

## 7th Annual First Novel Award Presented to Louise Wareham



The James Jones Literary Society has awarded its \$3,000 First Novel Fellowship Award for 1999 to Louise Wareham, 34, of New York City. Wareham, who was born in New Zealand and moved to the United States at the age of 12, has completed her first novel, *Since You Ask*, over the past six years.

"It is a very powerful story," said Michael Lennon, a professor of English and vice president of academic affairs at Wilkes (Pa.) University and a member of the James Jones First Novel Fellowship Award Selection Committee.

Wareham's novel was chosen from among 472 entries in the 1999 competition. In 1993, the Society inaugurated the annual award to be given to an American author of a first novel in progress "to honor the spirit of unblinking honesty, determination and insight into modern cultures as exemplified by the late James Jones, author of *From Here to Eternity* and other prose narratives of distinction."

The newest Fellowship winner is a 1987 graduate of Columbia College in New York and also studied at Canada's Humber School for Writers. Her poems have appeared in *Poetry* magazine. She worked as a reporter since age 15 in New York City and New Zealand and was a senior editor and travel writer at *Yachting* magazine when she left journalism to work on her novel and her poetry writing. She is currently employed as a part-time assistant at Union Theological Seminary.

"It is an honor to receive an award in the name of James Jones," Wareham said. At least half of the winners of the James Jones First Novel Fellowship have found publishers for their novels, including 1994 winner Mary Kay Zuravleff, author of *The Frequency of Souls*; 1995 co-winner Rick Bass, author of *Where the Sea Used to Be*; 1996 winner Greg Herbek, author of *The Hindenburg Crashes Nightly*; and 1997 winner Leslie Schwartz, author of *Jumping the Green*.

Other members of the selection committee besides Lennon were Patricia Heamon of Wilkes University, author Kaylie Jones of New York City and her husband, Kevin Heisler. Kaylie Jones, the daughter of the author for whom the award is named, currently teaches fiction writing at the Long Island University Southampton College campus and has her own latest book, *Celeste Awakening*, coming out in April.

The James Jones Literary Society is based in Robinson, Ill., where Jones was born and raised.