



Mark Twain Circular

Newsletter of the Mark Twain Circle of America

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Report from the President

Lawrence I. Berkove
Univ. of Michigan-Dearborn

This has been an eventful period for the Mark Twain Circle. Much has been accomplished, some of which has already happened and some of which will come to pass shortly.

1. In terms of long-range effects, the most important development is that the Circle is now officially a 501 (c) (3) organization. Back in February 1987, when the Circle was founded, two of the founding members, Lou Budd and Everett Emerson, incorporated the Circle in North Carolina as a non-profit organization. That was a big help to the Circle in our early years when our financial activities were few and well under the \$5000/yr. limit. But with the inauguration of *The Mark Twain Annual* four years ago, the situation changed. Suddenly, we had a much larger cash flow. It opened the Circle to accounting by the IRS. Accordingly, with the help of a friendly lawyer who donated his time pro bono, we applied to the IRS for 501 (c) (3) status. It was more of a complicated and drawn-out process than we expected, but our lawyer was up to the challenge, and we were finally approved.

This means that (a) we now have non-profit status with the IRS despite our larger cash flow, and although we have to file an annual report we pay no income tax. (b) Any donations to the Circle are now tax free. Therefore, if anyone wishes to make a beneficial gift to the Circle from now on, in accordance with IRS regulations, it will come under the heading of "charitable donations"; it will be tax-free for us and can be used by donors as a deductible credit on their income tax. (c) We are also now eligible for lower postage for all official mailings. The fact that we now have to file an annual report to the IRS, however, will require some streamlining of our operations to make them more timely, efficient, predictable, and economical. These issues, among others, will be dealt with in some detail at

Correction

In the November 2006 issue of the *Mark Twain Circular*, the byline for "Tribute to Ed Branch" was rendered as "Robert Hirsch." The General Editor of the Mark Twain Project, who wrote the article, is, of course, Robert Hirst, not "Hirsch." In my abject apology to Bob for the error, I blamed it on having, as a frequent teacher of lit crit, spent too much time meditating on the work of E. D. Hirsch. At any rate, please note that Hirst and Hirsch are two different people, and the one important to Mark Twain studies is the former. —*Jim Leonard*

the business meeting at the ALA conference in Boston in May. Please attend as your presence—and vote—will be important.

2. The Circle has become more active. In addition to our annual sponsorship of two panels at the annual MLA conference in December and two panels, a business meeting, and a social mixer (happy hour?) at the annual ALA meeting in May, last year the Circle joined the American Humor Studies Association in New Orleans for a joint conference. Our ex-president Ann Ryan was one of the two coordinators. Of course, the conference went well, and featured a number of papers on stand-up comedy and other topics.

In response to a request from some members a year ago, early this summer our vice-president Bruce Michelson is arranging a two-day program at Hannibal in cooperation with Henry Sweets, the head of the Mark Twain Center there. Any of you who have not made a pilgrimage to Hannibal and seen the preserved section of town with Mark Twain's and Becky Thatcher's homes, Cardiff Hill, Twain's birthplace at nearby Florida—the source of some important scenes and characterizations in HF and other books—and the Mark Twain cave, or taken a river cruise to the islands off Hannibal, now have a splendid opportunity to rectify that lack. There will also be some paper presentations, and a survey of research possibilities. For dates, more details, and registration, contact Bruce Michelson at brucem@uiuc.edu.

Isabelle M. Budd

3. An NEH-sponsored summer seminar on Mark Twain will be held at Elmira College during July for 15 high-school teachers chosen from applicants all over the country. Barbara Snedecor and I will be co-directors, and Joe Csicsila will be an associate director. Barbara will be in charge of administrative procedures and logistics, and Joe and I will focus on the educational content. In addition to classes, discussions, and evening movies, there will also be tours to the Twain home in West Hartford, CT, the Farmer's Museum in Cooperstown, NY, and various sites around Elmira.

4. The Circle has been contacted recently for advice by Mark Twain groups in the process of forming in Korea and Queensland, Australia. We wish them well and hope that they will soon be off and running.

5. Members who have published books and articles are encouraged to notify Jim Leonard, editor of the *Circular*, with specific bibliographical information if not the publications themselves. Everyone is waiting for Tom Tenney to finish updating his still valuable two-volume *Reference Guide* from 1977, but we need an ongoing report of scholarly publication, and the *Circular* addresses that need insofar as Jim learns of publications. Please help him out with prompt notice. At the same time, the *Circular* also runs reviews of recent books.

6. As the Circle increases its activities, it also hopes to increase its size. Show prospective members copies of the *Annual*, the *Circular*, and this letter and let them know that the Circle is a dynamic organization that welcomes new members to join and become active. As item #3 indicates, we try to be responsive to members' interests.

Isabelle M. Budd, the wife of Louis J. Budd, died at their home on December 22, 2006. She is also survived by a daughter, Cathy Budd, a son, David Budd, his wife Karina, and their child, granddaughter Exelee.

Mrs. Budd took an active interest in local government, and in 1975 won an at-large seat on the Durham, North Carolina, City Council. In 1999 she gave the Duke University Archives a small collection of her personal papers; they document the controversy of Duke Forest homeowners over plans for nearby road extensions. And they illustrate by practical example her paralegal training and concern for both the law and civic affairs.

"Twain's Will Be Done," by Isabelle Budd, was included in the Spring 1984 issue of the *Mark Twain Journal*, followed by a facsimile of Mark Twain's will on pages 34-39. Her article is in answer to the question: "What happened to Samuel Clemens' estate between the time he died and the creation, seventy years later, of the current and permanent foundation bearing his pen name?"

A year later, the *Journal* published a genealogical chart showing "The Relation of Mark Twain to Cyril Clemens." With it, Mrs. Budd included a list of sources. (See Fall 1985 issue, p. 2.) Then, in the Spring 1987 *Mark Twain Journal*, "Clara Samossoud's Will" appeared. Again, Isabelle Budd wrote a detailed and useful article, complete with notes and a facsimile of Clara's ten-page will (pages 17-29).

Another important contribution was made by Mrs. Budd when she helped the Mark Twain Circle of America become a not-for-profit organization.

Isabelle Budd's legal expertise and interest in Mark Twain have given us valuable insight as well as information about the Clemens family members and their possessions.

To: Prof. Kerry Driscoll
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Please enroll me as a member of the **Mark Twain Circle of America** and subscriber to the *Mark Twain Circular* and *The Mark Twain Annual*. I enclose a check for \$20.00 (\$22.00 for a non-U.S. address) made out to "Mark Twain Circle of America."

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ABOUT THE CIRCLE. The Mark Twain Circle of America was formed at an organizational meeting held at the 1986 Modern Language Association convention in New York. Although many members are academic specialists, the Circle also includes many non-academic Twain enthusiasts.

ABOUT THE CIRCULAR. The *Mark Twain Circular* is the newsletter of the Mark Twain Circle of America. It is published twice per year (April and November) and is mailed, by the editor, to all members of the Mark Twain Circle. The *Circular* prints news of Mark Twain events and scholarship, directories of members, and current bibliography. Subscribers are distributed among 44 states and 14 foreign countries.

ABOUT THE ANNUAL. The Mark Twain Circle also publishes an annual volume titled *The Mark Twain Annual*, edited by John Bird (Winthrop University), featuring criticism and pedagogy related to Mark Twain and his works.

River of Dreams

Imagining the Mississippi before Mark Twain

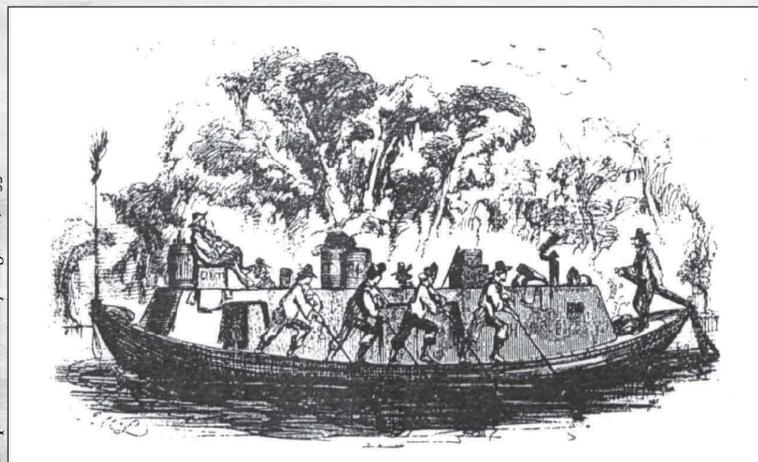
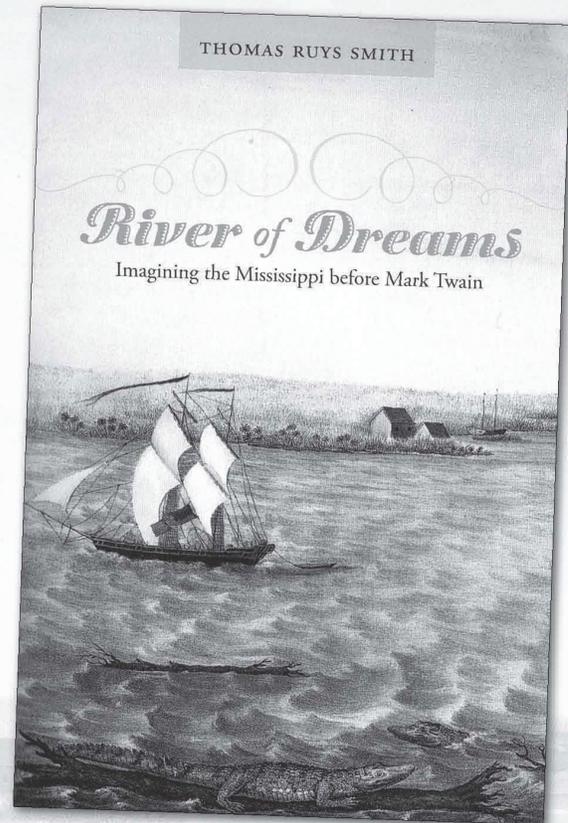
THOMAS RUYS SMITH

Even in the decades before Mark Twain enthralled the world with his evocative representations of the Mississippi, the river played an essential role in American culture and consciousness. Throughout the antebellum era, the Mississippi acted as a powerful symbol of America's conception of itself—and the world's conception of America.

As Twain understood, "The Mississippi is well worth reading about." Thomas Ruys Smith's *River of Dreams* is an examination of the Mississippi's role in the imagination of the times, and explores its cultural position in antebellum literature, art, thought, and national life.

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Thanks to Libby Walker and Danielle Saia for their valuable work on this issue of the *Mark Twain Circular*.