

STANLEY A. RANSOM JR. BIOGRAPHY

Stanley Ransom was born in Winsted, Connecticut in 1928, served in WWII from 1946-1948 in the Army of Occupation in Japan, and graduated from Yale University in 1951. After receiving a Master's Degree in Library Service from Columbia University in 1953, he worked for five years as a librarian for the New York Public Research Library, and from 1956 to 1974 was Director of the Huntington, L.I. Public Library.

His book, "America's First Negro Poet; Jupiter Hammon of Long Island," was published in 1970 and 1983. His 1970 book received a Certificate of Commendation from the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH). In 1972 he was elected President of the New York State Library Association.

In 1974 he became Director of the Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System in Plattsburgh, serving 29 member public libraries, from which he retired in 1991. From 2007-12 he was Director of the Plattsburgh Public Library. His new timely book, entitled "America's First Black Poet; Jupiter Hammon of Long Island," has been published by Outskirts Press on May 23, 2020, and is on Amazon.com as a color paperback, 197 pages, \$19.95 and as Kindle at \$9.99.

He originated Black Poetry Day, celebrated nationally each year on October 17th, the birth date of Jupiter Hammon in 1711. The purpose of Black Poetry Day is "to recognize the contribution of Black poets to American life and culture and to honor Jupiter Hammon, first Black in America to publish his own verse."

In April, 1978, he founded and for thirteen years was a Charter Trustee of the Lake Placid Olympic Museum. He has long been involved in the research, collection, preservation and promotion of the history and folklore of New York State. In 1994 he was honored by the AASLH as a folklorist, and in 2006 received an Award of Merit from them "for sustained efforts in preserving the folk music of New York State." Since 1951, he has been a folk singer, playing guitar, hammered dulcimer, mandolin, and autoharp and also writing topical songs. His stage name is "The Connecticut Peddler," and his website is www.stanransom.com.

His song, "The Ironville Mine," is part of the mining exhibit at the Adirondack Museum in Blue Mountain Lake, NY. He has produced ten recordings of New York State folk music, including "Down the Saranac," (songs about the history of Plattsburgh,) called "wickedly funny" by the Saratoga press, and "Adirondack Sampler," which received a Certificate of Commendation from the AASLH in 1994. Others include "North Country Christmas," "Songs of Lake Champlain," "North Country Memories," "Civil War Songs of Upstate New York," and "The Battle of Plattsburgh: Songs of the War of 1812." He gives storytelling and 1814 music concerts in the U.S. and Canada.

From 1956 to 1974 Stan was the Director of the Huntington, L.I., Public Library. During that time he researched and performed the traditional music of Long Island and recorded thirty traditional songs of Long Island, "My Long Island Home," and "I Love Long Island." He is a professional storyteller and a member of the National Storytelling Institute. He has been a member of the Sons of the American Revolution and Plattsburgh Rotary Club for over fifty years. He has been on the Boards of TAUNY, (Traditional Arts in Upstate New York), the Transportation Museum, and the New York Folklore Society. Since February, 2007, Stan has been Secretary of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commission in Plattsburgh. In 1998 the Plattsburgh Chamber of Commerce named him "Irishman of the Year," the year of his "Ice Storm Song of 1998." Stan has a bi-racial family, and is a librarian, folk musician and storyteller.

Stan is ordained an Elder in the Presbyterian Church in Huntington and in Plattsburgh.

From 1992 to 2005 he was the North Country AARP Coordinator and worked in Albany to pass the EPIC senior prescription bill, receiving the AARP Citation for his work in 2005.

Since 2000, Stan and his wife, Christina, have been Co-Chairs of the Battle of Plattsburgh “Children’s Games,” teaching children 40 games played in 1814. In 2017 they were honored to be chosen Parade Marshals for the Battle of Plattsburgh celebration. In 2019, Stan was honored by Governor Cuomo as one of “Six Over Seventy” seniors who contributed to the community in many ways.

Stan and his wife Christina, retired head of the CVPH Medical Library, and President of the local Toastmasters International Club, volunteer at CVPH Skilled Nursing Facility. They have four children and six grandchildren in six states.

Stanley Austin Ransom Jr. May 31, 2020