

T. S. ELIOT SOCIETY

NEWS & NOTES

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THE 1990 ANNUAL MEETING

The eleventh annual meeting of the T. S. Eliot Society is scheduled for St. Louis, this coming September 28 - 30. The meeting is co-sponsored by the Society and the First Unitarian Church of St. Louis.

This year the program will take a somewhat different form from previous occasions. We'll have a paper reading session on Friday evening from 8 - 9 p.m. and another on Saturday morning at 9:00 a.m. The latter will be followed by the T. S. Eliot Memorial Lecture at 10:45. We are delighted to announce that the Memorial Lecturer this year will be Dr. Shyamal Bagchee of the University of Alberta, a fine Eliot scholar and a distinguished addition to our growing list of Memorial Lecturers. His topic will be Eliot and Coleridge. On Sunday, as customary, we will be the guests of the First Unitarian Church under the leadership of the Reverend Earl K. Holt III, official historian of the Society. Much of Saturday afternoon and evening will be reserved for informal gatherings and activities. This year, again, we'll sample the wealth of cultural opportunities offered by St. Louis. Look for more details in the next NEWS & NOTES.

Most activities will be held at the newly rehabilitated Mayfair Suites. The arrangement for members of the Society: all suites whether for single or double occupancy, \$80.00 nightly. (Hence members may team up to reserve a suite for two occupants at the same charge as for one.) Members may phone in reservations after July 1 by calling 1-800-444-3313 or by writing to Mayfair Suites, 806 St. Charles Street, St. Louis, MO 63101. Pre-registration forms for the conference itself will appear in the next NEWS & NOTES.

LESLIE KONNYU RECEIVES DEGREE

Leslie Konnyu, scholar, poet, man of letters, and founder of the T. S. Eliot Society, returned to his native Hungary last winter to receive the degree he had begun in his own country many years ago. As Anne Dunning of the *St. Louis Sun* reports, Leslie Konnyu journeyed back to his homeland with armloads of transcripts, textbooks and a 130-page thesis on John Xantus, a 19th century Hungarian scholar whose flora and fauna collection is in the Smithsonian Institution. He was determined to finish the academic project he had interrupted in 1949 when, not wanting to live under the Soviet regime, he and his wife emigrated with their children to the United States. Now, some forty years later, his thesis and oral examination have earned him the degree of Ph.D. *summa cum laude* in geography/ethnography from the University of Budapest.

This degree crowns a lifetime of academic and literary achievement. Leslie Konnyu, who holds degrees in education and music and has written and published widely, took a master's degree in cartography from St. Louis University in 1965, which contributed to his long-term career with the U. S. Mapping Agency. Throughout his long residence in the U. S. he has continued to produce poetry, essays, monographs and studies, mostly in the Hungarian language. "I'm a Hungarian, a writer who writes about Hungarian subjects," he insists: "I always wanted to finish my studies in my area; I wanted to finish what I started."

Members of the Society will know that Leslie Konnyu's loyalty to the country of his birth does not prevent him from a deep appreciation of and commitment to preserving the cultural heritage of others. We remember well the story of his arrival in St. Louis, where, with that deep respect for humane letters his own tradition had always fostered, he naturally sought out what he was convinced must exist - a monument to St. Louis's distinguished native son and poet T. S. Eliot. Finding none, he set about to create one, and both the Eliot Memorial plaque by the Hungarian artist Andrew Osze now housed in the Missouri Historical Society and the T. S. Eliot Society itself are the fruit of his efforts.

CALL FOR PAPERS, 1990 MEETING

Grover Smith has issued a call for papers for the 1990 meeting to members of the Society, with a deadline for receipt of these papers by July 15, 1990. Papers must be on Eliot topics, must not have been read elsewhere or published in any form, and must not exceed 20 minutes' reading time. Papers should be mailed (with return postage if return desired) to Dr. Grover Smith, P. O. Box 6043, Durham, NC 27708. Send by U. S. Mail only. The final selection of papers will be announced in the Summer NEWS & NOTES.

SOCIETY TO PARTICIPATE IN FIRST ALA MEETING

The T. S. Eliot Society will participate in the first annual Conference sponsored by ALA (The American Literature Association) at the Bahia Resort Hotel, San Diego, California, on May 31 - June 3, 1990. (The ALA is a coalition of major societies dedicated to the study of individual American authors. For further description of the nature and purpose of the organization see elsewhere in NEWS & NOTES.) Papers in the session devoted to Eliot will be read by the following T. S. Eliot Society members: E. Philip Bollier (Tulane University), Bruce Hayman (LaGrange Park, IL) and James Torrens, S.J. (Santa Clara University).

In addition to the sessions arranged by the author societies themselves, there will be panels on other writers, on the major genres and literary periods, and on selected topics. These will include slave narrative, the short story cycle, Jewish American fiction, science fiction, autobiography, Puritan literature, contemporary American poetry, and California writers. Among those who have agreed to participate are: Charles Altieri, Nina Baym, Jackson Benson, Jackson Bryer, Lawrence Buehl, Virginia Spencer Carr, Gloria Erlich, Giles Gunn, Susan K. Harris, Gordon Hunter, Arnold Krupat, Roy Harvey Pearce, Marjorie Perloff, Joel Porte, Daniel Walden, and Cynthia Griffin Wolff.

The presentation of papers at the conference will begin on Thursday, May 31 at 1 p.m. and end late Saturday, June 2. There will be a welcoming reception on the evening of May 31 and a final party on the evening of June 2. The arranged hotel rate is \$69 dollars a night single, \$75 double. (The Grosvenor Inn, several miles distant, offers a rate of \$45 a night single or double). There will be a conference fee of \$25 (\$10 for retired persons and graduate students). As a coalition, the ALA does not enroll individual members, so no membership fee is involved for those wishing to attend. For hotel reservations, write to Dr. Alfred Bendixen, Dept. of English, California State University, 5151 State University Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90032.

THE AMERICAN LITERATURE ASSOCIATION

The ALA is a coalition of major societies devoted to American authors, formed to provide specialists in American literature with new opportunities for scholarly interaction. As a coalition the ALA does not charge membership fees and keeps its conference fees to a modest level. Because of its commitment to helping scholars of American literature at every phase of their careers, some panels at its annual conference are reserved for advanced graduate students speaking about their dissertations. ALA activities, along with announcements concerning conferences on American authors, the publication of new journals and newsletters, and the formation of new author societies are publicized through an ALA newsletter as well as through the newsletters of member societies. Future issues of the ALA newsletter will contain further lists. Those wishing to subscribe to the newsletter, which began publication in December, 1989, may do so at the special introductory rate of \$5 for the first two years. A few complimentary copies of Vol. I, No 1 are still available. Inquiries, and checks made payable to the American Literature Association, should be sent to Professor Alfred Bendixen, Dept. of English, California State University, L.A., Los Angeles, California 90032.

MAYFAIR SUITES TO HOST 1990 ANNUAL MEETING

The newly remodeled Mayfair Suites, a renovation of one of St. Louis's historic small hotels, will re-open this summer and will serve as the headquarters for the September, 1990 meeting of the T. S. Eliot Society. The 18-story building in the heart of the city at Eighth and St. Charles Streets will retain its formal, wood-paneled dining room and its old Hofbrau bar with the original stained glass windows, now converted into a clublike grill which will serve three meals a day. The managing director, Peter S. Green, is seeking to create the ambiance of a small, luxurious European-style hotel, with manually operated elevators, concierge service, a special night butler and 24-hour room service. The suites will be identical, each with a parlor and bedroom, bathroom and entertainment center with bar. Four meeting rooms and a library on the mezzanine will accommodate conferences and small groups. Workers are meticulously refinishing the hotel's original millwork and ornate plaster ceilings, as well as refurbishing the old rooftop swimming pool, the first ever built in St. Louis.

The ambiance of the hotel and its history will be a particular draw for members of the Society this year. Presidents Harry Truman and Lyndon Johnson made the Mayfair their St. Louis headquarters when in the city, and Irving Berlin visited in 1942 while touring the country with is World War II musical "This is the Army." Cary Grant, Kirk Douglas and Robert Young regularly stayed at the Mayfair, as so on at least one famous occasion, did John Barrymore, who ran up a princely bill and paid it, they say, with a rubber check! Although much of the interior of the building is being replaced and/or refitted, including all of the plumbing and wiring, the hotel is on the National Historic Register, and the historical design is being respected wherever possible. The Mayfair Suites should contribute

much, in its own way to the 1990 T. S. Eliot Society meeting, and the generous discount offered members of the Society should make it affordable for all. (For further information on rates and reservations, see page 1 of NEWS & NOTES.)

REQUEST TO MEMBERS

Please inform NEWS & NOTES of Eliot conferences, exhibits, symposia, lectures or special sessions of which you are aware, as well as of anthologies, essay collections or new serial publications featuring criticism devoted to his work. Include as much information as you can about titles, names and addresses of sponsors or publishers. Let us know, too, if you have published recently on Eliot or related issues. We will publicize this information in NEWS & NOTES as much as space allows. Write to Cleo Kearns, 81 Lawrence Avenue, Highland Park, New Jersey 08904.

RUSSELL KIRK NAMED HONORARY MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY

Dr. Russell Kirk has been named Honorary Member of the T. S. Eliot Society by the Board. Dr. Kirk, a participant in the Centenary program two years ago, is a well known literary and social critic, whose books include *Eliot and His Age: T. S. Eliot's Moral Imagination in the Twentieth Century* (1971). He joins a distinguished list of Honorary Members: Cleanth Brooks, Valerie Eliot, Donald Gallup, Robert Giroux, and Andrew Osze.

SOCIETY PEOPLE

Society Member Professor Tatsushi Narita, of Nagoya City, Japan has published two recent articles, "Eliot and His First Beating of the 'Bhghong' - a Brief Treatise on His View of Poetry," *Studies in Social Sciences and Humanities* (Kyoyo-Bu College, Nagoya City University) 32: 39-47 (March 1988) and "T. S. Eliot and His St. Louis Area Background - Some New Materials on Lockwood School," also in *Studies in Social Sciences and Humanities* (Kyoyo-Bu College, Nagoya City University) 33: 71-86 (March, 1989). The 1988 article is the latest of several by Professor Narita concerning Eliot's response to events at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair.

Society member Jeffrey M. Perl has just published *Skepticism and Modern Enmity Before and After Eliot*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989.

Society member and former President Jewel Spears Brooker and the late Joseph Bentley have just published *Reading The Waste Land: Modernism and the Limits of Interpretation*, Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1990.

Honorary member Donald Gallup gave the George Parker Winship Lecture at the Houghton Library on October 17, 1988. This lecture has been published under the title "The Eliots, and the T. S. Eliot Collection at Harvard," *Harvard Library Bulletin* 36: 233-47 (Summer, 1988). (The journal was late in appearing.)

DR. RON SCHUCHARD ELECTED TO SOCIETY BOARD

The Society is delighted to announce the election of Dr. W. Ronald Schuchard as new board member to serve from January 1, 1990 through December 1, 1992. Ron Schuchard is the author of numerous articles on Eliot and other modernists and is co-editor of *The Collected Letter of W. B. Yeats*, vols. 3 and 4 and editor of Eliot's Clark Lectures. He served as the Eliot Memorial Lecturer in 1985.