



# Mark Twain Circular

Newsletter of the Mark Twain Circle of America

Volume 21

November 2007

Number 2

## Report from the President

**Lawrence I. Berkove**  
Univ. of Michigan-Dearborn

The 2007-08 academic year is already shaping up to be an eventful one. The following items are worthy of note.

1. In my previous letter I said that the Circle would be subject to annual review by the IRS. That needs a little clarification. Each year, we are required to apprise the IRS of our general financial situation. The IRS can, of course, ask for more detailed information at any time. I am happy to say that under our Secretary-Treasurer **Kerry Driscoll**, our financial house is in order. She is now officially the sole recipient of any payment to the Circle, and the sole dispenser of Circle funds.

2. As was discussed at the general meeting at ALA last year, the Wiley-Blackwell (W-B) organization is putting together a centralized publication of the journals of major American author and literary societies and asked us to join. It was decided that the Executive Board would look into the matter when written proposals were sent to us. This was done by late summer. Although there will be an exchange of payments between us and W-B, it was decided that on balance this was a desirable way to go and the arrangement would enhance the Circle as well as its publications. The Executive Board, responding to W-B's request for a prompt response, unanimously approved the proposal after making some changes in it, and in September I signed our acceptance of it. Starting with the 2008 *Mark Twain Annual*, therefore, our editor will continue to determine editorial policy and solicit, select, and edit submissions to the journal, but W-B will handle the layout, publication, and mail-

ing. It will also publish the journal (including the previous issues) online, maintain the website, and pay us royalties. This matter will be reported on more fully at the next general meeting, at ALA.

3. Under the guidance of Editor **John Bird** and Associate Editor **Ann Ryan**, the next issue of the *Annual* is expected to come out and be mailed in December. We hope to mail membership notices for 2008 with the *Annual*, thus saving on separate postage. Following the vote last May to raise dues, the new annual rate for individual members will be \$25—still a great bargain for author societies. Please pay for your renewal promptly, preferably as soon as you get the *Annual*; it will help us greatly in keeping ahead of our costs in a tight year.

4. Thanks to vice-president/president-elect **Bruce Michelson**, the Circle will soon have a new, more attractive, and more helpful webpage. It will be kept up-to-date and be a reliable source of information about the Circle and its activities.

5. Judging from the evaluations by the 15 high-school teachers from around the country who attended the month-long NEH seminar on Mark Twain that was co-directed last July at Elmira College by **Larry Berkove** and **Barbara Snedecor**, and assisted by **Joe Csicsila**, it was a great success. Guest lectures from **Mike Kiskis** and **Kerry Driscoll** were valuable additions to the program. The NEH continues to encourage submissions for future programs on Twain. See the NEH website for information.

6. On a less positive note, the MLA appears to have a policy that penalizes member organizations for offering more than one panel at its December meetings, which we have regularly done. It schedules one panel for the last day, at or close to the last hour. We will take counsel with other member organizations on this matter, and have a report for the membership at the ALA business meeting in May, where our position can be voted on. In the meantime, we will offer two

MLA panels again this year.

7. The Call for Papers for the ALA meeting has been posted for close to a month on the Mark Twain Forum, Mark Twain Circle, and ALA websites. Two panels will be offered. Papers should be submitted to me by mail or by e-mail. See the "Call for Papers" on p. 3 of the *Circular* for session titles and descriptions and for addresses for submission of papers. Some excellent submissions have already been received, so it is desirable to submit as early as possible.

8. The newly formed Australian Mark Twain Society is becoming quite active. Under the spirited leadership of its president, **Ron Hohenhaus**, it has begun to search through the 1860s newspaper archives of Ballarat and other gold-mining communities for articles by Twain and other Sagebrush and California authors that were reprinted as exchange items. If you wish to correspond with Mr. Hohenhaus, his e-mail address is: [info@marktwain.com.au](mailto:info@marktwain.com.au).

9. Last May **Larry Berkove** discussed the relevance of *Connecticut Yankee* to the general subject of political satire on the national MLA radio program, *What's the Word?* (#234). In brief he explained how although one level of the novel may be seen as addressing the topic, in light of the novel's deeper-level denial of freedom, the issue of political satire is reduced to secondary importance.

10. **Joe Csicsila** and **Chad Rohman** will co-chair the "Centennial Symposium on Mark Twain's 'The Mysterious Stranger,'" next Oct. 10-11 at Elmira College. It will schedule fourteen international scholars as presenters and feature an evening cocktail reception followed by a formal dinner and a keynote address by **Alan Gribben**.

11. Let me end this report with some exceptionally good, late-breaking news. In response to our application to the Mark Twain Foundation for much-needed financial assistance, the Foundation has generously responded with a grant of \$2000. It will ensure that we end 2007 and begin 2008 in the black. In accordance with the Foundation's instructions, the following statement acknowledges the source: "The Mark Twain Foundation. Use of this name for anything other than appropriate funding lists requires prior approval." The Circle is deeply grateful for this support.

It should be evident that the Mark Twain Circle has entered upon a program of increased activity that has attractions for both established Twainians and new members. This is an exciting time to be involved with Twain studies, so we encourage established members to renew their memberships promptly and to spread the word to potential new members that they are welcome.

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## 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](mailto:leonardj@citadel.edu)), or by other means.

### Books

**Applegate, Debby.** *The Most Famous Man in America: The Biography of Henry Ward Beecher*. Doubleday, 2006. Pp. 529. Hardcover. \$27.95. ISBN 0-385-51396-8.

**Berne, Suzanne.** *The Ghost at the Table*. Shannon Ravenel, 2007. Pp. 304. A novel in which Twain and his family play a role, paralleling the relationships of the twentieth-century family who are the story's main focus.

**Bush, Harold K.** *Mark Twain and the Spiritual Crisis of His Age*. Harold K. Bush, Jr. University of Alabama Press, 2007. Pp. 352. Hardcover. \$47.50. ISBN 978-0-8173-1538-2. Mark Twain is often pictured as a severe critic of religious piety, shaking his fist at God and mocking the devout. Such a view, however, is only partly correct. It ignores the social realities of Twain's major period as a writer and his own spiritual interests: his participation in church activities, his socially progressive agenda, his reliance on religious themes in his major works, and his friendships with clergymen, especially his pastor and best friend, Joe Twichell. It also betrays a conception of religion that is more contemporary than that of the period in which he lived. Harold K. Bush, Jr. highlights Twain's attractions to and engagements with the wide variety of religious phenomena of America in

his lifetime, and how these matters affected his writings. Though Twain lived in an era of tremendous religious vigor, it was also a time of spiritual upheaval and crisis. The rise of biological and psychological sciences, the criticism of biblical texts as literary documents, the influx of world religions and immigrant communities, and the trauma of the Civil War all had dramatic effects on America's religious life. At the same time mass urban revivalism, the ecumenical movement, Social Christianity, and occultic phenomena, like spiritualism and mind sciences, all rushed in to fill the voids. The rapid growth of agnosticism in the 1870s and 1880s is also clearly reflected in Twain's life and writings. Thus Twain's career reflects in an unusually resonant way the vast changes in American belief during his lifetime. [Text from dust jacket.]

**Davidson, Loren K.** *Down the River, or Wildness of Heart*. Xlibris, 2006. Paperback. Pp. 152. \$20.99. This is a book mainly about the Mississippi River—the story of three young college professors exploring Huck Finn, Mark Twain's river, and themselves—whacking together a raft from a sodden old dock, and then pushing off onto a calm surface only to be suddenly embraced by a strong current taking them completely off course, and in subsequent days, being swept along through searing heat, drenching rain, wild hurricane winds and swarms of mosquitoes. At the beginning of the trip, Davidson writes, "While picking up sticks for a fire, I crossed the head of the island. It was almost dark now and I looked across to Hannibal, where lights shone cheerily. I suppose my mood, like that of the gregarious Huck, should have been a little wistful, but instead, the sense of adventure, of reliving in a small way the marvelous joys of Huck's real fiction, made the contrast between my feeling and his, great. The air about me contained a host of witnesses. The real island and real Hannibal were suddenly and without effort the idyllic, fictional Eden of boyhood, and across a shining river lay St. Petersburg. Something had begun, the end of which we could not see." [Text from publicity flyer.]

**Gabler-Hover, Janet, and Robert Sattelmeyer, eds.** *American History Through Lit-*

## Call for Papers American Literature Association National Convention San Francisco, CA May 22-25, 2008

The Mark Twain Circle will offer two sessions at the American Literature Association convention, centering on the following general topics:

1. *Mark Twain's Use of History*—ideas and events from the past that influenced him.
2. *The International Mark Twain*—Twain's involvement in international events, and/or their impact on him.

There will be three papers in each panel, each of duration of no more than 20 minutes. The deadline for receipt of complete manuscripts is **Monday, Jan. 7, 2008**. All papers received will be promptly acknowledged. A decision on each will be reached by Tuesday, Jan. 15, and notification will follow soon thereafter.

Inquiries and all papers should be submitted to:

Prof. Lawrence I. Berkove  
Dept. of Humanities  
Univ. of Michigan-Dearborn  
Dearborn, MI 48128  
lberkove@umd.umich.edu

*erature, 1820-1870*. 3 vols. Hardcover. Pp. 1500. \$345.00. Charles Scribner's Sons, 2005. Entries include "The Innocents Abroad" and "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County."

**Justus, James H.** *Fetching the Old Southwest: Humorous Writing from Longstreet to Twain*. University of Missouri Press, 2004. Pp. xiii + 591. Hardcover. \$54.95. ISBN 0-8262-1544-0.

**Krass, Peter.** *Ignorance, Confidence & Filthy Rich Friends: The Business Adventures of Mark Twain, Chronic Speculator and Entrepreneur*. John Wiley & Sons, 2007. Hardcover. 288 pages. ISBN 0-471-93337-6. \$22.95. Peter Krass's study of Twain considers his rabid entrepreneurial side and pursuit of great wealth in the spirit of the robber barons. Krass explores this oft-

neglected side of Twain's life as he uncovers his rollercoaster ride through America's Industrial Revolution. Krass attempts not only to capture Twain's rich experiences, but his voice, which was acerbic and hilarious, gloomy and exuberant, painfully blunt yet always instructive. After growing up in poverty, Twain sought his fortune in the Nevada Territory silver mines. Eventually, he struck gold when he founded his own publishing house and then made a killing of \$2.5 million in today's dollars by publishing General Ulysses S. Grant's memoirs alone. Twain was a venture capitalist who made significant investments in some twenty start-up firms and inventions. He was also an inventor himself, a Wall Street investor with a sizable stock portfolio, a pioneer in salesmanship, a brilliant public speaker, and a hard-nosed negotiator. From his tremendous breadth of experience, Twain became a savvy businessman in his own right and befriended tycoons like Andrew Carnegie and Henry "Hell Hound" Rogers, the latter John D. Rockefeller's right-hand man. But he made his blunders, too, that put him on the brink of personal bankruptcy. Krass captures the drama in a unique business narrative that follows Twain's evolution as an entrepreneur, venture capitalist, and passionate investor. [Text from publisher's blurb.]

**Messent, Peter, and Louis J. Budd, eds.** *A Companion to Mark Twain*. Hardback. Pp. 568. Blackwell, 2005. \$162.95. Mark Twain is one of the best-known figures of American literature. This broad-ranging companion brings together many of the most respected American and European critics and a number of up-and-coming scholars to provide an overview of Twain, his background, his writings, and his place in American literary history. It places especial emphasis on the ways in which the author's works remain both relevant and important for a twenty-first-century audience. The book approaches Twain through six subject headings: his cultural and historical context; his relationships with other writers; his role in the larger professional world of publishing and performing; studies of his travel writing; studies of his fictional works, and readings of his role as a humorist. [Text from dust jacket.]

**Nasaw, David.** *Andrew Carnegie*. Hardcover. xiv + 878 pages. Penguin, 2006. ISBN: 978-0143112440. \$35. Nasaw's biography of Carnegie includes a discussion of the friendship between Mark Twain and Andrew Carnegie and reprints

portions of a number of letters that were exchanged between the two men. [Text from Mark Twain Forum notice.]

**Quirk, Tom, and Gary Scharnhorst, eds.** *American History Through Literature, 1870-1920*. 3 vols. Hardcover. Pp. 1500. \$345.00. Charles Scribner's Sons, 2005. Numerous entries related to Mark Twain, as well as literary realism and the historical context of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

**Robinson, Forrest G.** *The Author-Cat: Clemens's Life in Fiction*. Fordham University Press, 2007. Pp. xvi + 242. Cloth. \$45.00. ISBN 978-0-8232-2787-7.

**Twain, Mark.** *Mark Twain's Civil War*. Ed. David Rachels. University of Kentucky Press, 2007. When the Civil War erupted in 1861, steamboat traffic along the Mississippi River ceased, leaving riverboat pilot Samuel Clemens out of a job. Answering a call for troops, Clemens enlisted in the Missouri militia and served for approximately two weeks before putting down his gun and heading westward—a departure that launched the writing career of the man more famously known as Mark Twain. Twain's popularity gave rise to increased examination of his background and speculation about the nature of his leave-taking. Was Twain a coward afraid to die for his country? Did his true loyalties lie with the Confederacy? What sequence of events led him to enlist and later abandon the Missouri militia? Though many have proposed answers to these questions, insight into Twain's personal and moral investments in the war is best derived from an examination of the body of literature he produced both during the war and in its wake. *Mark Twain's Civil War* facilitates this type of analysis by compiling all of Twain's Civil War writings under one cover. From nonfiction essays and reprinted speeches that attest to his personal experiences in the war to the fiction imbued with Twain's later sentiments towards the conflict, editor David Rachels assembles a collection which gets at the heart of Twain's relationship with the war that divided the nation. Selections include "The Private History of a Campaign That Failed," "An Author's Soldiering," and a reprint of the first public comments he issued about his experience in 1877. Twain's fiction comprises the latter half of the book, with pieces like "Lucretia Smith's Soldier," "The Facts in the Case of the Great Beef Contract," and "A True Story, Repeated Word for Word as I Heard It"

offering his perspectives on romantic depictions of the war, the misguided government bureaucracy, and the institution of slavery. Supplementing these Twain-penned pieces are works by Albert Bigelow Paine, Twain's biographer and literary executor after his death, and Absalom C. Grimes, a Confederate mail runner who served alongside Twain during the war. [Text from dust jacket.]

**Vogel, Dan.** *Mark Twain's Jews*. N.J.: KTAV Publishing House. Pp. xiv + 146. Hardcover. \$22.95. ISBN 0-385-51396-8.

### Articles

**Ensor, Allison.** "Our Big New Organ Industry": Mark Twain and the Hope-Jones Organ Company of Elmira, New York." 27 pp. Quarry Farm Paper #9, 2005. The monograph concerns Twain's involvement with a pipe-organ manufacturing company which was established in Elmira under the guidance of the eccentric organ builder Robert Hope-Jones. Twain's nephew Jervis Langdon was very much a part of the company and was responsible for getting Twain to come to Elmira for the April 3, 1907, demonstration at the Park Church of one of the new Hope-Jones organs. (Twain made a brief talk to the assembled organists, many of whom had come up from the New York City area.) There was a lot of mistaken optimism about these organs, and the company folded before many years had passed. Hope-Jones went on to work with Wurlitzer, and his ideas were significant in the development of the theater organ. To the purists of the organ world Hope-Jones' name was anathema. [Text provided by author.]

**Kim, Bong Eun.** "Mark Twain's Critique of Literacy Through the War Machine of *Joan of Arc*." *JAST (Journal of American Studies of Turkey)* 21 (2005).

**Kim, Bong Eun .** "Ethics in Twain's *Connecticut Yankee*." *Orbis Litterarum* 61.2 (2006): 133-59.

**Ober, K. Patrick.** "From Amusement to Anger: Samuel Clemens's Shifting Attitude Toward Patent Medicines." *The Pharos* 69.4 (Autumn 2006): 9-15.

**Royal, Derek Parker.** "Eruptions of Performance: Hank Morgan and the Business of Politics." *The Midwest Quarterly: A Journal of Contemporary Thought* 45.1 (2003): 11-33.

### Online Essays

**Beck, Hamilton.** "Mark Twain on the Crimean War." *The Victorian Web*. August 2005.  
<<http://www.victorianweb.org/history/crimea/beck/1.html>>

**Halpern, Martin.** "Huck, Katrina, Gerhard, and Us." *History News Network*. George Mason University. October 3, 2005.  
<<http://hnn.us/articles/16292.html>>



### Dates to Circle

**December 27-30, 2007.** Modern Language Association Annual Convention. Chicago, Illinois.

**May 22-25, 2008.** American Literature Association Annual Conference. San Francisco, California.

**October 11-12, 2008.** Symposium on *No. 44, The Mysterious Stranger*. Elmira, New York.

**August 6-8, 2009.** The Sixth International Conference on the State of Mark Twain Studies. Elmira, New York.

**Minutes**  
**Mark Twain Circle of America 2007 Business Meeting**  
**Westin Copley Place Hotel, Boston**  
**May 25, 2007**

1. President Larry Berkove called the meeting to order at 11 am, and distributed a detailed agenda.
2. Executive Coordinator Kerry Driscoll reported on the Circle's finances, stating that after expenses related to the printing and mailing of Volume 4 of the *Mark Twain Annual* (2006) and the cost of the Circle's ALA reception, our balance would be approximately \$3,500. She also reported that membership renewals for 2007 are still arriving, which will bolster the Circle's coffers. Two potential areas of revenue growth were briefly discussed: the sale of advertising space in *The Mark Twain Annual* and increasing the numbers of libraries which subscribe to the *Annual*. Currently, the Circle receives about \$1,200 annually from these institutional subscriptions, but the potential exists for a much larger amount.
3. Larry then reported on the Circle's expanded activities for 2006-2007. In addition to sponsoring panels at both MLA and ALA, the Circle collaborated with the American Humor Studies Association to sponsor a very successful conference in New Orleans in December 2006. In June 2007 the Circle will also sponsor a tour of Twain sites in Hannibal, MO, led by Bruce Michelson, followed by a roundtable discussion by Twain scholars. In July 2007, Larry Berkove and Joe Csiscila will lead a teachers' workshop on "Mark Twain in His Age," funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, at the Center for Mark Twain Studies at Elmira College.
4. Larry also reported success in obtaining tax-exempt status for the Mark Twain Circle from the IRS. This news was greeted with a hearty round of applause from the group. John Bird offered special thanks to Larry for the time and energy he exerted in this endeavor, noting that several previous officers of the MTC had attempted this and not succeeded. The Circle's official non-profit status entitles us to several benefits, including reduced bulk mailing rates, and eligibility to apply for grants from organizations like NEH. In addition, donations to the MTC are now tax-deductible. Larry also stated that this status does not entail filing annual income tax forms (for which the Secretary/Treasurer breathed an audible sigh of relief), but stressed that good financial records must be kept in anticipation of the IRS's review of our status in 2010. He spoke about the general need for greater fiscal accountability, and a movement toward a more formal, systematized method of record-keeping.
5. Larry reported that he has submitted an application to the Mark Twain Foundation for a grant of \$2,000 to support the Circle's work. He also mentioned that in his role as president he has been contacted by Twain admirers in both Korea and Australia, who are interested in establishing organizations similar to the Circle to advance the study of Twain abroad.
6. Michael Kiskis made a motion to increase the Circle's annual dues for 2008 from \$20 to \$25. The dues for overseas members would increase from \$22 to \$27. This change was unanimously approved by voice vote.
7. Larry announced the transition of the editorship of the *MT Annual* from John Bird to Ann Ryan after the completion of Volume 5 later this year. During the production of volume 5, Ann will work with John in the position of Associate Editor, which she affectionately referred to as being "Girl Friday." Jim Leonard will continue in his role as Managing Editor. Ann briefly discussed plans for a special issue of the *Annual* on Twain and Gender for 2008.
8. The Circle's priorities for 2007-2008 were then discussed: pursuant to our eligibility for bulk mailing rates; plans are being made to shift all Circle mailings to one central post office in Syracuse, NY—to be determined by Ann Ryan for convenience and proximity to the LeMoyne campus to facilitate the mailing of the *Annual*. Kerry will continue to prepare the MTC membership renewal notices, but will send them on to Ann for mailing. It is anticipated that volume 5 will appear in December 2007; a subscription renewal form will be placed inside each copy, and a reminder notice will be sent under separate cover in early 2008. Pay-

ments for subscription renewal will continue to be made to the Executive Coordinator.

9. Jim Leonard then discussed the Circle's financial arrangements with various online companies. Currently, Ebsco publishes both the *MT Circular* and the *Annual* online. Recently, Gale-Thomson and ProQuest have also asked to include the *Annual* in their online offerings. Jim stressed that these are non-exclusive arrangements that give the Circle's publications increased exposure, but might perhaps cut into individual memberships. Jim then introduced Margaret Zusky, of Blackwell Publishers, who gave a very interesting presentation on the *American Literature Collection* that her company is launching in 2008. This will consist of an electronic package of scholarly journals (*The F. Scott Fitzgerald Review*, *Steinbeck Review*, *Leviathan* (the Melville Society journal), and possibly *The Mark Twain Annual*) that will be sold to libraries worldwide. Blackwell would provide an annual \$5,000 stipend to the editor of *The Mark Twain Annual*, and cover all the costs of both printing and mailing hard copies of the *Annual* to Circle members. For each copy of the *Annual* sent to a member, Blackwell would charge the Circle approximately twenty dollars. This possibility generated much excitement and discussion among those present, given Blackwell's potential to reach a worldwide audience. Concerns were also expressed, however, about maintaining the *Annual's* distinctive look, etc. Margaret will follow up with a detailed written explanation of Blackwell's offer, which will then be reviewed by the Executive Committee.

10. In her role as past president and chair of the nominating committee, Ann Ryan nominated Joe McCullough (in absentia) and Jim Leonard for the position of Vice President of the MT Circle, beginning in 2008. Jim Leonard won the nomination by voice vote.

11. Dennis Eddings announced that in October 2009 a conference will be held in Philadelphia commemorating the bicentennial of Edgar Allan Poe's birth. He is trying to put together a panel called, "Reading Poe on Salary: Edgar Allan Poe and Mark Twain, Influences and Affinities." If interested, please contact Dennis at [ajbel@comcast.net](mailto:ajbel@comcast.net).

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kerry Driscoll  
Secretary/Treasurer

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**To:** Prof. Kerry Driscoll  
Executive Coordinator, Mark Twain Circle  
Department of English  
Saint Joseph University  
1678 Asylum Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06117

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 \$25.00 (\$27.00 for a non-U.S. address) made out to "Mark Twain Circle of America."

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(printed name)

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(city, state, zip code)

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

James S. Leonard, Editor  
*Mark Twain Circular*  
English Department  
The Citadel  
Charleston, SC 29409

*E-mail: leonardj@citadel.edu*  
*Fax: (843) 953-1881*  
*Phone: (843) 953-5068*

Nonprofit Org.  
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### **Mark Twain Circle Officers**

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- Kerry Driscoll  
Saint Joseph College

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- Ann Ryan (Past President)  
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- James S. Leonard  
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**SERIAL LIBRARIANS:** The *Mark Twain Circular* is entered selectively in the annual bibliographies of the Modern Language Association and the Modern Humanities Research Association, and in the *Humanities International Complete*, the *Literary Criticism Register*, *American Literary Scholarship*, and "A Checklist of Scholarship on Southern Literature" (which appears annually in the Spring issue of the *Mississippi Quarterly*).

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