

ABOUT MELINDA M. PONDER

Melinda M. Ponder became intrigued with Katharine Lee Bates' story when she attended Wellesley College and studied English – in the same English Department that Katharine Lee Bates established at the school decades earlier.

Ms. Ponder continued her academic career as a published literary critic with an M.A. in American Studies and a Ph.D. in English and American Literature from Boston College and then as a college professor.

As coordinator of the English B.A. program and the Women's Studies program at Pine Manor College, a small formerly all-women's college about the size of Katharine's young Wellesley College, Ponder could vividly picture Katharine's similar life as a teacher and scholar. She innately understood why Katharine promoted women's achievements and education—and why she was often frustrated with endless faculty meetings.

Ms. Ponder has written and published numerous articles and essays on Katharine Lee Bates, and reviewers have praised her sympathetic treatment of Bates' work and personal life. In addition, Ms. Ponder has given many talks and interviews surrounding the life of Katharine, including on the A&E Network, Monitor Radio, BNN News, as well as for the Falmouth Historical Society with panelist Lynn Sherr.

In addition to her fascination with Katharine Lee Bates, Ms. Ponder is also a Nathaniel Hawthorne scholar, and she has published two books on this subject: *Hawthorne and Women: Engendering and Expanding the Hawthorne Tradition* and *Hawthorne's Early Narrative Art: Its Origins in Eighteenth-Century Anglo-Scottish Aesthetics*. Her essays and articles on Nathaniel Hawthorne and other American and British authors have appeared in *Genre*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Essex Institute Historical Collections*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, and *The Nathaniel Hawthorne Review*.

Ms. Ponder was born in Indianapolis, traveled East to pursue her academic career, and her home is now in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and is Professor of English Emerita at Pine Manor College.