

# Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial Newsletter

VOLUME XXI, No. 4

RED CLOUD, NEBRASKA

## Spring Conference Schedule

May 6, 1978, Red Cloud, Nebraska

- 8:00 A.M. - 12:00 Registration - WCPM Museum, Coffee and rolls.  
9:00 A.M. - Mass—Grace Episcopal Church.  
10:15 A.M. - Mini Tour—George Cather House, leave from Episcopal Church in own cars. Be sociable & double up.  
12:30 P.M. - Box Lunch—Little Red School House, 1 mile West on 136, 1 mile South.  
2:00 P.M. - THE MATINEE  
**The Troll Garden**—Panel Discussion, Veterans Memorial Hall  
10:00 A.M. - 5:30 P.M. - Art Show—Nebraska Photographers, Depot.  
1:30 P.M. - 5:00 P.M. - Open House at All Buildings.  
7:00 P.M. - Thresher's Supper, High School Gymnasium  
Tom Allan - Emcee—Omaha World Herald  
Roger Welsch - Speaker—Folklorist, UNL  
Linda Phillips - Fritz Mountford  
Performing Artists

## The Matinee

Participants for this year's discussion of Cather's **The Troll Garden** include:

Mildred R. Bennett, founder of the WCPM and author of **The World of Willa Cather** will serve as moderator for the afternoon. Mrs. Bennett, recognized as the foremost authority on Willa Cather, served as President of WCPM for 21 years and continues to assist scholars from all over the world with their research.

Ella Cather Lewis is the daughter of Jack Cather, Willa's youngest brother. She received her M.A. in Education and Speech Communication at USC. She currently is with the speech department at Long Beach City College where she specializes in public speaking.

Margaret Goodman-Malamuth received her B.S. in English from Bemidji State University and her M.A. in English from Baylor University. She served as Associate Professor of English at Long Beach City College from 1955 to 1976. She is now on personal leave.

Dr. Bruce P. Baker has served as a WCPM board member from 1975 to the present. He received his M.A. from the University of Omaha and his Ph.D. from Texas Christian University. Currently Professor of English at The University of Nebraska, Omaha, he served as Fulbright Lecturer in English at Kabul University, Afghanistan in 1976.



Mrs. George Cather (Willa's Aunt Franc), Aunt Georgiana of "A Wagner Matinee."

## The Troll Garden

"All S.S. McClure could think of to do for her after he published **The Troll Garden** was to offer her a job as one of his editors on **McClures' Magazine**, where she worked hard for six mortal years before it seems to have occurred to her that she was not being a writer, after all, which was what she had started out for."—Katherine Ann Porter, afterward to **The Troll Garden**.

Published in 1905, Willa Cather's first volume of seven short stories will set the theme for the Panel Discussion at the 23rd Annual Cather Spring Conference.

## Curator Appointed

The Board recently appointed Ann E. Billesbach, Curator of the WCPM. Ann, a native of Central City, Nebraska, received her B.A. in English from the University of Nebraska in 1975. She attended Cooperstown Graduate Programs in American Folk Culture and Museum Studies, completing course work for her M.A. in 1977. Ann comes to the WCPM following a National Endowment for The Humanities Internship with The Institute of Texan Cultures in San Antonio.

## Conference Banquet

The 23rd Annual Spring Conference Banquet will honor those who have given time and financial assistance to the WCPM through the years. With such devoted support the Memorial has continued its ever-increasing activities, culminating once again in the Annual Cather Spring Conference.

Tom Allan, roving reporter for "The Omaha World Herald" will emcee the program which includes several selections sung by performing artists Linda Phillips and Fritz Mountford. Roger Welsch, folklorist at UNL, will serve as guest speaker for the evening.

## Welsch Banquet Speaker

Roger L. Welsch, noted Nebraska folklorist, will be guest speaker for the Spring Conference Banquet. Welsch is currently Associate Professor of English and Anthropology at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. In 1977 he received an award for distinguished teaching from the University and State Legislature.

Welsch is the author of several books including **Sod Walls: The Story of the Nebraska Sod House, Shingling the Fog and Other Plains Lies** and **Tall-Tale Postcards: A Pictorial History** and has released a recording of Nebraska pioneer folksongs entitled **Sweet Nebraska Land**.

## Performing Artist — Fritz Mountford

Fritz Mountford, a native of Red Cloud and graduate of Hastings College, will provide vocal entertainment for the Annual Cather Banquet.

Mountford, a vocalist with The Fred Waring Pennsylvanians, also serves as director of The Waring Blenders, a specialty group with the Waring tour. He is an accomplished choral arranger and enjoys teaching as a conductor at The Waring Workshop.

## Performing Artist — Linda Phillips

Linda Phillips, soprano, of New York City, will be guest soloist at the Cather Spring Conference, May 6, 1978. Miss Phillips will sing Willa Cather's "The Hawthorne Tree."

Linda Phillips is a native of Red Cloud, Nebraska. A graduate of Indiana University, she has been an apprentice artist with the Santa Fe Opera Company and performed leading roles with the St. Paul Opera, the National Opera Company, the Syracuse Symphony, the Kansas City Lyric, and the Opera Orchestra of New York.

In April, she will sing the role of Musetta in "La Boheme" with the Opera Association of Great Miami, and will appear April 24th as soloist at Bethany College, Lindsborg, Kansas, in Vaughan William's "Dona Nobis Pacem" with the Kansas City Philharmonic Orchestra.

### Please Send Your Change of Address

Remember to send in your change of address if you are moving.

## "Into the Morning"

Because of popular demand, the film "Into the Morning: Willa Cather's America" will again be shown during the 1978 Spring Conference.

Produced in 1975 by WNET-TV, New York, the film makes use of Red Cloud settings and people as well as those of the Southwest in its portrayal of Willa Cather's life and works.

The times and location of the showing will be posted at registration.

## Church Services

The Grace Episcopal Church will again open its doors to worshipers the morning of May 6. A Mass will be offered at 9:00 A.M. as a part of the Spring Conference.

The Reverend Dr. William A. Johnson, Canon Theologian of The Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine in New York City and Professor of Philosophy and the History of Ideas at Brandeis University, will Celebrate the Eucharist.

He will be assisted by the Reverend Brent Bohlke, Chaplain at St. Mark's on the campus and instructor of English at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln.

Both Dr. Johnson and Rev. Bohlke are Cather scholars and have generously offered their services for the Spring Conference.

The St. Juliana Choir, an ecumenical group of Red Cloud people, will provide the music for the service. The Choir is under the direction of John English, music instructor at Red Cloud Community Schools.

Mrs. Bernard Sprague will provide accompaniment on the pump organ.

## Pavelka Farmhouse Nominated

The *Ántonia* Farmhouse, setting for a part of Willa Cather's *My Ántonia*, is being nominated for listing in The National Register of Historic Places.

The farmhouse, home of Annie and John Pavelka, was deeded to the Memorial by Mr. and Mrs. Haldine Johnson in 1976.

In Book V, "Cuzak's Boys," of *My Ántonia*, Cather recreates the Pavelka farm of the 1900's.

"Set back on a swell of land at my right, I saw a wide farm-house, with a red barn and an ash grove, and cattle-yards in front that sloped down to the highroad . . . The roof was so steep that the eaves were not much above the forest of tall hollyhocks, now brown and in seed. Through July, *Ántonia* said, the house was buried in them; the Bohemians, I remembered, always planted hollyhocks. The front yard was enclosed by a thorny locust hedge, and at the gate grew two silvery, mothlike trees of the mimosa family."

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's cultural resources worthy of preservation. Listing in The National Register makes property owners eligible to be considered for federal grants-in-aid for historic preservation through state programs.

## Membership

Have you remembered to send in your 1978 membership contribution? We know how easy it is to put things like this aside with all good intentions of taking care of it at a more convenient time. Please put us back on the top of your priority list. If you no longer wish to contribute or receive the Newsletter, send us a note instructing us to drop your name from our mailing list.

Thank you, Vi

## N.S.H.S. Merger

LB567, authorizing the acquisition of the properties and operation of The Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial by the Nebraska State Historical Society, received the final approval of the legislature on March 10, 1978. The bill awaits the Governor's signature.

Senators Bereuter, Kahle, and Warner, sponsors of the bill, are to be commended for their continuing interest and efforts in promoting the legislative approval of the merger.

The Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial and Educational Foundation will continue and expand its activities as set forth in it's charter — "assisting scholarships in the field of humanities and perpetuating an interest throughout the world in the work of Willa Cather." (Late note: Governor Exon signed LB567 March 16, 1978.)

## WCPM In New York Times

The WCPM received front page coverage in the Travel Section of **The New York Times**, Sunday, January 29.

In an article on writer's home towns in the Midwest, Richard R. Lingeman described his trip through Webster County and Red Cloud.

"Red Cloud, and the country around it, has been well mapped and marked for the Cather pilgrim, thanks to The Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial and Educational Foundation which was set up in 1955," said Lingeman, noting the accomplishments of the WCPM.

## Mass Vestment Donated

The Memorial has always been without the appropriate Catholic vestments to use in St. Juliana's Catholic Church.

The Very Rev. Myron Effing, O.S.C., Prior of the Crosier Monastery in Hastings, Nebraska, recently supplied us with a beautifully embroidered green brocade garment. This vestment, called a "cope," is used during the "season of the year" between Easter and Advent.

The cope is originally from St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Pierz, Minnesota, and is worn during solemn occasions such as weddings or baptisms.

### Special Student Registration

**WCPM 23rd Annual Spring Conference  
May 6, 1978, Red Cloud, Ne. 68970**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please name each person in group)

\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Student(s) at \_\_\_\_\_  
School Name \_\_\_\_\_

#### Number Wanted

- \_\_\_\_\_ Ticket for all day - \$11.00 each
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reg., Tour, Lunch, & Panel - \$6.00 each
- \_\_\_\_\_ Panel Discussion only - \$2.00 each or \$1.50 (if group of ten or more)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Total Amount Enclosed

- Self addressed stamped envelope enclosed. Please mail tickets (not possible after April 29th).
- Will pick up tickets on May 6th at WCPM Museum.

**PRE REGISTRATION WILL CLOSE 4:30 P.M. MAY 3RD**  
Registration on day of Conference will not include meals.

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May 6, 1978, Red Cloud, Ne. 68970**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please name all in group)

\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

#### Number Wanted

- \_\_\_\_\_ tickets for all day - \$14.00 each  
OR BY EVENT
- \_\_\_\_\_ Registration - \$1.00 each
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mini Tour - \$2.00 each
- \_\_\_\_\_ Box Lunch - \$3.00 each
- \_\_\_\_\_ Panel Discussion - \$2.50 each
- \_\_\_\_\_ Banquet - \$6.50 each
- \_\_\_\_\_ Total Amount Enclosed

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## Watkins' Book Includes Cather

"Willa Cather knew her childhood prairie as well as the Southwest . . . In American Literature she may be the author who has written most capably about her own culture and also thoroughly absorbed another and entirely alien civilization and written about it with an accuracy like that of one born to the people."

### Preface to *In Time and Place*

The WCPM recently received a copy of *In Time and Place: Some Origins of American Fiction* by Floyd C. Watkins, Professor of English at Emory University.

Watkins spent three weeks in Red Cloud in 1975 while doing research for his book.

*In Time and Place*, explores "cultural and historical and geographical background and their effects on fiction." His Cather chapters deal with *My Antonia* and *Death Comes for the Archbishop*.

### 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.

## New Exhibit Cases

Three new exhibit cases have been installed on the lower level of the Garber Bank Building. The birch cases, made locally by carpenter Bob Graining, will greatly expand the display capacities of the WCPM. They will house changing exhibits, enabling WCPM to display much of its previously stored collections on a rotating basis.

## The Song of The Lark In Paperback

The University of Nebraska Press has released Willa Cather's *The Song of The Lark* in a bison paperback edition.

The new edition reproduces the full text as it was originally published in 1915.

The book sells for \$4.95 and is available from the WCPM. Please include \$.50 for postage and handling.

—Ann Billesbach, Editor

### AIMS OF THE WCPM

- To secure the bonding, insurance and housing of a permanent art, literary and historical collection relating to the life, time and work of Willa Cather.
- To identify and restore to their original condition, places made famous by the writings of Willa Cather.
- To provide for Willa Cather a living memorial 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)

### BOARD OF GOVERNORS

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## Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial

Red Cloud, Nebraska 68970

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### MUSEUM HOURS

Open May 1 to October 1  
10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays  
1 to 5 p.m. weekends