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## New Paltz says yes to 'Ulysses'

**Joyce fans welcome Bloomsday**

By CHRIS FARLEKAS

*Times Record* Correspondent

New Paltz joined the literary big time yesterday with its first celebration of **Bloomsday** and the day long, out-loud reading of "Ulysses."

James Joyce spent seven years writing "Ulysses." Twenty-three readers from Mohonk Mountain Stage Company brought the novel to vivid life, beginning at 10 a.m. and continuing until almost midnight. The readings were held in the cozy backroom of the Painted Word Book Shop on Main Street in this college community.

The novel takes place over the course of one day, June 16, now among the most famous dates in literary history. Similar Bloomsday programs are a tradition in New York City, San Francisco, Tokyo, Moscow, London, Dublin, Paris, Athens and Shanghai.

In New Paltz, the readers sat on stools. Each of the novel's sections was announced, vaudeville style, by a sign.

The event cost \$5 to attend. Listeners had their hands stamped so they could come and go during the course of the 12-hour reading. Several people stayed for several hours, others for only one or two. There were 10 minute breaks every hour or two.

Si and Rennie Lewin spent most of the day there. Married 60 years, they've read the book several times. "We love this great book," Lewin said.

Maria Thompson, a Marist College English professor, said she came "because I've never heard it read aloud."

"Ulysses" takes place in Dublin and is the chronicle of a single day – June 16, 1904 – as experienced by a cast of characters, including Leopold Bloom. The choice of that particular date was a token of love from Joyce to Nora Barnacle, the girl he met and fell in love with on that date.

They were what some would call a mismatched couple. He was educated and rebellious, she was an uneducated chambermaid. They remained together until his death in 1941.

Justin Malook said hearing the words "made it a lot easier for me to understand. I think (Joyce) unnecessarily made the book too difficult by not using punctuation. I tried to read it a few times, but I gave up. Now I see the secret is you have to read it aloud."