

# T. S. ELIOT SOCIETY

## NEWS & NOTES

Number 8

Summer 1989

Published by the T. S. Eliot Society (incorporated in the State of Missouri as a literary non-profit organization), 5007 Waterman Boulevard, Saint Louis, Missouri 63108

### THE 1989 MEETING

The tenth annual meeting of the T. S. Eliot Society is scheduled for St. Louis on September 23 and 24, 1989. The meeting is co-sponsored by the Society, the First Unitarian Church of St. Louis, and the Missouri Historical Society. Pre-registration forms should be returned to our Secretary.

All daytime events on Saturday, September 23, including the Memorial Lecture in the morning and panel of Eliot papers followed by discussion in the afternoon, will be conducted at the Historical Society's headquarters, the Jefferson Memorial Building in Forest Park, except that the elegantly catered supper at 5:15 P.M. will take place at the Park Director's residence in Tower Grove Park (Magnolia and Tower Grove, opposite the Botanical Gardens).

The special Saturday-evening St. Louis-premiere performance of Eliot's play *The Family Reunion*, to be staged by the West End Players Guild, Wayne Linder directing, will be held in the theatre quarters of the Union Avenue Christian Church, 733 Union at Enright. (Enter off Delmar onto Belt north to Enright; go east on Enright to the Players Guild parking lot at Union.) This performance, which is private for members of the T. S. Eliot Society and their friends, will be followed by a lavish reception for the audience and cast.

The Saturday lunch and supper arrangements are being overseen by Board member Melanie Fathman, and the evening post-theatre reception by Marilyn Holt.

On Sunday morning, September 24, all members of the Society will be guests of the First Unitarian Church, 5007 Waterman Boulevard, for papers and discussion concerning *The Family Reunion* at the church Forum beginning at 9:30 A.M., and afterwards for an address on T. S. Eliot by the Rev. Earl K. Holt III at eleven o'clock.

Following is a complete program of events.

#### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

9:00 a.m. REGISTRATION *Jefferson Memorial Building,  
Forest Park*

Dr. Vinnie-Marie D'Ambrosio, Secretary  
Dr. Linda Wyman, Treasurer

9:30 a.m. WELCOME—Emerson Auditorium  
Dr. Grover Smith, President  
Mr. Leslie L. Konnyu, Founder

#### MUSICAL INTERVAL

10:30 a.m. TENTH ANNUAL T. S. ELIOT MEMORIAL LECTURE  
Dr. Leonard Unger, Emeritus Professor of English,  
University of Minnesota  
"Actual Times and Actual Places in Eliot's Poetry"

12:00 noon BOX LUNCH

2:00 p.m. MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT

2:25 p.m. SOCIETY MEMBERS' PANEL

Dr. W. Ronald Schuchard, "T. S. Eliot's Clark Lectures: 'The Uses of Metaphysical Poetry'"  
Dr. Stanley Sultan, "Love and Death in *The Waste Land*"  
Dr. Lois A. Cuddy, "T. S. Eliot's Mother, 'Masters,' and the Creative Theory of Evolution"  
Discussion

5:15 p.m. SUPPER *Residence of the Park Director  
Tower Grove Park*

8:15 p.m. *THE FAMILY REUNION*, by T. S. Eliot *Union Avenue  
Christian Church*

West End Players Guild  
RECEPTION

#### SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

9:30 a.m. FORUM ON *THE FAMILY REUNION* *First Unitarian  
Church*

Dr. Linda Wyman, "Language As Plot in *The Family Reunion*"  
Fr. James Torrens, S.J., "Seeing Spirits on the Eve of War"  
Discussion

11:00 a.m. ADDRESS  
Rev. Earl K. Holt, III, "Ghosts: Who You Gonna Call?"

### LEONARD UNGER TO BE MEMORIAL LECTURER

The T. S. Eliot Memorial Lecturer this year will be Leonard Unger, Professor Emeritus at the University of Minnesota, a distinguished critic, poet and writer whose services to Eliot criticism and to literary scholarship in America have extended over many years. Professor Unger's published works include *Donne's Poetry and Modern Criticism* (1950), *The Man in the Name* (1956), *T. S. Eliot* (pamphlet, 1961), *T. S. Eliot: Moments and Patterns* (1966) and, most recently, *Eliot's Compound Ghost* (1981). He has edited *T. S. Eliot: A Selected Critique* (1948), *Seven Modern American Poets* (1967) and co-edited *Poems for Study* (1953). He has also served as editor in chief of Scribner's reference set *American Writers* (4 vols., 1974) and of its *Supplement I* (2 vols., 1979).

In his *Seven Modern American Poets* of 1967, Professor Unger situated Eliot firmly in the context of American poetry, a position prophetic, as it turns out, of recent ways of understanding anew Eliot's work and influence. He did so, however, with a judicious sense of the general shift in American culture from the margin to the center of literature in the English language. This shift, which—as Unger acutely pointed out—Eliot both experienced and helped to accomplish, has become increasingly evident, and our Memorial speaker's work has helped to make it so. His 1966 book on Eliot was an alert and sensitive new critical reading; it is complemented well by his recent *Eliot's Compound Ghost*, which is both a complex study in influence, its anxieties and difficulties for writer and reader alike, and the record of a lifetime of reading and reconsideration of Eliot's total oeuvre.

We look forward to Professor Unger's address and to his presence at our annual meeting this year.

### ELEGANT SUPPER PLANNED FOR SEPTEMBER MEETING

The supper planned for Saturday evening at 5:15 during the first day of the Society's annual meeting, September 23, will take place at the Park Director's residence in Tower Grove Park in St. Louis. The occasion has been planned to allow for a leisurely and pleasant meal in a lovely setting with plenty of time to attend the play and to look about St. Louis in the evening.

Tower Grove Park, one of the finest examples of Victorian parkland remaining in the United States, is another legacy of the remarkable generation of men and women who founded and developed St. Louis in the nineteenth century. It was given to the city by the entrepreneur Henry Shaw (a friend of William Greenleaf Eliot, T. S. Eliot's grandfather) who was in his own way not only a successful businessman but a visionary—founder and patron not only of the park itself but of the Missouri Botanical Garden as well.

To create the park, Shaw worked with expert botanists and architects to design gardens and park spaces which were both functional for urban use and fascinating from the point of view of the flora and fauna they sheltered and preserved. The park is host to many trees over a hundred years of age, including several no longer in cultivation. (A replanting program had been designed to maintain the diversity of these trees and the thousands of shrubs and plants the park displays.) Shaw also paid close attention to the networks of paths and roads that weave through the park, and to the architectural features, which include charming gazebos, great towers and gates, the obligatory Victoria pond and "ruins." The latter are earthworks, as we should probably call them today, constructed of huge limestone blocks "aged" during the course of a fire in a nearby hotel and salvaged by Shaw to make a romantic landscape feature. Exotic water lily and floral displays accompanied these installations and continue to enliven the garden today.

Ever since the 1970's, the directors of this enormous urban garden and park space have worked both to preserve and maintain it and to adapt it to contemporary life. Gazebos are picnic sites; carriage drives are bicycle and fitness paths. Stupp Memorial Garden, the only senior citizen facility within a city park in the state, was constructed in 1982. Under the current director, John Karel, carriage services have returned to the park. The Society will thus be dining in a setting which represents a good deal of the civic spirit, breadth of vision, cosmopolitan and yet practical intelligence which were part of T. S. Eliot's American heritage.

### ELIOT SOCIETY MAY AFFILIATE WITH ALA, CALL FOR PAPERS LIKELY IN FALL

An alliance of societies that focus on individual American authors, the American Literature Association (ALA), has been founded, and it will conduct annual conferences beginning in 1990. The purpose of ALA is to encourage the study of American writers and their works. The Eliot Society's Board of Directors are considering a proposal, laid before them by Grover Smith after ALA's organization meeting in San Diego, CA, in June, to have the Society take part regularly in the annual conferences. This year's meeting in San Diego, convened as the "Cal. State Symposium on American Literature," was attended by Dr. Smith together with a panel of Society members, Lois A. Cuddy, W. Ronald Schuchard, and James Torrens, S.J., who presented a program of three papers on Eliot. The Society would gain the exclusive right to set up Eliot panels at future ALA conferences. Its regular St. Louis program will be unaffected.

Dr. Smith may be able to start planning in November for Eliot Society participation in the next ALA conference, scheduled for May 31 - June 2, 1990, in San Diego. Thus there may be a call for current members to send in to him, by a deadline early next spring, the texts of proposed 20-minute papers never previously read or published.

ALA, unlike most associations, will not enroll individuals as dues-paying members. Rather the various participating author societies, remaining entirely independent, will serve as the vehicles of access for their own members to ALA functions. Only through holding membership in one or more author societies can one claim membership in ALA. There are no dues either for individuals or for participating societies, though persons attending conferences will be charged a registration fee to defray expenses for programs and other necessities.

At the Symposium in June, 15 author societies provided panels, which accordingly dealt with Eliot, Twain, Whitman, Cather, Melville, Hemingway, Dickinson, Stevens, Emerson, Bellow, Poe, Hawthorne, Wharton, Faulkner, and Steinbeck. All of the societies exist to promote literary study, without political agenda.

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### NEED AN ADDRESS?

Did you meet someone at the 1988 Centennial meeting but forget to ask for an address? An unofficial list of registrants and addresses has been compiled and is available by writing to Larry Melton, East Central College, P. O. Box 529, Union, MO 63084. There is no charge, but please enclose a self-addressed, stamped business envelope. This is a fine way to keep in contact with TSES friends and to renew acquaintance.

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## ST. LOUIS FRIENDS OF THE SOCIETY MEET

St. Louis area members and friends of the T. S. Eliot Society met informally on Sunday, February 19 at Christ Church Cathedral, by invitation of Society member Larry Melton.

The afternoon afforded an opportunity to renew acquaintance and recall the excitement and activities of last fall's meeting.

As part of the regular Cathedral music and arts series, the group heard a concert by the Eastern Illinois University (Charleston, Illinois) Woodwind Ensemble.

After the concert, the TSES group toured the 120-year-old building. In 1988, Christ Church celebrated its centennial year as the Cathedral of the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri. Since Eliot was a Unitarian in St. Louis, there is only the Anglican connection to link the man and the Cathedral.

A short reception was held in the Bishop Tuttle Building to complete the afternoon.

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## SOCIETY PEOPLE

Jewel Spears Brooker, under the provocative heading "T. S. Eliot Centennial: The Return of Old Possum," edited a 33-page section of the *Dictionary of Literary Biography Yearbook: 1988*. With an introductory sketch of Eliot's life and reputation, in which she noted significant commemorative events of the poet's Centenary year, Dr. Brooker presented seven essays commissioned for the *Yearbook*. These are as follows: M. C. Bradbrook, "Growing Up with T. S. Eliot"; Robert Crawford, "T. S. Eliot's Urban Imagination"; Joseph Bentley, "Eliot's Works and Days: Poetry and the Possibility of Political Discourse"; Grover Smith, "T. S. Eliot the Classicist: His Ideas in Historical Context"; Ann P. Brady, "T. S. Eliot the Religious Poet"; Cleo McNelly Kearns, "Eliot, Buddhism, and the Middle Way"; and Katharine J. Worth, "Eliot's Plays in the English Theatre of the 1980's." The section contains also two pages of poster and program designs, including those created for Washington University and for the T. S. Eliot Society last year.

The *Yeats Eliot Review*, edited by Society member Russell Elliott Murphy, has devoted its latest numbers (Summer-Fall 1988 and Winter-Spring 1989) to a selection of the papers read at the University of Arkansas (Little Rock) Centenary conference on Eliot in May 1988, "T. S. Eliot: Retrospect and Prospects." The papers by Society members comprise the following: Grover Smith, "Yeats, Eliot, and the Use of Memory"; the late Joseph Bentley, "Action and the Absence of Speech in 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock'"; Virginia Phelan, "Eliot *contre* Sartre: Reversing the Proposition"; William Errett Kinnison, "Why, damme, it's too bad!: The Structure of Comedy and the Strictures of the Doubting Game in T. S. Eliot's *The Confidential Clerk*"; Constance A. Pedoto, "Intertextuality in the Works of T. S. Eliot: A Means to Total Readability or to Complete Frustration?"; and Dennis Ryan, "Marie Lloyd and the Last 'London Letter': T. S. Eliot's Transmutation of Ideology into Art in *The Waste Land*."

The T. S. Eliot Anniversary Issue of the *Southern Review* (Autumn 1985), edited by Society member James Olney, has now been reissued as a book by the Oxford University Press. Intended to recall the 1965 memorial collection edited by Tate, it had some of the

same distinguished contributors: Brooks, Fowlie, Janet Adam Smith, Unger, Austin Warren. Many of the 1965 contributors were no longer living twenty years later. Among the younger voices, or older talents neglected by Tate but recognized by Olney, we meet here Jewel Spears Brooker, Donald Gallup, Harvey Gross, Jeffrey M. Perl, W. Ronald Schuchard, and Stanley Sultan, present members of the Society distinguished in any company.

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## RESULTS OF BOARD ELECTIONS: ANN BRADY, TED WRIGHT CHOSEN

In the elections for Board members, decided in May by members of the Society who mailed ballots to the Secretary, Dr. Ann P. Brady and Dr. George T. Wright were chosen to hold seats until the spring of 1992. Dr. Brady was an incumbent.

The present membership of the Board is as follows:

Grover Smith, *President and Chairman*  
Cleo McNelly Kearns, *Vice-President*  
Linda Wyman, *Treasurer*  
Vinnie-Marie D'Ambrosio, *Secretary*  
Allen J. Koppenhaver, *Historian*  
Jewel Spears Brooker, *Supervisor of Elections*  
Ann P. Brady  
Melanie Fathman  
Earl K. Holt III  
Leslie Konnyu (Founder)  
George T. Wright  
Glenn P. Wright

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## CORRECTION!!!!

Linda Wyman, not Earl K. Holt III, is the current treasurer of the T. S. Eliot Society. The Society will, however, continue to use its St. Louis address. The correct way to correspond with the treasurer is as follows:

Dr. Linda Wyman  
5007 Waterman Boulevard  
St. Louis, Missouri 63108

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## REMINDER: RESERVE HOTEL ROOMS NOW FOR SEPTEMBER MEETING

Society members are reminded that we have owed a good deal of the amenity of our past meetings to the pleasant atmosphere of the Forest Park Hotel. Early reservations are a courtesy as well as a convenience to conference planning. If you haven't done so yet, please make your reservations now. Rooms are \$47.00 single or double occupancy; \$52.00 triple or quadruple occupancy. Forms were mailed to you with your last NEWS & NOTES, but in case you've misplaced them, the hotel's address is

The Forest Park Hotel  
4910 W. Pine Boulevard  
St. Louis, Missouri 63108  
(314) 361-3500  
(800) 622-4913 (Missouri only)  
(800) 622-4910 (Nationwide)

## ARE YOU SURE YOU ARE A MEMBER OF THE T. S. ELIOT SOCIETY?

*An Extraordinary Presidential Message To Remonstrate  
with Some Valued Members*

You can be sure—but only if your 1989 dues have been paid. And if the last contribution you made was for 1988, you are being carried on the Society's books just until after the 1989 meeting in St. Louis. You will then continue to receive NEWS & NOTES through the Fall 1989 number, after which, unless *current* dues are received by the Treasurer, you will—much to our regret—be dropped from the rolls.

To send your dues in, address Linda Wyman, Treasurer, 5007 Waterman Boulevard, St. Louis, MO 63108. The scale of memberships remains: REGULAR, \$15-\$24; SUPPORTING, \$25-\$49; SUSTAINING, \$50-\$99; PATRON, \$100—above.

*Beginning with dues for 1990, the payment date will no longer be January 1; it will be November 1.* So on November 1, 1989, you are asked to remit your 1990 contribution to the Treasurer in the category you prefer. What if you should like to send an overdue contribution for 1989 along with a timely one for 1990? Then, please, so indicate on the face of your check, and make sure your check arrives *before* November 1. But remember that until you have paid your 1989 dues you are not entitled to the special hotel rate and Saturday meal rate for the 1989 meeting September 23-24.

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## WILBUR FOUNDATION RENEWS SUP- PORT FOR SOCIETY'S MEETING, ENABLING PRODUCTION OF ELIOT PLAY

The Marguerite Eyer Wilbur Foundation, of Santa Barbara, CA, from which the T. S. Eliot Society also derived significant funding for the Centenary program last year, has awarded a supporting grant of \$3,750 for 1989.

The purpose of the grant, for which Grover Smith applied on behalf of the Society, is to meet certain costs of the 1989 annual meeting. Without such subvention, the Society would have been unable to commission dramatic entertainment this year. With part of the grant, Eliot's *The Family Reunion* is being produced by the West End Players Guild of St. Louis and will be staged in an exclusive performance for the Society on the evening of September 23.

*The Family Reunion* will be the third Eliot play to be acted at a Society meeting. In 1987 *The Cocktail Party* was presented, and in 1988 *The Elder Statesman*. The current year's offering, however, is the first by the West End Players Guild.

The Wilbur Foundation does not ordinarily make sustaining grants, and if a play production is desired for 1990 the Society's membership may have to agree to a "pay-as-you-go" plan of funding, according to the Treasurer.

## REFLECTIONS

By the President of the T. S. Eliot Society

Thanks to a loyal group of fellow officers in the Society, three of them brand-new in their jobs, I find that we have reached the mid-summer season and are approaching the September annual meeting, not only without a breakdown in operations but with several solid achievements to the Society's credit this year. We are, though just barely, meeting our bills and beginning to retire our indebtedness after 1988's gala Centenary commemoration. We should be much further along financially, but our members (as I gauge the problem) prefer to pay dues any time but in the winter months; and to the logic of their feelings we are prepared to yield from now on. The dues for 1990 will become payable this November.

The biggest news this year for the Society's future development comes with the founding of the American Literature Association. Of course this event may mean in the time immediately ahead a genuine purification of the polluted academic waters in which most of us try to swim; and for the Society I think it promises both that our present members shall get fresh opportunities to display their Eliot scholarship for the most significant organization of serious scholars who yet remain, and that new, energetic, and serious scholars shall be attracted to join the Society. If we send our members to read papers for ALA, the papers must represent only the best Eliot scholarship—no trivia. The Society was doubly honored in San Diego this June, once by the sound learning and original brainwork of members Cuddy, Schuchard, and Torrens, and once by the extraordinarily good audience reception and complimentary-remarks afterwards from Whitman people, Twain people, Stevens people the whole boiling.

Support by our membership in coming to the 1989 meeting September 23-24 in St. Louis will do the Society more good than any other kind of gesture. As members you ought to attend the Memorial Lecture, the Saturday-afternoon and Sunday-morning papers and addresses, and the production of *The Family Reunion*. This year marks the 50th anniversary of that play, the interest of which now seems to me to transcend drama—unfortunately for the stage, perhaps, but not for the creative mind of Eliot. Leonard Unger, our Memorial Lecturer, is one of the most durable of Eliot scholars and one of the most challenging. The other members of the Society who will be offering papers have all, like my old friend Dr. Unger, come by invitation, simply because they as well are very good Eliotists. The three who represented the Society in San Diego will not be reading the papers they gave there, but new, previously unread ones; and I am fairly tickled by my success in having got, with Dr. Sultan and Dr. Wyman too, such a knowledgeable bunch together—such astonishing erudition they possess. The events of the two days will culminate in the morning program at the First Unitarian Church, bringing us back, as Mr. Holt has eloquently reminded us, to Eliot in his true spiritual beginning.

Would you please do the Society and yourself a good turn? Send the Editor, Dr. Kearns, news of the conferences you organize, essays and books you publish, and Eliot mysteries you solve. NEWS & NOTES has no space to print your articles, but plenty of room for news of your contributions to our common enterprise.

GROVER SMITH