

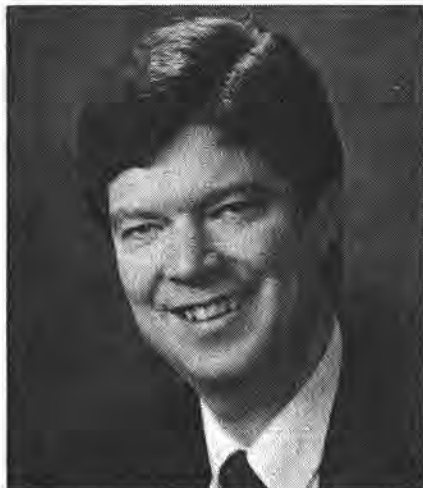
Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial Newsletter

VOLUME XXXII, No. 1

Editor, Mildred R. Bennett

RED CLOUD, NEBRASKA

Operatic Artists Featured at 1988 Spring Conference



Daniel McKinney

Daniel McKinney, tenor, will sing "Le Donna é mobile" from *Rigoletto* and the part of Alfredo from *La Traviata*.

Mr. McKinney studied with Patrick H. Goesser, Professor of Voice at Fort Hays, Kansas State University and with Herald Starck, Chairman, Department of Voice, University of Iowa. He won a voice scholarship at Fort Hays in 1973-74 and was the state winner of the KMTA Voice Competition in Ottawa, Kansas, in 1973. He did graduate teaching at The University of Iowa. He has performed in various operas both in Kansas and Iowa. Recently he has been tenor soloist for *St. Matthew Passion* and *Messiah* in Bethany College at Lindsborg, Kansas.

June Schock, coloratura soprano, will sing the part of Violetta in *La Traviata*. Ms. Schock holds a Master of Music degree from the University of Colorado, Boulder, where she studied with Professor Louis Cunningham.

In 1976, Ms. Schock won both the Metropolitan Opera and San

Published 70 years ago this October, *My Antonia* has become a classic of Pioneer life and history. Sometimes overlooked is the passionate background of music in this novel. Cather uses plantation melodies, cowboy songs and opera as background for her story of strength and perseverance. In this Spring Conference we endeavor to give you a taste of the melodies that provide a setting for Antonia's heroic achievement. We feel that in no better way can we **Celebrate Nebraska** — its strength, its joy, its fortitude — **in 1988**.



June Schock

Francisco Opera Regional Auditions. After singing for Luciano Pavarotti in New York City in March 1981, she was invited to participate in the Pavarotti International Voice Competition. In addition to performing throughout the Midwest as a recitalist and concert soloist, Ms. Schock has sung the



Marshall Christensen

role "Olympia" from *Tales of Hoffmann* by Offenbach with the San Francisco Opera, 20 performances of the "Queen of the Night" from Mozart's *Magic Flute* in the German opera houses of Kiel, Mannheim and Hannover, and the additional roles of "Fiordiligi," "Musetta" and "Madame Golden-trill." German critics said of her performance as "Queen of the Night," "her warm dramatic coloratura was effortless and virtuosic. Even with her first entrance the hall resounded with bravos!"

She now teaches at Hastings College.

Marshall Christensen, baritone, will sing "The Last Rose of Summer" from *Martha* and "O Promise Me" from *Robin Hood*. He will also sing the part of Pere Ger-mont in *La Traviata*.

Mr. Christensen began his formal vocal studies at the University of Nebraska where he studied with Dr. Arthur Westbrook and graduated with a degree in Music. During his years at the University, he

(Continued Next Page)

performed in numerous shows and concert productions and was featured soloist on radio and television. He was soloist at the First Plymouth Congregational Church in Lincoln.

Upon graduation he continued his studies in California with opera coach Harold Hurlbut and included a session with Metropolitan opera star, John Charles Thomas.

During his military tour, he was in band Special Services as a trumpeter and vocal soloist. A highlight of his military tour was a command performance for Continental Armies Commander General Maxwell G. Taylor for which he was awarded a special commendation.

Following military service he lived in California and Minnesota where he performed in opera and concert productions with major musical ensembles. He was baritone soloist with the 3M Symphony Orchestra for 13 years, appearing in concerts in the Twin Cities and also on tour in adjoining states. Christensen was a contracted soloist in churches and synagogues in Minneapolis and St. Paul for over 20 years.

Mr. Christensen is now in active farming and farm management in Nebraska, but finds time to perform in local productions as well as church work.

Ten artists from the Hastings Symphony Orchestra, Dr. James Johnson, conductor, will furnish music for the operatic concert.

Dr. Harold Shiffler, retired from the Speech and Drama Department of Hastings College, will narrate the script for the evening's music.

Tribute

To *My Antonia* H. W. Boynton in *Bookman*, December 1918 paid this tribute:

It is true to the Nebraskan soil of her own childhood, and therefore true to America and the world. On the surface it also might be called artless and deficient in action. But here in fact it differs sharply from a chronicle like "The Manse at Bar-

ren Rocks." Miss Cather is an accomplished artist. Her method is that of the higher realism; it rests not at all upon the machinery of dramatic action which is so right and essential for romance. Her "Song of the Lark," a triumphal story if there ever was one, lacked the rounded artifice that lures a big public — lacked, above all, the conventional "happy ending." So does *My Antonia*, which, even more frankly a portrait than its predecessor, is a portrait of a woman.

Miss Cather has owned as among the most vivid of her experiences on the Nebraska ranch of her childhood, her impressions of the Scandinavian and Bohemian settlers who were among her neighbors. Thea Kronborg in "The Song of the Lark" was of Swedish parentage. Antonia is a Bohemian girl on a Nebraska ranch. Her father, a musician and dreamer, has no heart in the new life and presently kills himself as the only way out. The mother and the elder son are ambitious and unscrupulous. Antonia is the one well-rounded member of the family; somehow she joins her father's sensitiveness to the sturdiness of her mother, and contributes that magic something of her own that is necessary to transmute mere characteristics into personality.

She is not infallible or protected by a special Providence, does not push forward to an obvious success or happiness. On the contrary she passes her first years of grown girlhood as a farm worker, becomes a "hired girl" in the neighboring town, runs away with a flashy drummer who deserts her before the birth of her child, and later marries an undistinguished and not especially successful farmer of her own race. But she is unconquerable; and she lives through everything to transmit that superb health and courage of mind and body to a great family who are bound to make their worthy contribution to America. It is in this guise, as "a rich mine of life, like the founders of early races," that we see her fulfilled and justified.

Clearly, the effectiveness of such a portrait depends in an unusual sense upon the skill of

the painter. Casual as her touches seem, no stroke is superfluous or wrongly emphasized; and we may be hardly conscious how much of the total effect of the portrait is owing to the quiet beauty and purity of the artist's style.

To Play Music of Blind Tom and Blind Boone Following Panel Discussion

Karen Gullickson of the piano faculty at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion holds a Bachelor's and a Master's degree in piano. An arranger and composer, she is also a professional pianist.

Many of her compositions have been performed by area college choirs, choruses and church choirs.

She holds membership in the National Chorister's Guild, Music Teachers National Association and American Women Composers, Inc. Currently she is doing graduate work in Theory and Composition. Mrs. Gullickson has three children.

Norma Ross Walter Scholarship Winner



Karen Hartmann, first winner of the Norma Ross Walter Scholarship in 1987, receives top grades at the University of Michigan. Enrolled in the Honors program in English, she has an average of 4.0 for the first semester. Karen, active in a college church fellowship,

works as a library assistant. She plans to teach high school English.

The 1988 winner will be announced in March. Each year one Nebraska high school senior girl graduate who wishes to major in English at the university of her choice, receives a scholarship which, if she maintains her grade average and continues in English, would amount to \$8,000.00 for her four year term.

See the special Cather display on May 7 at the Webster County Museum, 4th and Franklin. Allow 30 minutes.

Prairie Workshop

The Cather Foundation and the Cather Historical Center, in connection with Kearney State College, will offer a Prairie Workshop (Course 491-591) June 6-10 at which two graduate credit hours may be earned. Credits may be gained in Literature or Biological Sciences. Cost for the two-hour course will be \$150.00. Registration will be limited to 25. To insure a place for you in this class, send a \$25.00 deposit to The Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial, 326 North Webster, Red Cloud, Nebraska 68970. Students who have never taken credit at Kearney State must also pay a \$10.00 matriculation fee.

Teachers for this course are Dr. Ty Harrison of Salt Lake City, Utah, specialist in ecology, botany and biology, and Dr. James Work of Colorado State at Fort Collins, Colorado. Dr. Work teaches English, writes of nature and other related topics and does expert photography. Supplementary instructors are William Whitney, prairie expert of Aurora, Nebraska; Kay Young of the Fontenelle Forest in Omaha; Ron Hull, program director of National Public Television; Ann Billesbach, curator of the Cather Historical Center; and Mildred R. Bennett of the Cather Foundation.

Students will have the rare privilege of working with experts. If this registration is not filled, the course must be cancelled.

33rd Annual Cather Spring Conference SATURDAY, MAY 7, 1988

8:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Registration, coffee and kolache — Cather Foundation Art Gallery and Book Store, 326 North Webster.

8:30 a.m.

Mass — Grace Episcopal Church, 6th and Cedar, Father Theron R. Hughes, Jr., officiating.

9:45 a.m.

Mass — St. Juliana Catholic Church, 3rd Avenue and South Walnut, Father Frank Leiblinger, officiating.

10:45 a.m.

A Visit to *My Ántonia* Country — Tour departs from Cather Foundation Building, 326 North Webster. Visit Ántonia's home, prairie dog town, the suicide grave, Harling house, Wick Cutter's place and others.

12:30 p.m.

Lunch — Vet's Hall, 3rd and Cedar

1:30-3:00 p.m.

"The Passing Show" — Vet's Hall, 3rd and Cedar. Panel: *My Ántonia*.

3:15-4:00 p.m.

Vet's Hall — Plantation Melodies and Compositions by Blind Tom and Blind Boone. Pianist, Karen Gullickson.

7:00 p.m.

Banquet — Operatic Concert. High School Gymnasium, 7th and Webster.

Following banquet and entertainment, Wine and Cheese Party, Red Cloud Country Club, two miles east on Highway 136 and ½ mile north.

8:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m. and 3:15-5:00 p.m.

Cather Foundation Art Gallery and Book Store — Open, 326 North Webster.

8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Open — Cather Historical Center, 338 North Webster

Open House — Cather Childhood Home — 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
3:00-5:00 p.m.

Open House — Burlington Depot — 12:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.

Nebraska State Quilt Guild Exhibition at Depot. Refreshments courtesy of Catherland Federated Women's Club (4:00-5:00 p.m.).

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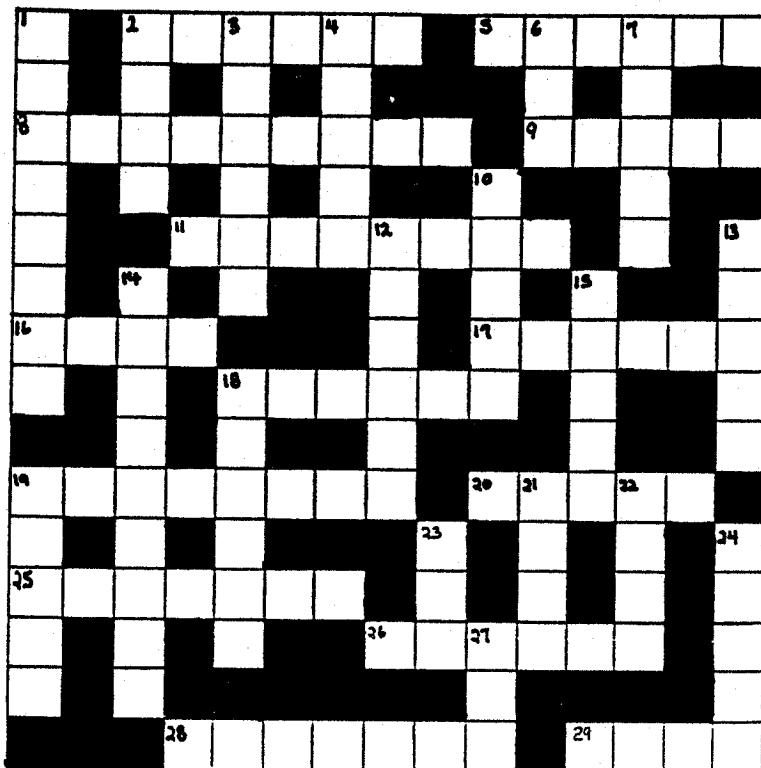
Cather Center Buildings are opened courtesy of Cather Historical Center, Nebraska State Historical Society, Ann E. Billesbach, Curator.

Conference produced in part with a grant from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, Division of Travel and Tourism.

Cather Puzzle

By Robert H. Kurth

After the Cather Seminar of 1987, Dr. Robert H. Kurth of Prairie Village, Kansas, inspired by the extraordinary joy of the session, sent the following crossword puzzle which we now share. Answers will be printed in a following issue.



ACROSS

- 2 Symposium focus: the World and the _____ (6)
 5 Prototype for Mrs. Forrester (6)
 8 Colorado's fictionalized Red Cloud (9)
 9 First published "Garden" of short stories (5)
 11 Ethnic background of Antonia (8)
 16 Where the Shadows fall (4)
 17 Archbishop (6)
 18 Old Mrs. _____ (6)
 19 Venerable veteran chronicler of Cather (8)
 20 _____ Valentine (5)
 25 The Professor's student and friend (7)
 26 Cather's mentor: "You must know the world before you can know the parish" (6)
 28 Neighbor _____ (7)

DOWN

- 1 1895 university publication containing Willa's writing (8)
 2 Symbol of Catherland (4)
 3 Willa's brother (6)
 4 Cather scholar: late lady of Lincoln's literati (5)
 6 Kingdom of _____ (3)
 7 Early biographer (5)

- 10 Whose case? (5)
 12 This Nebraska-born novelist and critic wrote re Cather and Crane: "the meeting of youthful minds on a sultry plains night" was one of "the star-crossed movements in American letters" (6)
 13 Word in title of first book of poetry (5)
 14 *Cather and Her Critics* editor (9)
 15 The Professor's place of refuge and rescue (5)
 18 Biographer of Lamy (6)

- 19 Photographer of pictorial memoir (5)
 21 Seibert — Willa's self-chosen middle _____ (4)
 22 *Sapphira and the Slave Girl*, Cather's _____ novel (4)
 23 Word in title of Pulitzer Prize novel (3)
 24 Joan, Cather bibliographer (5)
 27 Only _____ to connect 26 Across to 28 Across (3)

Fall Symposium at B.Y.U.

Plans are underway for a national symposium on Willa Cather at Brigham Young University September 15-17, 1988. The event will be sponsored by the Center for Family and Community History at the university, and papers on family, community, and family history in the works of Willa Cather are invited. Anyone interested in Cather is, of course, invited to attend and may receive future mailings about the symposium by writing to Professor Glade Hunsaker, Center for

Family and Community History, 335 KMB, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602.

Anyone wishing to submit a paper for consideration should submit two copies of a 9-10 page manuscript and a short abstract (25-50 words) by June 15, 1988 to Professor Marilyn Arnold, Graduate Studies, D-341 ASB, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602. The symposium will also feature invited lectures and papers by Mildred R. Bennett, James Woodress, David Stouck, Susan J. Rosowski, John J. Murphy, Marilyn

Arnold, Patricia Yongue, and Bruce Baker.

In addition to its "scholarly" aspects, the symposium will offer related cultural events including performances of music important in Cather's fiction and readings of her poetry. The week of the symposium will be "Willa Cather Week" in Provo and the surrounding area, with displays and discussions featured in bookstores, schools, libraries, and other public buildings.

An Evening With Willa Cather

The Geneva Arts Council of Geneva, Nebraska, is sponsoring a performance of Lynne Swanson in "An Evening with Willa Cather" on Sunday, April 10, at 7:30 p.m. in the city auditorium at 9th and "H" Streets. Ms. Swanson, a veteran performer of the Wyoming Chautauqua will present her stellar monologue as Willa Cather in full period costume. The scene, a hotel lobby in Red Cloud in the early 1900's, presents Nebraska's greatest novelist home for a visit.

Adult tickets are \$5.00; students, 18 and younger, are \$2.00. You may order by mail from Geneva Arts Council, P.O. Box 54, Geneva, Nebraska 68361.

White Waste My *Antonia*

Cold winds
blow
Chilling fine
snow
Over time and space.
Icy winds
whistle
Across empty
plains
Dressed in white.
Cattle hover
close
Together for
warmth
In the winter storm.

Mary-Anne Martin
Topeka, Kansas

Received from . . .

TOM HUTSON, now stationed in Taiwan, Cather novels translated into Chinese.

JEAN TSING, of Beijing, four Cather novels translated into Chinese and a copy of "Paul's Case," the first known Cather Chinese translation in 1943.

DAVID FENG, Shanghai, two books of Cather in English with Chinese notes to teach English to Chinese students.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Worlds of Mari Sandoz; The History, Culture, Art and Literature of the Great Plains

A Multidisciplinary Conference

Kearney State College

Friday and Saturday,

September 30 and October 1, 1988

Invited topics include, but are not limited to: Women's studies, Indian lore, Literature and the Other Arts, Anthropology, American Studies, Oral History Traditions, Genre Studies.

2 page abstract or 10 page paper by April 2, 1988 to:

Dr. Helen Stauffer
Department of English
Kearney State College
Kearney, Nebraska 68848

Scholar for a Day

Dr. Virgil Albertini, professor of English at Northwest Missouri State University and a recognized authority on Willa Cather, served as Scholar for a Day at Humboldt, Nebraska High School on Tuesday, February 23. On a grant from the Nebraska Committee for the Humanities, Dr. Albertini talked to the entire high school, freshmen through seniors, throughout the morning. The first 90 minutes was a discussion of the legacy of Willa Cather, her life and writings with a slide show of the Cather home area around Red Cloud. The second period afforded a close look at her primary prairie novels: *My Antonia* and *O Pioneers!*

Superintendent Darrell Montgomery and his staff provided kolaches. Congratulations to him and his school.

Please let us know what you are doing to promote Cather.

Helen Cather Southwick reports that new owners of The Shattuck Inn in Jaffrey, New Hampshire, plan to restore the Inn to its status when Willa Cather wrote there, and eventually it will be open for guests.

Quilt Exhibit

Members of the Nebraska State Quilt Guild, under the leadership of Paulette Peters of Elkhorn, will exhibit 10 quilts at the Burlington Depot during Spring Conference. The Guild lists 850 members throughout Nebraska. Quilts to be exhibited are those mentioned in *One of Ours*, *My Antonia* and "Old Mrs. Harris."

You will see Mahailey's quilts from *One of Ours*: "log-cabin," "laurel leaf," and "blazing star," a watermelon design and a beans and corn quilt from *My Antonia* and a scrap quilt like the one referred to in "Old Mrs. Harris."

A page about the Cather childhood home appears in *Historic Preservation*, March/April issue. We owe this fine presentation to Ann Billesbach, curator of the Cather Historical Center in Red Cloud.

From Kentucky . . .

Ron Butler moved from Henderson Community College to Owensboro Community College in 1987. For one of his first activities he taught an adult education class on Cather.

Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial
326 North Webster Red Cloud, Nebraska 68970



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YOU CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE LIFE AND GROWTH OF THE ORGANIZATION

- By being a Cather Memorial Member and financial contributor:
BENEFACTOR \$1,000.00 and over

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIPS

Patron	\$100.00
Sustaining	25.00
Family	15.00
Individual	10.00

WCPM members receive:

- Newsletter subscription
- Free guided tour to restored buildings

- By contributing your Willa Cather artifacts, letters, papers, and publications to the Museum.
- By contributing your ideas and suggestions to the Board of Governors.

ALL MEMBERSHIPS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND BEQUESTS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

Under Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1965

Special group memberships (such as clubs or businesses) are available. Write to the Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial for details.

AIMS OF THE WCPM

- To promote and assist in the development and preservation of the art, literary, and historical collection relating to the life, time, and work of Willa Cather, in association with the Nebraska State Historical Society.
- To cooperate with the Nebraska State Historical Society in continuing to identify, restore to their original condition, and preserve places made famous by the writing of Willa Cather.
- To provide for Willa Cather a living memorial, through the Foundation, by encouraging and assisting scholarship in the field of the humanities.
- To perpetuate an interest throughout the world in the work of Willa Cather.

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What About Willa Cather in Italy?

These books by Willa Cather may be found in Italian translations today:

My Antonia, La Tartaruga edizioni, 1985. This is a new translation with an 8 page forward by Goffredo Fofi. A former translation of this novel came out in 1947 and is now out of print. In 1983, Mondadori published a cheap paperback translation of *My Mortal Enemy* which had a brief biography of Willa Cather. This book is now out of print and is unavailable on the market. *Death Comes for the Arch-*

bishop first came out in 1936 and was reprinted several times prior to the 1980's.

Previously translated were: *O Pioneers!*, 1933; *One of Ours*, 1955; *The Professor's House*, 1950; *Shadows on the Rock*, 1936 and *Obscure Destinies*, 1935, reprinted in 1956. The latter was a collection of Willa Cather's short stories plus *Lucy Gayheart* and *A Lost Lady*. All the books listed above are out of print today and it is impossible to find them in Italian bookshops.

Among literary scholarship there is one essay on Willa Cather by Salvatore Rosati in *L'Ombra dei Padri*, Roma 1958. This is a full

length essay on the theme of Willa Cather and tradition. Angela Bianchini published in 1963 an essay on Willa Cather and Europe which was included in *Spiriti Costretti*, Firenze 1963. We must not forget that Elio Vittorini, the famous Italian writer and among the first scholars of American Literature, included Willa Cather's "The Sculptor's Funeral" in *Americana*, the important anthology that first introduced American writers in Italy.

Nowadays it would be wise to pay more attention to Willa Cather and see new editions of such everlasting books.

— Dr. Paolo Fantozzi
Lucca, Italy