President's Column
John Bird
Winthrop University

I am teaching a graduate seminar on Mark Twain this semester, a class I have taught two or three times before. It is always a great experience and a great privilege. Most of my ten students had read *Huckleberry Finn*, but most had not read anything else by Twain before the class started. So it is very exciting to share with them and watch them read works including “A Jumping Frog,” *Innocents Abroad, Roughing It, Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn, A Connecticut Yankee, Pudd’nhead Wilson,* and *No. 44, The Mysterious Stranger,* as well as a number of shorter pieces. This intense focus on Twain’s life and works is exhilarating for me, and I hope it is for them. I drive home each Monday night after our three-hour class with so many ideas floating around in my head. What a great job I have that I get paid to think about and talk about Mark Twain, something I would do for nothing (but don’t tell my university).

As another year begins to wind to a close, I think about how much of my year has centered around this person who died over a hundred years ago. I spent much of my summer reading all the Twain books and articles from 2014 for the “Mark Twain” chapter in *American Literary Scholarship,* then scrambling to distill all that into 20 pages of summary and evaluation. Mark Twain is indeed alive and well in the academy, and now it is time to turn my attention to the scholarly work from 2015. My good friend from graduate school, Gary, stopped by the other day on his way to Florida, and I was telling him how envious I was of him back then in the early 1980s that he had published on Mark Twain and had been included in one of those volumes. As I read through those volumes to begin my dissertation, I used to think about what it would be like to publish an article on Twain and have it reviewed by the likes of Lou Budd or Hamlin Hill. In my wildest dreams, I did not imagine that it might be me writing that chapter someday.
Summer began with ALA in Boston, where one of the Mark Twain Circle sessions was “Returning to the Scene of the ‘Crime’: The Whittier Birthday Speech Re-enacted and Re-examined.” My somewhat offbeat idea was to recreate the controversial speech, with a number of different voices chiming in. “The Mark Twain Players” included Bruce Michelson as narrator, David Carkeet as William Dean Howells, me as Mark Twain, and Kerry Driscoll, Kathryn Dolan, and Dennis Eddings as a number of characters, including Whittier and various newspaper accounts. The room was packed, and the discussion that followed was one of the most engaging I have seen in many years. That speech is like Rashomon, interpretations varying wildly according to point of view, with Twain’s own reactions the most wildly variant of all. Our plan for the 2016 ALA is to do something similar with Twain’s bawdy, centering around 1601. See the call for papers in this issue and let me know if you would like to join the Mark Twain Players.

In early July, I was part of a Twain panel, “Mark Twain in the West” at the International Humor Studies Association conference in Oakland, with Ben Griffin and Vic Fischer of the Mark Twain Papers, chaired and organized by Linda Morris. That trip to the West Coast allowed me to spend two days conducting some research at the Mark Twain Papers, always a great experience, as anyone who has had the privilege will attest. I am convinced that time does not operate normally within the Bancroft Library; that big campanile seems to ring much more often than other clocks, and before you know it, it is 4 p.m. and time to leave the archives.

At the end of July, I gathered with many Twainians at the 2nd Clemens Conference in Hannibal, MO. Henry Sweets and the people at the Mark Twain Boyhood Home and Museum put on an excellent conference, well-attended, with numbers way up from the first one four years ago. Although their recent flooding prevented us from touring the reconstruction of Quarles Farm, we were able to take trips to the birthplace site in Florida, MO, to the Mark Twain Cave, and to go on a dinner cruise on the Mark Twain Riverboat. It’s great to be in a place where nearly everything is named for Mark Twain! (I suspect he would heartily approve of Hannibal’s new brew pub.) I am already looking forward to 2019. And Elmira is now less than two years away...

As part of an endowed professorship I currently have, I am supposed to give an annual lecture to the university community. Talking about Mark Twain to groups beyond our relatively small scholarly community is important, and I was gratified to have nearly 100 students, faculty, staff, and local residents show up for my talk, “Born To Trouble: Mark Twain’s Huckleberry Finn, the ‘N’ Word, Censorship, and Race.” I also talked about Huck and Mr. Mark Twain with two local senior citizen lifelong learning groups, the second one an enthusiastic audience of nearly 200. It is gratifying to see that interest in Mark Twain remains so strong.

Mark Twain has been the center of my year in several other ways, but I think you get the idea. The seeds for all this were sown over 30 years ago, when I decided to focus on Mark Twain for my dissertation. Today’s PhD students are dissuaded, even forbidden, from writing a single-author dissertation. A graduate of our MA program is about to start writing his dissertation at another institution. He was rabid about James Joyce, almost monomaniacal, managing to make a connection to Joyce in nearly every paper he wrote, no matter what the topic. I asked him if his dissertation would be on Joyce, but he shook his head sadly. “I might get to include Joyce,” he said, “but they won’t let us write about a single author.”

“They won’t let us.” Wow. I am certainly glad such a stricture was not in place 30 years ago. Even then, there were warnings not to focus (continued on p. 9)
Twain Talk
An Interview with Peter Messent

What's your earliest memory of reading Twain?

I wish I could remember! I studied Huckleberry Finn at University where (unusually for the period) I took an American Studies degree. But I'm sure I must have come across Twain before that. Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn have become part of our collective unconscious, our cultural memory, and that's my excuse. I guess I'd read versions of them as a child or had them read to me or maybe seen TV programs based on them. But more than this I cannot now say: no blinding moment of recognition!

Where and when did you first encounter Twain in the classroom?

At Manchester University, UK, where Dennis Welland—a Twain scholar—headed up the Department and literature program.

What was your dissertation topic and who directed your dissertation?

I'm beginning to sound older than I am but I did not do a PhD as I got my first permanent academic job before completing my Master's dissertation. This is no sign of genius but of an early 1970's British University system that was fast expanding, especially in the field of American Studies (unfortunately, no longer true today!). But my 60,000-word Master's dissertation was titled "American Humour Between Three Wars" and focused on Twain, Ring Lardner and Kurt Vonnegut. Don't ask me what the third war was: I think the Civil War? Or perhaps Vietnam? It's a title that doesn't really make sense. My supervisor was Dennis Welland but we weren't really on the same wavelength and I really didn't know what a dissertation was meant to be. So it's not a piece of work I'm at all proud of and I suspect was profoundly unoriginal in almost every sense. I guess it is the same in the U.S. but young scholars now in the UK are expected to publish from the very start of their career. But I remember a senior colleague saying to me early in my career that no literature scholar was ready to publish until they were in their forties, and in my case I suspect they were right. My first book was an edited one for the Twentieth Century Views series on Occult Literature! And I was 36 when that came out. I'd written to them suggesting they needed an update of their Hemingway book (another favourite author of mine) and they said no, but would I do an occult literature one. So careers are built? My occult phase did not last long.
Have your impressions of Twain and his work changed at all over the years?

Yes, in all kinds of ways, and that’s mainly to do with changing intellectual concerns and climates. My first proper work on Twain came when critical theory first took hold in the UK and the teaching of literature took on the kind of rigour it had not (for me) had before. Also I began to see a way of approaching texts in a different way and one that genuinely allowed me to have a type of critical entry to a text that, again, I’d never been able to find before. Up to that point I felt I had nothing to say that the Coxes, Nash Smiths, Fiedlers, and Trillings hadn’t already said and a thousand times better than I could ever say it. My first "proper" book was New Readings of the American Novel: Narrative Theory and its Application (1990) and I had one chapter on a Bakhtinian reading of Huckleberry Finn, looking at the way in which the dialogue of voices (and the values they represented) in the book worked in counterpoint with Huck’s monologic narrative voice. It all sounds a bit earnest now and perhaps was but I did at last feel that I was writing something worthwhile (you don’t have to agree!). After that I hooked into the gradual changes that took place in critical thinking and in Twain studies: work on discipline and punishment by Richard Brodhead and Steve Mailloux (whom I was mightily impressed with when we met at Elmira); the new historical turn which read Twain and Race in the context of the time of his writing rather than the period of the text’s setting; the postcolonial and transnational turn which I associate most clearly with critics like Paul Giles, John Carlos Rowe and Mary Louise Pratt; the work of Jonathan Arac, with (underlying much of what he said) a deep-rooted challenge both to the liberal critical consensus of the 60s and to the myth and symbol approach (which earlier critics had also critiqued). Twain became for me a many-sided author who could be read in a multitude of different ways. And of course as time passed my interest in the very variety of Twain’s writings and in the brilliance of his comic techniques also grew. Toni Morrison judged Huckleberry Finn a work of "classic literature, which is to say it heaves, manifests and lasts." That’s what I feel about a lot of Twain: that it still repays our critical attention; has something to say to each generation of scholars and students; keeps, as it were, speaking anew to us in meaningful personal, social and historical ways.

What, if anything, have you grown to dislike about Twain that man and/or Twain studies?

Like everyone, Twain had his bad as well as his good points but I find it hard to dislike him. Quite the opposite, his acute sensitivity to the world around him (even if he didn’t always act on it) make him (for me) someone who didn’t take life easily but who, in the words of a Kipling poem (?) I think he himself quoted, always “done his level best” to live decently and generously to those around him, with an intense loyalty to his family and close friends. His relationship with his daughters as they grew older was never an easy one and he didn’t quite let go and let them grow up in their own ways, perhaps. But in that he was very much a man of his time.

Twain Studies: hmmm. If I occasionally have noticed a tendency to insularity (as occurs in any single author group) I couldn’t have met a nicer bunch of people and that is part of what has kept me working on Twain. I’ve been very lucky in that I always easily got funding (at
least from my 40’s on) to come to a conference every year or two in the U.S. and to do research at Berkeley and elsewhere. And meeting Twain scholars on those trips has been a real joy. I genuinely think people work on a particular author because they have something in common with her or him, and Twain people are generous, witty, welcoming, bright, a great bunch. I don’t want to mention anyone by name because there are too many people who have genuinely made my academic and personal life richer, and I would hate to leave anyone out! But I must mention Lou Budd: a lovely and witty man who treated younger Twain scholars as absolute equals and whose generosity towards me (as one of those younger scholars) was astonishing.

What are some of the common misperceptions about Twain that you strive to clarify/correct/amend?

This may sound harsh but I find there is a tendency to treat him rather as a saint when it comes to the matter of race. Twain grew out of his early prejudices to become a figure who was clearly very much on the right side in his depiction of African American culture and in his recognition of the various injustices in American society affecting those who were on the wrong side of the (supposed) racial dividing line. But he wasn’t perfect and in some ways did not rise above the values and prejudices of his time. But I would argue that we really cannot expect anything else. And that in books like Huckleberry Finn and Pudd'nhead Wilson he did lay out a radical challenge to the deepest of racist suppositions.

What do you consider your most important contribution to Twain studies?

I guess I’m most pleased with Mark Twain and Male Friendship, my last Twain book, in that it spoke to concerns which were personal as well as historical. And Twain came alive for me in a new way in his relationships with Howells, Rogers and good old Joe Twichell! But I also enjoyed writing my book on Twain’s short works, an undervalued area. And I wish I could write better on the way humor works, such a difficult thing to do. I think it was E.B. White who said that dissecting humor is like dissecting a frog. The thing immediately stops jumping and becomes just dead matter. A nicely appropriate image for Twain’s work.

What’s your best story about a Twain scholar from an earlier generation?

Well, that stumps me completely! Pass. But I have two best Twain stories of my own. The first is coming to the U.S. for a holiday with Carin, my wife, and my two children about twenty years ago. We visited Amherst and went to the Emily Dickinson house. There turned out to be one tour a day and eight people allowed on it. It was full. Carin said why didn’t I try and get on it alone, so I said I taught Dickinson (which I did) was here from the UK, and was there any possibility of fitting one more person on the tour. You know the answer: No. The next day we went to Hartford to the Twain house.

What’s your best story about a Twain scholar from an earlier generation?
Tours every half hour. Friendly people. A democratic experience. Talk about redskins and palefaces (a nod to Philip Rahv).

Second story. Gretchen Sharlow invited me to Elmira to give one of the papers at Quarry Farm and stay for a few days. I stayed by myself at Quarry Farm which at night was totally quiet with total blackness outside. And of course the house is furnished in Victorian style, as when Twain would stay there. Well, late at night the house would start creaking and (though I have no truck with ghostly presences) I did start locking every door behind me as I moved from room to room. A total treat to be there but scary!

What do you think still needs to be done in Mark Twain studies?

I very much liked the historical turn that took place in the 80’s whereby our study of texts become much more historically and culturally specific and I think this affected my own work greatly. But I can’t quite let go of the myth and symbol approach and suspect we might go back to it at some point (though treat it in a different way). I guess what I’m thinking of is the worldwide appreciation of novels like Huckleberry Finn. How does that happen? How, for instance, do the Japanese “get” the book. Especially when you think of the problem of translating Jim’s dialect and Huck’s vernacular voice. Shelley Fishkin has done valuable work on this but I think there’s still much more to be said and thought about here. We also need more biographical stuff on Twain and his daughters. But I’m uneasy here because I feel whoever does it (and I’m sure someone is doing it already) may well open up intimate and painful family details which are perhaps best left unrevealed. Tricky!

What’s your best advice for someone just starting in the field?

Take your time. Don’t try and do too much too quickly. Go to conferences and talk about your ideas with other Twain scholars and ask them what they see as promising future topics. It is not always easy to find a subject to focus on, especially with a writer like Twain who has been the subject of so much critical attention. But there are always new areas to write about. I remember meeting a graduate student at my first Elmira conference who was working on the servants of various American writers, Twain among them. What a brilliant subject!

Peter Messent retired from the University of Nottingham in 2011 following a distinguished career of 40 years as Professor of Modern American Literature and Head of the School of American and Canadian Studies.
This coming January Hollywood releases a new combined adaptation of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. But be warned: this is no Elijah Woods-meets-Mark Twain. *Band of Robbers* is a little different.

Written and directed by award-winning indie filmmakers Aaron and Adam Nee, *Band of Robbers* is a distinctly modern take on Twain’s two best-known works. Tom and Huck (and Joe Harper and Ben Rogers and Becky Thatcher and Sid Sawyer and Tommy Barnes and Amy Lawrence, for that matter) are all grown up and living in a twenty-first-century iteration of small-town America. Even though they’re older, Tom and his gang have lost none of their lust for adventure—or for Murrell’s treasure.

Reviewers are hailing *Band of Robbers* as a movie with “a killer premise, polished direction, and a tone as though Anton Chigurh sauntered into *Bottle Rocket*.” The film casts Kyle Gallner (*American Sniper*) as Huck, Adam Nee (*The Last Romantic*) as Tom, Melissa Benoist (*Supergirl*) as Becky Thatcher, Stephen Lang (*Avatar*) as Injun Joe, Matthew Gray Gubler (*Criminal Minds*) as Joe Harper, and Hannibal Burress (*SNL*) as Ben Rogers. *Band of Robbers* will strike many at first as straight-up literary pastiche. And it is, in the best sort of way. Adam Nee explains that he and his brother labored at all stages of the process to remain faithful to Twain’s texts: “I carried around a couple of old paperbacks on and off for seven years, trying to crack the case of merging these two stories into a movie. I was obsessed, to be completely honest. I would highlight and underline and have eureka moments that ended up hitting dead ends later. But a closer look reveals that the Nees sought to do more than simply get the surface details of Twain’s plots right. *Band of Robbers* is, in a sense, cinematic homage to Mark Twain, an artist both brothers admire deeply. “What attracted me most to these stories,” says Aaron Nee, “is the mysterious balance Twain struck in his books, holding childish whimsy and the biting humor of an old
curmudgeon in perfect tension with each other. The books are simultaneously light, humorous adventures and dark, violent satires. The challenge of capturing that dramatic alchemy really appealed to me.”

Band of Robbers premiered in June 2015 at the Los Angeles Film Festival where it received a special encore screening at the LA County Museum of Art. In November it won the Director’s Choice Award at the 2015 Naples Film Festival. When asked how they would define success for this project, the Brothers Nee are quick to say that it’s all about helping the audience they wrote Band of Robbers for find this film. “We believe there a lot of people out there that this movie will resonate with,” says Aaron. “Cutting through the noise and getting this in front of people it will mean something to is our biggest goal.” Adam adds, “we don’t expect to have a huge opening weekend. What we do hope for is that the film builds and grows and that people champion it and take pride in having discovered it and shared it with friends.”

Look for Band of Robbers to hit theaters and VOD January 15, 2016.

Check out the trailer and the latest news and updates at bandofrobbersmovie.com.

New Mark Twain Documentary
88 Days in the Motherload: Mark Twain Finds His Voice

To watch the trailer, order the film, and for broadcast schedules of your local PBS stations visit www.thisnthatfilms.net.
President’s Column (cont.)

on a single author, but “they” did not forbid it, thank goodness.

I am thinking now about those senior groups, those lifelong learners. I realize that I am one of them, and not only because I am very close in age to their demographic, but because I am a lifelong learner too. I have devoted over 30 years, more than half my life so far, to reading about, writing about, thinking about, and talking about Mark Twain. And for much of that time, I have been a member of this community that shares that lifelong interest, the Mark Twain Circle of America—and beyond.

Perhaps the preeminent lifelong learner was Mark Twain himself. When I think about the breadth of his reading, in areas including history, literature, biology, geology, theology, philosophy, politics, psychology, economics, and so much more, I stand in awe. By the end of his life, he had given himself an education that surpasses what we get in college these days, even when we have advanced degrees. Not bad for a person who had to stop his schooling at age 12 or so.

The end of November brings Mark Twain’s birthday, and my Twain class happens to meet on that Monday, November 30. Our second to last class of the semester will become a birthday party, and I plan on toasting the person who made all this possible. Here’s to Mark Twain! Long may he live!

Speaking of toasting, look for announcement of a gathering to be held at ALA in San Francisco in May, 2016. As one of my last presidential acts, I will organize a ten-course Chinese banquet at what I think is the best Chinese restaurant in Chinatown. Details to follow...

The Mark Twain Annual
The Journal of the Mark Twain Circle of America

Chad Rohman, Editor
Kerry Driscoll, Book Review Editor

The Mark Twain Annual focuses on critical and pedagogical articles about Mark Twain’s works. Founded in 2003 by the Mark Twain Circle of America, this annual fall publication is sent to all members of the Mark Twain Circle and published by Penn State University.

For submission inquiries and information about the journal please contact Chad Rohman at crohman@dom.edu.
Mark Twain Circle
Minutes of the 2015 Annual Meeting

ALA Annual Conference
Boston, Massachusetts
May 23, 2015

President John Bird called the meeting to order.

In attendance were John Bird, president; Kerry Driscoll, vice president; Sharon McCoy, executive coordinator; Chad Rohman, editor, *Mark Twain Annual*; Joseph Csicsila, editor, *Mark Twain Circular*; Joe Alvarez; Dennis Eddings; Judith Yaross Lee; Bruce Michelson; David E. E. Sloane.

President John Bird offered opening remarks, welcoming members and announcing the joint reception with the American Humor Studies Association (AHSA) at 7pm at the Met Back Bay, after the AHSA/Chesnutt Society panel, ending at 6:30 pm. Bird then discussed the joint Quadrennial Conference with AHSA that took place in New Orleans in December 2014, asked for reports of the conference from members, and opened discussion of future venues and a potential date change, further from final exams and MLA so that more members could attend. Dennis Eddings and Judith Lee reported that the conference was a success, with new members, no simultaneous sessions, strong presentations and feedback, and good fun all around. The executive coordinator will send a check for $750 for MTCA’s portion of the expenses over and above the conference fees collected. October was proposed as a date change for the next conference, and suggestions for possible venues included Austin, TX; Las Vegas, NV; and Clearwater, FL. If any members have other ideas, please contact John Bird, and he will make sure they are discussed with AHSA.

Bird next discussed the upcoming Clemens Conference July 23-25, 2015, in Hannibal, MO, sponsored by the Boyhood Museum. Presentation submissions are up from the first quadrennial conference; Bird encouraged members to increase the Circle’s support of and presence at the conference, aiding its growth in depth and scope. Joe Csicsila asked that members attending would forward pictures for inclusion in the *Circular*.

Vice president Kerry Driscoll made a proposal for a reception at next year’s annual meeting in San Francisco for a reception and sessions including a round table and panel, honoring Vic Fisher, one of the editors at the Mark Twain Papers, on his retirement. Details were discussed and the proposal unanimously accepted. Further discussion of next year’s annual meeting at ALA also included a proposal by Dennis Eddings that the Circle follow the success of its Whittier Dinner speech performance and discussion with a performance of 1601, perhaps with a panel of supporting papers. John Bird and other members commented on the success of the Whittier performance and discussion, an event that had standing-room-only attendance. Members of the Circle took parts in a dramatization of Twain’s speech and those of other luminaries present at the event, along with quotations from press coverage in its wake. Lively discussion followed of the event, its history, controversies about its presentation and its actual impact, and about the performance by Circle players. All present unanimously supported a similar production/session next year.
Sharon McCoy presented the treasury and membership report. Income for the year, including membership dues, donations, royalties, and institutional subscriptions was $5,502. McCoy noted that membership renewal income was thus far lower than expected as, due to family health issues, the renewal notices had been delayed. PayPal continues to be a strong option for renewal, though some members reported problems or confusion with the process on the website. Expenses for the year, including stipends, a transitional limited print run for the *Circular*, the annual reception, and the web page, total $4481, resulting in a treasury balance of $12,348.70. The Circle’s share in the Quadrennial Conference expenses (mentioned above) is not yet included in this balance. In terms of membership, the Circle gained only 15 new members this year, down from last year. Currently, the organization has 173 national members and 20 international members, also down from last year.

Discussion ensued about attracting new members, engaging current members, and making membership more affordable, with the conversation continued during Joseph Csicsila’s report (below) of a public relations evaluation project by members of his university. All present members agreed that, given economic realities and the fact that the electronic format of the *Circular* means that international memberships no longer need higher rates to account for postage, membership rates should be adjusted. New, lower rates for international members, graduate students, and K-12 teachers were unanimously approved after discussion, along with a 3-year renewal discount for individual members. New membership rates for 2016 are as follows:

Graduate students and K-12 teachers: $15
Individual members, both inside the U.S. and internationally: $30
Multi-year discount, individual level: $75 for three years

Chad Rohman presented the editor’s report for the *Annual*. Diana Pesek at Pennsylvania State University Press reports “modest increases” in individual and institutional subscriptions, of 3% and 5%, respectively, from 43 to 44 individual subscriptions and 104 to 109 institutional. Rohman reports that Pennsylvania State UP has been extremely supportive, correcting any problems quickly, and that the editorial manager is working well. Rohman announced the July 1 deadline for the 2015 issue, with one-two essays yet to come in. Rohman is pleased with the quality of submissions and feels that there are a healthy number of rejections and strong participation from the editorial board of fifteen, all but one of whom have reviewed submitted essays, but he would like to see even more essays submitted. Rohman would like to encourage presenters at ALA, the Clemens Conference in Hannibal, and other conferences to develop and submit their papers to the *Annual*. All submissions are read by at least two readers. Dennis Eddings commended the high quality of the *Annual* under Penn State, and David Sloane commended Rohman on his editorship. Rohman would like to encourage members to send their work to the *Annual* for consideration: “Don’t be hesitant.”

Joseph Csicsila presented the editor’s report for the *Circular*, stating that response to the new electronic format and its expansions has been positive, particularly to the interviews
now included. Csicsila also presented a capstone project and report by Eastern Michigan University’s public relations cohort. Their evaluation concluded that the Circle is operating on an older model for organizational growth and included recommendations for updating the logo and a suggestion to incorporate a social media specialist into the executive board, in order to reach out more effectively to a broader audience. It was suggested that over the next two years a small committee form to focus on these possibilities, including providing more services for high school teachers and finding ways to give more members opportunities to participate actively in areas of interest to them. John Bird was commended for the Circle website; suggestions for making it even stronger included adding a blog to the website with contributions from various scholars and developing resources for sharing information and for teaching.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon D. McCoy

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**Mark Twain Circle**

**Calls for Papers**

American Literature Association
San Francisco, California: May 25-29, 2016

Session 1: “Mark Twain’s Bawdy *1601* and Other Dirty Works: Readings, Reactions, and Discussion”

We will have readings of *1601*, “Some Remarks on the Science of Onanism,” and perhaps other works, as well as critical commentary by Mark Twain, Van Wyck Brooks, and other critics. A script will be provided to readers. If you would like to be a member of the Mark Twain Players, send a request to John Bird by January 15, 2016. Email to bird@winthrop.edu

Session 2: Open

Send a proposal for a 20-minute paper on any topic related to Mark Twain’s life or works to John Bird by January 16, 2016. Email to birdj@winthrop.edu

Modern Language Association
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: January 5-8, 2017

“The Politics of Mark Twain’s America”

Proposals are invited examining any aspect of Clemens’ life and work in relation to the ideologies, social movements, and class/race/gender tensions of the latter half of the 19th century. Send abstracts to Kerry Driscoll at kdriscoll@usj.edu by 1 March 2016.
Renew Your Membership in the Mark Twain Circle of America for 2016!

And if you haven’t yet renewed for 2015, you can use this form, too.

$30 Individual (US and International)
$15 Graduate Students and K-12 Educators
$75 Three-year Individual

Membership helps support the educational and social activities of the Circle, including scholarly panels at academic conferences such as MLA and ALA. It also includes our newsletter, The Mark Twain Circular, which will keep you connected to all things Twain, and the Mark Twain Annual, published by Pennsylvania State UP, beginning fall 2013. Previous issues will be available to members through JSTOR.

Send queries regarding the Mark Twain Annual to:

Chad Rohman, Editor
The Mark Twain Annual
Department of English
Dominican University
River Forest, IL  60305
crohman@dom.edu

For Annual submission information or to submit a manuscript, visit the Annual’s Editorial Manager website: http://www.editorialmanager.com/mta/

Memberships now payable online via PayPal (credit, debit, or PayPal account)

Or, send your check—payable to the Mark Twain Circle of America—to
Sharon McCoy, Executive Coordinator
Mark Twain Circle of America
165 Weatherly Woods Drive
Winterville, GA 30683

Name_______________________________________________________________________

Address_____________________________________________________________________
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Email Address_________________________________________________________________

Academic Affiliation (if any)___________________________________________________

Questions? Sharon McCoy can be reached at sdmccoy@uga.edu or sdmccoy@alum.emory.edu
Mark Twain Bibliography
Recent Publications

Mark Twain Annual (2015)

Critical Essays
Peter Messent, “Mark Twain, White Elephants and Siamese Twins: Humour and Liminality”
James L. Machor, “A Trying Five Years: The 1870s Reception of Roughing It, The Gilded Age, and Sketches New and Old”
David Foster “On the Theme of Mark Twain’s Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc”
Alex Brink Effgen, ”‘Young’ Walter F. Brown: Before, During, and After A Tramp Abroad”
Matt Seybold , “The Neoclassical Twain: The Zombie Economics of Colonel Sellers”
Debra Cochran, “Imagining Boundaries: Visualizing Space in Twain’s Following the Equator”
Leonard Martinez, “Concentric Failures: Melville, Twain and Shifting Centers”
Greg Sevik, “Poetry, Prosody, Parody: Mark Twain’s Rhythmic Thought”
Ann Ryan, “(Not) Wanted Dear or Alive: Mark Twain’s Literary Autopsy of ‘Jim’s Ghost Story’”

Pedagogical Essay
Saara Zabeen, “The Introduction of Tom Sawyer’s Adventures, to the students of Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) to develop their reading habit”

Reflections: Life at Quarry Farm Today—Guests and “Ghosts”
Harold Bush, “Another ‘True Story’ about Quarry Farm”
Steve Webb, “Quarry Farm and the Afterlife”
Henry B. Wonham, “Shooting Fish in a Barrel: My Visit to Quarry Farm”
Kerry Driscoll, “Privacy and society ...in a manner conjoined”

Book Reviews
Mark Twain, edited by by Gary Scharnhorst. Mark Twain on Potholes and Politics: Letters to the Editor (Garrett Morrison)
Harold H. Kolb Jr. Mark Twain: The Gift of Humor (Tracy Wuster)
Mark Twain, Livy Clemens, and Susy Clemens. Edited by Benjamin Griffin. A Family Sketch and Other Private Writings (Barbara Snedecor)
Andrew Levy. Huck Finn’s America (Ann M. Ryan)
As the Mark Twain Journal approaches its eightieth year of publication (it was originally known as the Mark Twain Quarterly at its inception in 1936), one marvels that the current editor is only the third person to hold this post. The founding editor and his successor would no doubt have been delighted to know that university libraries currently subscribe to their periodical in numerous nations, including France, Germany, Canada, Taiwan, Switzerland, Japan, and England. It has also become a frequently consulted source for the electronic database JStor.

In its early days the journal carried miscellaneous poetry as well as tributes to and articles about prominent contemporary American and British authors. Gradually over the decades its contents began to focus more narrowly on biographical, historical, and critical essays devoted to Samuel Clemens, his family, and his circle of friends and acquaintances. This issue carries on that latter tradition when ROBERT STEWART explores a hilarious newspaper report that Twain filed about an 1863 party at the governor’s house in Carson City. In addition, HENRY S. COHN fills in the blanks about the relationship between Clemens and the newspaper editor and Republican politician Joseph R. Hawley of Hartford. Most Mark Twain scholars are familiar with Hawley’s name but few know much about his life and career.

Our feature article for this Fall issue is THOMAS RUYS SMITH’s illuminating study of how the Mississippi River was depicted shortly before Twain wrote his famous descriptions, and the extent to which those previous accounts presumably influenced his writing.

Independent scholar R. KENT RASMUSSEN becomes the fourth “Legacy Scholar” to be honored by the Mark Twain Journal for his major contributions to the field of Twain studies. KEVIN MAC DONNELL provides a biographical sketch of Rasmussen that helps us appreciate—if not entirely fathom—the energy and the methods behind his phenomenal productivity.

GRETCHEN MARTIN takes up a little-studied late fragment, “Which Was It?,” that has deeply ironic racial overtones.

JOHN LOCKWOOD continues to research instances where reality duplicated fictional events in Twain’s short stories: the burglar alarm and the telephone.

We also commemorate in this issue the success of MARK WOODHOUSE’s work as the Mark Twain Archivist at Elmira College. GRETCHEN SHARLOW, former director of the Center for Mark Twain Studies, writes about Woodhouse’s many achievements in collecting, cataloging, archiving, and promoting the various association items he drew to that campus—including approximately ninety volumes from the Clemens family library that their housekeeper Katy Leary had been allowed to retain as mementoes.
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