



# The Barnard Bulletin

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HAPPY



HOLIDAYS

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## A VERMONT WRITER

BY MARGARET EDWARDS

*This column is an offering of The Danforth Library in Barnard and a chance to introduce a Vermont writer who deserves wider renown.*

**Anna Dewdney**

**1965 – 2016**



Born Anna Elizabeth Luhrmann in Manhattan on Christmas Day of 1965, with an early childhood spent in Englewood, New Jersey, she became a famous, Vermont-based writer/illustrator of childrens' books by the time she died at 50. Ten of her titles had been on *The New York Times* bestseller list, often as number 1.

She was known by her *nom de plume*, Anna Dewdney. She lived in Lower Bartonville, Vermont. It's tempting to assume she succumbed to the allure of Vermont when she left Philips Andover Academy to finish high school at Putney. Students at The Putney School—in Putney, Vermont—got to “live the dream” of growing up on a real farm, not just learning to milk a cow, but *having* to milk a cow on a regular schedule—not just tilling and planting, but pulling the weeds and harvesting. The school also encouraged creativity, original thinking, and lively participation in all the arts.

After Anna married and had two children, she soon found

that her 1987 B.A. in art from Wesleyan didn't always come into play as she helped support her young family and the dogs. She was a waitress, a rural postal carrier, and a teacher of art, history, and remedial language classes at a private boarding school for dyslexic boys. Her true career began when she illustrated several children's books, but it didn't take off until 2005 when a book for young children, that she had *written* as well as illustrated, got published. *Llama Llama Red Pajama* was at once a stunning critical success and best-seller, and it started what became Dewdney's series of charming *Llama Llama* books. These evoke early childhood anxieties that, by each book's end, are satisfyingly resolved.

Dewdney's gift was not just her fanciful illustrations, not just her innate understanding of a young child's mind and emotions, and not just her discipline in producing no-frills narratives. She had a good ear for rhyming. And rhymes can make all the difference, especially to a child. When a child is learning new words at a fast clip—learning that *that* particular word means *this* thing or *this* action—the discovery of rhyme, which turns sense into delicious nonsense, is a delight. Here is a *llama* (the hairy creature from Peru) and here is your *mama!* They are not at all the same or even similar, but through matching sounds they seem weirdly related.

Modern poets lost something important when they dropped rhyme, a key mnemonic device that helps in the memorization of poetry. Declamation of poems from the stage was part of elocution classes in every American grammar school and high school throughout the early twentieth century. Robert Frost, a genius with rhyme, insisted that writing poetry devoid of end-of-line rhymes was “like playing tennis with the net down.” But Ezra Pound countered by pointing out that a poet who ended a line with “fountain” would find the next line inevitably needed to end with “mountain”—and how could such a strict rule aid anyone who valued subtlety of self-expression or expansiveness? Pound won.

Even so, the season may prompt you to read aloud to some children you know the time-honored lines: *‘T was the night before Christmas, and all through the house/ Not a creature was stirring, not even a...’* That's the moment when the delighted children shriek, “*MOUSE!*” Anna Dewdney's little llama child, dressed in his red pajamas, is being put to sleep in his room one evening. The story starts out very simply:

*Llama llama / red pajama / reads a story / to his mama*

She kisses him, goes downstairs, and when “*Mama's at the kitchen sink*” that's when “*baby llama wants a drink.*” To make his wishes known:

*Llama Llama / red pajama / calls down to / his llama mama*

She calls back that she'll be “*up soon.*” So he “*hums a tune*” as he waits. But when he hears Mama Llama an-

*Cont. next page - Dewdney*



*Dewdney - Cont. from front page*

swer the *phone*, “*Baby Llama starts to moan.*” He listens, hears nothing. What is she *doing*? He’s soon “*boo hoo-ing.*” And so he continues to wait while his anxiety increases.

*Eyes wide open / covers drawn.../ What if Mama Llama’s gone?*

The baby llama finally makes such a ruckus upstairs that his mother rushes to his bedside. “*Mama’s busy*” gets rhymed with “*tizzy*,” and she criticizes her baby for unnecessary “*llama drama.*” But the real resolution is in the last verses, when she reassures him by saying:

“*Mama Llama’s / always near, / even if she’s / not right here.*”

He gets two kisses from her, and as he “*snuggles pillow/ soft and deep...Baby llama/ goes to sleep.*” End of story.

The winning formula for Dewdney’s tales is very simple, and their appeal is always the same. The baby seems pleased at first. Then circumstances thwart his will or scare him. He throws a fit. His mama comes to his rescue by explaining things, suggesting an alternative, and quieting his distress. The combination of illustrations with rhymed text produces the magic.

*Llama Llama Holiday Drama*, published by Viking Press in 2010, is the book that most suggests a Vermont setting. Baby llama (as well as Mama and other characters) are depicted outside bundled for winter weather. Snow is on the ground. There are “only fifteen more shopping days” left till December 25<sup>th</sup>, and Dewdney evokes the whirlwind of exciting experiences that a child can enjoy:

*Llama Llama holidays. / Ads and signs and store displays*

*Sparkly candles. / Yummy bread. / Dress-up clothes in green and red*

Not to mention the goodies on *shelves*, and the snow and the *elves*. The season becomes such a riot of impressions that the baby llama can fasten his attention on only a few. Quickly his preoccupation becomes:

*Just how many days to go? / Llama Llama wants to know.*

*How long till that special date? / Llama Llama has to wait.*

The waiting, waiting and more waiting—it’s not easy for him. The shopping gets dizzying. What would his friend like: a *rubber duck*, or a *tractor truck*? “*Wooden blocks / or a building set?*” Very soon only one query dominates his mind: “*What will Llama Llama get?*”

And later, as his mama bakes cookies, his questions stay the same:

“*How many / more days, again? / The special day / is coming when?*”

He gets a tummy ache from eating too many cookies. In nursery school, he can...:

*Draw a snowman. / Make a star. / Decorate / a candy jar.*

But time travels slowly. By the time he makes a present for his mama of sparkles, sticks, and glue, and wonders should he “*roll it up/ and wrap it how?*” the wait has become intolerable. “*Llama wants to give it NOW!*”

No, not yet. There are snowflakes to cut out; there’s eggnog to pour; and Mama seems to take forever stringing the lights on the tree.

*All this waiting / for one day? / Time for presents / RIGHT AWAY!*

*Too much music / too much fluff, / too much making / too much stuff!*

Llama Llama, feeling overwhelmed, begins tearing things up until his mama gets down on the floor with him to suggest something better.

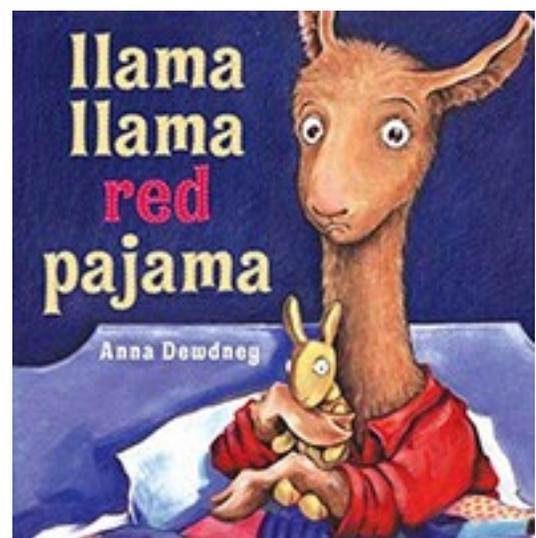
*Come and listen, / little Llama./ Have a cuddle / with your mama.*

And after her pitch that “*rest*” would be “*best*,” she gives him her perspective:

“*Gifts are nice, / but there’s another—/ the true gift is / we have each other*”

The baby llama, soothed by his mother’s words (if not made philosophical), finds peace. Close to her and feeling “*warm and snug*,” he “*gives a kiss and gets a hug.*” The final illustration shows him in bed, smiling as he sleeps.

Dewdney’s series of *Llama Llama* books have been translated into more than thirteen languages worldwide. They are often used to promote reading in literacy campaigns. They have been adapted into a children’s series by Netflix. In 2011, her work was read live on The Today Show to its large television audience. Dewdney’s work has been adapted into stage plays and dance performances. Even Dolly Parton at Dollywood created a musical based on the *Llama Llama* books. Moreover, the Dolly Parton Foundation chose the series for its Imagination Library, a non-profit serving children through book donations.





*Dewdney—Cont. from previous page*

Winsomely regular rhyme and meter, a sweet-looking youngster who loves his mother, and a story with always a satisfying resolution at the end no matter the upset—what’s not to like? Well, the fate of the author isn’t to anyone’s liking. After her fifteen-month struggle with brain cancer, Anna Dewdney died. And it was just like her that she requested no funeral but suggested instead that everyone who mourned her should create an occasion to read to a child.

Anna Dewdney’s books are well represented in Barnard’s Danforth Library. In the children’s section can be found the two books summarized in this article: *Llama Llama Red Pajama* and *Llama Llama Holiday Drama*. Also shelved nearby are: *Llama Llama Mad at Mama*, *Llama Llama Misses Mama*, and *Llama Llama Gram and Grandpa*.

### DANFORTH LIBRARY NEWS

Curbside service is available Wednesday from 3-5 p.m. and Saturdays 10 a.m. to Noon. Request will be packaged and labeled for pickup in the foyer. Masks are required. Call 802-234-9408 during open hours to request a title or leave a phone message with name and call back number. Book returns can be placed in the returns in the outside book drop. High-speed ECFiber Wi-Fi is available from outside the building. The password and instructions are posted on the outside door.

Trustee Update: Barnard resident Susan McNulty joined the Danforth Library Board of Trustees in November, appointed by the Select Board to fill Suzy Hickey’s term that will expire in 2023. Suzy retired from our Board after thirteen years of serving as both trustee and treasurer, and we thank her thirteen years for her dedicated service to the Library and to the town of Barnard. Welcome Susan!

Resources: Are you in the market for a vehicle in the near future? The EPA/DOE has just issued a new Fuel Economy Guide, featuring “fuel economy, annual fuel cost, and emissions information for new model cars, sports utility vehicles, and light trucks.” A printable electronic version is available at:

<https://www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/printGuides.shtml>.

Book Donations: Book donations on hold for the present while we refresh our collection to make way for new books. However, if you have paperbacks in good condition, please contact Kassie Tibbott at [Ktibbott@gmail.com](mailto:Ktibbott@gmail.com). She is collecting paperbacks for the correctional facilities.

From all of us here at Danforth Library, we wish you all a safe, warm, and merry holiday, and a bright new year - we could sure use one of those!

Trustees: Margaret Edwards, Judy Maynes, Ellen Miles, Susan McNulty, and Edythe Wright.

## WINDSOR CENTRAL UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD

There is a Special Meeting of the Windsor Central school board, December 21, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

Budget discussion will be the focus of the meeting.

There will be a discussion about a possible reduction in principal hours at Barnard Academy that Barnard families may wish to hear about and contribute to. The meeting agenda is here and the Zoom link to the meeting is below.

As always, feel free to write with questions.

Sincerely,  
Pamela Fraser

Zoom only video-conference. Join meeting here:

[https://wcsu-net.zoom.us/j/82356161914?](https://wcsu-net.zoom.us/j/82356161914?pwd=bUw1NkR4Rm5FTmNvL1NuUIRVQzcrQT09)  
pwd=bUw1NkR4Rm5FTmNvL1NuUIRVQzcrQT09

Meeting ID: 823 5616 1914 Passcode: 939028

### LOCAL CRYPTOGRAM

A cryptogram is a code in which one letter is substituted for another. For example, the word “Church” could be written BWMSBW. The letter B would be the letter C and would be so throughout the entire message. In this message M = L. The solution is found by trial and error. The CRYPTOGRAM answer is on the last page.

“WKMM HVCC-BCCI MSCP FUC  
TSVFCQ PVJT,  
ZVB FUC TSVFCQ TSVBP ZQC  
TCZQSMA PSXUSVX:  
FJMM AC FUC EUKQEU DCMM PZB  
ZVB PMJT,  
ZVB FQCZB PJWFMA ZVB PICZH  
MJT,  
WJQ FUC JMB ACZQ MSCP Z-BASVX.  
JMB ACZQ AJK OKPF VJF BSC;  
AJK EZOC FJ KP PJ QCZBSMA,  
AJK MSNCB TSFU KP PJ PFCZBSMA,  
JMB ACZQ AJK PUZMM VJF BSC.”  
-ZMWQCB MJQB FCVVAPJV,  
FUC BCZFU JW FUC JMB ACZQ



THE PLANNING COMMISSION meets on the first Monday of the month at 7:00pm at the Town offices.

ECFIBER Governing Board meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7pm in 012 Oakes Hall, Vermont Law School. More information at <https://www.ecfiber.net/>

BARNARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION meets the second Monday of the month, 7:00pm, Town Hall.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR [zoning@barnardvt.us](mailto:zoning@barnardvt.us), 234-9211. By appointment only, no standing hours during due to the COVID-19 restrictions. After hours cell 603-762-5280.

BEES MEETINGS are held at 6:30pm on the 2nd Thursday of each month in the library at the school.

DANFORTH LIBRARY HOURS: Wed 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. and Sat 10:00 - Noon. Curbside only. Please call 802-234-9408 with requests. Mask required for pick up. Wi-Fi access available from outside the building.

SELECTBOARD meets the first and third Wednesday of the month at the Town offices at 7:00pm.

SELECTBOARD ASSISTANT, Rob Ramrath, 234-2911 x 2, Cell 603-762-5280, [selectboard@barnardvt.us](mailto:selectboard@barnardvt.us). By phone at any time, in person by appointment.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR, Rob Ramrath, 234-2911 x 2, Cell 603-762-5280, [zoning@barnardvt.us](mailto:zoning@barnardvt.us). By phone at any time, in person by appointment.

TOWN CLERK office hours are Monday & Tuesday, 8:00am-3:30pm. Public access is restricted. Call 234-9211 for an appointment.

THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD meets the third Thursday of the month at 7:00pm at the Barnard Town Hall as necessary.

THE BARNARD ACADEMY SCHOOL BOARD meets at 6:00pm at the school on the third Monday of each month.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY Programs to be announced. Questions? email: [historicalbarnard1761@gmail.com](mailto:historicalbarnard1761@gmail.com)

BARNARD LISTERS [listeners@barnardvt.us](mailto:listeners@barnardvt.us), 234-9576. Office hours, except holidays: Wednesday 9:00am - 11:00am; by appointment; or anytime a Lister is in the office.

THE BARNARD ENERGY COMMITTEE meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, 7:00pm at the Town Hall

YOGA CLASSES offered at Danforth Library, Mondays 9:00am - 10:30am with Amanda Anderson. Classes are by donation; for more information contact [Amanda@innerliftyoga.com](mailto:Amanda@innerliftyoga.com). Yoga Classes are also offered on Thursdays from 9-10:30 with Beth Umba. Contact Beth at: [bethumba@gmail.com](mailto:bethumba@gmail.com).

BARNARD GENERAL STORE, Monday-Saturday: 7am-7pm, Sundays: 8am-6pm. <https://www.facebook.com/barnardgeneralstore>

BARNARD LISTSERV: to subscribe please send an email to: [barnard-subscribe@lists.vitalcommunities.org](mailto:barnard-subscribe@lists.vitalcommunities.org)

RECYCLING HOURS: Saturdays, 8:00am to 4:00pm,

THE BARNARD INN is running a "Feeding Neighbors & Sustaining Community" campaign. Purchase an e-Gift Card and in turn the chefs will feed neighbors. Whole chicken dinners (serves 4-6) and individual sized meals to help feed Vermonters in need. Thank you and please stay safe. E-Gift Cards are available at [www.barnardinn.com](http://www.barnardinn.com).

## LISTER NOTES

On December 14, 2020 at 9:30AM the listers participated in the defense of the 2019 Board of Civil Authority (BCA) decision on the valuation of the property owned by Scott and Amy Smart, parcel ID 02-0665, located on Midsomer Meadows Lane. The Smarts had appealed the 2019 BCA decision to Property Valuation and Review (PVR). PVR assigned Mr. Richard Scholes as Property Valuation Hearing Officer and Mr. Scholes arranged for both parties to be heard by video and teleconference.

Mr. Smart contended that his property had a fair market value in the neighborhood of \$700,000 as of April 1, 2019. This value was based on the sale of properties that he felt were comparable to his, and that he had purchased the property for around \$500,000 in 2015. Mr. Smart felt the market had reached a low in 2019 and that the repairs and improvements that he had made to his property before 2019 did not significantly increase its market value, considering that a number of other structural issues that lowered the properties marketability.

The Listers based their \$1,100,00 valuation on comparable Barnard property sales in 2019 and the mass valuation model that had been built for the 2019 reappraisal. The issues that had been noted by the NEMC appraisers during their inspections were taken into account.

Mr. Scholes decision is likely to be filed with PVR within a week of the hearing, and PVR will likely send notification of the decision to Mr. Smart and the Town before the end of the year. Thus it is hoped that the Listers can certify the 2019 and 2020 Grand Lists as being complete, with no hearings pending.

## CRYPTOGRAM ANSWER

“Full knee-deep lies the winter snow,  
And the winter winds are wearily sighing:  
Toll ye the church bell sad and slow,  
And tread softly and speak low,  
For the old year lies a-dying.  
Old year you must not die;  
You came to us so readily,  
You lived with us so steadily,  
Old year you shall not die.”

- Alfred Lord Tennyson, The Death of the Old Year