



Mark Twain Circular

Newsletter of the Mark Twain Circle of America

Volume 16

October–December 2002

Number 4

MT at MLA

The MLA's 118th annual convention will be held in New York City, beginning at 3:30 p.m. on Friday, 27 December and ending at 3:00 p.m. on Monday, 30 December. The Mark Twain Circle will sponsor the following sessions:

Session 402: *Mark Twain and the Politics of Righteousness*

[8:30-9:45 a.m., Holland, Hilton]

Chair: Ann M. Ryan (Le Moyne College)

Papers:

- "Mark Twain's Children's Crusade: How Family Sparked Samuel Clemens's Quest for Social Justice," Michael J. Kiskis (Elmira College)
- "Mark Twain's Long Retreat: Fifty Years of Saluting the Union Army," Neil Schmitz (SUNY, Buffalo)
- "Form and Content, Politics and Righteousness: Mark Twain's Catechisms in *What Is Man?*," Joe Boyd Fulton (Baylor University)
- "'How Much Higher and Finer Is the Indian's God': Mark Twain and Native American Religion," Kerry Driscoll (Saint Joseph College)

Session 785: *Mark Twain in New York*

[1:45-3:00 p.m., Harlem, Hilton]

Chair: Kerry Driscoll (Saint Joseph College)

- "Mark Twain's (and Adam's) Encounter with the Dinosaur in New York," Joseph

B. McCullough (University of Nevada, Las Vegas)

- "Minstrels in Manhattan: Mark Twain and Polk Miller in New York," Cameron C. Nickels (James Madison University)
- "'Taking a Liking to the Abominable Place': Mark Twain Becomes a New Yorker," Ann M. Ryan (Le Moyne College)



MT at SAMLA

The Mark Twain Circle sponsored the following session at the 2002 SAMLA Annual Conference in Baltimore (November 15–17):

Session Title: *The Overlooked and Lesser Known Twain*

Chair: Joseph A. Alvarez (Central Piedmont Community College)

Secretary: Jeffrey A. Melton (Auburn University at Montgomery)

Papers:

- "Killing 'Half a Novel': Mark Twain's *Those Extraordinary Twins*," John Bird (Winthrop University)

What's Inside?

<i>Calls for Papers</i>	2
<i>Current Mark Twain Bibliography</i>	3
<i>Mark Twain Sites</i>	6
<i>Dates to Circle</i>	6
<i>Everything You Need to Know . . .</i>	7

- "A Curriculum on Twain's Book *The Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc*," Mrs. Jules A. Hojnowski (Independent Scholar)
- "A Great Dark: Mark Twain's Continuing Voyage into Uncertainty," Chad Rohman (Dominican University)
- "Darwin's Metaphor and Idea of World-within-World in Mark Twain's *Three Thousand Years among the Microbes*," Takeshi Omiya (Independent Scholar)

The session also included a business meeting to elect officers for 2003.

Other Twain-related activities included the following session sponsored by the

American Humor Studies Association:

Session Title: *Rethinking American Humor*

Chair: John Bird (Winthrop University)

Secretary: Allison Ensor (University of Tennessee)

Papers:

- "Mark Twain Gets Serious," Terry Oggel (Virginia Commonwealth University)
- "A Trickster Shakes Hands With God: Trickster Discourse in Mark Twain's *Letters From the Earth*," Daniel Woods (Radford University)
- "Clyde Edgerton's Sunbelt and the Legacy of Southwestern Humor," George Hovis (Murray State University)

Calls for Papers

Mark Twain Annual

The Mark Twain Annual, the new annual publication of the Mark Twain Circle of America, will publish its premiere issue in Fall 2003. The journal's focus will be on criticism and pedagogy related to Mark Twain and his works. Please send articles, proposals, or queries, with a deadline of July 2003, to the editor:

John Bird, Editor
The Mark Twain Annual
 250 Bancroft
 Department of English
 Winthrop University
 Rock Hill, SC 29733
 birdj@winthrop.edu

MT at American Studies Association

In keeping with the theme of the 2003 American Studies Association meeting in Hartford—"Violence and Belonging"—we are seeking paper proposals for a session on late works by Twain including "To the Person Sitting in Darkness," "The War Prayer," "The Stupendous Procession," "King Leopold's Soliloquy," "The United States of Lynch-erdom," etc., that address Twain's responses to vio-

lence in a range of contexts. Please e-mail the proposed abstract and a brief identifying bio paragraph to Hilton Obenzinger and Shelley Fisher Fishkin (hobnzngr@leland.stanford.edu, sfishkin@mail.utexas.edu) by January 5th.

American Literature Association Annual Conference

Dates: May 22-25, 2003

Location: Hyatt Regency Cambridge
 575 Memorial Drive
 Cambridge, MA 02139

Conference Director: Maria Karafilis (California State University, Los Angeles)

Conference Fee: \$75 (\$25 for Graduate Students, Independent Scholars and Retired Faculty). The conference fee includes a food credit for those who pre-register by April 15, 2003.

Deadline for Proposals: January 30, 2003

Address for Papers and Proposals:

Professor Maria Karafilis
 English Department
 California State University
 Los Angeles, CA 90032-8110
 Fax: (323) 343-6470
 Email: mkarafi@calstatela.edu

The primary source for information on the American Literature Association and its activities is its website:

www.americanliterature.org

Current Mark Twain Bibliography

James S. Leonard
The Citadel

Current Mark Twain Bibliography is a means of giving notice of what's new in Mark Twain scholarship. Where annotations are used, they are in most cases descriptive blurbs provided by publishers (or in some cases, by authors) with value judgments edited out. If you have recently published something that you would like to have included in this list, send it to me by e-mail (leonardj@citadel.edu), or by other means.

Books

Cox, James M. *Mark Twain: The Fate of Humor*. Reissue. Mark Twain and His Circle Series. University of Missouri Press, 2002. In *Mark Twain: The Fate of Humor*, James M. Cox pursues the development of Mark Twain's humor through all the forms it took from "The Jumping Frog" to *The Mysterious Stranger*. Instead of seeking the seriousness behind the humor, Cox concentrates upon the humor itself as the transfiguring power that converted all the "serious" issues and emotions of Mark Twain's life and time into narratives designed to evoke helpless laughter. In those sudden moments of pleasurable helplessness, we glimpse the great heart of a writer who imagined freedom in the slave society of his youth and discovered slavery in the free country of his old age. For this edition of *Mark Twain: The Fate of Humor*, the author has written a new introduction showing how and why Mark Twain remains a central figure in American life; he has also appended an essay disclosing why *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* will always be a hard book to take.

Twain, Mark. *Mark Twain's Letters, Volume 6: 1874-1875*. Mark Twain Papers, 9. Ed. Michael B. Frank and Harriet Elinor Smith.

University of California Press, 2002. 957 pages. 6 x 9 inches. 51 black and white illustrations. Cloth. \$85.00. ISBN 0-520-23772-2. Mark Twain's letters for 1874 and 1875 encompass one of his most productive and rewarding periods as author, husband and father, and man of property. He completed the writing of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, published the major collection *Sketches, New and Old*, became a leading contributor to the *Atlantic Monthly*, and turned *The Gilded Age*, the novel he had previously coauthored with Charles Dudley Warner, into one of the most popular comedies of the nineteenth-century American stage. His personal life also was gratifying, unmarred by the family tragedies that had darkened the earlier years of the decade. He and his wife welcomed a second healthy daughter and moved into the showplace home in Hartford, Connecticut, that they occupied happily for the next sixteen years. All of these accomplishments and events are vividly captured, in Mark Twain's inimitable language and with his unmatched humor, in letters to family and friends, among them some of the leading writers of the day. The comprehensive editorial annotation supplies the historical and social context that helps make these letters as fresh and immediate to a modern audience as they were to their original readers. This volume is the sixth in the only complete edition of Mark Twain's letters ever attempted. The 348 letters it contains, many of them never before published, have been meticulously transcribed, either from the original manuscripts (when extant) or from the most reliable sources now available. They have been thoroughly annotated and indexed and are supplemented by genealogical charts, contemporary notices of Mark Twain and his works, and photographs of him, his family, and his friends. [Text from advertising copy.] [Reviewed for the *Mark Twain Forum* on December 9, 2002 by Barbara Schmidt.]

Articles

Berkove, Lawrence I. "Poe, Twain, and the Nature of Conscience." *ESQ* 46.4 (2000): 239-53.

Mark Twain Sites

What's Past, and Passing, and to Come

Mark Twain Boyhood Home and Mark Twain Museum Hannibal, Missouri

In 1987, the Mark Twain Home Board and Mark Twain Home Foundation completed a study titled "A Program for the Restoration of the Mark Twain Boyhood Home, the Mark Twain Museum, and the surrounding area as a riverfront town of the late 1800's." The suggested first step for the museum was restoration of the Mark Twain Boyhood Home, which was accomplished in the 1990-1991 period. Secondly, more museum space was suggested. A major start on additional museum space was acquisition of the Sonnenberg Building, which has been rehabilitated and is known presently as the New Mark Twain Museum. Many of the elements of this plan were visions. Some, such as flood protection for the historic area, have materialized. Restoration and improvements on many buildings have occurred by property owners. Many elements are still in the future.

With acquisition of the Sonnenberg Building, an advisory panel of Mark Twain scholars was formed. This panel met for three days in 1992 to brainstorm ideas and suggestions for the new museum facility. Major suggestions included a biographical section on Mark Twain's life and a display on his books. Work then proceeded on stabilizing the building and readying it for museum use. In 1998 the academic advisory panel met again to discuss ways to utilize the new museum and to consider all of the museum facilities. This evolved to the concept of using the new museum to examine Mark Twain's writings and his biography with the properties around the Boyhood Home to reflect Hannibal and its influences.

The decision was made to focus the first floor of the new museum on Mark Twain's books. As a first step, *Huckleberry Finn* was approached with a raft and with film segments from the book. Secondly, *Tom Sawyer* and *Roughing It* were represented. This spring, *Connecticut Yankee* and *Innocents Abroad* were added. Visitors have five large interactive exhibits to experience. Towards the rear of the building visitors climb a grand staircase to the mezzanine and a reconstructed pilothouse. The mezzanine will reflect elements of *Life on the Mississippi*.

In 2001 a planning session was held to focus further on interpretation throughout the museum properties. The idea of stressing Mark Twain's Hannibal experience around the Boyhood Home and his career at the new museum was discussed. As a result of ideas expressed at this session, the Mark Twain Home Foundation is now formulating a master plan with the assistance of Dr. Jay Rounds of the University of Missouri, St. Louis. This plan will review the interpretations at all of our properties and form preliminary plans for new exhibits.

If anyone has ideas or suggestions to make regarding the interpretation and presentations at the Mark Twain Museum properties, please respond. You can e-mail direct@marktwainmuseum.org with your thoughts.

Henry Sweets, Director
Mark Twain Home Foundation
Hannibal, Missouri

Dates to Circle

- **December 27–30, 2002.** Modern Language Association Annual Conference. New York, NY.
- **May 22–25, 2003.** American Literature Association Annual Conference. Cambridge, MA (Hyatt Regency Cambridge). See Call for Papers on p. 2.
- **November 14–16, 2003.** South Atlantic Modern Language Association Annual Conference. Atlanta, GA (Marriot Marquis).

Everything You Need to Know . . .



ABOUT THE CIRCULAR.

The *Mark Twain Circular*, newsletter of the Mark Twain Circle of America, was launched in January 1987 by Thomas A. Tenney (Editor of the *Mark Twain Journal*). James Leonard (The Citadel) assumed editorial responsibility with the February 1987 *Circular* and has continued in that capacity until the present. The *Circular* is published four times per year (Jan.–March, April–June, July–Sept., and Oct.–Dec.) 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, short biographical articles and critical commentaries, and current bibliography. Subscribers are distributed among 44 states and 14 foreign countries.

ABOUT THE ANNUAL. Beginning in 2003 the Mark Twain Circle will publish an annual volume titled *The Mark Twain Annual*, edited by John Bird (Winthrop University and featuring criticism and pedagogy related to Mark Twain and his works. See “Call for Papers” on p. 5.

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; the membership has since grown to approximately 350. Current officers are displayed on p. 8. Past Presidents are Louis J. Budd, Alan Gribben, Pascal Covici, Jr., David E. E. Sloane, Victor A. Doyno, Michael J. Kiskis, Shelley Fisher Fishkin, and Laura Skandera Trombley. Past Executive Coordinators: Everett Emerson, James D. Wilson, Michael J. Kiskis, Laura Skandera Trombley, Joseph A. Alvarez, and John Bird. Although many members are academic specialists, the Circle also includes many non-academic Twain enthusiasts.



ABOUT THE MARK TWAIN JOURNAL.

Founded in 1936 by Cyril Clemens, the *Mark Twain Journal* is the oldest American magazine devoted to a single author. In 1982, the *Journal* moved to its present home in Charleston, S.C., under the editorship of Thomas A. Tenney. There are two issues per year, Spring and Fall, with a new volume each year. The *Journal* tends to appear late, and begs your patient indulgence. New subscribers may wish to begin with the 2001 issues rather than the 2002.

To: Prof. Joseph Csicsila
Exec. Coordinator, Mark Twain Circle
English Department
Eastern Michigan University
Ypsilanti, MI 48197

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 \$15.00 (\$16.00 for a non-U.S. address) made out to “Mark Twain Circle of America.”

(printed name)

(address)

(city, state, zip code)

To: Thomas A. Tenney, Editor
Mark Twain Journal
English Department
The Citadel
Charleston, SC 29409

Please enter my subscription to the *Mark Twain Journal* for the year(s) circled: 2001, 2002, 2003

Subscription rates for individuals are \$10 for one year, \$18 for two years, \$25 for three years, or \$30 for four years. Libraries: \$18.00/year, no discount. Foreign: Add \$2.00/year for postage.

(printed name)

(address)

(city, state, zip code)