



Mark Twain Circular

Newsletter of the Mark Twain Circle of America

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The President's Column

James S. Leonard
The Citadel

Mr. Budd, Mr. Kiskis, and Mark Twain

The sad impoverishment of the Mark Twain community by the recent passing of Louis J. Budd and Michael Kiskis is likely, among other things, to bring to mind (especially for old guys like me) our own mortality. But it also brings to mind the *immortality* of the sorts of intellectual endeavor that are so deeply woven into the lives of scholars like Lou and Michael—immortality, that is, in the way their work draws us out of ourselves and toward a pure consideration of the value of a life (Twain's) and its productions, both the enduring ones and the ephemeral.

Lou's and Michael's approaches to the study of Mark Twain represented, we might say, opposite ends of the spectrum. Lou focused on the public Mark Twain—emphasizing Twain's views on society in *Mark Twain: Social Philosopher*, contemporary responses to Twain's work in *Mark Twain: The Contemporary Reviews*, and the making of Twain's celebrated public persona in *Our Mark Twain*. Lou clearly was fascinated by the nature of celebrity itself and the ways in which Twain cultivated and exploited it. He brought to light the weight of responsibility that a writer as self-consciously aware as Mark Twain must carry, as a result of his fame and the prospect of leaving behind a lasting legacy.

Michael, on the other hand, attended to the private Mark Twain—both the publicly private Twain, as experienced in *Mark Twain's Own Auto-*

biography, which offered us (along with Michael's admirable introduction) the chapters of the Autobiography that Twain actually published himself, and also the more personal version of the private Twain that Michael liked to speculate about in a reader-response mode that effectively connected our twentieth and twenty-first century lives to Twain's.

When Lou died (at an advanced age, I'm glad to say), the thing that impressed me most was how many Mark Twain scholars came forward immediately with how-Lou-Budd-changed-my-professional-life declarations. So I was not the only one. But there certainly was no one more important in inducting me into Twain studies than Lou—both by his scholarly example and by the genuineness of his professional generosity.

As for Michael, I considered him a personal friend, as, I'm sure, many of his other professional associates did. Michael was that kind of person. And he considered Mark Twain to be *his* friend.

Lou was, of course, the Circle's first President, selected at the gathering of Twain enthusiasts at the storied 1986 MLA meeting at which the Circle was founded. I took on the task of editing the Circle's newsletter, the *Mark Twain Circular*, and Lou was my most frequent contributor as well as my indispensable advisor. Michael was there at that first meeting in 1986, too—a fact that I think he took some pride in. And in the many convenings of the Mark Twain faithful since then, he was among the *most* faithful and his presence among the most delightful.

Michael and Lou had a lot of fun in the company of Mark Twain and his friends, both past and present. We were fortunate to have them with us. □



**Inaugural Hannibal Mark Twain Conference
By John Bird**

“Mark Twain’s Hannibal: The Clemens Conference,” the inaugural conference sponsored by The Mark Boyhood Home and Museum, was held in Hannibal, Missouri, August 11-13, 2011. It was a rousing success, with some forty registered attendees, 19 scholarly papers, two keynote presentations, special entertainment, and guided tours and excursions. Curator Henry Sweets, Executive Director Cindy Lovell, and the rest of the Boyhood Home staff did a stellar job in organizing this quadrennial conference.

Early attendees were treated to a guided tour of Hannibal the day before the conference began, followed by a wine tasting and tour of the Museum Gallery, which included an appearance by two of the winners of the Fourth of July “Tom and Becky” contest. A nice mixture of established scholars, emerging scholars, international scholars, and graduate students presented interesting and thought-provoking papers on a variety of Twain-related topics. Barbara Snedecor, Director of the Center for Mark Twain Studies at Elmira College, presented the first keynote address, on Olivia Clemens’ letters, and Robert Hirst, General Editor and Official Curator of the Mark Twain Project and Papers at the University of California Berkeley, finished the conference proceedings with a keynote highlighting his 44 years at the Mark Twain Papers. →

Attendees were treated to a moving performance of “A True Story” by Gladys Coggswell, as well as a preview of an upcoming documentary on Hal Holbrook’s five decades of performing as Mark Twain.

As added treats, visits to Samuel Clemens’ birthplace and the reconstruction of John Quarles’ farmhouse in Florida, Missouri, were offered, as well as a musical performance by Nashville musicians Carl Jackson, Larry Cordle, and Jerry Salley.

On Friday night, we visited the Mark Twain Cave (McDowell’s Cave in the time, McDougal’s Cave in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*), an amazing tour that changed the way I will read *Tom Sawyer* and the opening of *Huckleberry Finn*.

The conference closed on Saturday night with a dinner cruise on the Mark Twain Riverboat, ending memorably as we cruised the Mississippi under a full moon, passing by Jackson’s Island, with various attendees taking the wheel and steering the boat. (At least two un-named participants made sure that the air on the upper deck was filled with a bit of cigar smoke.)

The weather in Hannibal was much more pleasant than one would expect in Hannibal in August, and the company was just as pleasant as one would expect when a number of Twainians gather for edification and for fellowship. This fine conference will be held again in 2015, when its numbers will surely grow. Thanks to Henry Sweets and Cindy Lowell for an amazing weekend! □

Scenes from Hannibal:

Left Inset: Becky, “Huck” (aka John Bird), and Tom pose for a picture
Right Inset: John Bird and James Wharton Leonard enjoy the moonlit *Mark Twain* dinner cruise



Henry Sweets (above right), Curator of the Mark Twain Boyhood Home and Museum, shows conference attendees the site of Mark Twain’s birthplace in Florida, Missouri. [Photos courtesy of John Bird and Mary Leah Christmas]

**Mark Twain Circle of America
Annual Business Meeting
American Literature Association
22nd Annual Conference
Boston, Westin Copley Plaza Hotel
May 28, 2011**

President Jim Leonard called the meeting to order at 11 a.m., noting the change in executive coordinator, honoring Kerry Driscoll for her five years of service.

In attendance were Jim Leonard, president; Linda Morris, vice president; Kerry Driscoll, outgoing executive coordinator; Sharon McCoy, incoming executive coordinator; Chad Rohman, editor, *Mark Twain Circular*; Bruce Michelson; John Bird; Larry Howe; Susan Harris; Judith Lee; David Sloane; Joseph Alvarez; Dennis Eddings; Lisa McGunigal.

Chad Rohman, editor of the *Mark Twain Circular*, spoke briefly, asking members to note the current bibliographic material and to please send any new citations to him to keep the bibliography current. He also encouraged members to send any photographs of this conference and of the upcoming conference in Hannibal. New plans for the *Circular* include the possibility of a column for comments and a color page or two. Comment was made on the lovely reflection on Lou Budd by Dave Sloane included in the last issue of the *Circular*, and possibilities were discussed for a reflection on Michael Kiskis's passing for the next issue. Several people suggested that Ann Ryan's obituary would be the most appropriate, and Chad said that he would discuss it with Ann, as it has been previously published in the *Elmira Star Gazette*.

Jim Leonard mentioned that we are trying to get as complete an email list as possible, so that important upcoming events that fall between issues of the *Circular* can be announced easily and comprehensively. The *Circular* is sent to all members; he and Chad Rohman noted that the list is for the most part up-to-date and accurate, with a limited number of problems.

Kerry Driscoll spoke for Ann Ryan, editor of the *Mark Twain Annual*, who was absent due to Michael Kiskis's memorial service, at which she was delivering the eulogy. Ann met with members of the executive board the day before to update the officers on the status of the *Annual*. Her report:

- The reflections in the last *Annual* proved to be exceptionally popular, generating significant amounts of positive feedback.
- This positive feedback led to an idea about how best to honor Lou Budd and Michael Kiskis: sol-

iting similar reflections on their work and contributions, featuring reflections on Lou Budd in the upcoming issue and on Michael Kiskis for next year's issue, after the proposed fall symposium.

- A new online submission system will be implemented for the 2012 *Annual*. Ryan and Leonard received training on the system and it seems straightforward. There is a possibility that this will also enable broader editorial participation, with a particular person being designated to coordinate readers and correspondence with a particular submitted piece. At this time, there are 20-25 unsolicited submissions annually, with about eight being chosen for publication. Susan Harris noted that she has never received a physical copy of the *Annual*, and Sharon McCoy said that she would look into the problem.

- Finally, it was noted that the *Annual* is still not listed in the *MLA Directory of Periodicals*, which Emma Hennessey of Wiley-Blackwell had said last year that she would take care of. Some discussion ensued about the difficulty, the history of the problem, and the urgency, with Sharon McCoy pointing out that without a listing in the *Directory*, publication in the *Annual* is of limited use to scholars at early or contingent stages in their careers; without that listing, the publication is not considered "peer reviewed" by potential employers or grant-awarding institutions. Susan Harris noted that she would be in New York City this summer and that she would be willing to personally go to the MLA offices, as sometimes that is most effective.

Kerry Driscoll then gave the final treasurer's report of her tenure.

The Circle currently has 164 national members and 29 international members, for a total of 193 members.

- The treasury contains \$9,254.21, but Driscoll noted that this low balance is due to the fact that with the changing of the executive coordinator position, the renewal sheets have not yet been mailed, and that this will generate approximately \$6,000. Driscoll reported that the reception yesterday at Met Back Bay (on Dartmouth and Newbery; 279 Dartmouth), cost only \$325.78, including food and drinks.
- Wiley-Blackwell charged \$4,650.00 to print and mail out the 2010 *Mark Twain Annual*. In return the Circle received 2 editorial stipends totaling \$5,163.79 (\$5,186.00 + \$77.79), plus an electronic royalty of \$51.17, for a total of \$5,214.96. This means the Circle gained a net profit of \$564.96. [continued on page 4 →]

- Finally, Driscoll proposed a donation to the Michael Kiskis Memorial Fund at the Elmira College Center for Mark Twain Studies, which was seconded by John Bird. Jim Leonard opened the question for discussion, and Linda Morris asked how much the donation would be. Kerry Driscoll proposed \$1,000, which met with general approval. Jim Leonard pointed out that such a donation would not only mark our respect for the loss of a valued colleague, but that it would also cement our relationship with the Center for Mark Twain Studies. John Bird seconded, the proposal was approved unanimously, and Kerry said that she would write the check before transferring the funds to the new account.

John Bird stated that, as founding editor of the *Annual*, he had large numbers of back issues available, though only limited copies of the first issue. He said that if members wanted back issues, he would send them for the price of shipping. Larry Howe suggested that while this was generous, it would be better to set at least a nominal back-issue fee. He stated that he wanted the back issues and would be happy to pay for them. Bird agreed that he would talk with Ann Ryan and set an agreed-upon fee for the back issues.

Joe Alvarez asked how many library subscriptions we have at the current time. Chad Rohman stated that for the *Circular*, it was between 70-80. Kerry Driscoll pointed out that for the *Annual*, we really don't know, as some library subscriptions involve the Wiley-Blackwell American writers collection, which bundles the *Annual* with journals on Poe, Melville, Steinbeck, and Fitzgerald, rather than by direct subscription.

Joe Alvarez reported on the American Humor Studies Association – Mark Twain Circle Quadrennial Conference in San Diego that took place in December 2010. The initial deposit required was \$4,016.25, which was split evenly by the two organizations. Total expenses for the conference were \$6,428.11, with the Circle paying \$2,221.15 and the Humor Studies Association paying \$4,214.06. AHSAs paid for the travel expenses for the conference planners of both organizations, as their treasury was more able to absorb the cost. Registration fees totaled \$3,220, which meant that the conference incurred a net loss of \$3,208.11, with \$604.05 coming from the Circle and \$2,604.06 coming from AHSAs. Alvarez discussed the relationship between the provision of meeting rooms and the “room-nights” quota that the conference hotels require, saying that we had sufficient room-nights to avoid additional fees, but that the high cost of catering is always a large portion of the expense overage. Plans were discussed briefly for the next joint Quadrennial Conference, with both New Orleans and Las Vegas discussed as venues. →

To:

Prof. Sharon McCoy
165 Weatherly Woods Drive
Winterville, GA 30683

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 \$30.00 (\$25.00 for graduate students, and \$32.00 for a non-U.S. address) made out to “Mark Twain Circle of America.”

 (printed name)

 (city, state, and zip code)

 (email address—please write clearly)

Ann Ryan had expressed interest in being the Circle’s conference organizer for this conference, and John Bird said that if she were unable to do it, he would be willing to step up again.

David Sloane announced an American Humor Studies Association winter conference with a workshop format in Stockbridge at the Red Lion Inn, planned for February 2012, if there is sufficient interest. The purpose is to focus on the presentation of research-in-progress, with in-depth feedback from conference participants, the idea being to offer support to graduate students and scholars in early stages of their careers. Other attractions mentioned include a gourmet chef, the relatively low off-season cost, and the skiing.

The inaugural Hannibal conference, “Mark Twain’s Hannibal: The Clemens Conference,” jointly sponsored by the Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum and Hannibal-LaGrange University, will take place on August 11-14, 2011. The Circle fully supports and is excited by the prospect of the conference, but it has no official presence in its planning; Bruce Michelson, as co-chair, was involved in the initial planning stages and screening submissions, but he was not part of the final selection process, so details were unavailable regarding the size of the conference, the number of papers being offered, or the type of accommodations. The conference is planned as a quadrennial event in August, alternating with the International Conference in Elmira. [continued on page 5→]

Kerry Driscoll briefly discussed a proposed symposium for October 2011 on domesticity and Mark Twain, in honor of Michael Kiskis. She is working with Center for Mark Twain Studies Director Barbara Snedecor to try to arrange an appropriate date; difficulties have arisen with conflicting fall campus events, scheduling, and accommodations.

Linda Morris announced that two sessions have been approved for the Modern Language Association annual convention in Seattle, January 2012.

Susan Harris asked whether it might be appropriate to consider the publication of creative work in the *Mark Twain Annual*, either as a regular category or as an occasional piece. Students in one of her graduate seminars have done some stellar creative pieces that merit publication; the idea was discussed and while doubt was expressed about whether there would be enough quality work available to merit a regular annual feature, the idea met with general interest and approval.

Judith Lee brought up the issue of membership and the necessity of attracting new members, suggesting that, as a start, membership should be a requirement for presenting in Mark Twain Circle-sponsored panels at the American Literature Association, Modern Language Association, and South Atlantic Modern Language Association conferences and for publication in the *Annual*, which met general approval. The idea of having a membership chair was raised, and Linda Morris suggested that this job seemed appropriate to attach to the office of vice president, which again met with general approval. She then made the motion formal, including the requirement of Circle membership to present or publish; seconded by Joe Alvarez, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

As a final order of business, Jim Leonard announced the official passing of the position of executive coordinator from Kerry Driscoll to Sharon McCoy. In deep appreciation her many years of fine service, Kerry received a copy of the issue of *Life* magazine that contained the original publication of "Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer among the Indians," purchased from Kevin MacDonnell of MacDonnell Rare Books, and a CD of Twain's favorite music by pianist and nineteenth-century music scholar John Davis.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:40 am.

Respectfully submitted by Sharon D. McCoy □



Mark Twain Circle at the MLA Conference in Seattle, WA, January 5-8, 2012

"Mark Twain: Editing and Editions"

Chair, Tracy Wuster

Benjamin Griffin, "Editing a 'Dictated' Text: Mark Twain's *Autobiography*."

Rachel Ihara, "The First Cuts: The Serial Edition of *Huckleberry Finn* in the *Century Magazine*."

Robert T. Tally, Jr., "BLEEP: Huck Finn, Censorship, and the Institution of Literature."

"Mark Twain and 'The Other'"

Chair, Susan K. Harris

Hsuan Hsu, "'Coolies' and Corporate Personhood in *Those Extraordinary Twins*."

Kerry Driscoll, "Mark Twain and the Maori."

Paula Harrington, "Jumping the Grenouille." □

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 Ann Ryan (Le Moyne College), featuring criticism and pedagogy related to Mark Twain and his works.

In Memoriam

Michael J. Kiskis 1954-2011

Michael J. Kiskis, Leonard Tydings Grant Professor of American Literature, renowned Mark Twain scholar, and long-time member of the Elmira College faculty, died on May 8th, 2011, in Binghamton, New York, after suffering heart failure. He was 56 years old.

Michael J. Kiskis was born in Amsterdam, New York, the only child of Stanley Kiskis and Francis Elizabeth Jaracz. Not unlike Mark Twain's most famous character, Huck, or for that matter, the author himself, Dr. Kiskis was born into a working-class family. Professor Kiskis credited his mother's devotion and hard work for his own success later in life. Of his mother, he wrote that she had a "simple statement of principle: you learn and you use that learning to make your way. And you pay back, and make sure that others make their way." After receiving both his bachelor's and master's degrees from St. Bonaventure University, Professor Kiskis earned his doctorate at the State University of New York at Albany, where he began his life-long study of Mark Twain.

Professor Kiskis, editor of *Mark Twain's Own Autobiography: Chapters from the North American Review* and co-editor of *Constructing Mark Twain: New Directions in Scholarship*, became one of the foremost authorities on the autobiographical writings of Mark Twain. Dr. Kiskis published dozens of articles and edited and co-authored several volumes on Mark Twain's life and his works. Treasured for his wit and his warmth, as well as his expertise, Michael Kiskis contributed to a number of professional and civic organizations. He was both President and a founding member of The Mark Twain Circle of America. He served as President of the American Humor Studies Association, on the editorial board of *The Mark Twain Annual*, as president of the Northeast Modern Language Association, and as president of the Mark Twain Society of Elmira. A regular contributor to multiple journals, both on-line and in print, Dr. Kiskis was also the editor of *Studies in American Humor*, a contributor to and the guest editor of a special issue of *American Literary Realism* as well as a contributor to two editions of *American Literary Scholarship*. Michael Kiskis was a frequent instructor in summer institutes sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, and in teaching institutes sponsored by the Center for Mark Twain Studies.

Dr. Kiskis's knowledge of American literature was as wide as it was deep, yet his reading of Mark Twain fo-



cused upon a consistent theme: the domestic life of Samuel Clemens. Dr. Kiskis located the source of Mark Twain's literary genius within Twain's experiences as a father, a husband, and a friend. In his writing and in his teaching, Professor Kiskis revealed Mark Twain in his full humanity: noble and flawed, playful and profound, haunted by loss and fueled by his imagination. In this regard, the intellectual interests of Michael Kiskis mirrored his own personal values. Unimpressed by titles, wealth, or reputation, Michael Kiskis cared foremost about the human condition, which he found documented as movingly in the letters of nineteenth-century working Americans, in the newspapers they read, and the postcards they sent, as in the writings of great artists.

Although a demanding instructor, Professor Kiskis valued each of his students and treated them with great kindness and compassion, and in so doing, inspired them to excel. Whether he was teaching from the American canon, Melville's *Moby Dick* or Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, or exposing his students to the hidden treasures of nineteenth-century popular culture, Horatio Alger's *Ragged Dick* or Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Pink and White Tyranny*, Dr. Kiskis encouraged his students to experience the simple pleasure of reading a book, before they worked to analyze it. Current students and Elmira College alumni from across the country have responded with a profound sense of loss at the news of Dr. Kiskis's passing. Rachel Masselle, class of 2014, described Professor Kiskis: "He was warm, funny, intelligent, unique, and he genuinely cared about his students. He evoked a love for literature in them all."

After serving as Assistant Dean of Empire State College, Michael Kiskis joined the faculty of Elmira College in 1993. Since that time he has served in leadership capacities on a number of college committees tasked with many different objectives: finding the best faculty to hire, articulating the academic standards of the college, strategic and long-range planning, curricular design and faculty development. As diverse as these committees may have been, Dr. Kiskis's commitment to excellence remained the same and his dedication equally consistent. Nowhere was this dedication more evident than in his continual support for the Center for Mark Twain Studies at Elmira College. His guidance and insight have helped to make Quarry Farm a site of international importance in the field of Twain studies. In his writing and his teaching, Michael Kiskis transformed the

"octagonal study" into something more than a tourist attraction; he revealed to the world beyond Elmira how dependent Mark Twain was upon the quiet retreat of Quarry Farm.

Michael J. Kiskis was, like the author he spent so much time with, a wonderful study in contradictions. He was a brilliant scholar who loved the movie *Caddyshack*, a sophisticated reader who punctuated his classes with references to "Phineas and Ferb," a reserved man with a raucous sense of humor. He drove a fast car and walked at a snail's pace; he was an old soul with a child's appreciation for the playful and the silly. While he loved his work and was devoted to his students, Michael found his greatest happiness at home, with his wife Ann Cady, watching "Top Gear," the British version only, walking their greyhound Joy, talking over their days, sharing stories and plans, simply being together. When writing of Twain's homelife, he wrote, "A home for Clemens was the intersection of the past and the present. It gave entrance to emotions he could achieve nowhere else; it was compassion made manifest." This was equally true for Michael and the home he shared with Ann.

In his late 40s, Michael Kiskis discovered the pleasures of high-performance race-car driving. He attended the Panoz Racing School at Road Atlanta (the home of the US LeMans series), and became one of a handful of scholars who could take a curve at over 100 mph. Those who knew him best say that he lived his life the same way he drove his BMW around the track at Watkins Glen, with exhilaration and deliberate control, gracefully balancing the fleeting moment against the demands of the longer race. Michael J. Kiskis lives on through his wife, Ann Cady, his greyhound Joy and his beloved friends, students, and colleagues. . . . □ **By Ann Ryan.** [Originally published in the *Elmira Star-Gazette*, May 22, 2011.]

Current Mark Twain Bibliography

Susan K. Harris. *God's Arbiters: Americans and the Philippines, 1898-1902.* Second subtitle: *The War that Sparked Mark Twain's Conflict with America.*

Oxford University Press, 2011. 257 pages. ISBN 978-0-19-974010-9. List price \$35.00

When the U.S. liberated the Philippines from Spanish rule in 1898, the exploit was hailed at home as a great moral victory, an instance of Uncle Sam freeing an oppressed country from colonial tyranny. The next move, however, was hotly contested: should the U.S. annex the archipelago? The disputants did agree on one point: that the United States was divinely appointed to bring democracy—and with it, white Protestant culture—to the rest of the world. They were, in the words of U.S. Senator Albert Beveridge, "God's arbiters," a civilizing force with a righteous role to play on the world stage. →

Mining letters, speeches, textbooks, poems, political cartoons and other sources, Susan K. Harris examines the role of religious rhetoric and racial biases in the battle over annexation. She offers a provocative reading both of the debates' religious framework and of the evolution of Christian national identity within the U.S. The book brings to life the personalities who dominated the discussion, figures like the bellicose Beveridge and the segregationist Senator Benjamin Tillman. It also features voices from outside U.S. geopolitical boundaries that responded to the Americans' venture into global imperialism: among them England's "imperial" poet Rudyard Kipling, Nicaragua's poet/diplomat Rubén Darío, and the Philippines' revolutionary leaders Emilio Aguinaldo and Apolinario Mabini. At the center of this *dramatis personae* stands Mark Twain, an influential partisan who was, for many, the embodiment of America. Twain had supported the initial intervention but quickly changed his mind, arguing that the U.S. decision to annex the archipelago was a betrayal of the very principles the U.S. claimed to promote. [Text from Amazon.com] □

Call for Papers Mark Twain Circle Sessions American Literature Association Conference San Francisco, CA, May 24-27, 2012

The Mark Twain Circle of America invites proposals for conference sessions (80 minutes per session) or individual papers (15-20 minutes) for the 2012 ALA conference (San Francisco; May 24-27). The topics are entirely open, provided that they're Twain-related. Send your proposal (abstract, 1-2 pages) to Jim Leonard by January 7, 2012, at the following address: jim.leonard@citadel.edu.

Call for Papers Special Joint Session: Henry James and Mark Twain American Literature Association Conference San Francisco, CA May 24-27, 2012

The Mark Twain Circle and the Henry James Society invite proposals for a conference session tentatively titled "Getting Real: Henry James and Mark Twain," at the 2012 ALA conference (San Francisco; May 24-27). Papers may focus on James-as-Realist, Twain-as-Realist, or both James and Twain; or they may address American Realism in general. Send your abstract (1-2 pages) to Jim Leonard by January 7, 2012, at the following address: jim.leonard@citadel.edu. John Carlos Rowe (johnrowe@usc.edu), 2012 President of the Henry James Society, will serve as contact person for the session on the Henry James side.

Elmira 2013

Planning has begun for *Elmira 2013: The Seventh International Conference on the State of Mark Twain Studies*. The anticipated dates are August 1 through 4, 2013. Be sure to clear those dates for attendance of the conference. Can it live up to the standard of *Elmira 2009*? Center for Mark Twain Studies Director Barbara Snedecor says "Yes." Watch for the call for papers on the Mark Twain Forum and the Mark Twain Circle website in coming months, and in the April 2013 *Mark Twain Circular*.

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