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Tracing Dayton's Literary Heritage

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The January/February issue of AAA Journeys magazine traces Dayton’s surprising literary heritage — and points to the University of Dayton’s efforts to keep Erma Bombeck’s legacy alive through a workshop in her name.

An excerpt:

“At first blush, the city of Dayton in Ohio’s Miami Valley seems like a typical Midwestern city: friendly, accessible and affordable. So how can such an Orville-normal place produce such genre-busting literary figures as Paul Laurence Dunbar, the first African-American writer and poet to garner national fame, and the nationally syndicated humor columnist and author Erma Bombeck, considered one of America’s first ‘domestic goddesses’ even before comedian and actress Roseanne Barr coined the term?

There is no single explanation, but visitors and aspiring writers may find their own Miami Valley muses by soaking up the history at the Paul Laurence Dunbar State Memorial House, attending the University of Dayton’s biennial Erma Bombeck Writers’ Workshop or just hanging around one of the Midwest’s largest bookstores, Books & Co., where Garrison Keillor likes to sing.”

Click on the related link to read the piece.

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