

CAXTONIAN

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Pearl Buck — America's most influential 20th Century woman

Dorothy Sinson



At the awarding of her Nobel Prize in 1938 in Stockholm, Sweden, Pearl Buck (l) visits with Swedish writer, Selma Lagerlöf, who was the first woman to win the Nobel Prize in 1909. Lagerlöf strongly supported PSB's nomination for the Nobel. (Photo courtesy of Dorothy Sinson.)

Pearl Sydenstriker Buck (PSB) (1892-1973) was born in West Virginia and lived for most of her first 42 years in China, as the daughter of Presbyterian missionaries and as the wife of an agricultural missionary. Her published works included 38 novels, 32 books of non-fiction, 19 children's books and hundreds of short stories, articles, and delivered speeches. She received the Pulitzer Prize in 1931 and the Howells Medal in 1935 for *The Good Earth*; but she is best and most controversially known for her receipt of the Nobel Prize in 1938, awarded to her for the "rich and truly epic descriptions of peasant life in China and for her biographical masterpieces."

PSB's accomplishments went well beyond her literary prizes. Since the days when Teddy Roosevelt called the Chinese "an immoral, degraded and worthless race," American's attitudes have changed dramatically. Historian

James Thomson saluted her in 1992 for her part in this change when he stated that she "was the most influential westerner to write about China since the 13th Century Marco Polo."¹ PSB was constantly in demand for articles, lectures, and symposiums concerning Asia. She was especially influential during WWII, when those seeking her counsel included Colonel "Wild" Bill Donovan, head of OSS; Associate Justice of the US Supreme Court William O. Douglas, and Hu Shib, the Chinese ambassador.

PSB began her passionate advocacy for racial equality in a speech in Harlem in 1932. After she viewed a recent anti-lynching art exhibit, she stated that the way white Americans acted often made her wish she didn't have "a drop of white blood in my veins."² Her "Letter to the Editor" (*New York Times*, 1942), in which she wrote that America's institutionalized racism in housing, jobs, and wages was worse than

Hitlerism, caused a national sensation — as did her often-repeated remark that "if we persist (in race prejudice) we are fighting on the wrong side in this war. We belong with Hitler."³ Walter White in a NAACP speech stated that PSB was "one of only two intelligent and brave souls in the white world to see the picture as it is."⁴

Another of PSB's powerful and passionate life-long concerns involved women and their place in the world. She lived her life as a courageous, empathetic, energetic, visionary woman, and she populated her fiction with such characters. *This Proud Heart*, her first novel about Americans,

is the story of a brilliant artistic woman who, when forced to choose between a husband and a career chooses the career without disastrous results. *Mother* is the story of an unnamed, flawed Chinese peasant woman, who endures untold tragedies, but is never defeated. As a woman with definite sexual needs and longings, she is an unusual mother-heroine indeed!

Pavilion of Women (written as GI's were streaming home and machoism was in the air) is the story of a Chinese matriarch who moves into a "room of her own" upon her 40th birthday. PSB's favorite, *The Old Demon*, is about an aged Chinese woman who saved her village by opening the dike gate and drowning the entire advancing Japanese army and, of course, herself. PSB's tremendous amounts of non-fiction efforts supporting female



Musings...

CAXTONIAN

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I remember when I was 10 years old," the actor said. He looked at the child sitting on the front row a few feet below him and said directly to the child, "Is that about how old you are?" The child, intimidated to be spoken to from the stage at his first professional theatrical production, snuggled deeply into his seat and managed a slight shaking of the head. "How old are you?" the actor asked. Speechless, the child did not answer. His grandfather, sitting next to him, replied for him: "Seven." The actor smiled and went about his performance

I was the grandfather; grandson Drake, the child; Ron Campbell, in the role of R. Buckminster Fuller, the actor. The evening was February 24, 2001. A little later in the performance, the actor would quote Fuller, "Every child is born a genius!" Firmly believing that principle, I had gambled that young Drake would respond to Campbell's masterful interpretation of one of the 20th Century's greatest human beings, R. Buckminster Fuller.

We arrived at the Mercury Theatre — the first Drake would visit — and we found our seats in the front row, just to the right of the center-stage. Then the lights dimmed, and the performance began. Within a few minutes, the actor had established direct contact with the child, and he maintained eye contact throughout the entire performance.

There were so many things I wanted Drake to hear, to experience. First and foremost, I wanted him to see a true master-performer at work in the person of Ron Campbell. He gave us a flawless and inspired performance. He brought to life the remarkable American, R. Buckminster Fuller, the grand-nephew of that great Transcendentalist, Margaret Fuller, who was a friend and confidant of Ralph Waldo Emerson. In a remarkable way, "Bucky," as he was affectionately known, was a marvelous fulfillment of Emerson's ideal person; one sees in him the inevitable flowering of genius as self-reliance is taken seriously.

It was in Chicago, in fact, in 1927, when Bucky, having failed at business and completely broke, contemplated suicide. He had his only mystical experience at that time. Through it, he launched what he called "a 50-year experiment" with this guiding principle, which came to him in the hour of utter distress: "You do not belong to you, therefore you do not have the right to eliminate yourself. You belong to the universe."

"A human being is a pattern of integrity," he discovered. What the individual can produce for his

fellow man is the essence of integrity fulfilled. Love is, in fact, he learned, being attuned to others. Selfishness, conversely, has no integrity. And God is the ultimate integrity. Such discoveries, Fuller told us, come only as we unlearn everything and rethink completely ourselves and our universe.

"We start off by teaching our children to give up the reality of feeling themselves on the round, and try to get them to pretend to be on a flat, planet." We don't go up and down when we walk stairs; we go in and out. The sun does not rise and set as it would on a flat Earth; the Earth turns constantly, and the turning brings the sun to us for day and takes it away for night.

"Let's all stand up," the actor said. And we did; I stood facing Drake. "Extend your arms and close your eyes," the actor said. "Do you feel the movement? The turning?" This is the reality of the universe, and, as a small cluster of human beings in a tiny theater on the north side of Chicago on an evening in February 2001, we found a taste of reality and thoroughly enjoyed it.

"Is there a structure linking the physical and the metaphysical?" he asked us. We know there is, and we come to understand, if we're listening very carefully, that Fuller, along with a select few thinkers of his time, brought us face-to-face with *synergy*, as he called it. As a result of this unifying force, several things happen: we come to know that mind is the most important element of the human species: "mind is everything; muscle is nothing." We know that "war is totally outdated" on spaceship Earth. We learn this guiding principle: "do more with less." And, finally, we come to understand that everything is "incredibly beautiful."

I listened carefully throughout the production, and Drake laughed at just the right times. As the actor brought out the triangle and the tetrahedron, and illustrated the icosahedron and the octahedron, Drake was with him all the way. Toward the end of the performance, the actor came to the front of the stage and said, "I hear children don't like math in schools these days." He looked at Drake and said, "Is that so?" Drake, having found a friend in this marvelous actor, nodded vigorously and smiled.

"How was it?" his grandmother asked when we returned to our apartment. "Awesome!" he said. The gamble with genius paid off — for both grandfather and grandson.

Robert Cotner
Editor

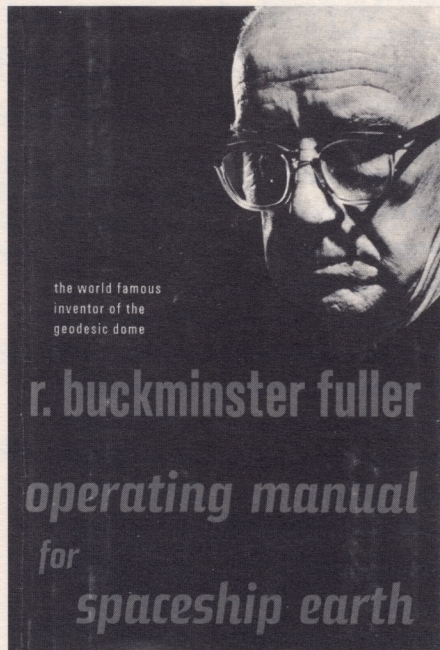


Ron Campbell in R. Buckminster Fuller: *The History (and Mystery) of the Universe*, at the Mercury Theatre, 3745 N. Southport Ave., Chicago, through April 29. (Photo courtesy of Cheryl J. Lewin Associates, Inc.)

“Think of it. We are blessed with technology that would be indescribable to our forefathers. We have the wherewithal, the know-it-all to feed everybody, clothe everybody, and give every human on Earth a chance. We know now what we could never have known before — that we now have the option for all humanity to make it successfully on this planet in this lifetime. Whether it is to be Utopia or Oblivion will be a touch-and-go relay race right up to the final moment.”

R. Buckminster Fuller
1980

*Bucky
Buckminster Fuller*



Dust jacket from Buckminster Fuller's book, *Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth*, reissued by Southern Illinois University Press in 1969. Bucky often worked at SIU and had an important role in academic life there. From the collection of Robert Cotner.

A selected chronology of books by R. Buckminster Fuller (1895-1983)

- Timelock*, Privately printed, 1928.
Nine Chains to the Moon, J. B. Lippincott Co., 1938.
The Dymaxion World of Buckminster Fuller, Doubleday & Co., 1960.
Untitled Epic Poem on the History of Industrialization, Simon & Schuster, 1962.
Education Automation, Doubleday & Co., 1963.
Ideas and Integrity, Prentice Hall, 1963.
No More Secondhand God, Doubleday & Co., 1963.
Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth, E.P. Dutton & Co., 1963.
World Design Decade Documents, World Design Science Decade, 1965-75 series.
What I Have Learned, Simon & Schuster, 1968.
Utopia or Oblivion, Bantam Books, 1969.
The Buckminster Fuller Reader, Jonathan Cape, 1970.
I Seem to Be a Verb, Bantam Books, 1970.
Intuition, Doubleday & Co., 1971.
Buckminster Fuller to Children of Earth, Doubleday & Co., 1972.
Earth, Inc. Doubleday & Co., 1973.
Synergetics: Explorations in the Geometry of Thinking, Macmillan Co., 1975.
And It Came to Pass — Not to Stay, Macmillan Co., 1976.
Tetrascroll, Universal Limited Art Editions, 1976.
Synergetics 2: Further Explorations in the Geometry of Thinking, Macmillan Co., 1979.
R. Buckminster Fuller on Education, University of Massachusetts Press, 1979.
Critical Path, St. Martin's Press, 1980.
Grunch of Giants, St. Martin's Press, 1983.
Humans in Universe, Mouton, 1983.
Cosmography, a Posthumous Scenario for the Future of Humanity, with Kiyoshi Kuromiya, Macmillan Co., 1992. ❖

betterment are less well known. She spoke and wrote repeatedly in favor of the Equal Rights Amendment, knowing a huge majority of her reading public (American Association of University Women and League of Women Voters) opposed the measure. At a Margaret Sanger tribute in 1935, she stated that not widely disseminating birth control knowledge in America involved "stupid, blind social injustice."⁵

Of Men and Women was published 22 years before *The Feminine Mystique* and contained many similarities. PSB wrote, as would Betty Friedan, that women were not assuming their responsibilities in the world and were actually retreating into their homes. Both blamed tradition (actually the feminine mystique) and both called for the same solution: "break it!"

Other courageous insightful and often prophetic activities of PSB included the time she spoke to several thousand missionaries. She answered her title question, "Is there a Case for Foreign Missions?" with a resounding "no!" portraying missionaries as "narrow, uncharitable, unappreciative, and ignorant,"⁶ and thereby she contributed to the re-thinking of the entire missionary movement. When FDR began to intern Japanese Americans in concentration camps in 1942, she condemned the action and labeled his policy as "blind, stupid, unreasoning, the sort of thing fascism does."⁷ In support of freedom for India, she wrote in 1934 that "Great Britain has participated in one of the longest and cruelest tyrannies in human history."⁸

During the early 1940's PSB had become the leading spokesperson for Indian liberation. Her fiction is populated with the triumphs and tragedies of interracial marriage, and this in the midst of anti-miscegenation laws, which existed in 25 states at the time. Her five documentary-like war-in-progress novels of WWII were unique in their Asian perspectives, their powerful female characters, and, in *Dragon Seed*, a recognition of the war crime of rape. Her frontier book, *The Townsman*, in at least one scholar's opinion, is an important document in the history of the western novel because of its "focus on citizenship rather than blood-thirsty sensation."⁹

Her five "talk books" with famous persons also included a talk in 1948 with Erna Von Pustau, a recent German emigré. This book, *How it Happens*, has been cited for contributing "valuable and in-depth pioneering insights into the psychology of totalitarianism."¹⁰

In 1950, writing for the first time about Carol, her mentally retarded daughter and only natural child, PSB inspired Rose Kennedy and others to write about their retarded children. *The Child Who Never Grew* is still in print and has been heralded as a book that helped change Americans' attitudes toward mental illness. Besides her three early literary prizes, she was elected to the National Institute and the American Academy and received dozens of awards, citations and honorary degrees. Her books have appeared on best-seller lists, such as Literary Guild and Book-of-the-Month Club, and eventually were published in 147 languages and dialects, many still in print today (27 in the US). Continually selected as one of America's outstanding women in the Gallup Poll and women's magazines' polls, she was among the first 20 inductees in 1973 into the new National Women's Hall of Fame in New York. She was also recognized, in a manner of speaking, by the FBI. Her FBI file totaled 300 pages and even included her children's

R. D. 3
PERKASIE, PENNSYLVANIA

October 25, 1940

Mrs. Gloyd Head
4176 Ingraham Highway
Coconut Grove, Florida

My dear Mrs. Head:

This is a personal and private letter to you which I write as one thinking woman to another at this time. I shall understand if you feel you cannot answer it. It is not important that I have an answer, but only that you have in mind, as you probably have already, the matter of which I wish to write you.

What I want to say is that I am thoroughly alarmed at the number of women who find the tide of discrimination and reactionary feeling rising against them. There are tides of fascism in our country, as we all know, which will unless they are checked swell to meet foreign fascism. You know what has happened to women in fascist countries. There are too many signs of the same attitudes appearing here to make women happy.

I myself am not and have never been a feminist or active in woman's suffrage. My interests have never been in any one group, even that of my own sex. But I cannot see reactionary opinions rising in our democracy without wondering if something can be done about it. The effect is not good just now especially when all loyalties to the nation ought to be full and free. It would matter less if the reaction against women were not appearing in such important places as it is.

What shall we or should we do?

Sincerely yours,

Pearl S. Buck
Pearl S. Buck

PSB letter to Cloyd Head, from the Eunice Tietjens Collection of the Newberry Library, through whose courtesy it is used.

book, *Matthew, Mark, Luke and John*, the story of four Korean/American boys fighting for existence under a bridge in Seoul, abandoned by their Korean mothers and their American servicemen fathers.

Definitely an advocate, PSB was also an activist. In 1941 she and her second husband created the East/West Association, a cultural exchange organization between America and Asian countries. In 1949 she started Welcome House, the first U.S. interracial adoption agency. Still in existence today, it has placed over 5,000 children in American homes, and liberalized adoption laws can be traced to her advocacy. PSB adopted seven children and would have adopted three more had the laws at the time allowed it. In 1964 she created the

PSB foundation as a second strategy to help Amerasian children. Opportunity Centers were eventually set up in 12 Asian countries offering medical, educational, and career help. The PSB Foundation still exists today and has helped more than 100,000 Amerasian children and their families.

Some of the greatest persons who ever lived were not military heroes or politicians, but people whose major accomplishments have impacted the lives of people. Richard Nixon, in his eulogy for PSB, called her a "bridge between the civilizations of the East and West." I see her as that bridge, shining in the sunlight, spanning the chasm filled with bigotry, hate, violence, and stupidity. I am filled with the hope that there is a young, 21st Century woman out there preparing to construct a "bridge" of her own. ❖



On the front row of dignitaries in the East Room of the White House, March 1962 (from l), Lady Bird Johnson, Pearl Buck, President John F. Kennedy, Jacqueline Kennedy, and Robert Frost. This photo appeared in Life magazine, March 1962; the print above is from the collection of Dorothy Sinson.

Editor's note: This is the first article for the Caxtonian by Dorothy Sinson, a specialist in Pearl S. Buck. We welcome her and this splendid piece on one of America's greatest writers. Sinson will present a talk on PSB at the May Caxton Luncheon.

Endnotes

- ¹ James Thomson, "Why Doesn't Pearl Buck Get Respect?" *Philadelphia Inquirer* (July 24, 1992), p. A15
- ² Roy Wilkens, "Talking it Over," *Kansas City Call* (December 23, 1932)
- ³ Joseph P. Lash, *Eleanor and Franklin* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1971), p. 671
- ⁴ *New York Herald Tribune* (February 12, 1942)
- ⁵ *The Washington Post* (February 15, 1933)
- ⁶ Pearl S. Buck, "Is There a Case for Foreign Missionaries?" (New York: John Day Company, 1932), p. 8
- ⁷ Pearl S. Buck, *American Unity and Asia* (New York: John Day Company, 1942), p. 103
- ⁸ Pearl S. Buck, "Asia Book Shelf," *Asia* (September 1937), p. 654
- ⁹ Ernest E. Leisy, *The American Historical Novel* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1950) p. 205
- ¹⁰ Peter Conn, *Pearl S. Buck a Cultural Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 268

A selected chronology of Pearl S. Buck's books (1892-1973)

1930, *East Wind: West Wind*

1931, *The Good Earth*

1932, *Sons*

East and West and the Novel: Sources of the Early Chinese Novel

1933, *The First Wife and Other Stories*

All Men are Brothers, Shui Hu Chan (Trans. Pearl S. Buck)

1934, *The Mother*

A House Divided

The Exile: Portrait of an American Woman (biography of PSB's mother)

The Fighting Angel: Portrait of a Soul (biography of PSB's father)

1938, *This Proud Heart*

The Patriot

The Chinese Novel (Nobel Prize Speech)

Other Gods

Today and Forever, Stories of China

Of Men and Women

The Dragon Seed

What America Means to Me

The Chinese Children Next Door
America Unity and Asia

The Promise

1945, *Portrait of a Marriage*

The Townsman (by John Sedges, pseudonym)

Talk About Russia: with Masha Scott

Tell the People: Talks with James Yen about the Mass Education Movement

1946, *Pavilion of Women*

The Angry Wife (by John Sedges, pseudonym)

Far and Near

How it Happens: Talk About the German People

Peony

Kinfolk

The Long Love (by John Sedges, pseudonym)

The American Argument: with Eslanda Goode Robeson

1950, *The Child Who Never Grew*

1951, *Sylvia (On-Na)*, published as a book in Japanese only

God's Men

See CHRONOLOGY, page 7

Caxtonian visits Nobel Literature Chairman

Junie Sinson

On February 19, 2001, while in Stockholm, Sweden, I was granted an interview with Kjell Espmark, the Chairman of the Nobel Committee for Literature of the Swedish Academy. As a "Nobel-watcher," I found the experience both exciting and rewarding.

Since my presentation of "The Acceptance Speeches of Nobel Laureates in Literature" at a Caxton Club dinner meeting on September 20, 2000, I have been impressed by the interest of the Caxton membership in the activities of the Swedish Academy in their awarding the Nobel Prize in Literature. Accordingly, I am sharing some of the perceptions that I had and the facts that I learned during my recent visit with Mr. Espmark.

In a negative sense, I share the concerns of another Academy member, Knut Ahnlund. He believes that the Committee for Literature is gradually moving toward a form of literary criticism that deviates from the narrative to deconstructionist conceptual communications.

Such a new approach in evaluating literature emphasizes the positives in presenting conflicting dualities, as distinguished from the linguistic problems in the dynamics of the narrative. Mr. Espmark supports incorporating the best of both the old and the post-modern methods of literary criticism.

It seems probable that the literature awards and the standard for awarding the Nobel Prize will move closer to deconstructionist literature. The moving force is the new, youngish, Permanent Secretary of the Academy, Homer Engdahl, who also sits on the Literature Committee. His apparent support of the thinking of Jacques Derrida is for many a cause for concern.

I inquired if The Caxton Club could submit to the Academy a Nobel nomination for literature. I was advised that that would not be possible. I was told, however, that the club could have input by forming a committee consisting, in part, of English professors and having our Nobel Committee and The Caxton Club produce a nominee for consideration to

be submitted through one of our club's English professors. I believe such a project and contribution would be exciting and would have significant benefit for The Caxton Club.

During my presentation at the club dinner meeting in September 2000, I reported erroneously that the Nobel Foundation had an endowment of three trillion dollars. Unfortunately, I failed to convert the krone into dollars, and the endowment is, in fact, three hundred million dollars.

Those who demean the Nobel Prize, due to slights to worthy authors, may soon have an



Alfred Nobel

opportunity to learn exactly why various authors were ignored during the 20th Century. The minutes of the Literary Committee meetings are being made public after a 50-year period. The release of these minutes will give insights into the awarding "and the rejecting" of authors of the post-World War II period. That data is now available in Sweden and is soon to be translated into English.

While discussing political considerations applicable to the awarding of the prize, Mr. Espmark stated, "Political considerations never affect our choice, but we are mindful that a choice can't be made without having a political affect."

I found interesting, but somewhat strained, the Academy's explanation for refusing to condemn the Iranian death-directive against Salman Rushdie after previously lobbying for the freedom of Ezra Pound.

I was advised that the Academy had been supportive of both Rushdie and Pound. I was further told that the Academy did not have as part of its mission the authority to take public positions on such matters. The Ezra Pound support had been accomplished through Dag Hammarskjöld, who coincidentally was then a member of the Swedish Academy. (I guess where there's a will, there's a way!)

For those who are, like me, "Nobel-groupies," may I suggest for future viewing the Nobel Museum Exhibition, which has recently opened in Stockholm. The Centennial Exhibition will run through September 2004. The theme of the exhibition is "What is creativity, and how can it be promoted?" If traveling to Scandinavia, Caxtonians may wish to visit that exhibit. ❖



Certificate awarded to Sully Prudhomme, first Nobel Laureate in Literature, in December 1901.

Chronology

Continued from page 5

- 1952, *Bright Procession* (by John Sedges, pseudonym)
The Hidden Flower
- 1953, *Voices in the House*
Come, My Beloved
The Man who Changed China: The story of Sun Yat-sen
- 1954, *My Several Worlds; A Personal Record*
- 1956, *Imperial Women*
Letter From Peking
A Certain Star
Friend to Friend: A Candid Exchange Between Pearl Buck and Calos P. Romulo
- 1959, *Command the Morning*
- 1961, *Fourteen Stories*
- 1962, *A Bridge for Passing*
- 1963, *The Living Reed: A Novel of Korea*
Welcome Child
- 1964, *Children for Adoption*
The Joy of Children
- 1965, *Death in a Castle*
- 1966, *The Time is Noon*
Matthew, Mark, Luke and John
For Spacious Skies: Journey in Dialogue with Theodore F. Harris
People of Japan
Essay on Myself
- 1967, *To My Daughters, with Love*
The New Year
- 1969, *The Three Daughters of Madame Liang*
The Good Deed and Other Stories of Asia, Past and Present
- 1970, *Mandala: A Novel of India*
China As I See It
The Kennedy Women: A Personal Appraisal
- 1971, *The Story Bible: Volume I The Old Testament*
The Story Bible: Volume II The New Testament
- 1972, *The Goddess Abides*
China Past and Present
- 1973, *All Under Heaven* ❖

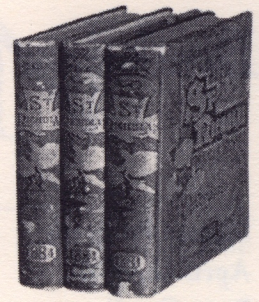


Rockwell Kent, "Moby Dick Rises" in *Moby Dick*, Chapter 41. 1930, pen and india ink on paper. From the Spencer Collection, New York Public Library. Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations. © 1930, R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company, Chicago. For additional information on this exhibit and other forthcoming, important exhibits at the Terra Museum of American Art, telephone 312/664-3939.

Wheaton College publishes Review

The Marion E. Wade Center of Wheaton College has published volume 17 of *SEVEN: An Anglo-American Literary Review* for the year 2000. The volume contains, among many other items, a 50th anniversary tribute to C.S. Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, an examination of J.R.R. Tolkien's interest in the international language, Esperanto, and its influence on his own invented languages, and an exploration of Dorothy L. Sayers' friendship with Muriel Jaeger. To order this issue or for further information, telephone 630/752-5908. ❖

Saints & Sinners Corner



Caxtonian Jim Marshall presented "An Unknown to the Public Environmental Concern" at the College of Complexes on March 24. Marshall is one of the Midwest's foremost authorities on American Indian culture and, particularly, the Hopewell mound earthworks, which he has surveyed and thoroughly studied. His publications highlight the advanced culture, particularly in mathematics, of American Indians.

Updates to the Caxton Club Membership Directory must be received by July 1, 2001, in order for the changes to appear in the directory to be distributed at the dinner meeting in October 2001. All corrections should be sent to John Chalmers, membership chair.

Steven Masello, Jim Tomes, and Lynn Martin have been appointed by the Caxton Council as the Nominating Committee for 2001. They will be selecting a new Vice President and five Council members for the coming year. Nominations may be forwarded to any one of the members or to Frederick Kittle for consideration.

FABS plans Cleveland trip

More than 40 persons have signed up for the fourth tour of the Fellowship of Bibliophilic Societies (FABS), set for May 31 to June 3, 2001, to Cleveland, OH. The tour is limited to 50 persons because the private libraries and the special viewing at the Cleveland Museum of Art can accommodate no more than that. Out-of-town visitors will have first preference, but reservations should be made as soon as possible. For further information and for reservations, telephone 800/999-3983, or make contact by email at Lawrence_Siegler@ml.com. ❖

Bookmarks...

Dinner Program

April 18, 2001

Peter Stanlis

The political life of Edmund Burke

Caxtonian Peter Stanlis will present "The Political Life of Edmund Burke" at the April dinner meeting. Peter is one of the nation's leading Burkean scholars, having written or edited seven books and 23 articles on him. He edited *The Burke Newsletter* and *Studies in Burke and His Time* for 15 years. His best-known book, *Edmund Burke and the Natural Law* (1958), revolutionized modern scholarship on Burke.

With Clara I. Gandy, he co-authored *Edmund Burke: A Bibliography of Secondary Studies to 1982* (1983), which reviews all scholarship and writings on Burke for the past two centuries. In 1969, Peter was one of six founders of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, and he served on the Executive Board and was national treasure of the organization for three years. In 1982, President Ronald Reagan appointed him to a six-year term on the National Council for the Humanities.

He is, as well, a British Academy Research Fellow and a member of the Academic Board of the National Humanities Institute. We are honored, of course, to have him as a member of The Caxton Club and a frequent speaker on another of his specialities, Robert Frost, with whom he had a close friendship for more than two decades.

In his dinner presentation, he will discuss Burke's involvement in the domestic and constitutional conflicts in Great Britain. These included the conflicts between England and Ireland, and between England and the American Colonies. He will also cover Burke's involvement with Indian Affairs and the French Revolution and will discuss his political philosophy as it relates to all of the above.

This is a program that promises to be in keeping with the great tradition of enlightened scholarship in the setting of the charming, bookish ambience that we all love so dearly. Join your friends as we hear one of our great American scholars speak on a topic dear to his own spirit.

Jim Tomes
Vice President and Program Chair

Luncheon Program

April 13, 2001

Paul Baker

The evolution of the web

Caxtonian Paul Baker, a pioneer in website design for the bookish set, will talk about his work, both for The Caxton Club and beyond, in the electronic world of cyberspace. His topic at the luncheon meeting will be "From Brochureware to Dynamic Content - The Evolution of the Web."

Paul is president of a web design and development firm on Wacker Drive, Chicago, and created for The Caxton Club one of the first websites in the book-collecting world. Today, The Caxton Club website is considered by many one of the finest available. It entered its second phase during the past six weeks.

In his talk to the club, Paul will present both a history and a contemporary commentary on the electronic communication program, which has taken the world by storm. He will trace the early websites, which were "brochureware" and did little more than substitute for existing printed materials. He will illustrate current Web content, much of which is published out of databases and configured on-the-fly to meet the information needs of individual and group users. And he will show how, as the public face of the web changes, the publishing processes behind the scenes continue to evolve.

This will be an informative, even provocative, presentation, and you'll want to hear the latest in the business of electronic journalism.

Edward Quattrocchi & Leonard Freedman
Co-Chairs

All luncheon and dinner meetings, unless otherwise noted, are held in the Mid-Day Club, 56th floor of BankOne, BankOne Plaza, Madison & Clark, Chicago. Luncheon and discussion, 12:30pm. Dinner meetings begin with spirits at 5pm, dinner at 6pm, lecture at 7pm. BankOne's parking garage, 40 S. Clark Street, offers a special parking rate after 5pm to guests of the Mid-Day Club. When you leave, please tell the parking attendant you were at the Mid-Day Club, and your parking fee will be \$10. Members planning to attend luncheons or dinners must make advance reservations by phoning the Caxton number, 312 255 3710. Luncheon for members and guests, \$20. Dinner, for members and guests, \$40.