

1967-1973

THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS of the 1967-1968 season was given by President William B. Wartman, head of the Department of Pathology at Northwestern University Medical School, at College Hall of the University Club. The paper, entitled "Contemplations from the Rock II—The Wood Burner" was a very pleasant account of summers in Maine.

The season included several papers which were biographical in nature: "Sromredevi, or Siromfredevi, of Londra" by Franklin Bing, a review of the early manhood and accomplishments of the English chemist, Sir Humphrey Davey; "The Holmesian Saga" by Charles Lincoln, dealing with Sherlock Holmes, his biographers, and interpreters in a witty manner; "Wyndham Lewis: A Writer Against His Time" by Henry Regnery; a scholarly essay on Stephen Douglas, "The Man from Winchester", by George Barclay.

There were also several papers which covered unusual topics: "Sex in Indiana", a carefully researched study of the Institute of Sex Research at Indiana University, by Stanley Korf; Louis Kuhn provided a delightful and informative commentary on street names in Chicago with "Revelations of a Street Walker"; Geza de Takats brought the several worlds of his background vividly to life in "Bloody Penelope and Other Short Stories" and at the conclusion he treated members to the drink—Bloody Penelope.

Two former newspapermen presented papers during the season. Herbert Simons, who had been a Chicago Times sports writer especially on baseball, reminisced about some of those experiences in "The Doll in the Hotel Room, or . . ." Unfortunately, his death was to occur some five months later. Seymour Raven, a former manager of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, presented a delightful first paper, "Crescendos and Dim-Innuendos", which

was full of recollections of the greats of the music world. In October 1968 it became the seventy-sixth Club Paper published.

The season ended with a most delightful Ladies' Night at the Arts Club of Chicago. The excellent dinner was followed by delightful reminiscences of happy times by Walker Davis in his paper "Those Were the Days That Were."

Herman Lackner, the ninety-sixth president of the Club, opened the 1968-1969 season with "Sack-Cloth and Hashish", a paper containing amusing comments on a random assortment of journals to illustrate the many facets of orthodoxy. He is also responsible for one of the special annual events of the Club. This is a pot-luck supper on the first Monday after Twelfth Night when the dining facilities of the Cliff Dwellers are not available to us.

The second paper of the season "The Lady of Lesbos" was given by Judge George Quilici, who unfortunately suffered a fatal heart attack on May 6, 1969. He was always genial and had a good story to tell, participating joyously and sagely in the conversational interchange that helps to make the Club what it is. Herman Lackner commented that one of the salient features of his term of office as President "was the feverish activity of the Grim Reaper", since eight resident members died during the 1968-1969 Club season.

During this season papers were given by brothers Norman and Leslie Parker, whose father had been a member of the Club, and by Leslie Parker's son-in-law Danforth Killips. Norman Parker's paper "An Old Frontier" was an extensive survey of Spanish and Moorish confrontation on the Iberian peninsula. "Frenchy Go Home" by Leslie Parker was an historical vignette of Citizen Genêt whose great-great grandson was the first American to be killed in France after the United States entered the war in 1917. An eloquent defence of the rule of majority in law was presented by Danforth Killips in his paper "Who Needs Enemies?"

Francis Straus II, the fourth member of his family to belong to the Club, gave a paper "Don't Bury the Sheep" which reported on the joys and tribulations of summers in Michigan.

"Elizabeth's Hero—and Anheuser's Too," by Samuel Insull, Jr. described how General George Custer became a folk hero without having behaved particularly heroically.

"Saint or Sinner" a very interesting and amusing paper on Scotsman Robert Burns, was presented by another Scotsman, Harold Drummond, who makes a hobby of the life and works of the poet. A high-light of the season occurred when Henry P. Chandler, who became a member of the Club in 1917, came from Bethesda, Maryland at the age of ninety to present a paper, "Working on the Side of the Angels in Chicago."

Ladies' Night closed the season with an excellent dinner and a delightful re-working of a fairy tale entitled "Hwylum, Whilom . . . Once Upon A Time," which was greeted frequently and loudly with laughter. The author, Theodore Silverstein, is a professor of Medieval English Literature at the University of Chicago.

The 1969-1970 season was presided over by Frederic T. Jung, whose Inaugural Address, "Confronting the Unpredictable" was a philosophical tribute to John Fiske.

Jack P. Cowan's paper, "Falashas of Ethopia—Ancient Jews in Exile" was notable for its careful research and the warmth of its on-the-spot observations. The eminent attorney, Elmer Gertz, in his paper "Yet Again" elucidated the political and philosophical tilts between Sylvester Viereck and Colonel House.

Several papers given during the season were based on personal reminiscences: Franklin Bing's description of his graduate school days at Yale in "Old Salvelinus Fontinalis"; a spirited recollection of an exhilarating childhood in the paper "An Autobiography of a Common Man" by Theodore Remer; "Salt", by Ellsworth Hoffstadt, dealt charmingly with his undergraduate studies at the University of Chicago; Edward Eichenbaum presented a light-hearted autobiography with theatrical reminiscences in "A Super's Lament"; an entertaining account of a boyhood vacation was described by Benjamin Boshes in his paper, "When the Town of Phelps Was Robbed." Geza de Takats again delighted us with stories and anecdotes brought together under the title: "Granny's Cough: Bitter Pill in Sweet Syrup."

Several members of long standing passed away during the 1969-1970 season. Among them were J. Leonard Hancock, a member since 1924, who was considered one of the leading classicists of the Club; Chauncey Maher, a faithful member for thirty-five years; and Benjamin Wham who presented seventeen papers during his forty-three years of membership.

On May 25, 1970, the Ladies' Night paper was a scholarly essay by Cyril Houle on Alexander Pope entitled "He", later published by the Club.

A prominent patent attorney, Norman S. Parker, was president in 1970-1971. His inaugural address, "Nostalgia" was a perceptive foray into education, history, and included an optimistic view of today's youth.

Among the season's highlights "Wilmot" by Alexander J. Isaacs portrayed John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester in a scholarly manner. William Beatty, in addition to being the Club's Gilbert and Sullivan expert, produced a literary essay on "Some Medical Aspects of Rudyard Kipling." Undoubtedly his position as librarian of the Northwestern University Medical School Library helped contribute to the source material for his paper. Wendell Krieg's paper "Each in His Own Tongue" was an essay on the roots, derivatives, and structures of language. "Truth Without Parallel" presented by David Maher dealt with the systemized non-Euclidian mathematics developed by Lobochevski which has become the basis of cosmic geometry. Lester King's paper, "Bernard and Peter", caught the spirit of twelfth century Europe, through a study of Bernard of Clairvaux contrasted with Peter Abelard, so well that it has been published. A clear and thoughtful account of the Federal Reserve Board was given by the Club's financial adviser, Arthur Baer in his paper "Mr. Gookin and the Monetary System."

One of the most amusing papers was "A Century of What?" by Julian Jackson describing his acquaintance with the celebrated fan dancer, Sally Rand, whom the author met through his publicity job at the 1932 Chicago World's Fair. Ladies' Night at the Saddle and Cycle Club was made memorable by a paper "Unpublished Memories" by Dr. Morris Fishbein. During 1968 and 1969, he also presented autobiographical papers entitled "Fragments from an Autobiography" and "Barnstorming."

Geza de Takats began his term as President with his Inaugural Address "Innocent from Abroad" in which he reminisced about his early life in Hungary and his immigration to this country. He is an internationally recognized vascular surgeon, once summoned to operate on King George V of England.

Franklin Bing was elected Poet Laureate of the Club on

October 25, 1971, an honor which his paper "The Sonnets of Shakespeare" more than warranted. Club members were kept on the edge of their chairs by Orville Bailey's "Et In Arcadia Ego" which was a beautifully written and researched account of the murder in 1849 of Dr. Parkman by Dr. Webster, both of whom were connected with the Harvard Medical School. A fine essay "T. S. Eliot: Wyndham Lewis: Ezra Pound: A Creative Friendship" was presented by Henry Regnery. A learned and witty dissertation on wine, its uses and history was detailed by Edward J. Wawszkiewicz in his paper "The Noble Ones." He also provided samples after the paper. In "The Bridge of Louis Ray" David Wald discussed playing bridge for large stakes as well as an eccentric bridge player who continually refused to bid spades. Apparently he was cured by psychotherapy and would bid spades when required, but now he refused to bid hearts. "An American Pessa in the Shadow of Ararat," by Percival Bailey was read by Paul Bucy. It told of a trip in 1961 to Armenia to deliver a medical paper and the attendant festivities.

One of the Club's most devoted members, Byers Wilcox, died on February 13, 1972. He had been a member of the Club for forty years, serving as President in 1953 and as Auditor since 1945. A partner in a large public accounting firm, he served as president of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants in 1946. His essay "An Ecclesiastical Autobiography" which was published by the Club in 1953 is considered by many to be a classic. Those who knew Byers will never forget him standing with an old-fashioned in one hand and his special cigarette-holder in the other. With a mischievous twinkle in his eye he dropped epigrams such as: "accounting, unlike theology, is not an exact science".

Several more of our members died during the year. Samuel Levin, who died on July 27, 1971 was a compulsive story teller who would regale the members with tales of his experiences as a country lawyer. His contribution to the ecumenical movement was being the annual speaker at an Indiana Methodist Church's religious service every fourth of July.

Morris Fishbein and Willard King, were awarded plaques on April 10, 1972, commemorating their fifty years of membership in the Club.

The Saddle and Cycle Club was again the setting for Ladies' Night when Lloyd Du Brul outlined the history of wine particularly in France in his paper, "Half So Precious." The Club's Poet Laureate, Franklin Bing, in verse mentioned every paper and author of the season.

The ninety-ninth season was presided over by the one hundredth president, Thomas Boal. His paper, "The Theory and Practice of Cunctation", presented the advantages of delaying tactics with wit and originality. Native Winnetkan, Tom Boal's varied experiences range from gold mining, potato farming in Idaho, to serving with the Coast Guard in World War II. Treasurer of the Club 1966-1973, he devoted much time and effort to Club affairs.

Drummond Rennie, a well-known physiologist and mountain climber, gave us one of the most memorable and exciting evenings in the history of the Club. The manuscript of "Folly", his first paper, had been taken from the Cliff Dwellers by mistake and was not retrieved until after the meeting. He then gave the entire paper from memory. It was a very personal and sincerely felt account of the author's organization of medical relief after an earthquake destroyed some of the most inaccessible parts of Peru. This enthralling paper and its remarkable delivery earned its author the only standing ovation within the memory of any member present. Everett Sentman read a paper entitled "Timothy J. Bentgrass Revisits Upper Seyghness", during which he periodically burst into song from opera and elsewhere. Theodore Silverstein, with his usual gusto, read a paper called "The Marquis and the Pauper: A Not So Simple Idyll 'Neath the Hills." This tribute to Chaucer was received with enthusiasm.

An historic event occurred on Friday, February 16, 1973, when The Fortnightly of Chicago, celebrating its centennial, invited our Club to a joint meeting. This was held in the Fortnightly's house on East Bellevue Place which had formerly been the residence of our member, Bryan Lathrop. This was the first joint meeting of the two Clubs since 1880. A sudden blizzard created havoc with traffic in the late afternoon but Mrs. Albert Crewe and Mrs. Francis Straus of the Fortnightly, and our own Douglass Pillinger so delighted us with their short papers that the five to eight meeting with champagne and hors d'oeuvres was a complete success.

The May 7, 1973 meeting was notable for a paper by Percival Bailey read by Nathaniel Apter. "South of The Border" was a spirited account of a war-time motor trip to present a series of lectures to the medical school in Mexico City. Since May 9 was Percival Bailey's birthday, all the members present signed and sent a birthday card to him. His touching note of appreciation follows:

Dear Literary Club Members:

I was very touched and pleased to receive your card with the signatures of members of my beloved Club. My thoughts were constantly with you on Monday nights. I need not tell you what the Literary Club has meant to me all these years. The warm close companionship and the memory of the papers remain with me always. It is the one thing I truly regret that I cannot participate in.

With my best wishes to each of you, I remain sincerely,

Percival Bailey, M.D.

Three months later on August 11, 1973, Percival Bailey died at the age of 81. Internationally known, especially as a neuropathologist, his contributions covered nearly all aspects of the neurological sciences. His papers, regularly presented to the Club from 1935 to 1973, were always a delight to hear and to the very end expressed the warmth and humanity of this outstanding man.

The 1972-1973 season was closed with Ladies' Night at the Saddle and Cycle Club where the dinner was followed by Orville Bailey's distinguished paper "How Fair The Meadows Are Today," an account of the botanical and literary achievements of John and William Bartram.

As the Centennial Year of the Chicago Literary Club gets under way, it seems appropriate to consider what was written by Mr. Gookin at the end of his fifty year history of the Club.

The future of the Club will be largely what we make it. As we sow, so shall we reap. The destiny of the Club is in the hands of its younger members. It is for them to carry on its traditions, to uphold its high standard, to make it the cherished meeting place where the best and most cultured men in the city will foregather. Each member in the future as in the past will need to have a keen sense of personal responsibility and be willing to give the Club of his very best. If the members do not fail in this, and it is inconceivable that they will, then at the expiration of another fifty years the Club should still be a lusty infant.

EDWARD M. PALUGA