

Biblio File

Here's what **Margaret McMullan** tells Biblio File she is up to: "Some terrific news! My new novel-in-stories,



Margaret McMullan

Aftermath Lounge (See New Books, February 2015), is the No. 5 best-selling fiction title this month [August] from SPD, a distributor for independent publishers. Parade Magazine named my anthology *Every Father's Daughter* a 2015 Top Ten 'Sizzling Summer

Read' and a 'Best Gift for Fathers Who Read.' My essay 'Stepping into the Fire: Helping a Student Write About Abuse' appeared in the June issue of Teachers & Writers Magazine. And after teaching and serving as the Melvin Peterson Chair of Literature and Creative Writing at the University of Evansville in Indiana for 25 years, I retired in May in order to write full time. ... **Helen Frost** (see New Books, Page 5) was awarded the New-York Historical Society's 2015 Children's History Book for *Salt* (Macmillan, 2013), which tells the story of two 12-year-old boys growing up in the Indiana territory in the midst of the War of 1812. ... The July 30 Chicago Tribune said **Achy Obejas'** *Ruins* is "one of the best novels about the economic plight of contemporary Cubans. On WGN Radio on July 30, Achy told Justin Kaufmann, "I found my voice in Chicago." ... American Rifleman gave a plug to **Gerry and Janet Souter's** *Guns of Outlaws* in its September issue. Gerry writes to say, "Of course, the NRA



Helen Frost

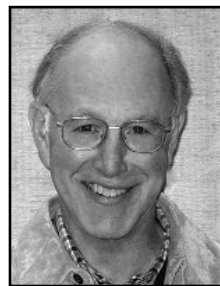
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Two takes on Chicago history start 2015-16 program lineup

Two histories of Chicago – its transit and how it impacted the senses of its inhabitants, will start of the 2015-2016 season of Society on Midland Authors.

The first program, to be held at 6 p.m. Sept. 8 at the Harold Washington Library Center in Chicago (See Page 3), will explore the city's heritage as a vital transportation hub.

Authors **Christopher Lynch, Neal Samors** and **Joseph Schwieterman** will discuss Chicago's extraordinary role as a travel center based on their new books, *Now*



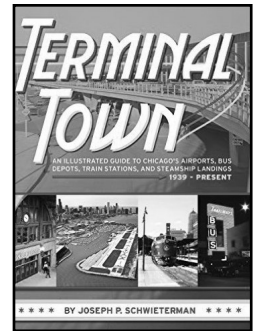
Neal Samors



Joseph Schwieterman

Arriving (the story of air travel in the Windy City over the past 90 years) and *Terminal Town* (an illustrated guide to Chicago's airports, bus depots and train stations).

The presentation will include stunning images and memorable stories of great transportation landmarks, past and present...and the millions who used them. Don't miss this informative yet entertaining program. It's free and open to the public.



On Tuesday, Oct. 13, at the Cliff Dwellers Club, 200 S. Michigan Ave., 22nd floor, Chicago, **Adam Mack** will discuss his new book, *Sensing History*.

A hundred years ago, a walk down a Chicago street invited an assault on the senses. Untiring hawkers shouted from every corner. The manure from thousands of horses lay on streets pooled with molasses and puddled with kitchen grease. Odors from a river gelatinous and lumpy with all manner of foulness mingled with the all-pervading stench of the stockyard slaughterhouses.

In his book, Mack explores the role of the senses in the rise of Chicago from the Civil War through the end of World War I. He examines from a sensory rather than purely visual perspective five events: the Chicago River; Great Fire; 1894 Pullman Strike; publication of Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*; and rise and fall of the White City amusement park.

Literary Landscape
Christopher Lynch

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Literary Latest
New Books

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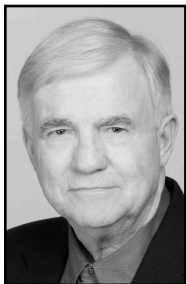
Literary Lore
Robert Loerzel

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Biblio File

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puts their 'A good man with a gun trumps a bad man with a gun' spin on the content, but their membership has deep pockets and waits by their mailbox every month for this mag to show up. We'll take it." ...



Robert O. Harder

... **Robert O. Harder** (see New Books, Page 4) writes to say, "I always enjoy reading the newsletter!" ...

... **Chris Abani** wrote a review of Vu Trans' *Dragonfish* for the Aug. 10 New York Times Book Review. ... **Michael Raleigh's** *Peerless Detective* (New Books, March) came out on Aug. 4. Michael will discuss and sign it at 2 p.m. Oct. 3 at Centuries and Sleuths Bookstore in Forest Park. Michael also will speak on realism in fiction writing at the Chicago Writers Conference on Sept. 26. ... **Lori Andrews** wrote an Aug. 3 op-ed for the Chicago Tribune headlined, "Gov. Rauner, protect our digital privacy." ...

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Literary License

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Twitter@midlandauthors

Society of Midland Authors members can now pay their membership dues, buy tickets to the annual dinner and make donations on our website with PayPal (there is a \$1 fee to help cover PayPal's fee). To make a donation, visit our home page at www.midlandauthors.com and click on the "Donate" button in the upper right corner.

Final Chapters

Elinor Swiger, 1927-2015

Throughout her life, **Elinor Swiger** was a prolific writer, sending letters to the editor, writing opinion pieces and crafting legal documents.

So it was no surprise to her family when she decided to turn her writing skills to books.

"Being a lawyer, she had an interest in writing," said Calvin Swiger said of his mother, who died March 7 at age 87. "She joined some literary clubs in Chicago when we moved to Chicago, and she joined a writers' workshop. ... She wanted to write some books, some significant ones."

Among the writers in the workshop was author **Rita Turow**, and both women eventually joined the Society of Midland Authors. Ms. Swiger was a longtime member of and contributor to the Society, and Turow eventually joined the Society's board.

On a family trip to Mexico, Ms. Swiger "took a lot of notes," Calvin said, and then wrote her first book, *Mexico for Kids* (1971). She followed that with *Europe for Young Travelers* (Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1972).

He next four books were related to the law. They were *The Law and You: A Handbook for Young People*, (Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1973); *Careers in the Legal Profession*, (Watts, 1977); *Women Lawyers at Work*, (Messner, 1978), and *The Law in Your Everyday Life* (Prentice-Hall, 1978).

Her favorite was *Women Lawyers at Work*, which contained biographies of famous women lawyers, including Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who now is a justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

"She loved biography," Calvin Swiger said. "She was an avid reader, much more of a nonfiction reader than a fiction reader. ... She would read just about everyone's autobiography."

Born Elinor Porter, Ms. Swiger grew up on a farm near Medina, Ohio, and attend-

ed Ohio State University as an undergraduate and law student. In 1951, she was one of two women graduates from a law school class that had nearly 130 men.

After graduating from law school, she worked as a tax attorney in the IRS chief council's office, where she met her future husband, Quentin Swiger. They had three sons.

After returning to Chicago, she joined the law firm of Robbins, Schwartz,

“Being a lawyer, she had an interest in writing.”

Nicholas, Lifton and Taylor, where she remained for nearly 30 years. The law firm had schools and colleges as clients.

Ms. Swiger also was involved in politics. In the 1970s, she served two terms on the Glenbrook District 225 School Board.

She also served two terms on the

Glenview Police and Fire Commission, and for 10 years she was chair of the Glenview Zoning Board of Appeals.

"She was always active in local politics," Calvin Swiger said.

She also was one of the co-founders of Character Counts! in Glenview.

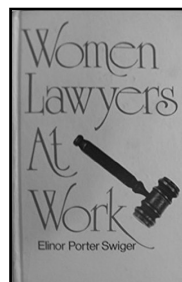
In addition, she was involved in the Chicago Bar Association, where she was chair of the legislative committee, and was the past president of the Illinois Council of School Attorneys. She also was involved in the Northfield Chapter of the Lyric Opera and the Glenview Community Church. And she liked golf, gardening and travel.

She also made an unsuccessful run for the Illinois General Assembly.

"When asked to serve, Elinor was always eager to lead workshops about copyright law for local writers," recalled former SMA board member Jennifer Bartoli-Kalina. "She maintained her professionalism and yet was down to earth when sharing with us the joys and woes of publishing."



Elinor Swiger



Chicago: hub to trains, planes, automobiles, yes, even canoes

Christopher Lynch is the author of *Chicago's Midway Airport: The First Seventy-Five Years* and *When Hollywood Landed at Chicago's Midway Airport: The Photos and Stories of Mike Rotunno*. He is co-author with Neal Samors of *Now Arriving: Traveling To And From Chicago By Air, 90 Years Of Flight* with Neal Samors. He also is a pilot and co-founder of the Midway Historians.

Literary License: *What's the one thing that would most surprise people about the Chicago transportation system?*

Christopher Lynch: Thanks to Chicago's natural resources and location, one can travel anywhere, and you don't need a car or even a plane. In a canoe, you can paddle from downtown Chicago all the way to Billings, Mont., or New Orleans. And from an aviation perspective, you are really only a few hours flight time to Europe, the Middle East, Asia, South America and a thousand places in between. Chicago is truly a city plugged into the global transportation nexus.

LL: *What made Chicago the crossroads of America?*

CL: Chicago has been shaped by its geography. As early as the French voyagers of the 17th century, explorers like Joliet saw this area's potential as a "portage" from the Great Lakes to the Mississippi and the Gulf of Mexico. Chicago became a hub of railroads and then for the airlines as well. In the early days of aviation, airplanes like the Boeing 247 or the Curtis Condor, or DC-9 could not fly long distances without refueling, and Chicago was an important stop on any cross-country flight. Crews also needed to be changed and passengers needed a meal as well. That's why Marshall Field's "Cloud Room" opened in 1948 at Chicago Municipal Airport, (renamed Midway in 1949) becoming such a popular spot. Many famous people, from Jimmy Stewart to Clark Gable to President Harry Truman, dined at the Cloud Room. And besides the great food, such as the Chicken Pot Pie

Sept. 8, 2015, program

Cliff Dwellers

Harold Washington Library,
Cindy Pritzker Auditorium
400 S. State St., Chicago

6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Free

with the flaky crust, the view through the restaurant's large windows was terrific, with airplanes taking off and landing.

LL: *Is Chicago well positioned to remain a transportation hub in the future?*

CL: I believe Chicago will always be an important center of transportation, as it

Literary Landscape

Christopher Lynch



has been for the history of the city. Even in the digital age, products and people still need to get around, and Chicago's transportation infrastructure continues to work well.

LL: *How did you get interested in writing*

about air travel and transportation?

CL: My interest in air travel and transportation began as a young boy, when my grandmother Rose O'Carroll drove me to Monarch Air Service, the family business at Midway Airport, pulling right onto the tarmac. In high school I worked summers at the airport. This being the early 1980s I'd listen to the corporate pilots, who had all been World War II pilots, talk about flying. They would be sipping coffee and telling war stories. Some of them had begun working in aviation back in the barnstorming era of the 1920s and 1930s. A 15-year old kid like me was hooked.

LL: *What's your next book?*

CL: My next book is about Albert Lambert, for which Lambert Airport in St. Louis is named, and the first man to financially back Charles Lindbergh's flight to Paris. It was not by accident that Lindbergh's aircraft was named "The Spirit of St. Louis." This book is for the "Notable Missourians" series for fifth- and sixth-graders published by Truman State University Press.

Biblio File

Continued from Page 2

On Aug. 26, **Arnie Bernstein** was interviewed about *Swastika Nation* for the National Geographic Channel. He also was featured in a Times of Israel article about the German-American Bund. ...

Patricia McNair

tweets to say, "Remember playing with the Ouija Board? Writing is like that sometimes. I don't know who is making them, but suddenly, there are words. Magic." ... The Aug.

10 Kenosha News said

Ann Bausum's *Stonewall: Breaking Out in the Fight for Gay Rights* (Viking Books for Young Readers, May 5) "is a nicely surprising book filled with history that few younger people may know." ...

Claude Walker (See New Books, page 5) writes to say he has another novel "in the works." ... The Open Book Club's next selection is *Paris, He Said* by **Christine Sneed**. ... **Anne Calcagno**

wrote a June Washington Post travel article headlined "Paradise found: Lago Maggiore, the 'Eden of Italy.'" ... The online magazine Bustle on Aug. 26 said of **Chinelo Okparanta's** SMA award-winning *Happiness, Like Water*, "These are colorful, yet dark, stories you won't be able to stop reading." ... Our sympathy goes out to **Shane Gericke**, whose wife, Jerrie, died Aug. 31 after a 14-year battle with breast cancer. ... **Eckhard Gerdes**

has a new novel coming out from an Australian publisher.

... **Jim Schwab** was a panelist at the 2015 Natural Hazards Workshop in Broomfield, Colo., on July 20. He also has been invited to keynote the Coastal Structures & Solutions



Chinelo Okparanta

to Coastal Disasters Joint Conference of the American Society of Civil Engineers



Patricia McNair

Biblio File

Continued from Page 3

and Northeastern University in Boston on Sept. 9. And he'll be on a panel for the Illinois APA Chapter conference in Normal on Oct. 7. ... **Rich Cohen** wrote an Aug. 30 story on the cover of the New



Eckhard Gerdes

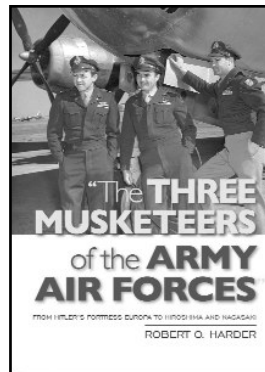
York Times Travel section about Lake Michigan. ... **Dominic Pacyga** was quoted in a May 29 Chicago Tribune editorial. ... Biblio File chatted recently with **Helen Lambin**, who in recent years has put on more than 50 tattoos, even though she is in her 80s. Chuckling, she confirmed it's been a positive experience and even therapeutic. ... **Jonathan Eig** wrote an Aug. 17 opinion piece for Crain's Chicago Business headlined, "Patrick Kane, the culture of pro sports and the abuse of women." ... **Sam Weller** is scheduled to give a Nov. 4 keynote address at Governors State University as part of its Big Read program. ... Mandevilla Press is releasing a new version of **Shane Gericke's** backlist – *Torn Apart*, *Cut to the Bone* and *Blown Away* – in eBooks and trade paperback print. ... **Carol Ascher** (See New Books, right) told the Aug. 31 Litchfield County Times, "I hope (the book) gives people the courage to go through the difficult moments that are there in any reconciliation and get enormous satisfaction in forgiveness." ... Media writer Robert Feder reported July 20 **Jonathan Eig's** best-selling biography of baseball legend Lou Gehrig has moved a step closer to becoming a movie. Feder wrote, "Robert Molloy, grandson of the late New York Yankees owner George Steinbrenner, has joined producer Armando Gutierrez to develop *Luckiest Man: The Life and Death of Lou Gehrig* as a feature film." ... Sad news: SMA member **Michael Argetsinger**, authors of books on auto racing, has died. An obituary will appear in the next issue of Literary License.

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Literary Latest



Sam Reaves' new book, *Cold Black Earth* (Aug. 1, Thomas & Mercer) tells the story of a former State Department agent who returns home from war to western Illinois just as a deranged killer escapes prison and stalks her. Reaves says his "elevator pitch" is "A *Thousand Acres* meets 'Psycho.'"



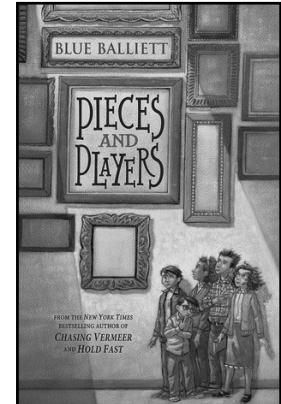
In *The Three Musketeers of the Army Air Forces: From Hitler's Fortress Europa to Hiroshima and Nagasaki* (Naval Institute Press, Oct. 15), **Robert O. Harder** tells the stories of the three men who led the atomic bombing missions.

"I served briefly with the bombardier, Tom Ferebee, and got to know the navigator, Dutch Van Kirk, late in his life," Harder emailed. "The three men's combined story had never before been told; they were extremely close to one another their entire lives."

It's the second book for the Naval Institute Press by Harder, who flew 145 missions as a navigator-bombardier and pilot, and is a "natural follow to the first book." He also has written a four-volume regional history for the Minnesota

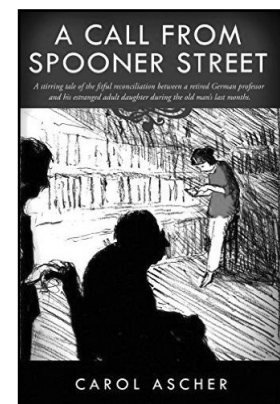
Historical Society.

Col. Walter Boyne, USAF (Ret.), a member of the National Aviation Hall of Fame and author of *The Influence of Air Power upon History*, wrote, "Bob Harder combines excellent writing and superb research with an almost unique advantage of having hands on-experience in the long-ago era of which he writes."



Blue Balliett returns to the world of art with *Pieces and Players* (Scholastic Press, March 31). Thirteen extremely valuable pieces of art have been stolen from one of the most secretive museums in the world. A Vermeer has vanished. A Degas has disappeared. And nobody has any idea where they and the other eleven artworks might be . . . or who might have stolen them.

Publishers Weekly said, "Balliett is an original. ... Thick with devilish red herings, this smart, playful story never stops challenging (and exhilarating) the audience."



Resentments have remained underground for too long in **Carol Ascher's** new book, *A Call From Spooner Street*

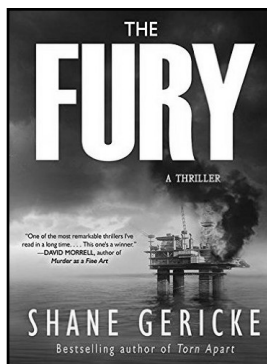
New Books

Continued from Page 4

(Mill City Press, Aug. 4). But then there is a reconciliation between an octogenarian father and his grown daughter.

Three generations of strong-minded Rosens have gone their own ways, keeping a safe distance from each other. When Peter Rosen, the octogenarian émigré professor, takes a bad fall in the snow, his estranged adult daughter Marlene begins flying regularly to Madison.

Long days on Spooner Street amidst her ailing father's beloved German books enable Marlene to let go of old bitterness and rekindle her love for him. When her son, Noah, returns from Africa for a last visit with his grandfather, he instigates a deeper honesty, love and forgiveness among all three Rosens.



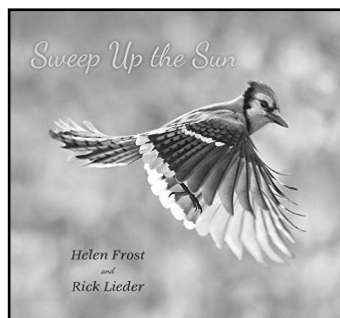
The Chicago Tribune called **Shane Gericke's** new thriller, *The Fury* (Tantor Media, Sept. 4), “a sweeping novel of global terrorism that’s endorsed by such literary superstars as Steve Berry and David Morrell, the creator of Rambo.”

Berry wrote, “Tension and turmoil add up to high-stakes suspense as the characters are skillfully played across a global chessboard. Written like a born bard of old, you won’t be disappointed. But be warned, treachery comes from all directions, even those that cannot be seen.”

In the book, the Deepwater Horizon disaster in the Gulf of Mexico washes a cache of doomsday weapons onto a Mexican beach: bombs filled with VX nerve gas mixed with anthrax, invented by the Nazis during World War II and perfected by the United States to use in the Cold War. The bombs soon fall into the wrong hands and create an unstop-

pable opponent. Only one Chicago Police detective has a chance of preventing those bombs from being used on American soil. Reeling from the recent murder of her husband as well as allegations of police misconduct, Detective Superstition “Sue” Davis is thrown into an undercover assignment. She must infiltrate the Mexican narcotics cartel responsible for the death of her husband in order to get close to the cartel’s sociopathic enforcer, Jimnez “Jimmy” Garcia.

But when the entire Garcia family is killed in Mexico by a U.S. Special Forces raid gone wrong, Garcia will stop at nothing to get vengeance, including triggering newly acquired bombs on American soil. Superstition’s assignment quickly becomes more dangerous than planned as the threat of a terrorist attack looms closer.



Baby robins, open-beaked in their nest. Mallards winging to a new clime. Whether chickadees or cardinals, sparrows or starlings, here are commonly seen birds in their natural settings, captured in photographs of rare beauty and grace.

That’s what you’ll find in Helen Frost’s new book, co-authored with Rick Lieder (Feb. 23, Candlewick)

In perfect synchrony, a lyrical narrative evokes images of play and flight, perseverance and trust.

School Library Journal wrote, “Following on the heels of *Step Gently Out* (Candlewick, 2012), which combines verse and photography to bring readers into the wonders of the insect world, this new title takes readers into the sky to fly with the birds.

Rise into the air/on the strength of your wings –

*go out to play in the sky,
trusting it to hold you/as you learn to fly.*

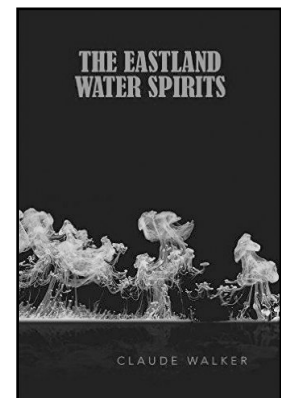
One motivational poem stretches easily throughout the book while the photographs work with it to capture impossible split seconds of flight and rest through a variety of conditions. (A)

*You may find yourself/shaking off rain-drops
or caught in a blizzard at night
You'll pause for a quick conversation,
meet wingtip-to-wingtip/in flight.*

Each page showcases a different type of bird including goldfinches, starlings, ducks, and woodpeckers, and the back matter uses the photographs to connect readers to the birds’ names and basic information. The sharply focused birds stand out against blurred backgrounds, creating a stark contrast that invites close and repeated observation.

With a gentle text and dramatic visuals, this book has much to offer beginning birders, science classes, and storytimes for very young listeners.”

At the end, readers will find profiles of the featured species.



Claude Walker's new novel, *The Eastland Water Spirits* (July 24) is set on Chicago’s deadliest day, far more deadly than the Great Fire. The SS Eastland, a poorly-designed, overcrowded lake steamer, capsized without warning in the heart of downtown Chicago, killing 844 people preparing for a company picnic. The victims – mostly young immigrants who toiled long hours in Western Electric’s Hawthorne Works – and the disaster itself were largely forgotten.

Centennial book about SMA is free to members

A Century of Winged Words

The Society of Midland Authors 1915-2015



Society members may obtain a free 28-page copy of our full Centennial history. It contains the history related in Robert Loerzel's adjoining column and much more.

Send \$1 for postage to the Society of Midland Authors, P.O. Box 10419, Chicago IL 60610.

A history of the Society

This is Part Three of the history of the Society. It picks up from the previous issue as Hamlin Garland decides to move East.

In his journal, **Hamlin Garland** wrote that he'd felt "only half hearted" about his efforts to set up this new Society. "It is all rather pitiful to me, now that I am set free to go East," Garland mused. "Fine and earnest as most of our Midland authors are, they form only a small nucleus in the midst of a ramshackle, ripping, roaring metropolis. Only the paragraphs, reporters, and poets of the daily press are able to survive in this bleak and noisy town." Garland quit his post as president of the Cliff Dwellers and moved to his new home in New York City in early January 1915.

The Society of Midland Authors held its first meeting, voting itself into existence, at 3:25 p.m. on April 24, 1915, in Club Room No. 1 of the Auditorium Hotel. The next day, the Chicago Tribune reported on the group's formation, calling it "a most interesting young organization."

And the Bismarck Tribune reported: "The society is new but it includes practically all of the men and women 'who have really stood up, head and shoulders, over the ruck in recent American literature.'"

The authors composed a little ode for the occasion, which was printed in that North Dakota newspaper. It probably wouldn't have passed muster as a submission to **Harriet Monroe's** Poetry magazine:

*We authors write the books ourselves,
The printer supplies 'em.
The dealer puts 'em on his shelves –
God bless the man who buys 'em!*

Garland was back in Chicago for a

“ *The Society of Midland Authors held its first meeting, voting itself into existence, at 3:25 p.m. on April 24, 1915, in Club Room No. 1 of the Auditorium Hotel.* ”

visit, and he gave a speech that night when the newborn Society held a banquet at the Auditorium, with Randall Parrish as toastmaster. The other speakers were **Douglas Malloch, Emerson Hough, Zona Gale, Edna Ferber and Clarence Darrow.** Garland's friends accused him of abandoning Chicago.

"There was nothing for me to say in reply to this, for each time I return I feel more keenly than ever the fact that my life in Chicago is almost rural by contrast with my

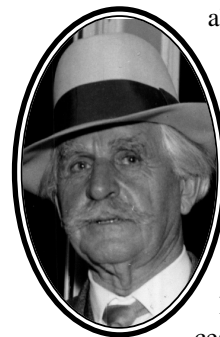
life in New York," Garland wrote in his journal. "My Chicago home is comfortable, my way of life peaceful and easy, but I am walking in a circle. I am making no progress. There are no surprises here, no stimulation to effort. If I were forced to live here I fear I should very soon cease to produce anything at all. No doubt this is a sign of weakness, but such is my psychology."

But Garland stood up for the Midland in comments to the Bismarck Tribune.

"Practically all of the stuff written in recent years, which can classify as literature has been dripped or pounded out up in these old states of Illinois, Kansas, the Dakotas, Michigan, Ohio and Indiana," Garland

*Literary
Lore*

**Robert
Loerzel**



Hamlin Garland



Harriet Monroe

said. "The stuff is printed in New York – but that is all."

As **Alice Gerstenberg** later recalled, Garland "hied himself to New York and we never saw him again." But he did earn a spot on the list of the SMA's charter members, and he stayed a member for a couple of years. His autobiography, *A Son of the Middle Border*, was published in 1917, followed by a sequel, *A Daughter of the Middle Border*, which won a Pulitzer in 1922.

"He never should have emigrated to the East," Stahl wrote in his memoir. "Hamlin Garland has written best when he wrote of the West or with the West in his heart. He is of the West, no matter where he may live. I am bold to say that I think no one else has so well written of certain Midland people."

Garland moved to Hollywood, Calif., in 1929, and died in 1940, writing in his later years about psychic phenomena, claiming that he'd encountered spirits: "They jest with me about their occupations. They laugh at my doubts, quite in character. They touch me with their hands."

The Society chose **James Whitcomb Riley** as its first "honorary president," although the Indiana folk poet was too ill to attend SMA events in Chicago. A letter from Riley was read aloud at the Society's first luncheon, in May at the Hotel La Salle: "You do me great honor in choosing me to head the Society of Midland Authors, an honor I dearly appreciate in view of the fact that we 'westerners,' more than all others, must now compose the mainstay of our country's old ideals – the simple and lovable virtues which have been our blessed American heritage. And so, in expressing appreciation to you, I want to emphasize the high, yet lowly, mission that is ours."



The Auditorium, where the Society of Midland Authors voted itself into existence.

Riley was so revered that when he died in 1916, all the schools in his home state shut down out of respect.

"He was very much interested in the SMA and aided materially in developing it, notwithstanding his ill health," Stahl later wrote.



John M. Stahl

Hobart Chatfield-Taylor

became the Society's first president. Gerstenberg believed that Chatfield-Taylor was "a natural and shrewd choice" for the job. "It is quite likely that when he was chosen president some of the writers would have preferred an author without social background," she wrote. "At that time there was an undercurrent of radicalism against any person of such position, a resentment from men of the Press or from a writer whose only recognition came from the skill of his pen. The suspicion was that if you had any connection with wealth or family prestige your writing just couldn't be good." But Chatfield-Taylor had proved himself with his writing, she said.



Hobart Chatfield-Taylor

"Though a man of wealth and a social leader in Chicago, Hobart worked with amazing pertinacity at his desk," Garland observed.

"Few of the authors I have met are as

interesting, instructive talkers as Chatfield-Taylor," Stahl commented. "Not many have traveled as extensively or observed as intelligently and diligently; not many have met as many eminent people – eminent in widely different fields; and he is full of positive opinions which he expresses in language equally positive, spiced with witticisms and kindly irony. He has all that is required of the captain of a football team; but he has a dislike, amounting to positive hatred, I am sure, of physical exertion. His ample face proclaims goodwill and hospitality; and he has enriched his life by having often at his

board authors and painters and singers of note. I am sure that not a dozen Americans know as many foreign authors; and he has a wide acquaintance among foreign statesmen."

In 1915, 1916 and 1917, Chatfield-Taylor hosted the Society of Midland Authors at Fairlawn, his estate in the northern suburb of Lake Forest, on one

“ *The Society chose James Whitcomb Riley as its first ‘honorary president.’* ”

June afternoon each year.

He'd married into possession of the Farwell family's mansion, which stood along a hundred-foot-high bluff the – tallest point along Lake Michigan's shore in Illinois – on picturesque grounds laid out by the renowned landscape artist Frederick Law Olmsted. Chatfield-Taylor had introduced golf to Lake Forest in 1893, setting up a seven-hole course on the estate; it later became the Onwentsia Club at a permanent location.

"And that first summer the Chatfield-Taylors invited us for an alfresco supper at Fairlawn, their pleasing, old-fashioned house and lawn, shaded by very old trees

History

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on a bluff of the lake," Gerstenberg recalled. "We all went to Lake Forest on the same train and I remember feeling shy and unacquainted until Lillian Bell and Mary Donahey reached out their wings. I was impressed by the portrait-appearance of Rose Chatfield-Taylor as she graciously greeted us with a suave smile.

She wore a large floppy hat and a flowing summer dress with a ribbon somewhere which tied into the blue of her gorgeous eyes. However she might have felt about entertaining this new band of writers Hobart had collected, she came along with the idea that he should fraternize."

The outing included a polo game and a dramatic performance at the Aldis Playhouse, which was run by SMA member **Mary Reynolds Aldis** (1872-1949) and her husband, Arthur.

Reporting on this field trip, the Chicago Tribune sardonically observed:

““ *Many non-authors are sharpening their plowshares and pruning shears into pens in the hopes of some day qualifying for membership in this redoubtable and interesting society.* ””

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Part Four will appear in the next issue of Literary License. It will profile early members of the SMA.

SMA Support

Dues cover mailings and other organizational expenses, but the Society always needs additional money for programs such as the awards at the annual May banquet. Thanks to these members who made contributions since the last newsletter:

Theresa Amato, Ann Bausum, Jennifer Bartoli-Kalina, Marlene Targ Brill, Greg Borzo, Bernard Brommel, Steven Burgauer, Carol DeChant, Michael Ebner, Beverly Friend, Marianne Fineberg, Robert J.R. Follett, Marianne Forrest, Thomas Frisbie, Jack Fuller, Timothy Gilfoyle, Frank Gonzalez-Crussi, Janet Hickman, Helen Lambin, Richard Lindberg, Katherine McCaughan, Jeannie Morris, Marcia Nelson, Milton Nieuwsma, Beverly Offen, Harry Mark Petrakis, Carolyn Splear Pratt, Cynthia Rademacher, John Raffensperger, James Reiss, Harriette Gillem Robinet, Allen Salter, Jim Schwab, Dick Simpson, Robert Sutherland and Martha Vertreace-Doody.

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