



The Chandler Reward of Merit

An Exhibit Honoring Children's Literature

May 1, 2012 – September 1, 2012

Memorial Hall, Thayer Memorial Library

With fanciful, colorful illustrations; tales of distant lands; spelling and grammar instruction; and sensational stories to guide behavior books to entertain and educate children and young people have been part of our library collection since its beginning in 1862.

One hundred years later, Library Trustee Herbert H. Hosmer initiated an annual award and lecture to bring a speaker to the Library who exemplified excellence in the broad field of children's literature. Mr. Hosmer chose authors, illustrators, and others who were well-known or went on to become famous. Speakers received a Reward of Merit for their contributions. He named the award and talk in honor of his ancestors John Greene Chandler and Alice Greene Chandler. Why is it called a Reward of Merit? Rewards of merit were small tokens of congratulation given to students in days past for scholastic accomplishments and good behavior. The Chandler Reward of Merit is a silver medal that was copied from one received by John Chandler's wife, Sarah Ann Guild, when she was a child.

Herbert Hosmer was well-connected in the field of children's literature. He was an authority and collector of children's books, illustrations, and printed materials which he bought, sold, and donated to different institutions. In this display are letters written to Mr. Hosmer by Chandler award recipients, articles about his connections to children's literature, and articles about the Chandler Book Talk. There are unique autographs and one recipient, Maurice Sendak, recognized Mr. Hosmer in an illustration. You can view the last Chandler Reward of Merit which is embedded in a book by puppeteer Paul L'Ecuyer. The entire list of the Chandler Reward of Merit winners is on the doorway leading from Memorial Hall.