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REVIEW: Elephant on My Roof

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JUVENILE LITERATURE

Cynthia's Attic: The Missing Locket by Mary Cunningham (Echelon Press, 2005; ISBN 1590804414, \$9.99).



The author weaves a wonderfully unique story of friendship and adventure. In the summer of 1964, two childhood best friends, Cynthia and Gus, discover that Cynthia has a magic attic. They use an old trunk in the attic to transport themselves through time. Their first adventure, which landed Cynthia in her great grandmother's house, was purely an accident. But, soon the two of them learn how to use the trunk in the attic to carry them back in time to help make past wrongs right. Cynthia's grandmother lost a very special locket when she was just a girl. Her mother never really forgave her for losing it since it was one of the few things she had left that belonged to her sister, Belle. Cynthia and Gus see the trunk as an opportunity to go back and find the locket. Little did they know that finding the locket was just the first step in making everything right again. After they found the locket, they decided to uncover the mystery of why Cynthia's great-great-aunt Belle never returned from Paris even though the family had mailed her a ticket to the United States aboard a cruise ship. Not only did they discover why she had not made it home, but they were able to once again alter the past in order to bring their family back together. This delightful tale of friendship and adventure wraps up with an unforeseen twist that will delight readers. The ending would leave one to believe that Cynthia and Gus could have many more adventures awaiting them. As a reader, you will hope they do! Highly recommended. Grade 4-6; Ages 8-12. ►►

— Reviewed by **Misty Conger**
Forsyth County Public Library

Don't Know Where, Don't Know When by Annette Laing (Confusion Press, 2007; ISBN 0-9794769-4-1, \$11.99).

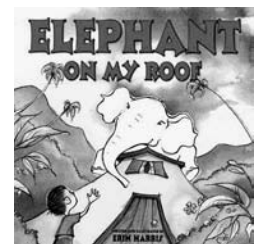


This engrossing first novel by a history professor at Georgia Southern University, about time travel during the Blitz, is recommended for ages 9 and up, but adults can enjoy it, too – this adult read it with great enthusiasm and persuaded her book club to read it! Preteens Hannah and Alex Diaz

are already sufficiently disgruntled when they are moved from San Francisco to Snipesville, Ga., a thinly veiled version of Statesboro. But things only get worse when they and their new African-American friend Brandon Clark meet an eccentric history professor and discover a national identity card, from England during World War II, for someone named George Braithwaite. Abruptly, they find themselves in the English village of Balesworth in 1940, where it is assumed that they have been evacuated from London to escape German bombing. This is a world of “ugly underwear, stinky sandwiches, ... nonabsorbing toilet paper,” but, more importantly, of different manners, mores and notions of child-rearing: For instance, adults may administer corporal punishment to misbehaving children, even those not their own, but are concerned to shield the young from their own anxieties. Brandon becomes separated from his friends and is transported even further back in time, to the same village during World War I. The three of them gradually discover the interconnections, across time, between lives lived in Balesworth, England, and Snipesville. They learn to combat such human faults as exploiting the helpless and abusing those who are different and to appreciate such virtues as courageous resourcefulness in the face of daily adversity. The women who exhibit this during the Blitz are Britain's “secret weapon,” (viii) and Annette Laing has written this book to honor those she has known. *Don't Know Where, Don't Know When* is Book 1 of *The Snipesville Chronicles*. We eagerly await future volumes! ►►

— Reviewed by **Rebecca Ziegler**
Georgia Southern University

Elephant on My Roof by Erin Harris (Red Cygnet Press, 2007; ISBN-13: 978-1-60108-002-8; ISBN-10: 1-60108-002-6, \$15.95).

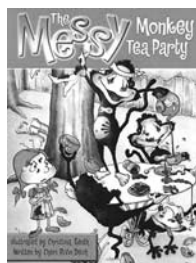


Young children love to read about animals in silly situations, so the book *Elephant on My Roof*, with its charming illustrations and simple storyline, has immediate appeal for ages 5 – 7. Author and illustrator Erin Harris, a graduate of the Savannah College of Art and Design, has given a folktale feel to her story of a young boy, Lani, who finds an elephant on his roof and seeks help from his fellow villagers to rescue it. The townspeople are reluctant to let an elephant loose in their community but ultimately lend a hand and are surprised to find their kindness returned to them in the many favors Lani's elephant friend does for those who came to his aid. The gentle watercolor

illustrations in this book are very sweet, and, in true picture book fashion, tell much more of the story than is explicit in the text. The characters and the landscape show an Asian influence, which makes this book particularly appealing to librarians seeking to include more cultural diversity in their collections. As it ably explores the theme of helping others, *Elephant on My Roof* would also be a useful book for school librarians seeking to support character education. ▶▶

— Reviewed by **Leslie R. G. Bullington**
Augusta, Georgia

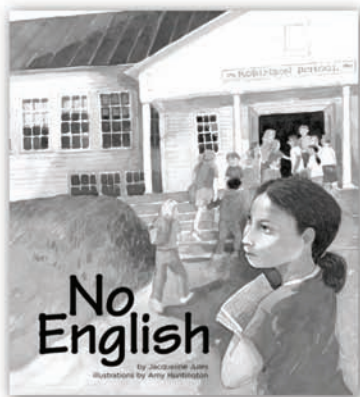
The Messy Monkey Tea Party by Cheri Bivin Deich, Illustrated by Christina Genth (Red Cygnet Press, 2007; ISBN: 978-1-60108-006-6, \$15.95).



A new kind of children's book publishing company, Red Cygnet Press works in partnership with university art departments to give promising students opportunities

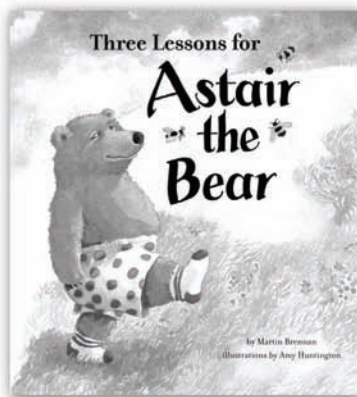
to be published. Savannah College of Art and Design graduate and illustrator Christina Genth makes her children's book debut with *The Messy Monkey Tea Party*. Genth's vibrant watercolor illustrations, coupled with first-time author Cheri Bivin Deich's whimsical verse, create a world where stuffed animals take on a life of their own. The opening illustration of a little girl's bedroom gives the reader gentle hints of what lies ahead when the heroine decides to throw a zoo animal tea party. Stuffed animals become – among other things – mire-lounging hippos, a shy ostrich and a band of mischievous monkeys, which all help the little girl's imagination run wild until it's time to clean up. "I pulled the ostrich's head from out of the sand, And sent him a packin' with the five-monkey band," our heroine tells us. After sweeping up sand and getting rid of some pesky alligators, the little girl is finally ready for bed and a well-deserved rest after a runaway tea party. And this is one tea party that lets the reader's imagination run a little wild, too. Recommended for most children's collections. ▶▶

— Reviewed by **Tracy Walker**
Dawson County Public Library



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