

THE FOSSIL

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT AWARDS AND INNOVATIONS

Guy Miller

Because of production problems, including a faulty printer and a shortage of help, ballots were late in getting to you. Our by-laws specify that your ballot reach you by July 10, and it is to be completed and returned to the Secretary no later than July 31. Obviously we must make an adjustment this year. So, let us urge you to return your ballot by August 15. You will vote for two candidates for our Board of Trustees. Note that space is provided for you to write in as many as two other choices from those listed. Those elected along with the one holdover (the incumbent President) will reorganize to serve you for another two years. You will remember that all other officers are appointed by the Board of Trustees.

At this time we are getting ready to attend the concurrent conventions of the AAPA and NAPA to be held in Elk Grove Village near Chicago, July 22-24. This is the first time that

such a venture between the two groups has been tried, and we are all looking forward to being a part of this event. The schedule has been well planned by Fossil (AAPA/NAPA) Barry Schrader & NAPA Secretary-treasurer Bill Boys; so, we know that it will be a successful experience. A special feature is a Fossils Appreciation Lunch. At that time we will be presenting two awards: the Russell L. Paxton Memorial Award for Service to Amateur Journalism, and the Gold Composing Stick Award. As we are always careful to point out, the Paxton Award is not a Fossils-originated award, but we have the honor of selecting and presenting it to the recipient. The Gold Composing Stick Award, whose centerpiece is actually a gold-plated type stick, is, however, a Fossils award. First presented to “Mr. Fossil” Edward H. Cole in 1953, this award has been given on 11 different occasions. This year’s award, then, will mark the 12th presentation in its 57-year span. Full information on these two awards—plus photos—as well as a report of the result of our Fossils election, will appear in our October issue.

TRIBUTE TO A FRIEND

Marion Fields Wyllie

“I do not know
what weeds will grow
in the garden of my life,”

wrote Martha Shivers in “Across the Plains,” published in 1981. It was gratifying to read Guy Miller’s recognition of a dear friend in *The Fossil* for April 2010. I don’t think Martha has let many weeds grow in her life, in the thirty-five or more years I have known her.

Martha and I are the last surviving members of a poetry correspondence club, called The Rhymer. The early leader, Ina Witkop, treated the round robin as a ship. She being the captain and the rest of us the crew. The bundle circulated in a given order, its cargo including a poem by each member, a letter and sometimes clippings or snaps. When Ina retired, the rest of us took turns at two-year terms as captain. Martha captained us several times.

Running a tidy ship, she contributed many poems and took a sympathetic interest in the ups and downs of our lives. She was a less severe critic than Ina, and gave us all inspiration and courage. Besides being active in *The Rhymer*, Martha published books of her own poetry and contributed to other publications. I wish I had pictures to share with your readers, of the many beautifully handmade quilts she sewed, often with hands in pain from arthritis.

Martha and her sister, Norah Lee, and myself were all members of the United Amateur Press. In 1992 (I think) the UAP convention was held in Atlantic, Iowa. Martha invited me to stay at her home, to attend the meeting. I needed my son, George, to go along for company, and Martha bade him welcome. She and her husband, Woodrow, met us at the Des Moines Airport and drove us the fifty miles to their home in Knoxville. After being royally entertained for two or three days, Woodrow drove us partway, and met Norah Lee, who took us the rest of the way to Atlantic. Somewhere I have a snap of the people at that convention. If I ever find it I'll send it on to you.¹ I am enclosing one of a group at Martha's home. It includes: three sisters, Norah Lee, Francis, Mary May with husband Tommy, and Martha. In front are George Wyllie and Martha's husband, Woodrow Shivvers. The other snap is of a UAP convention in 1991 at Sauble Beach, Ontario, Canada. In it are Bill and Betty Snodgrass of Illinois, Lisa Roose-Church of Michigan, Lucille Rosebery of Florida, Beth Smith of Stratford, Ontario, Watson Richards and Marion Wyllie of Owen Sound, Ontario, and co-hosts, Elsie Jarl and Dee Burnlees of Sauble Beach, Ontario.

The amateur clubs, *The Rhymer*, and other groups have brought me many friends, and none dearer than Martha.

ZINE-O-SCOPE

¹ Marion subsequently found this photograph of the 1992 Atlantic, Iowa UAP convention, and it is included as an illustration in the paper edition of this number of *The Fossil*.

Featuring: *Nix Nem [Quarterly Review]*

Editor: Ray H. Zorn (1910-1997)

Publication Dates: April 1929-December 1937 (any later?)

Affiliations: UAPA, AAPA (from December 1937)

Ray Zorn's *Nix Nem* was founded as a 2 7/8 x 4 7/16-inch monthly magazine running 20 or 24 pages. The first number was dated April 1929 and issued from 9 North Sleight Street, Naperville, Illinois, in the Chicago suburbs. But the June number announced the editor's removal to Troy Grove, Illinois, effective June 10, 1929. The three numbers of the first volume in the author's possession (June, July and August 1929) do not declare any associational affiliation. The price for an individual number was a nickel; the price for a year's subscription of twelve monthly numbers was a quarter (although a probable price increase to a half-dollar for a year's subscription was announced in the June 1929 number). "Important Notices" in the August 1929 number noted the availability of a \$1.50 lifetime subscription.

The contents of these first small-sized numbers were fairly typical for amateur magazines of the era. All three numbers contained a column entitled "The Cinema Parade," with brief reviews of current films. Advertisements were solicited at the rate of two cents per word—"three insertions for the price of two." A half-page ad cost 50¢, a full-page, 75¢. Most ads were from fellow publishers, but others were placed by stamp-dealers and dealers in office and printing supplies:

SWANBERG Lifetime pencils. Red rubber, with nickel trimmings. Extra leaders, eraser, clip—everything—only 25¢ postpaid. Guaranteed for five years. Imperial Mail Service, Kewanee, Ill.

FOR SALE:—Two Kelsey hand presses, a 5 x 8 and a 5 1/2 x 9 1/2, both in first class condition with new rollers. Can send samples of work for 2¢ stamp. Priced to sell. Write for full particulars and prices. Glenn's Print Shop, Box 83, Chattanooga,

Okla.

Poems and short-short stories were features from the beginning. "Off-trail," fantasy and science fiction material would remain occasional features of *Nix Nem* for its entire run. The June 1929 number contains "A Trip to the Moon" by James L. Quinn, relating how the narrator and a few friends entered a torpedo-shaped tube billed as a moon-travel machine and found themselves transported to the earth's satellite after an eight-hour journey when the narrator accidentally struck a protruding lever. They found a frozen realm and decided to remain in their ship, but were greeted by a fur-clad denizen who invited them to his house made of ice and offered them frozen fish to eat. But it was all a dream as the narrator found out on the return trip:

As we were descending toward the earth I feel asleep and when I awoke I found myself lying on my favorite sofa where I had "flung" myself just about an hour before, being very tired after a hard day at the office.

The "Book Reviews" in the June 1929 covered stamp dealers' catalogs exclusively, but the column expanded in later numbers to include more literary material. "Magazine Reviews" were a prominent feature of *Nix Nem* from the start, and were later expanded to include special coverage of first numbers. "The Skyline" was a column of editorial comment, while "Open House" featured readers' comments. A "Health" column written by Dr. Ralph A. Wagner, "Drugless Physician," of Tiffin, Ohio commenced in the July 1929, with a treatment of the benefits of sun-baths, followed by a treatment of air-baths in August 1929. James L. Quinn of Easthampton, Massachusetts (the author of "A Trip to the Moon") began submitting a humor column entitled "Wize Kracks" in July 1929.

A number of changes had occurred by the next number in the author's possession, vol. 2 no. 3 dated September 1932. First a foremost, the title had changed from simply *Nix Nem* to *Nix Nem Quarterly Review*, which the magazine retained for the rest of its run. In addition,

the page size had increased to 3 x 6 inches. Typical numbers were now to run between 8 and 12 pages; covers as such were apparently first introduced with the March 1936 number. *Nix Nem* was now published "in the interests of U.A.P.A." and "circulated through the United Mailing Bureau." Subscription was 20¢ for four quarterly numbers, and exchanges were sought with other amateur publishers. The editor's selection of the best poem from the last quarter's amateur verse was now featured on the front page; later, this feature was dropped in favor of notice of the editor's selection and a prize for the selected poem. The magazine review column had been renamed "Publishers Parade" and noted: "Only those papers received direct from the editor or publisher are reviewed in this department." "Book and Pamphlet Reviews" includes two volumes of *Poems from the Heart of Vermont* and *A Day at Oakwood Colony*, "a description of the author's conception of an ideal institution for mental and physical defectives." Dr. Wagner's column no longer appeared, but "The Advantages of Sex Education" by Edwin C. Downs appeared in its second installment. Among the advice provided: "Practical experiences show that men who control passion have keener sensibilities and sometimes utilize marvelous powers that seemingly transcend the physical senses." "The Skyline" recorded the election results from the foregoing U.A.P.A. convention, including the election of editor Zorn as Laureate Recorder. He duly noted: "Now that your editor is Laureate Recorder, we shall be pleased to receive MSS and journals for entry. Mark all entries 'Laureate Competition' and always send an extra copy of your journal for review."

Quarterly numbers of *Nix Nem Quarterly Review* apparently ran uninterrupted from March 1933 (vol. 2 no. 1) through at least December 1937 (vol. 7 no. 3), although the author's file is incomplete. The aspects which reflect the editor's individuality most prominently were: (1) commitment to poetry; (2) commitment to U.A.P.A. and its interests; and (3) hobby interests like stamp-collecting, song lyric-writing and fur-farming. Most of the poetry published reflected conventional values but the unusual was not neglected. Here is Richard A. Thomas, Jr.'s "I Shall Be Dancing" from the December 1934 number (reprinted from *The Bookmark* dated September 1934):

I shall be skull and bones dancing at night!
Fetch me a coffin; stitch me a shroud;
Out in the weather I'll bleach my bones white;
I'll hold up my skull in attitude proud.

Since love has left me I strengthen my laughter;
Hurry my shroud; make it small-stitched and white;
This, surely this, will be following after:
I shall be skull and bones dancing at night!

Perhaps the best poem published featured on *Nix Nem's* front page was Ronald Walker Barr's "Japanesque" in the September 1935 number (reprinted from *Americana Monthly* dated September 1935):

We watched the sampan sails fade out of sight
And merge into the gloom across the bay
When evening shadows on the water lay
And cherry blossoms starred the dusk with light.

Tonight, afar, I know you watch and wait,
Sadly, as women do, when moonlight falls,
And only the wind comes stealing over the walls,
Into the garden when the hour is late.

Zorn belonged to a correspondence group called the Cyclopoets, and his March 1936 and September 1937 numbers were special Cyclopoets numbers featuring poetry by members of the group. Zorn explained in "About in Cyclopoets" in the March 1936 number:

The Cyclopoets letter-group was organized late in 1933 at the suggestion of Martin Keffer of Roanoke, Va., and was first captained by Miss Kay Hempel of El Kader, Iowa. The ostensible purpose of the group is the study of verse-forms and practice in writing them, and many types have been under consideration. At the same time, these pen acquaintances find much to chat about in a very friendly manner.

In October, 1934, Miss Hempel resigned her captaincy and membership in favor of other duties. Ray H. Zorn was chosen to succeed her and still serves the group as Captain, while the letter at present makes about three complete rounds every year.

There are ten members in the Cyclopoets letter-group; all but two are represented by original work in this issue. A personal note about each one will be found in our "Flashlights" column.

Viewing "Flashlights" in the same number, one finds the names of the poets: Gladys Lloyd, Sally Ekins, Maurice White, Miriam Bralley, Rev. Maurice Daily, Ray Albert, Richard Alexander Thomas, John D. Adams, Earl Henry, Ray Zorn, and Martin Keffer.

As is also typical for journals of the era, contests abounded. In the June 1933 numbered appeared Floyd V. Dean's "Tale of a Cigarette," and readers were asked to identify actual brand names occurring in the story. The winner was to receive a copy of *Contemporary American Poets—1931*, autographed by Zorn, a contributor to the book. The same number contained a column entitled "Blowing Our Own Horn," which reflected one of the editor's own interests:

"White Hawaiian Moonlight," a waltz song, and a composition of your editor, Ray H. Zorn, was presented over radio station WJBC, La Salle, Illinois, being sung by Miss Lucille McVey. Miss McVey used this number in her program of popular songs,

Monday evening, April 3, 1933. This song has not been published but manuscript copies can be secured for 35¢ from the composer.

Zorn is also listed in the "1933 Directory of American Songwriters" published in New York City, exclusively for the songwriting trade.

Three of Mr. Zorn's songs were given a grade of "B-Good" in the recently closed song contest conducted by Ted Browne Music Co., Chicago.

If interested in original popular-type songs or piano solos, write to Ray H. Zorn, Troy Grove, Ill., requesting information or thematic bits, as desired.

At least one of the songs written by Zorn, "How Can We Recognize the Night," was submitted for copyright by Alfred Noatch of Staunton IL on October 7, 1936. Just how much recognition Zorn gained as a song-writer, is not known to the writer.

Willard "Texas" Thompson was thumbing his way across America in preparation for a career as a writer and meeting fellow amateurs and Lone Scouts along the way. He visited Zorn in Troy Grove on July 2-3, 1933 and the "Special Convention Number" of *Nix-Nem* dated July 29-30, 1933 featured his "Thumbs Up," subtitled "(Notes By a Hitch-Hiker)," with observations like:

The meanest place in America is Scarsdale to White Plains, New York. Here walking on concrete or shoulders is illegal. Paths to nowhere must be taken.

Zorn attended UAPA's 37th convention at the Morrison Hotel in Chicago at the end of July; earlier (June 26), he had taken in the Century of Progress Exhibition in the same city. Thompson followed with "A Plebeian Looks at Museums" in *Nix Nem's* March 1934 number,

and received notice in the "Flashlights" column:

Willard Thompson hopes to put out a paper devoted to whimsical verse, the occult, metaphysics, scouting, travel, and collecting, liberally illustrated with linoleum cuts.

When last heard from Willard Thompson was in St. Louis where he met Suhre and had his picture taken with Pursell..."Texas" is head and shoulders above Pursell...Mrs. P. pulled the trigger...(for the photo)....

Reflecting the generosity of his notices of other publications in *Nix Nem*, "Flashlights" noted of the editor:

Doc Noel informs us that the Victory Ticket will again put your editor up for Chief Critic...Thanx...

"Flashlights" also recorded that amateur journalism was far from the only interest of the editor:

Your editor, a radio DX fan, has recently listened to programs direct from CX26 at Montevideo, LR5 at Buenos Aires, CMCW and CMJP at Havana, TGW at Guatemala City, KGU in Honolulu, and 2BL at Sydney....

In the June 1934 number, Zorn wrote about his experience with James Joyce's controversial novel *Ulysses*, which had finally been cleared for publication in the United States by judicial decision in 1933: "Joyce recognizes the sordid facets of his characters, and he doesn't shrink from giving them their place." Zorn's friend Willard "Texas" Thompson continued his travel narratives in "Museum Registers." Writing later under the title "Well, I've Read It" in *Nix Nem* for December 1936, Natalie H. Wooley was rather more caustic about Joyce's work:

As erotica, the book is a disappointment. Some of Boccaccio or Balzac, or the modern

writers Bodenheim and Donald Henderson Clarke outstrip it completely. As history, it is insignificant. As a text-book of hitherto deleted words, it leaves little to the imagination.

While many amateur journalists probably read Joyce's novel, James Fuller Spoerri (1899-1969), who became a corporate lawyer residing in Evanston IL in later life, was probably the most dedicated collector of Joyce's works; his Joyce collection was acquired by the Kenneth Spencer Research Library at the University of Kansas in 1953. Spoerri was working as a Congressional aide in Washington DC when he belonged to the Hoffman-Daas faction of the United ca. 1920.

One of the most remarkable texts ever published in *Nix Nem* was undoubtedly Robert Holman's "Cameo Cut in Raspberry Jello" in the June 1936 number:

"I told her I loved her. I cannot say whether the words gave her any enjoyment, and emotional palpitations. I hope she didn't take me too serious. When I said it I didn't mean it. Conversation wasn't so brisk and I thought I had to say something. So I did. I said I love you. Saying things like that often helps other things along. Some people say nice weather we are having or it looks like rain. You must say something sometimes or you will never start anything. So I said I love you. Nice words them, I love you, sort of nice sounding words. If you are any good with inflection and intonation you can make I love you do tricks. Some people would say you could get yourself the world with a fence around it. But I think that is stretching things too far. It's funny that way with words. Same way when you write them. Put a sentence on paper and for half an hour you can amuse yourself mightily twisting the words round and round until a melody seems to emanate from them. It must have been the same way when I told her I loved her. Cannot recall the exact number of times I repeated the declaration but I must have been amusing myself as if with a written sentence. Her kisses seemed better after I said I love you. Describing kisses with a word like better doesn't convey my feelings. That's the way things are at times. Like words kisses are funny. If kisses weren't

so different I suppose I would still be seeing her. For a time while with her I wouldn't think of anything. Men don't remember everything that happens while they are with women. No one is to blame. After while I was thinking of everything even while kissing her. She often asked me what was wrong, why my state of coma? Coma isn't the word she would say. She wasn't smart like some women. That was what made conversation so hard. A man can't spend hour after hour talking absolute nothing to a woman and all she is doing is smiling or giggling or looking straight at you without seeing you. Amusing a woman is hard sometimes. I suppose I did like her a little. A man can't kiss a woman and not get to like something about her. I guess it must have been the dirt that I liked about her. In the daylight whenever I saw her I could swear there was dirt in her ears. Even in the dark I knew her finger nails were as dirty as could be. There is a lot you can't see in the dark. You can imagine things that you know couldn't be seen in reality. I always like to give all people the benefit of any doubt. In daylight her face wasn't perfect. It had blemishes and blotches but I always remembered that after kissing her for a while the blood made the skin soft and warm and yielding. And I always, always remember there are compensations in such things. All men I suppose are like that. If you marry such a woman after a time and fashion the dirt must change from a likeness to a shade of love. It must happen that men sometimes murder women who forget about such infinitesimal things as dirt. If it isn't murder then it must be drink. It generally is one or the other. It must have been a half dozen times I was with her. After the first time I was always going to break the friendship but I didn't. Finally I told her I was sorry but I had another girl. I said more but there are things a man can't remember. Anyway I told her I loved her and I was sorry and all I asked was for forgiveness. Forgiveness: I just didn't take time to think what I might exactly have meant. If I would kiss her once after that I know that the dirt would have banished everything I had said. If while kissing her I would think of her ears and the dirt in them I would kiss her lips so much the harder. When I told her about the other woman I didn't just naturally lie to her. It would have been impossible for me to disclose the other woman's name because that kind of woman I didn't have. I guess it was a woman who didn't have dirt in her ears and didn't go about the house stockingless showing nice legs but

somewhat streaked with dirt. That other woman I must have been thinking was smarter and I wouldn't have so hard a time to talk to her. I know them kind of women are easy to make conversation with but it is harder to kiss them the first time. I guess that is why I liked her and said I love you even when I didn't love her. I guess men are all like that when they are telling women lies."

Perhaps Holman had been reading *Ulysses*, too. In his article "Concerning Words" in the December 1936 number, Holman mentioned among his favorite wordsmiths Barbey d'Aurevilly, Edgar Saltus, Baron Corvo and Joris-Karl Huysmans. If Holman seemed somewhat hesitant about the facts of life in his contribution, fourteen-year-old Virginia King was hardly so in her "Sonnet" in the September 1936 number:

Moonlight—
Held tight.
Kiss:
Bliss.
Once, twice;
(My, how nice!)
Knees—
"Please."

That thrill:
"I will!"
Marriage—
Baby carriage.
Baby squall
(That's all!!!)

Holman continued with his “The Power of Suggestion”—concerning the use of the asterisk in literature—in the same number.

Literature didn't wholly occupy Zorn during these years. He continue to be keenly interested in United association matters, and printed his June 1935 number in unusual format to display the four United election tickets (dubbed Loyalty, Crusaders, Progressive and Independent) of that year on the verso. Reflecting his yeoman's work in reviewing other journals in *Nix Nem*, Zorn was slated for Criticism Chief in three out of four of the tickets. (The Crusaders slated Ira Swindall, Jr. for the office.) Then in his December 1936 number, Zorn published “An Open Letter to Irwin O. Brandt,” criticizing official editor Brandt for delay in issuing *The United Amateur*. Perhaps it was the doldrums in the United that influenced Zorn to distribute *Nix Nem* through the newly-founded American, as well as the United, beginning with his December 1937 number. He wrote:

The United, instead of being jealous and abusive toward the American association, should take a lesson from it as concerns publishing and mailing. The American is a one year old, without time-honored traditions, with a comparatively small membership—but it has frequent issues of its official magazine and many mailings....and it's as live as a high tension wire.

The author's own file of *Nix Nem* ends with the December 1937 number; the author does not know whether there were further issues published. Zorn settled into a civil service job and became postmaster at Troy Grove. From there he issued three numbers of a small journal titled *The Lovecraft Collector* in 1949. They have become collector's items among Lovecraft fans. His early interest in Lovecraft can be noted in several late numbers of *Nix Nem*. He wrote a brief review of Corwin Stickey's memorial chapbook *H.P.L.* in *Nix Nem* for September 1937:

"HPL"—a brochure of 8 poems by Howard Phillips Lovecraft; with a frontispiece by Virgil Finlay. Science-Fantasy Pubs.; 1937. Leatherette cover. Limited edition. (Obtainable only with a one year's subscription to "Amateur Correspondent," 130 William St., Belleville, N.J. at 25¢.

The late H. P. Lovecraft was without doubt a peer among the writers of weird fiction. I have read few stories that could create the equal of the feeling of horror induced by "The Colour out of Space."

In these few poems, it is proved that Lovecraft had the rare gift of introducing eeriness into verse as well. Whether he deals with sudden terror as in "The Dweller," with the loathesomeness of "Night Gaunts," or with the haunting ghostly beauty of "Harbour Whistles"—his poems are finished examples of word-artistry in his chosen field.

In "Book and Pamphlet Reviews" in his December 1937 number, Zorn gave brief notice to Lovecraft's first-published book:

"Shadow Over Innsmouth," by H. P. Lovecraft. Illustrated by Frank A. Utpatel. Visionary Pub. Co., Everett, Pa.; 1936. Cloth. Price, \$1.00.

Amateurs who knew the late H. P. Lovecraft should have an uncommon interest in this book. It is the first story by this master teller of weird tales to appear separately in book form, and will undoubtedly become a collectors' item.

The story itself is a good example of Lovecraft's gift of portraying mounting horror. The hero, telling his own story, is attracted to the ancient city of Innsmouth on the coast of Massachusetts by local hints at uncouth mysteries. What he finds there and what he

learns there is told gradually, but with a steadily increasing current of suggested horror. The climax, reached when he is forced to flee for his life from a horror now become real and physical, is told with action and a sense of pursuing terror that holds the reader fascinated. The anti-climax, following unrelentlessly, gives the story a terribly shocking conclusion.

As for the title *Nix Nem* itself, Zorn explained in his "Flashlights" column in the June 1933 number:

"Nix Nem" means literally "no name"....The name originated in September, 1925, and has adorned three journals....

If Zorn was counting the monthly *Nix Nem* originating in April 1929 and the quarterly *Nix Nem Quarterly Review* as two separate journals, it would appear that he (or another amateur journalist) used the name on yet another journal as early as September 1925.

"Nix" undoubtedly derives from the German "nichts," indicating the negative. "Nem" is in fact "name" in the international language Volapük, in which a number of amateur journalists (including Frank Graeme Davis in earlier years) were interested. If you search for the phrase "Nix Nem" on the Internet, you will find a number of citations of Hungarian texts; apparently, "Nem" can mean a category or gender in Hungarian.

WERE IL DUCE'S SONS AMATEUR JOURNALISTS?

Ken Faig, Jr.

In his "Flashlights" column in the June 1934 number of *Nix Nem Quarterly Review* (vol. 4 no. 2), editor Ray H. Zorn noted (pp. 17-18): "Do you know that Mussolini's 18-year-old son, Vittorio, edits a weekly paper called 'Anne XII'?....(Which means 'twelfth year')....If

anybody knows his address get him to join the UAPA....”

I decided to see what I could learn about this matter using Internet resources. The Wikipedia article on Italian dictator Benito Mussolini (1883-1945) indicates that he had three sons and two daughters by his wife Rachele Guidi (1890-1979):

1. Edda (1910-1995) who married Count Galeazzo Ciani (1903-1944), Mussolini's erstwhile Foreign Minister;
2. Vittorio (1916-1997), who became a film critic and producer;
3. Bruno (1918-1941), an aviator who died in the crash of his military aircraft on August 7, 1941;
4. Romano (1927-2006), a jazz musician and painter;
5. Anna Maria (1929-1968), who married (1960) Nando Pucci Negri.

Mussolini also allegedly had a son Benito Albino Mussolini (1915-1942), who died in a mental institution, by Ida Daisler (1880-1937).

The Wikipedia article on Bruno Mussolini notes: “At age 12 Bruno took after his father and tackled journalism. He and his older brother Vittorio published a weekly called *The Boys' Pen (La Penna del Ragazzi)*.”

The source of this information in the Wikipedia article on Bruno Mussolini may well be *Time's* article dated March 2, 1931 entitled “The Press: Journalism Is Life,” which took note of Bruno and Vittorio Mussolini's weekly journal. *Time* quoted Vittorio's quip “Journalism Is Life” from the sixteenth number of the brothers' weekly. *Time* noted that Vittorio's juvenile interests in football games, movies, stamp collecting, and jokes and puzzles contributed to the contents of the brothers' weekly. Vittorio was said to have written a novel in the previous year. Twelve-year-old Bruno was said to have written a melodramatic story entitled “The Vessel of the Dead,” in some ways reflecting his father's writing, but without the eroticism.

More than this about *La Penna del Ragazzi* (or should it be *La Penna di Ragazzi*—my Italian is virtually nonexistent) I have not been able, so far, to learn.

It's interesting that all three Mussolini sons by Rachele Guidi were interested in creative matters. Some of Mussolini's grandchildren have followed him into politics.

I doubt whether very many amateur journalists will be interested in the amateur journalism endeavors of the children of Axis dictators. The subject of these children always makes me think of Nazi Propaganda Minister Dr. Joseph Goebbels and his wife Magda, who with the help of SS Doctor Ludwig Stumpfegger, killed all of their children (except Magda's son by an earlier marriage) at the end of the Third Reich. At least the Mussolini children lived to see another day after their father and his mistress Clara Petacci were killed by Allied partisans at the end of the war.

LETTERS TO EDWIN HADLEY SMITH

Reprinted from Library News (no. 9), December 1941

Rheinart Kleiner, United official editor in 1918:

December 2, 1936, Chester Place, Chester, N.J.

Last month I took a trip to Philadelphia and visited your collection in the Franklin Memorial. The sight of this accumulated treasure is enough to make an amateur reel with joy. I embraced an armful of bound volumes and carried them to a nearby table. My absorption was such that the lights were switched off before I realized that closing had come.

Elsa Gidlow, United president in 1917:

February 9, 1937, 1158 Page Street, San Francisco, California

I have pleasant memories of amateur days and some friendships grew out of them. Some of us had fun editing and publishing. I imagine the members did not realize what a child I was when they were corresponding—about 15 or 16 when invited to join

the association. Since 1921 I have been a professional writer, editor, or journalist of one sort or another.

Charles W. Heins, United organizer in 1895, president in 1900:

October 13, 1941, 16 Winant Avenue, Ridgefield Park, N.J.

I contributed stories to the American Magazine, Cobleskill, N.Y., in 1894 and to the Gem, Harrisburg, Pa., in 1895. My first papers were the Literary Pioneer in 1897 and Arrows in 1900.

I attended the reception last month to President Reed of the United at the Hudson County Amateur Press Club. My daughter Virginia has joined the Blue Pencil Club. My son John [John Milton Heins], the National official editor in 1921, is superintendent of the Scarsdale (N.Y.) Inquirer, a weekly paper; he is married and has four children.

I hear [Clyde F.] Noel has got out a paper which calls me "the first rebel of the United." Such a slam may make me active again. Then watch the fur fly, as that's my business on my 137-acre Pine Bush (N.Y.) estate we have 1,000 full-blooded mink for breeders and mink-coat dealers.

[Smith notes that Heins had published a 28-page booklet, "Mink Ranching, a profitable hobby or an enterprising business."]

SUMMERRISE

Kent Clair Chamberlain

Hose shoots

Stream of Life.
Plants drink,
Reviving withered Earth.

THREE POEMS

Martha E. Shivers

A Joy of Summer

Down in the garden
By the blue windmill
Nestled in the lilacs
Where quiet and still
Rests a small bird house
Hidden from friend and foe
A home to the wren
Who flits to and fro.

She's very secretive
With her tiny babes
Singing melodies
In the lilac shade.

Happy little wren
I love your pretty song,
And your maneuvers,
Stay where you belong!

Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

A door of life has closed for me
But not before I could recall
The anguish of another time
The flowers that grew upon a wall.

Still, laughter rings on from inside
Halls that shouted with memories;
Tears that fell once upon a time,
Lessons learned from curiosities.

I do not grieve the door that closed,
Nor with wanton recall the days of pride
Or unhappiness, but with accord
Embrace Life's door that opens wide.

A Moment

He mixed the mass like a potter
Adding water
A clump of weeds
Handful of seeds
Then with a tall stick from the yard
He twisted hard
With a crooked smile
All of the while
He answered questions that I asked

What is this task?
He gasped four words,
Soup for birds!

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Ken Faig, Jr.

It has surely been a busy quarter in amateur journalism affairs. While we await AAPA's and NAPA's history-making joint convention in Elk Grove Village IL in July, Gary Bossler came into correspondence with the Connecticut printer and bookseller who had acquired part of former Fossil Historian Daniel Graham's large amateur journalism as abandoned property in a Staten Island NY garage earlier in the decade. Two hundred bound volumes of amateur journals (out of approximately four hundred such bound volumes once owned by Sheldon and Helen Wesson) and twenty-nine FedEx shipping boxes of loose journals were involved. Quick action by NAPA President Jack Visser and Fossils President Guy Miller has assured rescue for these journals and a professional placement evaluation by NAPA Librarian and Fossil Trustee Stan Oliner. By the time you are reading these lines, at least the loose journals should be safely in Stan's hands in Denver, Colorado.

I have to thank Marion Fields Wyllie, who will be celebrating her 104th birthday on October 26, 2010, for the fine tribute to her friend Martha Shivers and for the photographs that she contributed to this number of *The Fossil*. Marion's memoir is more than just a tribute to her friend Martha, but also contains a beautiful thumbnail history of the poetry round-robin The Rhymer, to which both she and Martha belonged, and of several UAP conventions in the 1990s. It is, I think, just the kind of personal recollection of amateur journalism experience which can add lasting value to *The Fossil*. As a latecomer to the mainstream amateur journalism hobby in the 1990s, your editor does not share a very large segment of our "institutional memory" on a first-hand basis. So, I encourage you to consider submitting a

recollection of amateur journalism friends, publications, organizations and conventions for publication in *The Fossil*. Your contribution will help to add value and diversity to our journal.

Marion's contribution also fits very well with the first installment of our new "Zine-O-Scope" feature, which will try to take a look at various noteworthy (and perhaps also some not so noteworthy) amateur journals from the past. First up, written by yours truly the editor, is a look at Ray H. Zorn's *Nix Nem Quarterly Review*. This portrait of Zorn and his journal fits well with Marion's memoir, since Zorn was also a strong supporter of amateur poetry. Just like Marion's subject, her friend Martha Shivvers, Zorn served as captain of an amateur poetry round-robin, The Rhymer in Martha's case and The Cyclopoets in Ray Zorn's. Zorn's journal also reflects his other hobby interests: stamp-collecting, song-writing, short-wave radio, and fur farming. The latter interest he shared with United Alumni stalwart Charles W. Heins (1875-1968), who owned and operated Mink Glen Fur Farm in Pine Bush, New York in the 1940s.

Round-robins are a neglected but nevertheless important segment of our institutional history as amateur journalists. Through associated correspondence and personal visits, the round-robins helped to build close-knit friendships within the larger associations. Round-robins were especially important in countries and regions (like late nineteenth-century Australia) where access to printing and duplicating equipment and paper was difficult. Of course, very few physical relics of round-robin journalism survive, but we can catch echoes of the phenomenon and its importance in printed amateur journals like Ray Zorn's *Nix Nem Quarterly Review* and in memoirs like Marion's of her friend Martha Shivvers and the round-robin The Rhymer.

Coming up in our October number...News of Paxton and Gold Composing Stick Awards and other events of ChiCon2...Fossil election news...Pages from Bill Groveman's ajoy photograph album with memories from Bill himself...Stay tuned and please subscribe or join if you have not already done so. (Internet readers get only the text portion of *The Fossil*.) Subscriptions are only \$10 per year and memberships only \$5 more—see below.

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(Information regarding 2010-2012 Board and Officers will appear in our October number.)

THE FOSSILS

<http://www.thefossils.org/>

This journal is the Official Organ of The Fossils, a non-profit organization whose purposes are

to stimulate interest in and preserve the history of independent publishing, either separate from or organized in the hobby known as “Amateur Journalism” and to foster the practices of amateur journalism. To this end, The Fossils preserved the Library of Amateur Journalism, a repository of amateur papers and memorabilia dating from the 1850s, acquired in 1916 and donated in 2004 to the Special Collections Department of the University of Wisconsin Library, Room 976, Memorial Library, 728 State Street, Madison, WI 53706. (The Library of Amateur Journalism Collection is not yet open for use at University of Wisconsin at Madison.) Individuals or institutions allied with our goals are invited to join The Fossils. Dues are \$15 annually—\$20 for joint membership of husband and wife. Annual subscription to *The Fossil* without privileges of membership is \$10. Make remittances payable to The Fossils, and mail to the Secretary-treasurer.