What Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Learned in Banner Elk

**Presentation #1 Abstract or Summary**

In the fall of 1936, novelist Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings came to Banner Elk, North Carolina, to find peace and quiet, to cure her persistent malaria, and to find the time and inspiration to write a novel percolating in her mind. She found peace and quiet in a cottage on a hemlock-shaded trail on the Lees-McRae College campus. The crisp weather set her malaria at bay, and she started work on her most famous work, *The Yearling*. But more importantly she created a connection to a small boy who lived in nearby Grandfather Home, an orphanage associated with the college. The bond that formed taught her much that she did not know that she didn't know about boys, and that knowledge informed not only the main character of the novel, but the young man in another work, her most famous short story, "A Mother in Mannville." In addition, a flying visit she made during her stay to see F. Scott Fitzgerald in Asheville put her in touch with one of the country's most successful authors, as he languished in alcoholic doldrums.

Rawling's novel and short story, together with her letters, a biography *Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings in the Mountains* by Dudley Gilmer and scholarly biographies of the author show the importance of this sojourn in the mountains for her creative and personal life and how rural Appalachians have much in common with the Florida crackers her works celebrate.

**At-A-Glance Bio- Presenter #1**

Dr. Michael Joslin serves as the director of the Stephenson Center for Appalachia at Lees-McRae College where he has taught since 1989. He has published six books and over a thousand articles on Appalachia. He photographs nature and Appalachian people, place, and ways. Living with his wife, Pam, in Buladean, North Carolina, Michael Joslin works his draft horses, hikes the woods, gardens, and enjoys mountain life.

This document is currently not available here.