

Change & Our Sense of Place

In these times when we juggle our need for security with our desire for serenity, the artist often is our guide. By showing us how to 'tilt our head and see from a different perspective' a local author offers us understanding through history, while a local poet presents a sense of balance by noticing the space we move in.

With the coming changes at Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) due to the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), Bill Bates's book guides us through the transition by helping us appreciate the past. At the same time, Colleen Webster's voice on her CD of poetry

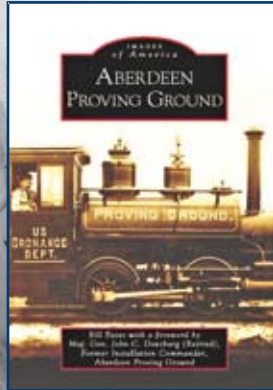
takes us to a deeper place from which we might find the strength to maneuver the sometimes-murky waters ahead.

Bill Bates, in his fifth book for Arcadia Publishing, presents images and unparalleled access to leading U.S. Army historians and records from current and retired army and civilian personnel to give us an unprecedented look behind the gates of APG. In his recent release of *Images of America: Aberdeen Proving Ground*, Bill focuses on the cooperation between the military and the citizens of Harford County.

Bill Bates



photo courtesy of
Ellie Mencer



new appreciation of those who have weathered the changes before us.

APG began with the relocation of the Ordnance Command from the Sandy Hook Proving Ground at Fort Hancock, NJ. Now APG is to be enriched by the addition of the Communications-Electronics Command from Fort Monmouth, NJ. As the Ordnance Command moves away from APG for Fort Lee, VA and personnel from Fort Monmouth move in, great changes are underway. Undoubtedly, APG will continue its tradition of leadership in the development and perfection of new technologies. And, just as surely, the Army will continue to find support in the citizens of Harford County.

*Excerpt from conclusion of
Images of America: Aberdeen Proving Ground,
by Bill Bates*

Bill provides “an introduction to Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) for those who have never been past the gates” and hopes to “bring back memories for those who served or worked on the base and for their families.”

His book is ‘civilian-friendly’ with few acronyms. Bill also shares an insightful view of the important roles of African Americans and women in supporting the military throughout the 90 years of APG’s history. With 128 pages offering over 200 vintage photos, we are led through an important part of our local history with ease and awe, leaving us with

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Poet Colleen Webster offers an alternative to our oft-threatened sense of security as she shares her very personal view of the world around us. In this summer's release of her CD, "If There Is A Way Home," Colleen takes us along on her daily walks/runs, bringing our attention to the large and small of nature, leading us inward to our hearts and souls. She shares her sorrows and her quest, her curiosity and her discoveries. Through her awareness of the natural things around us, she nudges us to stop and listen, feel, touch, smell and truly see the wonders right here—right now!



Colleen Webster on the River

photo courtesy of Angelina Prandini

i do not know what it is about this world
that opens me. i only understand that
something in me demands this blooming
flying, the eagles circle my breathing

from "somewhere I have never traveled"

by Colleen Webster

The Power of Naming

No matter where you stand on God and scientists, you have to admire what must have been their strut of certainty, white coats and robes swishing as they reeled off *Zebra Swallowtail* for the flitting butterfly, *Mummichug* for the flashing foil of tiny fish, all of creation wavering in uncertainty before the voices spoke, giving *Mink*, *Woodchuck*, *Aspen*, *Spice Bush*, *Moose*, *Sagebrush*, *Sedge Wren*, *Armadillo*.

This is not what bubbles up in my woodland jaunts—instead the uniform green blurs until my memory blots out what is individual, definite, so that I tentatively throw out *Jack-in-the-Pulpit*

Colleen and Daisy



photo courtesy of Jack Douglas

to the hooded, hidden green flower and then more wonder. All these tiny white *Garlic Mustard*? No, a patch of look-a-like *Sweet Cicely* and now I must revisit all white blooms I have filed away incorrectly in my mind.

Even those old white robes knew a thing or two about doubt and revision. One gnarled finger pointed out *Unicorn*, *Narwhal*, but later, younger hands prefaced such claims with *Mythical* and *Legendary*. When I call out *Old Squaw*, an invisible tapping reminds me *Long Tail* is now the name for such an elegant dabbling duck.

I tread carefully, wrapping the light veil of what I know around my heavier mantle of ignorance, finding my place in this chain of creation, classification, identification. I touch the daisies and pocket river stones as I go.

©2007, Colleen Webster

Gently urging us to notice the many shades of green, Colleen takes us along as she trains for marathons, sails, kayaks, bikes or walks her dog, Daisy. All the while she moves us away from the daily hustle and bustle, out of our fears, and back to our quiet self. You cannot listen to her voice reading her poignant writings, without memories of sorting through the yard for a 4-leaf clover, or catching fireflies in an old jelly jar. Today, maybe you'll take a moment to stand against an old, very tall tree and sense the connection of past and future. More importantly, at that moment, breathe deeply, relax and notice! And in that moment, vital to our senses of well-being, lies the balance between our need for security and serenity. 🐾

- Bill Bates book is available for \$19.95 in many shops through town or at www.arcadiapublishing.com.
- You can purchase Colleen Webster's CD for \$10+ postage by e-mailing EllieEditor@aol.com.

ENDNOTE:

Photo on page 17: From page 104, TANK REPAIR CREW. Women in overalls fine-tune a tank – just one of the many traditionally male and military roles that civilian women filled on base during WW II. Despite working at some of the most physically demanding of jobs, women also had to work hard to get some changes made: Eleanor Roosevelt and other leading women of the day mounted a media campaign to get slacks adopted as acceptable work wear for women. (Courtesy the Historical Society of Harford County)