

Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial Newsletter

VOLUME XXIV, Numbers 2 & 3

Editor, Mildred R. Bennett

RED CLOUD, NEBRASKA

May Conference Speaker Internationally Famous A. L. Rowse

Our most famous international visitor this year is Dr. A. L. Rowse, don of Oxford, author of seven volumes of poetry and numerous volumes of history and biography. He is the expert on the Elizabethan Age and William Shakespeare. One of his greatest classics is **A Cornish Childhood**, the story of his growing up and succeeding against impossible difficulties.

Dr. Rowse admires Cather and believes that a writer's place and background should be preserved to provide valid sources for understanding an author's work. Twenty years ago, because of his intense interest in Cather and place, he accepted an invitation to speak at the University of Nebraska as a gateway to Red Cloud. At that time we could not enter the Cather childhood home, we had little to show — only dreams and shadows of hopes. Even then, Dr. Rowse showed kindness and sympathy to our efforts.

This year, on our 25th Anniversary, Dr. Rowse returned and saw with astonishment and delight our restoration and preservation of Cather places and country. He confided to me that 20 years ago, he didn't think we could "pull it off."

He writes, since his return to England, "What an unbelievable achievement you have brought off, in making Red Cloud into a **ville musée** — as I said, nothing like it in England except Stratford — That has been going for hundreds of years, and you have done it in twenty . . . I loved my visit and was so touched to see all those places."

Dr. Rowse partook in the afternoon panel discussion on our chosen book, **Lucy Gayheart**. It had been a new book to him, and he was much moved by it. He defended Harry Gordon against too much attack, a man's viewpoint against that of the women panel-



Mildred R. Bennett listens to comments of Dr. A. L. Rowse.

EDITOR'S NOTE

If you are reading these words, you are getting this newsletter because you have contributed something to the progress of the Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial and Educational Foundation sometime during the past twenty-five years. You have a right to know how we are spending your resources. About eighteen months ago we turned over the six Cather buildings and our archives to the state for maintenance and preservation. With that financial load off our shoulders, we now have the expenses of the newsletter (it does not pay for itself), the very minimum wages we pay Vi Borton for running things, and we pay part of her expenses. WE DO NOT PAY BOARD MEMBERS' EXPENSES FOR ATTENDING BOARD MEETINGS, NOR DO WE PAY FOR DINNERS OR FOOD FOR SUCH BOARD MEMBERS. We pay our own way. We now have to pay for tour guides, because, as you may have noticed, economic conditions condemn most people to earning money, and the day of free volunteer work is almost over. Your money goes toward promoting further education in Cather, to the Annual Spring Conference, toward sending information abroad to other countries, to answering letters concerning Cather, to giving

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ists, Marion Marsh Brown and Mildred R. Bennett.

In the evening Dr. Rowse, featured speaker, expressed his admiration for what has been done in Red Cloud to commemorate Willa Cather.

Dr. Rowse autographed one hundred of his **A Cornish Childhood**, for admiring readers.

From a Japanese Viewpoint

When I asked Dr. Harue Tawarada a few months ago to write this article, she requested that we correct it to American English, because English is not her mother tongue. When we read Dr. Tawarada's account, we were so much charmed by her style that we did not want to change a word. We think you will agree.

— Mildred R. Bennett

Dr. Harue Tawarada teaches part time in Ochanomizu University, a prestigious national women's university in Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo. Her subjects are English Reading for freshmen and sophomores, Department of English and American Literature. She uses as textbooks: Jane



Austin, **Pride and Prejudice**; Betty Friedan, **The Feminine Mystique**; and Ashley Montague, **The American Way of Life**.

Dr. Tawarada, mother of three children, has prepared for publication "Uncle Valentine" and "Ardessa," short stories by Willa Cather, as texts for teaching English in Japan. Notes are, of course, in Japanese. Long a Cather enthusiast, Mrs. Tawarada has promised us a copy of the text as soon as it is available.

A THOUGHT ON WHY JAPANESE LOVE WILLA CATHER

Months ago Mrs. Mildred Bennett asked me in one of her letters why Japanese people love Willa Cather. Among many foreign visitors to the Memorial Japanese seemed to be the most frequent, according to her. I myself like Miss Cather's stories very much, and I knew there were quite a few in Japan who shared my pleasure of reading them. Yet, being no Cather

scholar, I had never thought of any relevant reasons for my liking, which I thought was rather due to instinct than anything else. I set about digging out **the** reasons, only to end up later with some rambling fragments of my impression on the subject you will find below.

To begin with, we Japanese are book lovers in general. Innumerable copies of books and magazines are published and circulated each week and each month all over Japan. Lots of foreign books are imported and lots more of excellent translated books are available. Literature is one of our favorite categories of reading, and Japanese, an insular people who have been very eager to take in new thoughts and things from the West during the past 100 years, are naturally interested in the rest of the world depicted in foreign literature.

Most of Miss Cather's major works have been translated into our language during these 20 years. As far as I know, they began to appear late in 1950s as a volume or two in a series of selected and translated masterpieces of modern American literature. They

Summer Art Workshop

July 18, 19, 20, 1980 the Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial and Educational Foundation sponsored a workshop on three-dimensional art, using local materials.

Melanie Schwartz, resident artist, has an M.F.A. from Iowa University and is currently teaching art classes at Anoka-Ramsey Community College in Minnesota. She was assisted in Red Cloud by Valeria Jeffries, who is currently enrolled at St. Cloud University as a Pottery/Ceramics major. She is in her senior year.

On Friday, the group studied the history of clay used in the Ludlow Brick Company. (Red Cloud's early brick factory mentioned in **The Song of the Lark**.) Incidentally,

Editor's Note . . .

tours of Cather sites and Cather country. We have just completed our new headquarters, which are adequate to display art from native artists, and also Cather related art. We must pay utilities. We do want you to know we are not entertaining ourselves on your gifts. (I always wonder about this when I am solicited by mail for some charity or other, don't you?)

In editing this newsletter, I take full responsibility for all that is not signed by someone else. If mistakes are here, blame me. I made them. One remark, however, is no mistake. I do thank you all for your support of twenty-five years. We could not be here without it.

Mildred R. Bennett
Chairman of the Board
**Willa Cather Pioneer
Memorial &
Educational
Foundation**

have been widely read along with works by Hemingway, Steinbeck, Faulkner, Fitzgerald, Dos Passos, etc. On the other hand, the great majority of Cather lovers who read her books in the original have been young, urban women, mostly col-
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our little restored Catholic Church (1883) and the Garber bank building (1889), all but the front, are built of that native clay, of bricks made by the Ludlow Brick Company.

On Friday the class worked on hand-built pots. The native clay, when fired, turns a beautiful brick red.

On Saturday students studied tools, materials and making of jewelry. Sunday, the day was devoted to paper and paper-making.

Our support of this native art workshop fulfills one of our aims: "To promote . . . art . . . relating to the life, time, and work of Willa Cather."

Japanese Viewpoint

lege students majoring in "English & American Literature," a very popular subject to learn on any campus in the post-war period.

I have no intention of trying to analyze Miss Cather's prose style at length here, but I would like to say that one of the important reasons for her popularity originates from it. We foreign readers can enjoy her stories without being distracted by complicated sentence structure, difficult or vague diction or too many metaphysical expressions. Her sentences rarely get very long; the clearness and crispness of her expression enhance the quality of our imagination and vision. Her impeccable polished prose doesn't show the hard work required in the process of her writing it. We are amazed at her being so free from wastefulness and indolence.

The panoramic views of the land on which Miss Cather has built her stories attract us immensely. There is no end to the pleasure of visualizing what the author writes — the unknown land with different shape of trees, different smell of plants, different make of houses and different figure of people. Her presentation of the flatness and vastness of the prairie, where you simultaneously see a "great golden globe" of the sun setting and a "big cart-wheel" of the silver moon rising from the opposite sides of its own horizon, inspires our imagination infinitely. Our country is mountainous, and the only way of seeing a long, undisturbed line of horizon is to go to the sea. Also, having no equivalents to such geographical phenomena as mesas or great underground rivers, etc. in Japan, we are fascinated by the wonders of nature in Miss Cather's Southwest as she depicts them. She was the first novelist to introduce those new regions in America to us.

Miss Cather's description, both minute and casual, of seasonal beauty in nature delights us. Japa-

MINI BOOK REVIEWS

Chrysalis: Willa Cather in Pittsburgh (1896-1906) by Kathleen D. Byrne and Richard C. Snyder. Price \$11.95 plus \$1.25 postage and handling.

Deals with development of Cather's talent in Pittsburgh, and gives information from her students. Some new insights, but faulty documentation. A curious Cather fan should read it.

Only One Point of the Compass: Willa Cather in the Northeast by Marion Marsh Brown and Ruth Crone. Price \$12.50 plus postage and handling \$1.25.

Shows Cather's need and demand for privacy to shelter her

nese people have long been admirers of nature and are always sensitive to beauty in the change of seasons. Our own classical literature would have been something quite different, had it not been for the seasonal variations we enjoy every year. Especially in classical poetry the appreciation of seasons was a must; even today a word or phrase indicating a specific season is a requirement both in a **haiku** (17-syllable poem) and a **tanka** (31-syllable poem). We feel that Miss Cather has much in common with us in our praise of nature.

With life's little ironies here and there, Willa Cather describes life as it is. While she finds optimism in youthful vitality and honesty, and admires health and beauty, she is intent on portraying declining individuals and their deaths without embellishment. Young Japanese readers are impressed and encouraged by the force of youth in her stories, and older ones are given much to brood over by those deaths, some of which are abrupt and unchristian. Being one among the latter group, I am particularly interested in her portrayal of various characters past their prime, her seemingly casual manner in describing the subtle shade in old age — permeating helplessness and a sense of being left behind

genius. New material. No documentation. Some semi-fictional treatment. Has some Isabelle McClung letters. A must for Cather readers.

ART GALLERY

The Art Gallery displays paintings and prints by Linda Stych, a native of Red Cloud, now living in Omaha, Nebraska. These works are for sale.

Another Red Cloud artist, Melanie Schwartz, has Etched Glass Plates inspired by Cather scenes on display and for sale.

The Bergers Collection of Cather paintings is on permanent loan and not for sale. Prints are expected to be available soon.

quietly, mixes with earnest wish for maintaining dignity and independence, their *raison d'être*. As a Japanese housewife in a 3-generation household I learn a lot from "Old Mrs. Harris" alone, for instance.

Willa Cather values tradition, doesn't she? And so do we. While intrigued by things new and unknown, we are always conscious of our debt to the past. We therefore feel a kind of secret relief to learn in her stories that under such simple and aggressive way of living in the frontier there lay the long-lasting tradition — the customs and cultural accomplishments in the old world — transplanted and cherished. I would like to know how the European tradition lives in the present communities.

It is natural that everyone who reads Cather stories should wish to visit the regions and people the author described so wholeheartedly. For this reason I believe there are a lot of Cather readers among those Japanese visitors to the Memorial who, either scholars or students, businessmen or housewives, are then and there to make their dreams come true. I hope I will be able to be one of the lucky people in the near future.

Cather Graduate Seminar in 1981

From June 13-20, 1981, the Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial and Educational Foundation will present a graduate seminar on Willa Cather in cooperation with Hastings College and the University of Nebraska Extension Department. Chairman of the seminar will be Dr. John J. Murphy, author of numerous articles on Willa Cather. His address is: Department of American Literature, Merrimac College, North Andover, Massachusetts 01860.

Lecturers will be Dr. James Woodress, Chairman of the English Department on the Davis campus of the University of California and Dr. David Stouck, associate professor of English at Simon Frasier University, Vancouver, Canada.

A TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY: AN EPILOGUE

Virgil Albertini is a professor of English at Northwest Missouri State University at Maryville, Missouri. He has been a faithful attendant at our spring conferences, and brings his students to Catherland for a tour each summer. He and his wife, Dolores, give them a firm preparation for Catherland, as you will read in this newsletter.

Any silver anniversary should be a special one. The Twenty-fifth Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial Spring Conference on May 3, 1980, scintillated!

The Conference's many participants reveled in the day's activities planned so dilligently by Founder Mildred Bennett, President Vi Borton, Curator Ann Billesbach, and the Board of Governors. Willa Cather's novel **Lucy Gayheart**, celebrating its forty-fifth year of publication, and Dr. A. L. Rowse, the renowned poet, historian, biographer, and Shakespearean scholar from London, England, added luster to the silver hue.

Willa Cather loved the traditional, and she would have approved of the 1980 Silver Anniversary Con-

ference because it did not deviate from its predecessors. Participants renewed friendships and made new friends as they, like Cather's Mary and Anton Rosicky, and the Cuzaks, lingered over their kolache and coffee at morning registration in the Cather Center Museum. One, to be sure, does not need to be an avid churchgoer to appreciate the two services held respectively at the Grace Episcopal — Cather's church — or the St. Juliana Catholic — site of Annie Sadilek Pavelka's wedding. The choral and organ music, supplied by members of the Red Cloud community and high school, inspired the listeners. Mid-morning saw several school buses lined up in front of the Museum — all there to take the conferees on a tour of Lucy Gayheart's "Haverford," and here people could see the Republican River, the Red Cloud depot, the area where Lucy skated, and finally the west edge of "Haverford," where the Gayhearts lived. What was here for those busloads of people to see? Surely, Lucy Gayheart really had no prototype, so what artifacts were there for the people to observe? Ah, Lucy's footprints encased in cement! The Sil-

ver Anniversary Conference participants "imagined" they were seeing the ones that Harry Gordon, Lucy's rejected suitor, so wistfully observed in the "Epilogue" chapter of **Lucy Gayheart**. And those footprints certainly had the look of "swiftness, mischief, and lightness." "As if the feet," as Cather described them, "had tiny wings . . . like the herald Mercury." One also saw Quality Street, different obviously from Lucy's day, but still present.

The box lunch in Red Cloud's City Park brought its usual, fine repite and again, leisurely paced, offered a fine interlude until it was time to hear the panel discussion on **Lucy Gayheart**, called "The Passing Show." Participants crowded Vet's Hall eager to hear the panelists' comments on the novel, and Dr. Bruce Baker, Mrs. Mildred Bennett, Dr. A. L. Rowse, and Professor Emeritus Marion Marsh Brown did not disappoint them. A highlight of the afternoon's discussion was the lively and entertaining debate between Mrs. Bennett and Dr. Rowse over Harry Gordon. Mrs. Bennett showed her dislike for him, while Dr. Rowse stated his fondness for the man.

The Silver Anniversary offered many attractive sidelights. Dr. Rowse generously allowed much time to autograph copies of his autobiography **A Cornish Childhood**. (Many people took advantage of the opportunity.) The tasteful Cather Gallery, housed in the new Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial and Educational Building, hosted a thrilling visual display of several of Artist John Bergers' paintings of scenes from Cather's works. Four of these beautifully painted scenes came from **Lucy Gayheart**. (Other Cather art and artifacts were in evidence, too.) At the depot, conferees also saw an exhibition of 130 contemporary photographs by Roger Bruhn and David Murphy. Entitled "Dreams in Dry Places," the collection enabled its viewers better to understand the practical, aesthetic, and

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Dr. A. L. Rowse accepts an Admiralty in the Nebraska Navy from Governor Charles Thone.

cultural aspects of historic Nebraska architecture.

At 7:00 p.m. the conference participants and many of Red Cloud's area residents descended upon the High School Gymnasium for an authentic Bohemian dinner, one that would have surely pleased Annie Sadilek Pavelka. She would have been happy, too, to hear Master of Ceremonies Ron Hull's humorous anecdotes and to see Nebraska's Governor Charles Thone and Mrs. Thone. The Governor offered remarks about Cather and her works, while Mrs. Thone, in tune with those comments, read selected passages from **Lucy Gayheart**, thus offering a concerted marital duo in harmony with the writings of Nebraska's noted author. Patricia Mountford Doty's singing of "When We Two Parted" (music by Gerald Ginsburg) was particularly moving, and the dinner audience appreciated Cheryl Kopperud's vocal rendition of James Koudelka's original composition, "My Friend the Land." Ah, but, of course, the real hero of the evening was the engaging and charming Dr. Rowse. His talk, "A Historical View of Willa Cather," was, like him, engaging and charming, but also solid and interlaced with a wonderful British tongue and wit.

Lucy Gayheart Panel at Conference

Bruce Baker, literature professor from the University of Nebraska at Omaha, presided over the panel discussion.

The program opened with selections from **Die Winterreise** to set the mood of sadness and loss, and then "If with all your heart you truly seek Him you shall ever surely find Him," from **Elijah** for the counterpoint of hope.

The first speaker, Marion Marsh Brown, pointed out the color and contrast evident in the story. She highlighted the artistic aspects of the novel.

Mildred Bennett spoke of Willa Cather's presence in all three main characters: Lucy, Clement, and Harry. Each shows an aspect of her character, and most of all, she says, in **Lucy Gayheart** that she, herself, suffered, even as Harry, from the wounds she had inflicted

in her lifetime — a lifetime, which of necessity must be limited to privacy and exclusion of even her friends.

Dr. Rowse commented on the previous remarks and added that he, too, had his troubles with publishers. He wanted to tell of a man who wished to divorce his wife because she "had played the strumpet in his bed." But the editor insisted that it must be "played the trumpet," and finally he decided one situation was as bad as the other. The audience loved his British wit and accent.

Audience participation in the discussion was more avid than usual, and the subject held audience attention. **Lucy Gayheart** was not well liked when it was first published. (We could not find a review fit to print.) But time has proven it to be a revealing work of Cather's art.

CATHER PRAIRIE BURNED

The Willa Cather Memorial Prairie, a 610-acre mixed grass prairie located five miles south of Red Cloud was burned this spring as a research site to determine the effects of burning. The prairie, owned by The Nature Conservancy, was purchased in 1974 and since then has been the site of many research projects done by staff and students at Kearney State College and Fort Hays Kansas State University.

According to Dr. Hal Nagel, professor of Biology at KSC, fire is a normal part of prairie life. Fires, started by lightning or Indians raced through Nebraska prairies

Yes, the Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial Silver Anniversary Spring Conference etched indelible memories. But does one ever find a Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial Spring Conference not exceptional?

— Virgil Albertini
July 9, 1980
Maryville, Missouri

quite frequently before intensive agriculture changed the prairie landscape. Prairie plants evolved with fire and grazing as a normal part of their environment. Without fire or some grazing, prairie species die and are replaced by weedy species, such as bluegrass. Too heavy grazing can have the same effect, however, he added.

Fire is still used as a management tool in tallgrass prairies in eastern Nebraska and Kansas. Spring burning of pastures eliminates stubble and allows more rapid and uniform growth of grasses and also aids livestock in uniformly grazing an area. In long-term studies at Kansas State University, fire has not diminished rangeland productivity.

Willa Cather writes in **My Antonia** of her first spring in Nebraska: "Everywhere now there was the smell of burning grass. Our neighbours burned off their pasture before the new grass made a start, so that the fresh growth would not be mixed with the
(Continued Next Page)

WILLA CATHER STATE HISTORICAL CENTER

Since we turned our buildings and their care over to the State, you no doubt wonder how we are getting along. Ann Billesbach, curator at the State Cather Center is in constant consultation with us and we with her. Ideas and cooperation go both ways.

This year the Cather childhood home showed dry rot in the two porches. They have been replaced, and the house is being painted. The depot is also being painted. Plans are in progress for the brick platforms at the depot to be reset.

Plans are also in progress for work on the exterior of the Anna Pavelka house. Since it is out in the country, and no other house is near enough for anyone to watch for us, we (the State and the Foundation) do not think at present it would be wise to restore the interior. However, plans are in mind to make eventually that area into a working farm, illustrating the methods of Cather's day.

Plans are also forming for a new large Cather building for orientation of the visitor and for more interpretation of her work in displays. The present Garber Bank building would then be restored to the bank it was in Cather's childhood.

I can hear you say that these are only dreams and economic conditions are terrible. You are right, but all the preservation that exists in Red Cloud, Webster County, and the world community of Cather scholars, (now integrated in their work through the Cather Center and the Foundation), was a dream twenty-five years ago.

For years I have wanted in the archives a complete file of all that has been written about Cather. Ann Billesbach assures me she has been making a bibliography of this work and has started systematic acquisition.

In all our activities the two institutions work side by side, each complimenting the other's facili-

ties and aims. Furthermore we have both involved ourselves in more community activities, also serving our aims.

Cather Prairie

dead stand of last year. Those light, swift fires, running about the country, seemed a part of the same kindling that was in the air."

On Cather Prairie, Nagel used fire as a tool to improve the habitat for native prairie species. The overriding goal in managing this prairie is to restore the area to as close to original prairie as possible. The prairie has been seriously invaded by Kentucky Bluegrass, which was not part of our original flora.

Bluegrass does most of its growing in spring and fall whereas most of the native grasses begin active growth in early summer. Burning the prairie in mid-May when blue grass is actively growing will kill much of it, eliminating the competition with native species and allowing them to grow more vigorously.

Research projects being conducted this summer after the burn, are ones to determine the effect of the burn on: small mammal populations, soil moisture, plant species composition, mycorrhiza (having to do with fungi and roots) on the roots of prairie plants, and forage production.

— Courtesy News Release,
Kearney State College
Cather inserts by
Mildred Bennett

GIFT SHOP NEW ITEMS

Cather Logo	
Paperweight	\$ 7.50
(Cast metal logo on Italian marble base)	
Postage & Handling	1.25
Cather Logo Napkins	
Cocktail (12)75
Luncheon (12)95
Postage & Handling50
All Hardback Books	
Postage & Handling	1.25
Paperbacks85
Nebraska residents add 3% sales tax.	

MUCH ADO ABOUT KOLACHE

Robert McMorris started it in his comments about Mrs. Virgil Albertini's making kolache for her husband's students who were coming from Maryville, Missouri, to tour Catherland. Four times, now, in his column he has dealt with the situation.

On July 8, 1980, he writes: "Although overwhelmed with mail on the Great Kolache Controversy, I had counted on yesterday's column to bury that subject. But what can I do when I get a letter from the woman who started it all?"

"Writing from her home in Maryville, Missouri, Dolores Albertini says yes, indeed, she made square-shaped kolache, with corners folded over, for one of her husband's literature classes. (Husband, Virgil Albertini, was preparing his graduate students in the works of Willa Cather for a visit to the author's home at Red Cloud, Nebraska.)

"However, to Nebraskans of Czech descent who think the only 'proper' kolache is the round, open-face kind with fruit center exposed, Mrs. Albertini said: 'I prepare both types, but actually prefer the folded ones. To be sure, the latter are more time-consuming to prepare because of the extra steps involved in cutting, filling and folding the dough. It is much easier to simply make an indentation in the center of the dough and place the filling in it.'

"To my colleague, George Shestak, who said the square kolache would never sell in Wilber, his hometown, Mrs. Albertini had this to say: 'Not all people of Czech descent hail from Wilber or even Nebraska. Mr. Shestak should be made aware that there are other Czech communities in the United States. It does not pay for one to be too provincial!'

"She invited both George and me to 'be daring and expand your horizons by trying a devilishly delightful folded kolache!'"

Notes of Interest . . .

Welcome to new board member, Catherine Cather Lowell, of Long Beach, California, daughter of John E. (Jack) Cather, youngest brother of Willa Cather. Catherine has often attended our spring conferences.

Welcome also to Betty Sherwood of Red Cloud (formerly of Sheldon Art Gallery), grand daughter of charter member and important founder of the Cather Memorial, Carrie Miner Sherwood; and to Dale McDole, who helped run the Memorial in his teen years and who now serves PERFORMING ARTISTS/Omaha.

All new members have shown their ability with new ideas, suggestions, and communication with us and others.

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We have a few of Dr. A. L. Rowse's **A Cornish Childhood**, autographed, left for sale. Send \$10.95 for the book, plus \$1.25 for postage and handling. Nebraska residents please add 3% sales tax. These autographed books are classics and priceless. Get your copy now for yourself, or for a Christmas gift for your favorite reader. (I was not able to lay it down, once I started. MRB)

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The book chosen for the 1981 Spring Conference, May 2, is **Sapphira and the Slave Girl**. For those of you who have not heard, the name **Sapphira** is pronounced (by Willa Cather's wish) Safeara. We did not know this fact until Margaret Cather Shannon corrected us. Later, we have heard that same comment from two other Cather nieces, Ella Cather Lewis and Catherine Cather Lowell. Start prac-

Note: For Mr. McMorris' information we want to say that the recipe used by Mrs. Albertini is Lucille Pavelka's, daughter of **My Antonia**, the character Martha in the book. What could be more Cather than that?

ting now so that the name will flow freely from your tongue when you come to discuss it May 2, 1981.

Order now your **Sapphira and the Slave Girl** in paperback for \$2.95 plus \$.85 postage and handling. You will need to read and re-read it before May 2, 1981. We will expect you to partake in questions at the Panel Discussion. Nebraskans, don't forget that 3% sales tax.

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We are well aware that you are missing Volume 4, 1979, from your files of our newsletter. This lack was due to illness on our staff. We will, however, issue a special newsletter, so marked, that you may file it in your empty space. Look for it this fall.

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Frank and Charlotte White of Hastings have sent us the cassette of the program they gave on **Lucy Gayheart** the Sunday before spring conference on KHAS Radio, Hastings.

The music and script will be available for listeners, and you will enjoy the artistic presentation of the music around which Willa Cather formed the book, **Lucy Gayheart**.

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John Bergers, the Cather artist, brought us a cassette of Blind Boone's music, played with piano rolls, popular in the 1920's and earlier. Some selections were actually played by Boone, others are selections played in his style. Blind Boone (and Blind Tom) are prototypes for Blind d'Arnault in **My Antonia**.

• • • • •

Father Pacificus Kennedy OFM of Boston, Massachusetts, a long time admirer of Willa Cather's work, sent us a clipping informing us that Pope John Paul II had approved the beatification of Bishop Francis de Montmorency-Laval, first bishop of Quebec, and Sister Marie of the Incarnation (Marie

LANDSCAPING AT THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Several years ago when elm trees all over Nebraska sickened, our trees around the Episcopal Church died. Mary Virginia Auld Mellen (daughter of Jessica Cather) sent us a gift to help restore the beauty of the trees around the church. With the cooperation of the grade school children who planted the trees, which the late John Fox (then County Agent) obtained, and with the faithful watering done by Richard and Viola Barton, we have now a beautiful group of trees.



Linden tree in the Episcopal Church yard.

Among them is a linden, favorite of Willa Cather. She says in **The Song of the Lark**: "They were not American basswood, but the European linden, which has honey-coloured blooms in summer, with a fragrance that surpasses all trees and flowers and drives young people wild with joy."

The cedar tree on the north side of the church entrance had been broken and killed. A new one was planted and is now growing rapidly to catch up with its mate on the south side of the entrance.

Guyard), foundress of the Canadian Ursuline nuns. For those of you who have read **Shadows on the Rock**, these personages will need no introduction. For the rest of you, I suggest you read Cather's book. She knew a long time ago how important these two faithful persons were to the people of Quebec.

Notes of Interest . . .

A note to those of you who think you can't afford to visit Catherland and the Cather buildings: The Salina, Kansas, students of Billie Winkler, paid for their own gas so as not to miss their anticipated journey to Red Cloud. Forty-five Omaha juniors, under the tutelage of Marlene Bernstein, put on a bake sale to raise the expenses of their trip to Catherland. Why aren't you taking advantage of your own state's heritage (if you are a Nebraskan) or seeing a literary shrine (if you come from other states or countries)?

The Board of the Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial and Educational Foundation regrets that the petition for a John G. Neihardt stamp did not pass. We support all efforts to honor Nebraska's contribution to the arts.

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Geology Along the Republican River Valley Near Red Cloud, Nebraska by Roger K. Pabian has been published by the Conservation and Survey Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, The University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Don Connors who teaches Cather in the high school at Downey, California, brought back four of his high school graduate seniors to see Catherland. The boys were most delightful guests in Red Cloud, and enjoyed our open spaces in contrast to Los Angeles.

For twenty-one years now, Don Connors has spent part of his summer vacation in Red Cloud. As usual, he looks around the Cather Memorial for things that need to be done. This year he paid for a roof to be put over our air conditioner so that we might have more efficient cooling.

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 admission 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.

Newsletter Contribution Only \$5.00
 (not a membership)

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Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial

Red Cloud, Nebraska 68970

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