

# The Fossil

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## New Member Profile

# A Lifetime of Printing and Publishing

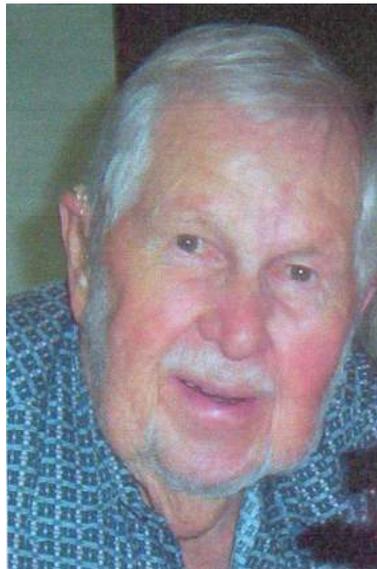
by Gordon K. Rouze

I WAS TWELVE years old when I printed my first publication, *The Imperial Times*, which I immodestly proclaimed to be “the leading newspaper in western Nebraska.” This small one-pager, produced on my Sears & Roebuck hectograph, must have really worried the local newspaper publisher. Actually he and I became great friends, as I’ll explain later. About the same time I made two life-changing discoveries: the Kelsey Company and the American Amateur Press Association.

From the hectograph I had graduated to a rubber-type toy press known as a Swiftset Rotary Press, whose manufacturer encouraged users to send in samples of their work along with printing tricks of the trade to be included in their house organ. This is how the late Les Boyer got my name, which led to a friendship that lasted a lifetime. He told me about the Kelsey Company; I told my folks about the Kelsey Company. I had to have a “real” press, and Mom and Dad came through with a “Complete 3x5 Outfit” the following Christmas.

Several friends shared my interest in printing and publishing as we somehow learned of the American Amateur Press Association, which was only four years old at the time I joined in 1940. (The Secretary’s records show my join date as 1941 but I believe it actually was 1940.) Receiving a monthly bundle was exciting. It wasn’t long before we were cranking out our little journals on the new presses Kelsey was regularly shipping to Imperial, Nebraska. At one time there were five AAPA members with presses in our little town of 1200 souls.

Before long I began hanging out at the offices of the local weekly, *The Imperial Republican*. Initially, it was just a source of paper, but as time went on I became good friends with the owner and the Linotype operator (the entire crew of the *Republican*). Looking back, I don’t see how two people, by themselves, could put



Gordon Rouze

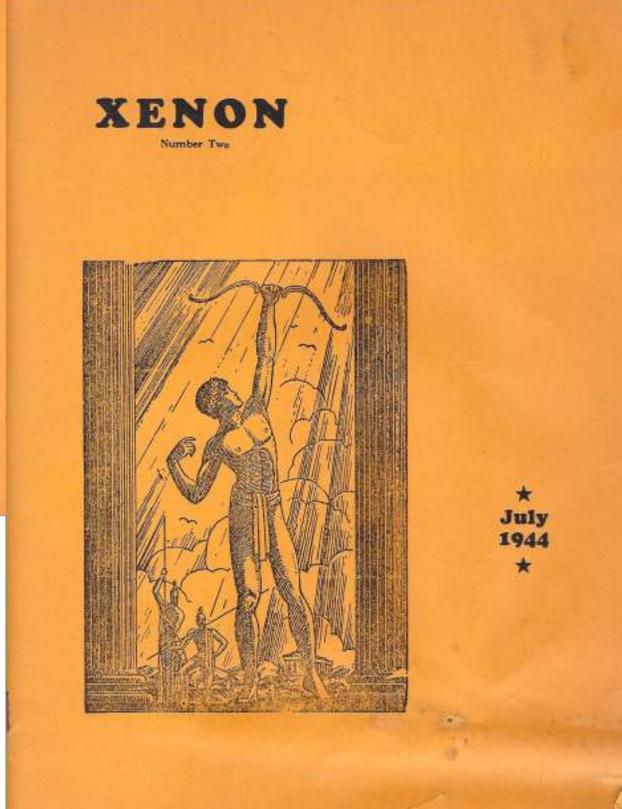
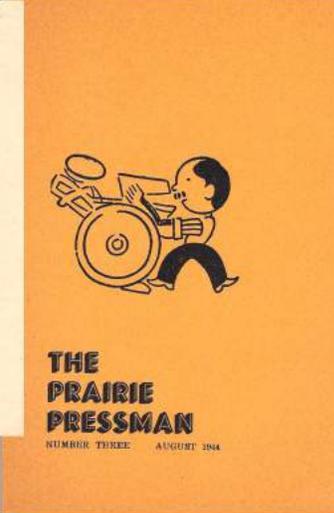
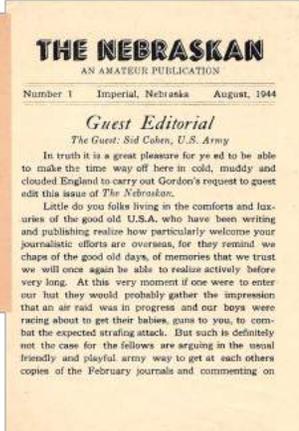
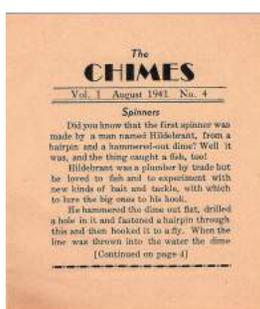
out a weekly newspaper. I recently had an occasion to visit the paper, now a high tech operation with a staff of 17. I thought technology was supposed to put people out of work. But I digress. One day I noticed an ancient jobber gathering dust in the corner of the shop and asked the owner if he would sell it. We made a deal for the 8x12 Gordon, which my dad and some friends hauled as far as the back yard where it was deposited under the large locust tree while Dad figured how to get the beast down the outside stairwell to the basement. I couldn’t wait so I proceeded to print an issue of my AAPA paper, *The Chimes*. You have heard of “shade tree” mechanics...but a “shade tree” printer? This is the press that won the war. While I was away being a Marine in WWII, my press became part of a scrap drive.

About this time I served a hitch as AAPA mailer, much to the delight of the local postal staff. It seems that their pay grade was dependent on the volume of pieces of mail going through the office, and the monthly bundles put them in a higher classification.

Those teenage years were among my most exciting aya periods with an active exchange of privately mailed journals with the likes of Burton Crane and Tim Thrift.

Interest slacked off during time with the Marines and then college, to be picked up from time to time as we corporate gypsies moved around the country. We were in Des Moines for a while where I could rub shoulders with the very talented Milton Grady. In Detroit, Lenny Bahr, no doubt one of the greatest typographers ever, became my mentor. I was able to go to the 1957 Cleveland AAPA convention, and a FAPA gathering in L.A.

But the greatest revival of interest came after we moved to Houston and became part of the group that included Les and Elaine Boyer, John and Anna Beth



Vaglianti, and Ralph Vogel. The Boyers' monthly bundle stuffing parties while he was mailer (2001-2002) and our lunches at the Hungry I were not to be missed. The Houston group hosted two AAPA conventions, in 1977 and 1994.

The name of my paper has changed many times over the years. At one time I counted over 100 issues of various titles and with tongue in cheek proclaimed that I too was a member of that select group, The Centurions, who had published 100 issues (of one title).

In addition to my AAPA journals, I printed *The Prairie Pressman* for the National Amateur Press Association, and *Xenon* for the Fantasy Amateur Press Association. I may also have been a member of one of the Uniteds, but my recollection is hazy.

The garage print shop now stands empty. The well-traveled 10x15 Challenge I bought in Des Moines, plus several hundred fonts of type collected over the years,

Four amateur journals published by Gordon Rouze in the 1940s.

are now gone, given to my apprentice who traveled to Sugar Land for over a year for printing sessions. The gift carried two conditions: I can use the press anytime I want, and when he is through printing, he gives it to another young aspiring printer. It's Dell and HP for me now, as I turn out my latest journal, *Verbatim*, for AAPA. ♦

### President's Message

## Remembering

by Ken Faig, Jr.

### A Beautiful Soul Enters Eternity

WHEN MELVIN AND LINDA SHIVVERS called me on February 2, I suspected the news was not good. It wasn't: Melvin's mother Martha E. Shivvers had died on January 31, just two weeks before what would have been her 102nd birthday on February 13, 2017. Martha had suffered a debilitating stroke a couple years before her passing. Yet, even as a centenarian, she managed a partial recovery, and was able to regain the ability to speak. She could no longer handle a pencil or a pen, but Melvin



Shivvers told me a wonderful anecdote concerning his mother. When on a visit he asked her about her poetry, she told him that she was still writing poems in her head. Martha was always accepting of the limitations of

our lives, and while her final years were undoubtedly difficult, I suspect that she strove to find things for which to be grateful even as a nursing home resident.

Martha devoted a lifetime to writing, from her school days into old age. In the amateur journalism hobby, she was active in the United and in poetry circles, and in later years gave much devoted service to The Fossils as our membership committee chair. She could of course have kept the position as an honorific for as long as she lived, but she decided to relinquish her position when she could no longer perform the work. Martha's granddaughter Dianna Shivvers published two wonderful books of Martha's stories and poems, and contributed a centenary tribute to her grandmother to the January 2015 number of THE FOSSIL.

The Fossils extend our condolences to Martha's family on her passing. We have lost a loyal friend after a long life well spent. While the world of the living is

poorer for Martha's passing, I think nevertheless that the world of our eternal destiny will be the richer for Martha's presence.

### ***High School Memories: Or, Why I Was Not a Student Journalist***

LAST YEAR MARKED the fiftieth anniversary of my graduation from high school. I was fortunate to graduate from high school in the same city where I was born—Cincinnati, Ohio—but just barely. Midway in senior year, my father took a new job in Chattanooga, Tennessee. However, my father's brother lived in a nearby suburb, and my school district (Greenhills, Ohio) allowed me to complete my senior year while living with my uncle and his family. I had relied on the district's school bus service to get to and from school. School bus service didn't extend outside the district's boundaries, but fortunately there was a city bus that I could use.

My class was fortunate in having a motivated group of alumni and alumnae who had planned prior decennial reunions. For the fiftieth reunion, they managed to trace all but eight—three men and five women—of the surviving class members. Of 225 traced classmates (132 men and 93 women), thirty-five—24 men and 11 women—had died, leaving 190 traced survivors (108 men and 82 women). While we experienced better than average mortality, it was still difficult to realize that so many of my classmates had already died. Included among the deceased was my own best friend from high school, who took his own life as long ago as 1974. Several classmates died in military service.

I don't know why my class contained so many more men than women. I can only guess that women residing in the school district had a greater tendency to attend private schools. I think it was then mandatory to attend school at least through sophomore year (grade 10). Perhaps the women did have a higher drop-out rate than the men.

In any case, thanks to the efforts of the reunion committee, somewhat fewer than 100 of the survivors of the Class of 1966 met for a fiftieth reunion weekend in September 2016. Including spouses, I'd guess that 150 or more persons were present for the Saturday evening dinner.

I have to admit that I attended the reunion with some trepidation. I wondered how my classmates would receive me. I was a nonentity in high school—if I didn't have to do something, I didn't do it, and I didn't participate in a single extracurricular activity, or even attend one, all through my four years of high school. As my classmates were eagerly embracing young adulthood, I existed in a cocoon. I kidded myself that emotions weren't important to me. I enjoyed facts and lists and one perceptive teacher told me that my obsession was actually anti-intellectual. I was not adept at analyzing and interpreting the facts, and one term paper that I cobbled together from the *Encyclopedia*

*Britannica* and one other source was probably close enough to a plagiarism to warrant an "F" rather than an "A."

The only glory I ever brought to my *alma mater* was my first place finish in freshman English in the Ohio State Scholarship tests in 1962-63. The same teacher to whom I had handed in that defective term paper had instilled in me a passion for grammar through her emphasis on sentence diagramming. I studied an older book on English grammar as a result, and that self-study was probably the reason for my test result.

I got my comeuppance for my lifestyle when most of the half-dozen or so colleges to which I applied turned me down for lack of extracurricular activities. I found out that high grade point averages and high SAT scores were a dime a dozen when it came to college applicants. I did go on to college, but that's another story. High school remains much more deeply etched in my memory than college.

What I did find out during the reunion weekend was that my former classmates accepted me as the person I was—despite my selfish narrowness in those years. Men whose primary passion had been sports came up and greeted me. One of our former cheerleaders' squad did the same. One gracious lady—still as beautiful in mature age as she had been in high school—told me that she had had a crush on me in the fifth grade. I never imagined that I could have been the object of a crush, but I thanked her for the compliment. Despite all the kindness extended to me and my wife during the reunion, I couldn't help thinking how much more I could have meant to my classmates had I given more of myself back in those years. Granted that I had no interest in sports (despite my size), I could have at least joined Latin club, since Latin was far and away my favorite subject. Besides, Latin club was full of beautiful young women. I never had any problem talking casually to girls, but as for a social relationship, I just wasn't ready.

There was one girl with whom I had been friendly in grade school, to the extent that I got kidded about it by my mother and others. I didn't mind the kidding, since I really did like this girl. However, because I was shy, I didn't push myself to maintain our friendship in junior and senior high school, even as she grew into a lovely and talented young woman. The best I could do was to enjoy her presence whenever we were in the same class together. In fact, I never dated in high school or college. I first met my future wife at work shortly before my thirtieth birthday. I think it's fair to say that I was a "momma's boy." I had a close relationship with my mother, and I found myself very lonely after she died when I was twenty-eight.

By way of contrast with me, my wife and my children all participated in extracurricular activities in high school. My wife's principal extracurricular activity for all four years at Proviso West High School in the Chicago suburbs was the school newspaper. During her senior year, she was copy editor for *Profile*, and she



editors in adult life. Both high school and college newspaper editors encountered some of the same pressures encountered by their peers in the professional realm — e.g., pressure from school administrators or from advertisers to remove or alter controversial stories. In fact, much of the coverage of school newspapers that one can find on the Internet concerns the legal issues arising from censorship or attempted censorship. Over the years, many faculty advisers stood up for the right of student editors and reporters to report the news.

Perhaps the two largest threats to student journalism today are the economics of publishing (either in traditional paper or electronic format) and competition from social media. In Donald J. Trump, we have the first U.S. president who relies heavily on Twitter to express his views in 140-character segments. As more and more organizations gravitate to social media sites like Facebook, willingness to invest the time and energy to digest traditional reporting is diminished. Today, fewer and fewer citizens read a traditional paper-format newspaper. Electronic publications are wonderful, but my own experience is that they encourage more browsing and less in-depth reading. Because of the scarcity of funding, more and more student newspapers, at both the high school and the college level, are gravitating toward the electronic media. There is even an organization, SNO, that provides Internet hosting and other services for student newspapers in the electronic domain. Probably the number of students willing to spend even a “thin dime” on a paper-format newspaper continues to diminish.

Throughout its history, amateur journalism has predominantly been a “solo” hobby — apart, of course, from those annual convention days for which amateur journalists save up during the rest of the year. Of course, there have always been notable exceptions. Brooklyn’s Blue Pencil Club held regular meetings and sponsored *The Brooklynite* through many decades. Boston’s Hub Club with its *Hub Club Quill* was another long-lasting local club. In the thirties, forties and later the Amateur Printers’ Club (APC) furnished a focus for East Coast amateurs. There were active amateur journalists’ clubs on the West Coast as well. Earlier, Roy Erford and Clyde Noel ran their faction of the United Amateur Press Association from their local Seattle club. The Woodbees of Columbus, Ohio, were another noted local club affiliated with the United. The Hoffman-Daas or Lovecraft faction of the United (1912-26) was noted for developing membership among high school and college students. Maurice Winter Moe (1882-1940) exposed many of his students at Appleton (Wisconsin) High School to the hobby, and Anne Tillery Renshaw (1890-bef. 1953) did the same with many of her students at Penn State. Lovecraft’s “prodigies” Alfred Galpin and Margaret Abraham came out of Moe’s high school group in Appleton, which published the amateur paper *The Pippin*.

Another hobby-related subject that once had a



*Albion, Michigan, high school printing class (1931)*

foothold at the high school level was printing. Harold Smolin’s interview in *THE FOSSIL* for July 2008 made reference to the cross-fertilization between high school printing classes and amateur journalism. Harold’s printing teacher at Morton High School, Charles Dietrich, put him in touch with AAPA. Many high schools, including mine, once had letterpress printing equipment. I remember taking an elementary printing segment in the seventh or eighth grade of junior high school, becoming familiar with the typecase, and even setting up and printing a business card. Students who went further in printing even printed the programs for school functions like graduation. Originally, all twelve grades of school in Greenhills, Ohio were in the so-called Community Building, and I remember the printing equipment there. I don’t think it accompanied us when we moved to a new high school building in sophomore year in 1963. Perhaps our high school printers continued to use the print shop at the Community Building. I know that we still had a school printer, Bob Bozeman, who served in that capacity as a junior and a senior. Eventually, changing technologies and insurance considerations probably meant the end of our high school print shop. Today book arts and printing programs are gaining a new foothold at the college level.

Some technical and vocational high schools offered more extended instruction in printing. In New York City, the School of Printing was established in the Hell’s Kitchen section of Manhattan in 1925. It continued to function as the High School of Graphic and Communication Arts (HSGCA) through 2012 and was reopened later the same year as a digital arts high school. HSGCA offered instruction in journalism as well as printing. I have found it difficult to discover how many high schools ever had Linotype or offset printing equipment. Of course, nearly all of today’s commercial printing (except for specialty niches like wedding invitations) is based upon electronically composed copy. Back in Harold Smolin’s day, the printing students at Morton High School in Chicago printed a weekly four-page newspaper, using letterpress equipment. By the time I attended high school in the 1960s, I think most high school newspapers were printed by commercial offset printers from student-composed copy.

One of the highlights of our fiftieth reunion was a

visit to the Community Building. Greenhills High School passed out of existence after the graduation of the Class of 1991, when it was merged with Forest Park High School to become Winton Woods High School. The former Forest Park High School building became the new Winton Woods High School building, while our brand new Greenhills High School of 1963 became Winton Woods Middle School. The 1938 Community Building remains the property of the Winton Woods school district. The Community Building houses the Pioneer Room, filled with memorabilia of the former Greenhills High School. Some of the wonderful WPA murals that once adorned the Community Building have been painted over, but others remain.

During our visit to the Community Building, it felt spooky to climb the worn concrete staircases and look down the long locker-lined corridors that were once trodden by so many thousands of students' feet. The beautiful auditorium of the Community Building that once housed athletic, cultural and religious events—even movies—seems now to be used for storage. However, the building still gets some use apart from providing office space for Winton Woods school district administrators. The Greenhills branch of the Cincinnati Public Library moved into space in the Community Building in 2016 after suffering severe water damage in its longtime home in Greenhills shopping plaza.

Of course, it's pointless to feel regret over things past. If my fourteen-year-old self were to be given a "second chance," he'd probably make all the same decisions he made the first time around in high school. Latin Club, unjoined. The young woman whom I admired, unasked to a dance or a play or a concert.

If there is any lesson to be learned from my own experience, I suppose it is that one ought, whenever possible, to live life to the fullest at each stage. Experiencing strong, new emotions can be a scary experience for a young adult. Trying to damn up or deny newly-experienced emotions is a difficult endeavor often characterized by avoidance strategies. Modulating, accepting and learning from these new emotions are better choices.

For young adults, feeling allegiances with pursuits (e.g., sports and other extracurricular activities and curriculum subjects) can be as important as feeling allegiances with peers. Despite downsizing at traditional employers of journalists, I think there remains strong interest in journalism at both the high school and the college level. I recall *The Weekly Reader* as an even earlier manifestation of newspaper presence in schools—for me, it was an enriching experience to receive my own newspaper to read as a student in elementary school. I suppose it's fair to describe the relationship of hobby amateur journalism and school journalism as limited. Yet, some amateur journalists of today are bringing the printing art to the attention of schoolchildren. Our secretary-treasurer Tom Parson's Letterpress Depot is a good example. Barry Schrader's travelling letterpress

"lab" was another example. Someone more active in the amateur journalism hobby than I could cite many more examples.

In most domains of human activity, it is the "givers" who are the dynamic, creative force. I think this maxim applies at all stages of life—from the young adults who spearhead the extracurricular activities in high school, to the elderly who are the center of social networks and activities in senior residences. Whether inside or outside the amateur journalism hobby, it's best to be a giver. However, in reality most of us are givers in some aspects of our lives, takers in others. The complexion of our lives changes over time, especially as our energies diminish in old age. When one must perforce be a taker, I think the key is to be oneself, and to be a gracious taker whenever possible. Even a taker like yours truly managed to receive a friendly welcome at his fiftieth high school reunion.

I only ventured into the amateur journalism hobby one small step at a time. Guy Miller patiently coaxed me into "pasting up" small amateur journals and then serving as Fossils' historian, NAPA critic and finally Fossils' editor. Several years after Guy's death I was recruited as Fossils' president in 2014. I like to think that my participation in the amateur journalism hobby—limited as it has been—has helped me to expand the giving part of my life. Even though I was no journalist of any sort during my high school years in 1962–66, those years remain a vivid part of my memories. The survivors of the classmates who were so young and so vibrant in 1962–66 are now, like me, approaching old age. It was surely a privilege to see so many of them again, to introduce them to my wife, and to try to express how much they meant to me. In different ways, both high school and amateur journalism helped me to become the person I am today.

I think I am less proud of the "achievements" of my life than I am grateful to have acquired the self-knowledge that enables me to negotiate the ups and downs of daily life, if not always with tranquility, at least with acceptance. I hope that this essay has helped to explore the subject of school journalism and to express how much my own high school experience meant to me. I think I would have enjoyed getting more experience in our school print shop, writing for the school newspaper and literary magazine, joining Latin club, or attending a school function with the young woman whom I admired. However, fifty years ago I was not ready to do any of these things.

I hope the memory of those once-busy high school print shops won't fade anytime soon. However the technology of their production may change in the forthcoming decades, let's hope that high school newspapers, literary magazines, and yearbooks will continue to form a rich part of the cultural traditions to which our young people are exposed. Youth is a time for dreaming. With any luck, student newspapers, literary magazines, and yearbooks will continue to fuel the dreams of the youth of future decades. ♦

# Tom Whitbread Remembered

by Dave Tribby

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS—AUSTIN Department of English celebrated the life and work of its longtime professor (and past Fossil president) Thomas B. Whitbread on January 27. Featured were readings from Tom's poems and remembrances of a "beloved teacher, colleague, brother, uncle, great-uncle, and dear friend." According to Douglas Bruster, a fellow professor in the department, "It was a moving but upbeat memorial, with family and friends eager to share their memories of Tom. Interestingly, his niece came across some childhood memorabilia while setting Tom's things in order: a childhood 'newspaper' he used to write when he was eight (I think), which chronicled the events of his home and hometown, with occasional glances at wartime events." A slideshow played at the memorial service included a number of pictures of Tom at NAPA and AAPA conventions.

An obituary in the *Austin American-Statesman* on January 26 revealed aspects of Tom's life that were not covered in the January issue of THE FOSSIL. Here are some excerpts:

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As a boy, Tom lived in West Cummington, Massachusetts, where he became an enthusiastic Brooklyn Dodgers fan and developed a love of trains. It's where he spent much time exploring with childhood friend, Bubby Sears, playing Cowboys and Indians, figuring out the most effective way to walk across a frozen pond, and exploring the crystal radio. Tom's mother taught him piano. He and his sister would immeasurably enjoy singing Gilbert and Sullivan together.

Crystal radio sets produce rather weak sound and must be listened to with sensitive ears. Tom was always able to hear and discern things others did not.

He was just ten years of age when he published a self-made gazette, *The Whitbread Bugler*. It included

wonderful accounts of family stories and adventures, historically accurate details of war news. Tom always demanded accuracy of himself and encouraged it in others.

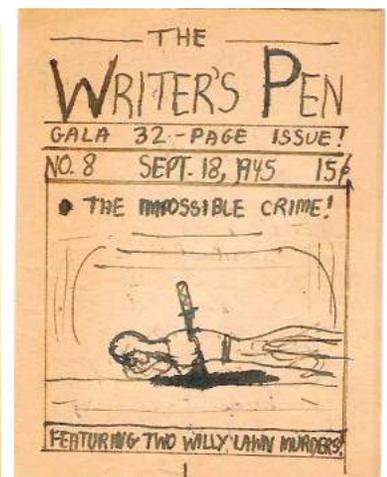
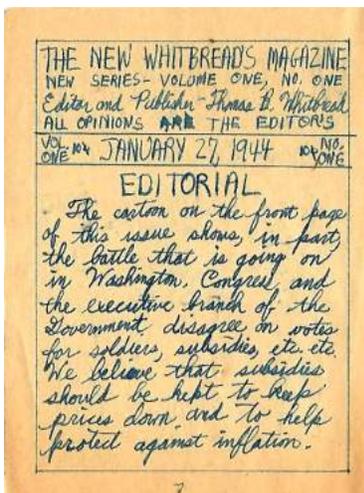
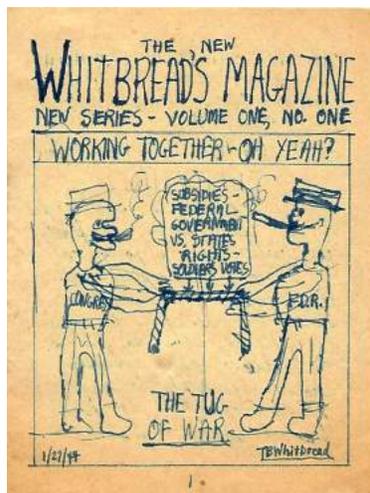
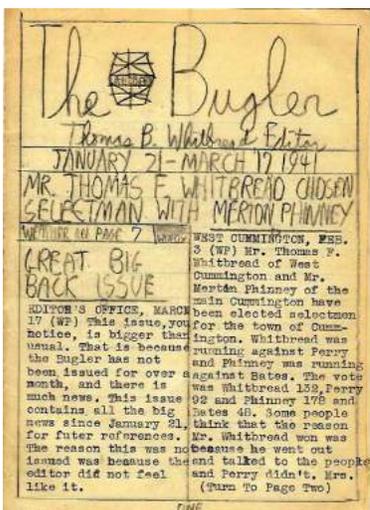
Throughout his lifetime, Tom witnessed and was a part of tremendous social changes, always with an accepting mind. Tom was 16 years-old when the Dodgers signed on Jackie Robinson as the first black player in the modern major leagues. A little over 60 years after, he saw the first African American President sworn in to office.

Tom was invariably kind and generous to friends and students, offering delightfully quirky insights and often withholding his words, showing his interest with the sparkle in his eye. Or, he might follow his escalating silence with an exclamatory onomatopoeic word. He would often be in conversation then become silent for a moment and suddenly erupt and recall entire poems or sing arias, his voice rising with dramatic effect. He could often be found enjoying a Travis Club Senator cigar while watching sports, reading books or the latest issue of the *New Yorker*, or listening to classical music. He was also fond of good diners, good company, and savored his meals and coffee.

—□—

Dr. Bruster forwarded images of Tom's earliest efforts at publishing, which were scanned by Elizabeth "Beth" Walsh, Tom's niece. The 52 scans include six issues of *The Whitbread Bugler* from January 1941 to January 1943, two 1944 issues of *The New Whitbread's Magazine*, and issue number 8 of *The Writer's Pen* dated September 18, 1945.

The earliest *Bugler* of the group is dated January 21 - March 17, 1941. Its first story notes the issue's 8 pages were more than usual, "because the Bugler has not been issued for over a month ... The reason this was



Early examples of Tom Whitbread publications: *The Whitbread Bugler* from 1941; *The New Whitbread's Magazine* from 1944 (first 2 pages), and *The Writer's Pen* from 1945.

not issued was because the editor did not feel like it." The January 1 - 5, 1943 issue, which sold for two cents, proclaimed "Fifth Year," indicating Tom may have started publishing in 1939 when he was only seven years old. *Bugler* covers a variety of household, community, and international stories. Some sample headlines: "Mr. Thomas F. Whitbread [Tom's father] Chosen Selectman With Merton Phimney," "War News," "Grandmother Sends Candy," "Ice Goes Out In River; Road Is Blocked; Schoolyard Flooded," "Tommy and Reed Make a Snowman But It Melts," "Opinions On The War," and "Reed Whitbread Has Curls In Her Hair Now - It Is Bad."

It's not known how many copies of each issue were circulated, but these examples look individually created - not reproduced on a mimeograph. The flag and headlines appear to be written in pencil (a few smudges may indicate corrections) while articles were written on a typewriter, mainly in two columns. A close look at the scans reveals occasional periods indenting the paper on the reverse page. He was a careful typer, with few overstrikes in an era when correction fluid was not an option.

Vol. 1, No. 1 of *The New Whitbread's Magazine*, dated January 27, 1944, and selling for 10 cents, was created with pen and blue ink. Cursive writing in one column replaces the typewriter text of the *Bugler*. The second issue, another 8-pager, proclaims, "Published Every

Thursday." Both issues have a political cartoon on the cover and an editorial on page two (supporting subsidies in the first issue, and discussing states rights in the second). "Political Notes" reports on the new Democratic National Chairman, "News Notes" describes actions of President Roosevelt, and "A Grain of Salt" questions Axis tampering in South American countries.

The final publication scanned, *The Writer's Pen* No. 8, proclaims itself a "Gala 32-Page Issue!" Tom's enthusiasm apparently exceeded his ability to execute: pages 13 through 20 and 32 were left blank except for page numbers. Still using cursive writing, Tom switched to black ink and raised the price to 15 cents. Included are two Willy Lawn Mystery stories by Thomas B. Whitbread, plus several pages concerning the opening of a new appliance store.

Tom's sister, Reed Walsh, recalls that Tom circulated a neighborhood newspaper in the early 1940s, typed using special carbon paper and a device with "purple jell in a wood frame"-likely a hectograph. "I think I remember Mother not liking our personal family behavior being laundered."

Tom joined NAPA in December 1943, so he continued his home publishing efforts even after he had obtained letterpress printing equipment and his *Berkshire Breeze* was circulated to a national audience. ♦

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*How H. P. Lovecraft touched the life of a New York socialite*

## Cassie Symmes: Inadvertent Lovecraftian

by David Goudsward

THE LONG FAMILY OBELISK in the Prospect section of the Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx is well known to horror and science fiction devotees as the final resting place of the remains of Frank Belknap Long, Jr. (1901-1994), listed beneath his grandparents. The family plot contains Long's paternal family members, but Long's maternal Doty kin are scattered across the cemetery in family plots, including a small mausoleum. It stands out not only by its size but by its design, an Egyptian Revival crypt in a field of headstones. The façade is triangular to evoke a pyramid, with Art Deco styled lotus blossoms engraved on each side of the door. The Egyptian Revival style flourished from 1820-1850, but had made a comeback during the 1920s with an Art Deco flair in the aftermath of the discovery of King Tut's tomb. This particular example is the final resting place of William Bittle Symmes (1851-1928) and his wife, Cassie Mansfield Doty Symmes (1872-1935).

Cassie Mansfield Doty was born 31 July 1872 in Bayonne, New Jersey, the second of the three children of Charles Edmund Doty and Emma Augusta Mansfield. The Mansfield and Dotys had been successful

produce wholesalers and brokers for a number of years in upstate New York, and Charles's move to Manhattan was a calculated risk to expand the business. It proved a wise choice. The family was successful and the Dotys became active in the arts and society affairs.

Cassie was maid of honor when her sister May Mansfield Doty married Frank Belknap Long, Sr. in 1891 (although the society pages neatly overlooked that Dr. Long was a mere DDS, not an MD). Frank Belknap Long, Jr. was born in 1901, much to the delight of dotting Aunt Cassie. Cassie's brother Mansfield Mudge Doty married in 1902. Cassie continued to dabble on the fringes of New York's society crowd, but no potential suitors seemed to strike her fancy.

After her mother Emma died in 1907, as the unmarried daughter Cassie was expected to serve as head of household. Between her father's age and his distraction over his wife's death, the produce business suffered. Cassie made a decision and moved with her father from their house into a smaller apartment. In 1908, Mansfield's wife died after a long illness; she had been an invalid since the death of her month-old, second son

four years earlier. Suddenly Cassie was caring for Mansfield's 5-year old son as her brother mourned and attempted to rebuild the family fortunes.

In 1910, Mansfield remarried, and formed a new produce brokering business with his father. With the family business again thriving, her father and brother resuming their lives, Cassie took a break. Her cousin Roxy Smith (first cousin, once removed) invited her to join her and her son William at the Hotel Griswold in New London, Connecticut, a glamorous summer playground for the wealthy.

In short order, a summer romance blossomed into a betrothal between William Smith and his second cousin, Cassie. She was given an engagement ring soon after he learned his divorce from his wife had been finalized. A 1916 wedding was planned and Smith essentially told Cassie to handle the details as the date neared. The five year engagement was deliberate for propriety's sake. It would be a minor scandal for Smith to remarry so soon after his divorce. Things started to go bad almost immediately. The Smiths had barely returned to New York when Roxy's husband, William Van Rensselaer Smith, died. When the estate will was released, New York society was astounded. It was known Smith made his fortune as a founding partner in the Arbuckle Brothers coffee empire. What wasn't known was that Smith was worth over \$5 million dollars (over \$120 million in 2017 dollars). Suddenly, the only thing between William and a fortune was his 78-year old mother, who knew of her son's irresponsible lifestyle. William began backing away from discussing the commitment with Cassie. As 1916 rolled around,

Cassie was beginning to suspect Smith had lost interest, and in February he called off the wedding, citing a variety of reasons but mostly that his mother didn't want him getting married. Cassie knew that was nonsense, and with few other options, stunned the society pages by suing William Smith for breach of promise. This was, by itself, not unusual, but what set New York society atwitter was what Cassie demanded — \$1 million, an unheard of amount. The *New York Times* had a field day. Under oath, Smith admitted to proposing, but claimed it was invalid because Cassie knew he was married. The case was settled out of court for an undisclosed amount. It would not be Smith's only

romance-inspired lawsuit by the time Smith's mother died in 1921; two of his ex-wives would also sue him, as well as his niece, who claimed he had reneged on an agreement to give her a larger portion of the estate if she did not tell Roxy that William had again married. Under William's litigious lifestyle, the family sued and countered sued each other into penury by the late 1930s. Cassie may not have thought so at the time, but subsequent events among the Smiths undoubtedly gave her some satisfaction at how things turned out.

Whatever amount Cassie settled out of court for, it was substantial, because she began appearing in the society columns at a much more rarefied level. At the same time, she met William B. Symmes, a widowed associate of her father, another successful produce wholesaler who had branched out in brokering manufacturing.

In April of 1917, three days before the US entered World War I, 45-year old Cassie Mansfield Doty married 66-year old William B. Symmes, Sr. at the home of her sister, May Long. It was a quiet affair, just close friends and family. Cassie was still skittish from the Smith affair, and Symmes was trying to be low key about a second marriage to a younger woman.

The newlyweds settled into a new home at the Hotel Theresa on Manhattan's 7th Ave, and as William began to plan his retirement Cassie immersed herself in the society arts scene. William's official retirement allowed them to spend autumns in Europe and winters in Florida. Based out of Miami, they began to explore the area. In 1923, they learned a new planned community called "Hollywood by the Sea" was being designed south of Fort Lauderdale. William was interested in the new city as a real estate investment. Cassie was interested because the new community was a planned motion picture colony. The next year, they commissioned the most sought after architect in south Florida, Martin L. Hampton, to design a building for them on Hollywood's main street, the Broadwalk. The "Symmes Shops" were to be a 2-story building in the popular American Southwest style, with apartments above an arcade that had space for nine small, exclusive shops. Construction on the shops began in 1925.

Cassie had also become a patroness of the arts, offering to underwrite the publication of a book of verse by her nephew Frank Belknap Long, Jr. By November of 1925, the book's contents had been compiled. The book included a preface by Samuel Loveman, and Long was at a loss as to whether some of Loveman's publications should be included beneath his name as credentials on the title page. Long's amateur journalism friends Lovecraft and Morton were drawn in to the debate (see Lovecraft's *Selected Letters* 2:30). Legendary amateur journalism printer W. Paul Cook's Recluse Press was commissioned to produce the 31-page book.

In 1926, Cook completed presswork on *A Man from Genoa and Other Poems*. It was a handsome volume and Cassie was impressed when given a copy. She and William were on their way to Europe, and her neph-

## HER WOUNDED LOVE VALUED AT \$1,000,000

Miss Doty Sues W. E. Smith for  
That Sum for Refusing  
to Marry Her.

HE IS HEIR TO \$5,000,000

His Father Was a Business Asso-  
ciate of John Arbuckle in the  
Coffee and Sugar Trade.

William Edgar Smith, heir to a fortune of more than \$5,000,000, and more than 54 years old, was sued in the Supreme Court yesterday for \$1,000,000 for breach of promise to marry. The plaintiff is Cassie Mansfield Doty. The papers in the action tell nothing about her, and her lawyer, David B. Simpson, declined to go into details. Neither would Mr. Smith or his lawyer, Winston H. Hagen, discuss the suit.

Mr. Smith's father was William Van Rensselaer Smith, who died on Nov. 2, 1911. He was a partner of John Arbuckle and made a fortune in the coffee, tea and sugar business. His estate was appraised at \$5,858,343, practically all of it going to his widow, Mrs. Roxy M.

*The New York Times* for  
June 3, 1916 covered the  
Doty-Smith lawsuit.



Frank Belknap Long, Jr. and H. P. Lovecraft, 1931 (photo from [www.hplovecraft.com](http://www.hplovecraft.com)).

ew's book gave her the idea of keeping a travel journal with an eye toward her own little book.

Any literary aspirations were cut short in September when the Symmes received a cable from Florida while still in Europe. On September 18, a hurricane roared ashore in Hollywood, decimating the town. Their recently completed Symmes Shops were among the casualties. Photos show a twisted

pile of wood and masonry, the wreckage unrecognizable as having once been a building. Under today's Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale, it would be classified as a Category 4 storm with sustained 150 MPH winds that slammed into Hollywood. The building was a total loss. It would take years for the local economy to recover. The Symmes simply sold the land at a loss and walked away, not the first, and certainly not the last, to lose money in Florida real estate.

The Symmes made their annual trip to Europe, then Miami, in 1927. Cassie had again jotted down travel notes. Now, she would produce her travel book. She contacted her nephew Frank and had him make arrangements with Cook. Unbeknownst to her, it would be the last trip with her husband. William B. Symmes, Sr. died in Manhattan on 30 May 1928, 2 months after their return from Florida. Cassie made a final change to her book, dedicating it to the memory of her husband.

*Old World Footprints* by Mrs. William B. Symmes was published in June of 1928 by W. Paul Cook as Recluse Press. 300 copies of the slim 32-page book were produced, with a foreword credited to nephew Frank Belknap Long, Jr. Although Long was credited for the introduction, Lovecraft admitted to several correspondents that he had actually written it because Long was too overwhelmed with work to meet such a short deadline for Cook. Lovecraft was being polite. In an unpublished 1929 letter to Clark Ashton Smith, Lovecraft admits that Long was so bored by Cassie's "tame travel-book" that he was unable to come up with anything (see *Collected Essays* 5: 287 fn), so Lovecraft stepped in and cooked up some "amiable ambiguities" for him.

Reading the text, Lovecraft's "ambiguities" are indeed subtle, and knowing how Long and Lovecraft felt about the text, the foreword starts with its tongue firmly planted in its cheek and remains there, and includes such backhanded compliments as "*The scenes are familiar, and the style is artless and without pomp or pretense; but the account is delightful because of these very things.*"

In 1929, Cassie resumed the scheduled trips to Europe and Florida, but traveling alone did not sit well

with the widow. She tried a trip to Cuba in 1930, with similar disinterest. Instead, she focused on the arts and limited her travels to winters in Florida. Soon after William's death, she had acquired a winter home at the Cavanaugh Apartments in Hollywood, about one-third of a mile north of where the Symmes Shops had briefly stood. Hollywood was convenient; it was less than 20 miles to the art scene in Miami but less expensive. William Symmes's estate was a tad sparse after the Symmes Shops debacle, and Cassie was becoming more reliant on her own resources.

Thanks to *Old World Footprints*, she was now a card carrying member of the National League of American Pen Women, whose membership was limited to professional women of the arts. She was an active member, and was even featured speaker at the November 1934 American PEN Women meeting in Miami, speaking on the *Damascus Blade*. She attended meetings regularly in Miami.

These trips to Miami would prove to be her undoing. Cassie Symmes was killed in a motor accident in Miami Shores en route to Miami on October 20, 1935. Lovecraft later mentions his authorship of Long's foreword again, to Barlow, in a September 1936 letter. It is only noted in passing, suggesting it was commonly known among his circle, now that Cassie was deceased (*O Fortunate Floridian* 362).

Cassie Symmes's ties to Lovecraft and his circle are unquestionable, although it is doubtful she was aware of Lovecraft as anything but an associate of her nephew, Frank Belknap Long, Jr. This is not to infer Lovecraft was any more familiar with Mrs. Symmes. He casually mentions her death in a letter to Galpin, identifying her only as the underwriter of Long's book *A Man from Genoa and Other Poems* (1926) and that the timing of her death was a "tragick irony" because Robert Barlow had printed Long's second book of poetry, *The Goblin Tower*, and had been binding a complimentary copy of as a gift for her. Lovecraft helped set type for the book while visiting with Barlow in Florida.

Lovecraft also corrected some of Long's meter while setting type on *Goblin*, and this brings up an interesting point. In *Dreamer on the Nightside*, a 1975 reminiscence of Lovecraft, Long admits he really didn't know W. Paul Cook, having only met Cook twice (neither time with Lovecraft present) and corresponded with him in "a few brief letters" (*Dreamer*: xiii). One would assume arranging for the publication of two books by Cook would involve more than a few brief letters. If Long was not coordinating texts, layout, editing, and Cassie's payments for the work, Lovecraft would be a logical intermediary between his two friends. And there are certain suspiciously archaic spellings and terms in *Old World Footprints* that seem more like the phrasing of the Old Gent from Providence than a novice travel diarist. It seems quite possible that Lovecraft also tweaked the text.

Frank's Aunt Cassie may owe Lovecraft a bigger debt than we have previously suspected. ♦

## Briefly...

by Dave Tribby

ONE ROLE of THE FOSSIL is to document the current amateur journalism scene, assisting future ajay historians in figuring out our era. An important component of that role is publishing profiles of Fossils.

It's great when new members write their own profiles. George Hamilton wrote his last July, and Gordon Rouze introduces himself in this issue. I find it more interesting to hear people's own unfiltered voices describing the things in the hobby – and in life – that have been important to them.

You don't have to be a new member in order to write your own profile...simply contact me if you would like to share your story. When Ken Faig was editor, he published several Fossil Portraits. The one that Martha Shivvers wrote about herself was an invaluable reference when it came time to write her obituary.

By the way, it is more precise to label Gordon a returning rather than new member. He belonged to The Fossils for most of the 1990s, but when he sent in his dues last October it had been more than 15 years since he was on the membership list. He last wrote for THE FOSSIL in October 2014 (issue 361) to describe "Lone Scouts of America Tribe Papers."

Regarding the date he joined AAPA: A perusal of *American Amateur Journalist* from the early 1940s shows no new membership listed for him. He first appears in a Secretary Report as a renewal in Nov-Dec 1941. So it seems likely that he joined in late 1940.

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Fossil David Goudsward originally wrote the Cassie Symmes article (p. 8) for *Lovecraft Annual No. 9* (2015), and he hopes to incorporate it into a future book describing H. P. Lovecraft's time in Florida. He has two recent books from Post Mortem Press. Out this month is *Murder Among Friends*, a collection he edited of new mysteries inspired by the works and life of John Greenleaf Whittier. May will bring the third volume of the Horror Guide series, *Horror Guide to Northern New England*, covering Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. For more information about his recent books, visit [goudsward.com/dave/](http://goudsward.com/dave/)

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Anyone who will be in the San Francisco Bay Area in early May should plan to stop by the Printers' Fair on Saturday, May 6, at History Park in San Jose from 10 am to 3 pm. Several amateur journalists (including your editor) are members of the San Jose Printers'

Guild and will assist in this display of letterpress printing and allied arts. For more information, visit [www.sjprintersguild.com](http://www.sjprintersguild.com)

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The University of Wisconsin Foundation's Ben Strand recently reported the balance in the Leland M. Hawes, Jr. Memorial Endowment Fund for the Library of Amateur Journalism stands at \$14,667.75. This is an increase of \$1,525 since his previous report in mid-December. Ben noted, "The match that Bill Boys set up (\$3,000) has been fully funded."

In late March, Ben visited Fossil Barry Schrader at his home in DeKalb, Illinois, to chat about ajay projects. Barry will be in Madison in May and plans on stopping by the LAJ to catch up on their latest work.

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Our Webmaster recently renewed registration of the domain [thefossils.org](http://thefossils.org) at a cost of \$10.21 for one year. In addition, our Internet Service Provider was paid \$24.95 to keep the website online for another year. ♦

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## NAPA to Meet in California

THE 142ND CONVENTION of the National Amateur Press Association will be held July 27-29 (Thursday through Saturday) at the International



Printing Museum in Carson, California. Dr. Leland Whitson and Mark Barbour are the hosts. Those arriving early can attend a tour of

Kater Craft Bookbinders on Wednesday, July 26 (shuttle leaves the Museum at 1:30). In addition to the usual NAPA business sessions scheduled for Thursday, Friday, and Saturday mornings, there will be special workshops, tours, and video screenings. For those staying late, Mark Barbour will hold a brunch at his home in Orange, California, on Sunday. All amateur journalists are welcome to attend any of the convention events. Further information about the NAPA convention can be found online at

[www.printmuseum.org/NAPA/](http://www.printmuseum.org/NAPA/)

The Museum hosted the 2005 NAPA Convention. The Amalgamated Printers' Association will hold their annual Wayzgoose at the Museum the weekend before the NAPA gathering. ♦

# Martha E. Shivers

February 13, 1915 – January 31, 2017

by Dave Tribby

MARTHA ELIZABETH SHERWOOD, daughter of John Wesley and Effie Haines Sherwood, was born on the family farm southeast of Knoxville, Iowa. For most of her life she lived near Knoxville, a town of about 7,500 located 40 miles southeast of Des Moines.



Martha Shivers

Martha was a life-long writer. In 2004 she recalled, "As long as I can remember I've wanted to write. Even when in grade school in the country, little stories were written, tucked away, and eventually disappeared."

After graduating from Knoxville High School in 1931, she attended Simpson College and then taught school. In 1935 Martha married Woodrow Shivers, and together they raised four children. In 1939, Martha began a column, "A Farmer's Wife's Chatter," for the weekly *Knoxville Journal*. Her pay was free copies of the newspaper. Later she wrote "From Here and There" with some monetary compensation. She found success submitting pieces to religious magazines, starting with *The Upper Room*, a Methodist publication.

In an article published in the October 2005 FOSSIL, Martha described her writing as a means of dealing with life's challenges, particularly family health issues:

Frustrations, fears and anxieties were dealt with by writing. Writing of Faith, of Hope, of Trust, of Patience. A local newspaper printed some of these writings sans pay. Writing had been a passion ever since a pencil could put words on paper. Now, writing brought forth the strength needed to cope with life's challenges.

Submissions of stories, of essays on ways to face life, were submitted to small magazines, religious booklets.

Illnesses and hospitalizations were many for the father; the two daughters and a son were also victims. All of the childhood diseases seemed to be severe. The Mother didn't escape health problems, but coped. Always the writings lifted the frustrations. The memories of siblings' explorings and pranks as well as other events were woven into narrations that, using facts as the basis, masked the events into stories.

She was encouraged to submit materials to the state poetry contest, and that led to a state workshop where she met new friends. One of these friends encouraged her to join the United Amateur Press. In 1980 she became a member of the National Amateur Press Association, and in 1994 joined The Fossils.

The United Amateur Press provided outlets for amateur writings. "Iowa Poetry Day," "Lyrical Iowa," and "Chaparral" presented opportunities for learning, opportunities to meet and share thoughts with other "hopefuls." The opportunity came to become a part of The Rhymers (now only five members), to join N.A.P.A., which provided wonderful associations

whereby "dream thoughts" were published – many of them. Then, the opportunity came to become a part of The Fossils, Inc.

Martha served as the first (and only) membership chair for 14 years, from 1997 through 2011. She assisted the secretary-treasurer by sending renewal reminders to each Fossil, and also prepared the membership list for publication. When she relinquished that role shortly before her 97th birthday, then-editor Ken Faig thanked her not only for her "dedicated term of service," but also for "a steady stream both of contributions and comments." Ken published several of her articles and poems when he edited THE FOSSIL in 2004 to 2012.

Martha was active in gardening, cooking, family genealogy, and quilting. After her children were grown she worked in Des Moines for 13 years at Central Life Insurance Co. After retirement, she worked as assistant librarian at the Knoxville Public Library for two years.

The January 2015 issue of THE FOSSIL celebrated her approaching 100th birthday. Featured were an article by Martha's granddaughter Dianna Shivers, a letter that Martha wrote to Dianna in 2004, and nine poems written by Martha. That issue is available on The Fossils' website. ♦

## The Fossil

THIS IS THE Official Publication of The Fossils, a non-profit organization of those interested in the history of amateur journalism. Individuals or institutions allied with our goals are invited to join. Dues are \$15 annually, or \$20 for joint membership of husband and wife. Annual subscription to THE FOSSIL without privileges of membership is \$10. For further information, visit our website:

[www.thefossils.org](http://www.thefossils.org)

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