum • Grades 1-4

Joe's best friend is John Henry. They shoot marbles, swim in the creek, and share ice pops during the hot southern summer of 1964. The only problem is that Joe's skin is the color of "pale moths that dance around the porch light at night," while John Henry's is the color of "browned butter." This means that John Henry can't do everything that Joe does, including swimming in the "whites only" town pool. Then the Civil Rights Act is passed that forbids segregation, and the boys think that things will be different. What they discover, however, is that they have the power to determine their own behavior, despite the racial prejudice that is still prevalent in the town. Wiles' concise text is both touching and inspiring, and Jerome Lagarrigue's memory-like illustrations powerfully enhance the emotional response of the reader or listener.

Under a War-Torn Sky

by *Laura Elliott* • Hyperion Press • Grades 7-12

Henry "Hank" Forester, like many other young American fliers during the Second World War, enjoys the excitement of his missions and the camaraderie of the other American soldiers. He is very proud to be doing his part to bring the war to an end so he can go home to his family and his girl, and live the peaceful life he dreamed of having before war tore his world to pieces. Hank's innate qualities become great strengths when his plane is shot down over Alsace during a bombing mission, and he must make his way across enemy-controlled borders and deep through the heart of occupied France in his efforts to return to the home that he loves.

Hank has only the Maquis (a French resistance group), his own keen instincts, and his wits to save him from the constant and oppressive threat of death. With page-turning excitement, drama, romance, and peppered with colorful characters amongst impeccable historical fact, this incredibly well written war novel is the ultimate bildungsroman. It will appeal to a vast variety of readers as they grow with Hank on his amazing journey under a war-torn sky.

The Jefferson Cup Award

honors a distinguished American biography, historical fiction or history book for young people. The Youth Services Forum of the Virginia Library Association has presented this award annually since the 1982 publishing year. Through the award, the Youth Services Forum seeks to promote reading about America's past, to encourage the quality writing of United States history, biography and historical fiction for young people, and to recognize authors in these disciplines.

WORTHY OF SPECIAL NOTE

The Belly Gunner

by Carol Edgemon Hipperson and Dale Aldrich • Twenty First Century Books • Grades 6-9

Carol Edgemon Hipperson tells the story of Dale Aldrich, World War II veteran, who served as a ball turret, or belly gunner on a B-17 bomber with the U.S. Eighth Air Force. Aldrich describes his bombing missions over occupied Europe and Germany, being shot down, captured by the Nazi's and sent to a prisoner-of-war camp. Aldrich survives the horrors of the POW camp and comes back to America, goes to college on the GI Bill, marries and raises a family. His daughter, Janie Aldrich Hickel, encouraged the author to interview her dad and tell the story of the average GI who doesn't think of himself as a hero, but was one of many American men and women who risked their lives to defend the free world.

My Family Shall Be Free

by Dennis Brindell Fradin • Harpercollins Juvenile Books • Grades 7-12

Peter and Levin, ages 6 and 8 are "kidnapped" and carried off to Kentucky after their mother runs away from her master taking her two baby daughters with her. The boys eventually are sold

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to a master in the Deep South. Over the course of 40 years through hard work and determination, Peter is able to buy his freedom and eventually, his family's as well. Excerpts from 19th century printed sources help personalize the story of this divided family, their struggle and eventual reunion. Booklist calls it "an engrossing saga that is both sweeping and intensely personal".

The Ransom of Mercy Carter

by Caroline B. Cooney • Delacorte Press • Grades 7-9

The Ransom of Mercy Carter begins in 1704 during the French and Indian Wars when the English village of Deerfield, Massachusetts is attacked by Mohawk Indians. Half the residents, the majority of whom are children, are taken on a forced march in the middle of winter, 300 miles north to Canada. Eleven-year-old Mercy Carter proves to be brave and levelheaded, helping other English captives and earning the respect and affection of her captors. Ransom by the English government seems to be her only hope but when it finally comes--what will her decision be?

SERIES WORTHY OF NOTE

Encyclopedia of American Studies

Grolier Educational • Grades 7-12

This four-volume set encompasses a very wide range of topics relating American popular culture and American history. The easy to read entries range from baseball and beauty contests to Wall Street, Williamsburg and Woodstock. Useful to students will be the thematic guide to the contents and the extensive subject index. Users of this set will be able to find diverse information on American life difficult to find in other sources.

For information about the award or to submit a nomination, please contact:

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Eligibility

- The book must be an original work published in the year prior to the selection.
- The book must be about U.S. history or an American person, or fiction that highlights the United States past, 1492 to the present.
- The author must reside in the United States.
- The book must be published for young people.
- The book must be accurate, informative, well researched, unbiased, literate, and give a clear and interesting picture of America's past.

Selection

The Jefferson Cup Committee selects the winning book. The committee has eight members: a chairperson selected by the previous year's committee, six individuals representing the six regions in the state, the outgoing chairperson of the Youth Services Forum, and the outgoing Jefferson Cup chairperson.

2002 Jefferson Cup Committee

Rebecca Purdy, Chair

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