

# The Fossil

Volume 117, No. 3, Whole No. 387 ♦ Sunnyvale, California ♦ April 2021

## Lovecraft and Loincloths

by David Goudsward

IN 1931, MGM realized they had a lot of unused jungle location footage left after releasing the successful *Trader Horn* film. This African footage was already paid for, so using the location shots would not impact another movie's budget. The decision was that a Tarzan film or two could be done on the cheap. Irving Thalberg negotiated for two films from Edgar Rice Burroughs. Director William S. Van Dyke went looking for an actor who was athletic enough to be believ-

able. He wanted someone with name recognition but not so famous as to make salary demands. Van Dyke decided on Johnny Weissmuller.

In the hands of a lesser director, *Tarzan the Ape Man* (1932) would have been as unremarkable as most other Tarzan films. But Van Dyke had the *Trader Horn* footage for rear projection and drop shots, and he utilized every animal scene in the MGM archives. Weissmuller could do most of his own stunts, allowing for realistic close-ups. It was not meant to be art. It was intended to be pure escapist entertainment. It was filmed in five months and was an immediate hit.

*Tarzan and His Mate* (1934) began pre-production as soon as it was apparent the first movie was a success. It reused footage from *Trader Horn* and the first Tarzan film. It finished shooting in March 1934 and was released on April 16. If H. P. Lovecraft saw the film, it was with Robert Barlow at one of the theaters in DeLand — the film reached the smaller Florida theaters in May.

Lovecraft's opinion of the Tarzan character had changed since the 1910s when he was housebound and



*Johnny Weissmuller's first two Tarzan movies were released in 1932 and 1934.*

had "become a prolific if indiscriminate reader." He had enjoyed the stories but had grown weary of what he considered errors sufficiently egregious to force him out of the story. Such forced suspensions of disbelief included the Ape-Man encountering a tiger (a species native to Asia) and Tarzan writing down his jungle friends' names before he had associated written letters and oral sounds. These errors resulted in letters to *The All-Story* magazine editors.

This is the same period of the "Jackson Wars" in *Argosy* that would result in his recruitment by Daas into the United Amateur Press Association.

So it is likely that Lovecraft would not have gone to a Tarzan film of his own volition. His opinion had not softened in the ensuing decades. In 1933, he had written E. Hoffmann Price that although a third Randolph Carter story was possible, he wouldn't drag Carter "through a Tarzan-like series of forced adventures!"

Lovecraft had been staying with Robert Barlow and his mother Bernice at the family house in DeLand, Florida, since May 2, 1934. Lovecraft's finances were dangerously limited on this visit. He had made the trip with \$30 in his pocket. As questionable as his funds were for such a trip, his logic was even worse. He admitted he'd never traveled such a distance with so little cash in pre-trip letters to Barlow and Robert E. Howard. To put this in perspective, his main concern was that he might be forced to cut his daily meal allowance down to 15¢ a day for a plate of beans and a cup of coffee. It was not starvation that worried him; it was that he might still have to curtail his visit to St.

Augustine.

After a series of day trips with Barlow, primarily to local landmarks in New Smyrna and De Leon Springs with free admission, the rest of the visit would remain close to the Barlow homestead. His finances meant postage was more carefully doled out. Postcards were often staggered or slipped into envelopes with letters to save on stamps.

As May became June, the end of his repeatedly extended visit came in sight (he wouldn't actually depart until the 21st). And his financial situation received a slight reprieve. His revision client, Zealia Bishop, made another small token payment against her balance, giving him a small financial cushion. He used it for one last field trip in addition to allowing him to splurge and spend 25¢ a day for meals on the trip home.

On June 9, Lovecraft wrote a postcard to Clark Ashton Smith. He mentions that he and Barlow went yesterday to Silver Springs, where the bottom of a lake is riddled with picturesque views seen from a glass-bottomed boat. Also sailed 10 miles down a tropical river which looked very much like the Amazon or Congo. The scenes for the cinema "Tarzan" are made here. I must send you a folder of the place — one of the most distractive and fascinating spots I have ever seen.

He would write similar reports to regular correspondents. He extolled the exotic animals and trailing vines to F. Lee Baldwin and described the 10-mile (round trip) voyage on the Silver River to Elizabeth Toldridge. To Duane Rimel, he calls Silver Springs "marvelously impressive" where "all the jungle scenes in the Tarzan movies featuring Johnny Weissmuller were taken."

This repeated referencing of Tarzan is an interesting insight to Lovecraft as a tourist. At the time of these letters, there had only been two films with Weissmuller as Tarzan: *Tarzan the Ape Man* (1932) and *Tarzan and His Mate* (1934). Neither had been filmed at Silver Springs.

It was not until *Tarzan Finds a Son!* (1939) was Weissmuller filmed at Silver Springs. The next film, *Tarzan's Secret Treasure*, was filmed in Wakulla Springs in 1941, as were early scenes of Tarzan's *New York Adventure* (1942).

So, if the only Tarzan film shot at Silver Springs was two years after Lovecraft's death, why did he believe the first two films were shot there? The answer is Newton A. Perry (1908-1987). Newt Perry worked as a performer and manager for Silver Springs. He was a strong swimmer, fearless on the high dive, and relentlessly opportunistic when it came to promoting swimming. He would arrange for newspapers and magazines to photograph underwater skits from a glass-walled shallow water version of a bathysphere or the glass-bottomed boats. Perry would ride a bike underwater, or eat and drink, usually with a photogenic model. The stunts were solely to demonstrate how



*Silver Springs postcard, circa 1935*

clear the water was as a tourist enticement. So it is no surprise that Perry also appeared in over 80 movie shorts by *Sportlight* filmmaker Grantland Rice. These short films appeared with newsreels and cartoons before the main features in theaters.

Several of the shorts were "Crystal Champions," featuring Olympic champions. Perry never competed, but he handled the arrangements to film at Silver Springs, helping where needed. And thus, in 1929, Newt Perry met speed swimmer and Olympic hero Johnny Weissmuller. In this short film, Weissmuller demonstrated his record-shattering speed by swimming in Silver River. Weissmuller was a spokesman for BVD brand swimwear and making appearances across the country, making similar swimming exhibitions, regardless of how cold or polluted the local river was. To Weissmuller, Florida was a welcome relief. His schedule quickly became booked with swimming demonstrations in Florida, creating a new dynamic that is so familiar today — an Olympic athlete as a celebrity outside of sports.

*Sportlight* filmmaker Grantland Rice, knowing how much stock footage was being used, probably offered another cost-cutting option. The two Tarzan films both have scenes where Weissmuller is swimming in a river to rescue Jane. The footage was reused from the *Sportlight* newsreel shorts where the future Tarzan demonstrates his vaunted swimming speed in the Silver River. Technically, Newt Perry was correct; footage of Tarzan swimming was indeed filmed at Silver Springs. He just overlooked the detail that it was shot in 1929 and recycled. This carefully worded phrasing is what Lovecraft heard on his visit. He was not the only one taken in by the claim.

Only *Tarzan Finds a Son!* (1939) was filmed at Silver Springs, thanks to Newt Perry's marketing. By that film, Newt Perry had moved on to manage Wakulla Springs. He took MGM and Johnny Weissmuller with him. *Tarzan's Secret Treasure* was filmed in Wakulla



Springs in 1941, as were early scenes of Tarzan's *New York Adventure* (1942).

Perry would later open Weeki Wachee Springs, converting his underwater publicity skits into longer and more elaborate routines featuring girls in fishtails – the fabled mermaids of Weeki Wachee. This placed Perry and the mermaids in direct competition with the glass-bottomed boat tours that Perry had established at Silver Springs and Wakulla Springs.

His publicity at Silver Springs not only survived, it also thrived, fueled by the fact one of the films was actually shot there. Even today, the easily debunked claims that all six films were shot at Silver Springs persist. Even S. T. Joshi erroneously notes that “[s]ix of the original Tarzan movies, starring Johnny Weissmuller, were filmed on location at Silver Springs between 1932 and 1941, including *Tarzan the Ape Man* (1932) and *Tar-*

*zan and His Mate* (1934).” The footnote is used verbatim in both *Essential Solitude* (Letters to August Derleth) and *Letters to F. Lee Baldwin, Duane W. Rimel, and Nils Frome*.

Lovecraft was well aware that tourist attractions were competing for tourism dollars, especially in the Great Depression. He had seen it first hand in St. Augustine, where claims of exaggerated age and fictitious origins of the “historic site” were almost a diversion unto themselves. Barlow would later refer to it as the “faintly fraudulent” nature of Florida tourism.

Lovecraft's perpetually challenged finances and focus on antiquities may indicate he wasn't fully aware of the quest for tourist dollars that surrounded him. Silver Springs may have a rare case where he believed part of the sales pitch without being unaware it was tourist hype. ♦

---

### President's Message

## Two Academic Looks at Nineteenth Century Amateur Journalism

by Ken Faig, Jr.

MANY AMATEUR JOURNALISTS will be interested in two PhD theses written on nineteenth century amateur journalism and completed within the last decade.



President Ken Faig

The first was written by Jessica Anne Isaac for the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh in 2015, “Compliant Circulation: Children's Writing, American Periodicals, and Public Culture, 1839-1882”:

[http://d-scholarship.pitt.edu/25636/1/isaacja\\_etdPitt2015.pdf](http://d-scholarship.pitt.edu/25636/1/isaacja_etdPitt2015.pdf)

Jessica was the guest of honor at the Amateur Journalism Conference at the University of Wisconsin (Madison) in 2016. Her article “Amateur Journalism: Rooted in Adolescence” appeared in THE FOSSIL whole no. 366 for January 2016.

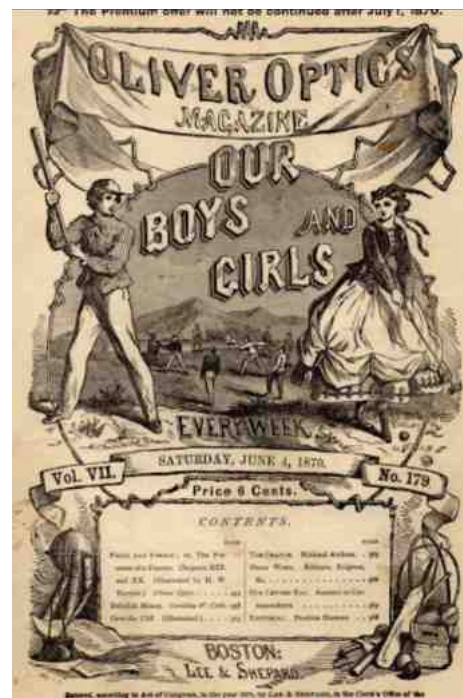
The second was written by Dawn Michelle Smith for the Department of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois (Champaign-Urbana) in 2017, “Print Networks of Youth Information Culture: Young People, Amateur Publishing, and Children's Periodicals, 1867-1890”:

<https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/bitstream/handle/2142/97713/SMITH-DISSERTATION-2017.pdf>

Should either of these links prove problematic, use Google to search for the author's name and the first

two words of the dissertation title. Both theses are available for free viewing on the internet.

I recently spent a few days reading Dawn Michelle Smith's thesis. Anyone interested in the influence of “Oliver Optic” (William T. Adams) on the development of nineteenth-century amateur journalism will find Smith's thesis a rich resource. Optic edited *Oliver Optic's Magazine* for Boston publisher Lee & Shepard between 1867 and 1875 – the decade before the organization of the National Amateur Press Association in 1876. Optic provided generous mentions of amateur periodicals received, and published a “Correspondents Wished” column of publisher's names and addresses for male amateur journalists. Out of concern that some readers might



*Oliver Optic's Magazine for June 1870*

misuse addresses for purposes of flirtation or courting, Optic refused to publish the names and addresses of female amateur journalists. Led by "Zelda Arlington" (Viola F. (Addison) Swift), the young ladies formed their own short-lived association in 1885-86. By the end of the Young Women's Amateur Press Association's short run, young women had finally gained admittance as full members in most existing associations.

In addition to *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, Smith focuses on the professional weekly story papers whose "blood-and-thunder" serials so entranced boy readers in the 1870s. Some of these papers also took favorable notice of amateur periodicals, especially those issued by "puzzlers." By the 1880s, some amateur journalism organizations, like the National, turned against the weekly story papers, criticizing especially their emphasis on crime.

Amateur journals at large took a turn toward more serious literary productions as the decade of the 1880s began. Smith treats in considerable detail the postal regulations of the 1870s, which gradually eroded the second class mailing privileges originally accorded to amateur journals. Some of the more literary amateurs even welcomed the mass extinction of beginners' sheets which the postmaster general's 1878 ruling produced. They felt that amateur journals ought to earn the second class mailing privilege just as professional newspapers had to.

Smith also notes the "age migration" of the hobby which transpired during the decade of the 1880s: from a hobby predominately consisting of teenagers in the 1870s the hobby moved toward one whose leadership centered on the young adult ages as the 1880s progressed. Smith's cut-off year (1890) was in fact the original activity threshold required for membership when *The Fossils* were founded in 1904.

The puritanism of Oliver Optic notwithstanding, amateur journalists did find romance and even marriage partners within the hobby: most notably, to begin with, Finlay Arnon Grant and Bertha York at the Boston National convention in 1885. For a hobby transacted through the United States mails fifty-one out of fifty two weeks of the year (the other week was convention week), the spectre of Anthony Comstock also loomed large. As Optic discovered, amateurs were interested in corresponding with hobbyists of the opposite sex, and a few amateur periodicals even ran advertisements for "flirtation cards," photographs of actresses and the like. The journals criticized for running such advertisements quickly dropped them.

A final theme emphasized by Smith is the economics of the hobby. Even the cheapest of the novelty presses which began to become generally available in the 1860s were beyond the means of working-class youths and their families. The niche of the "amateur

author" gradually evolved to accommodate youths who could not publish. In the beginning, amateur journals took subscriptions, ran paid advertisements and offered premiums (like presses) for supporters who generated enough subscriptions. The post office early on deprived amateur editors of the privilege of "free exchanges," but even so, exchanges remained the predominant method of circulation of amateur papers—a trend that was re-enforced by the emergent anti-commercialism of the 1880s.

Oliver Optic maintained a consistent refusal to publish the work of amateur authors, demanding that they serve their apprenticeship before graduating to professional publication. Stressed by increasing postage, amateur editors complained that they should not have to pay for work by amateur authors which was refused by professional publications. Even at the turn of the century, amateur journalism was far from uniform enforcement of W. Paul Cook's later "money cannot buy it" mantra, but the hobby had definitely taken a turn from its earlier mimicking of the operations of professional publications.

Both the Isaac and the Smith theses contain their share of academic terminology, some of it above my head. But their rich mining of sources in the amateur journalism hobby carries their theses for me. I hope the dissertations by Isaac and Smith mark the beginning of a trend which will see amateur journalism resources like those at the American Antiquarian Society, the University of Wisconsin (Madison), the University of Iowa, the University of California (Berkeley), and the Western Reserve Historical Society well-utilized. The American Antiquarian Society holdings are already part of a proprietary digital collection, and I hope that parts of other major amateur journalism collections will eventually be made available digitally as well. Of course, "unaffiliated scholars" like yours truly will be especially grateful for collections that are available without cost online.

In the meantime, kudos to Drs. Isaac and Smith for new light shed on our hobby. ♦



*William T. Adams (1822-1897) used the pseudonym Oliver Optic for writing and editing.*

## *Excerpts from Both Theses*

### **Compliant Circulation: Children's Writing, American Periodicals, and Public Culture, 1839-1882**

by Jessica Anne Isaac  
(pp 111-113)

THERE IS EVIDENCE to suggest that the amateurs' perspective on their bombastic style of self-representation began to change in the early 1880s. Prominent amateurs and prominent amateur publications began voicing criticism of the earlier amateurs and their mode of writing. One important amateur in particular, as I will show, suggests that such modes of writing, often in the service of amateur campaigns for office, "cast a shade of 'boyishness'" on Amateurdom, thereby connecting overly earnest defenses of reputation with immaturity and undesirable youthfulness. This change in perspective comes about during a period when amateurs were remaining active in, or at least connected to, Amateurdom longer into their early adulthoods. These older amateurs tended to have more success winning positions in the amateur press associations because they were older, more experienced, and had more disposable income, and they thus exerted a significant influence over amateur debates. Within this new dynamic, the prevailing sense of the purpose of amateur journalism changed and with it the amateurs' modes of self-presentation. The amateurs of the 1880s begin to describe their purpose as one of education through self-cultivation and literary achievement. Concurrently, they begin adopting more elevated modes of writing. "The only thing that brings Amateurdom into repute as an Educational Institution," writes the author of the "boyishness" line, "is the facility it affords for the promulgation of literary tastes among the youth of the land." This new, clear purpose and its elevated style supplanted what had been a much less clearly stated, more multifarious purpose in the previous decade. The amateurs of the 1870s, though they probably learned many things from publishing their papers, had not characterized their efforts as educational, nor had they given so much emphasis to literary taste. They seem to have participated for the pleasure of participating, of having an audience, of asserting themselves on paper. Their style of self-representation supported this purpose by demonstrating the importance of identity, reputation, and ability in Amateurdom. The new regime of older amateurs in the 1880s, however, and their new purpose for amateur publishing initiated a change in amateur style and a negative attitude towards youthful displays of irreverence and overwrought self-assertion. ◆

### **Print Networks of Youth Information Culture: Young People, Amateur Publishing, and Chil- dren's Periodicals, 1867-1890**

by Dawn Michelle Smith  
(pp 258-259)

THIS DISSERTATION is the result of an effort to look for and center young people in the histories of print culture and information. The young people in this instance — amateur journalists in the late nineteenth century United States — were almost exclusively white, economically comfortable, overwhelmingly male, and aspired for the most part to professional or managerial careers. They were in general avid readers of multiple popular children's magazines and story papers. Though these relatively privileged young amateurs produced thousands of newspapers and hundreds of books that survive to the present day in large collections such as the amateur newspaper collection at the American Antiquarian Society, they and the papers they produced have, until recently, been largely invisible to scholars. That has begun to change over the last decade or so, as scholars working in areas including children's literature studies, media studies, American studies, childhood studies, and library and information science have begun to address the theoretical and methodological questions raised by these amateur publications and amateur practices. This dissertation is intended as a contribution to this ongoing cross-disciplinary scholarly conversation. These chapters demonstrate the complex relationships between children's magazines, weekly story papers, and amateur newspapers. They also elaborate on mechanisms through which young people were able to establish long-distance connections and geographically dispersed peer networks through print. As young amateurs were influenced by and influenced the print culture of which they were a part, so too did they influence and were they influenced by the information culture in the post-bellum United States. Toni Weller suggests that information history, as a relatively new field of scholarship "has strived to find its feet between the related fields of history and of library and information science." This dissertation, emerging from a library and information science program, is an effort to explore ways in which young people's practices, interactions, and experiences can be made visible in the field of information history as it continues to develop. ...

This dissertation affirms (for its author, at least) the rich potential of continued scholarship in these areas and gestures toward opportunities for crossdisciplinary collaboration. ◆



# Delores Zillmer Miller

June 26, 1938 – November 22, 2020

by Dave Tribby

THE OCTOBER 1985 American Amateur Press Association secretary-treasurer report listed two new members: Russell and Delores Miller of Hortonville, Wisconsin. In their new member profiles we learned the Millers, their five children ages 10 to 22, and forty Holstein dairy cows lived on a 128 acre farm where they grew their own feed, hay, oats, and corn.

Delores had been “a nurse, teacher, chauffeur, psychologist, referee, truck driver, plus everything else that goes with running a farm.” She had written a newspaper column and published a monthly newsletter and quickly become active in AAPA, using four antique typewriters and the services of a “good instant print copy shop.” The first issue of *Miller* (sometimes named *Miller Time*) appeared in the December bundle. The Millers appeared in almost every bundle, sometimes with two issues, writing short, pithy articles about family life on their farm.

Later, Delores published her own *Farmer's Wife* (Russ had *Farmer Miller*). After their retirement from active farming, her writing was often devoted to telling family stories going back to the early 20th century, usually including a vintage picture. The writing was not sentimental, but “warts and all” descriptions of people she had known and loved. Her final *Farmer's Widow* appeared in the January 2021 bundle.

She was born Delores June Zillmer in Waupaca County, Wisconsin, the daughter of William and Alma (Lembke) Zillmer. She graduated Marion High School in 1956 and married Russell Eugene Miller on May 25, 1957. (Russ died August 18, 2019, age 86, after battling prostate and bone cancer for three years.) Her children saw her as “the strong-willed and sassy matriarchal architect of ‘the Miller Way,’ defined by hard work without complaint, thoroughness in every endeavor, and dedication to others without seeking recognition or reward.”

Delores received five AAPA laureate awards: three special awards (“for her continuing ‘down home’ narrative” in 1991, “for best epitomizing life in rural

America” in 1998, and “her brief but charming dispatches from the prairie” in 2012), a prose non-fiction honorable mention in 2000, and a non-letterpress printed journal honorable mention in 2017. She was appointed AAPA historian in 1994 and served for ten years.

In addition to frequent bundle submissions, Delores maintained private correspondence with numerous AAPA members.

She discovered she had stage 3 breast cancer in 2012, and wrote about the experience in Dean Rea's e-journal *Author's Bazaar* for September 2013:

Biopsy, catheter, chemo, surgery and radiation followed for eight months. We managed to celebrate the party [55th wedding anniversary and Russ's 80th birthday], all without telling anyone how sick I was. Bluffing my way through.

All went well with the treatments. I was sick. Very strong chemo knocked my body to hell and back. Now, Russell says he thought he would find me dead in bed a few times. He took over all the house and yard work. Hair loss, nausea, weight loss, fatigue, chemo brain, loss of memory, and all the good stuff. Now it is summer of 2013, and I must honestly say I am 75 per cent back to my old self. I also celebrated my 75th birthday.

...  
Life has been good to me. Cancer taught me not to worry. Let events happen, as they will whether or not I can control them.

The cancer was in remission for a number of years, but it did return. One of her last e-mail messages, to AAPA secretary-treasurer John Carvalho, showed her unflinching attitude:

I'm on the last roundup with my cancer. Hospice nurse at the farm house weekly. Meds — morphine which I did not need yet. Daughter Robin moved in along with the other children coming and going. I want to die at home. No more chemo or procedures although I had a negative covid test last week and lung drainage. The morbid children joke they want me to die of covid so that can go on my death certificate and then they can brag Ma beat cancer.

Delores passed away at home on November 22. ♦



*Delores Miller, front, at Amateur Journalism Conference 2016 with husband Russell, son Keith, and grandchildren Alyse and Dayne.*

# UW Adds E-Journals to Digital Library

by Dave Tribby

BOTH THE American and National Amateur Press Association have archives for e-journals, amateur journals created in digital format and circulated to readers electronically rather than on paper. Most e-journals were created between 2004 and 2010, although AAPA still attracts an occasional new issue. (See "E-Journals: Salvation or Menace?" in the October 2019 issue of THE FOSSIL.)

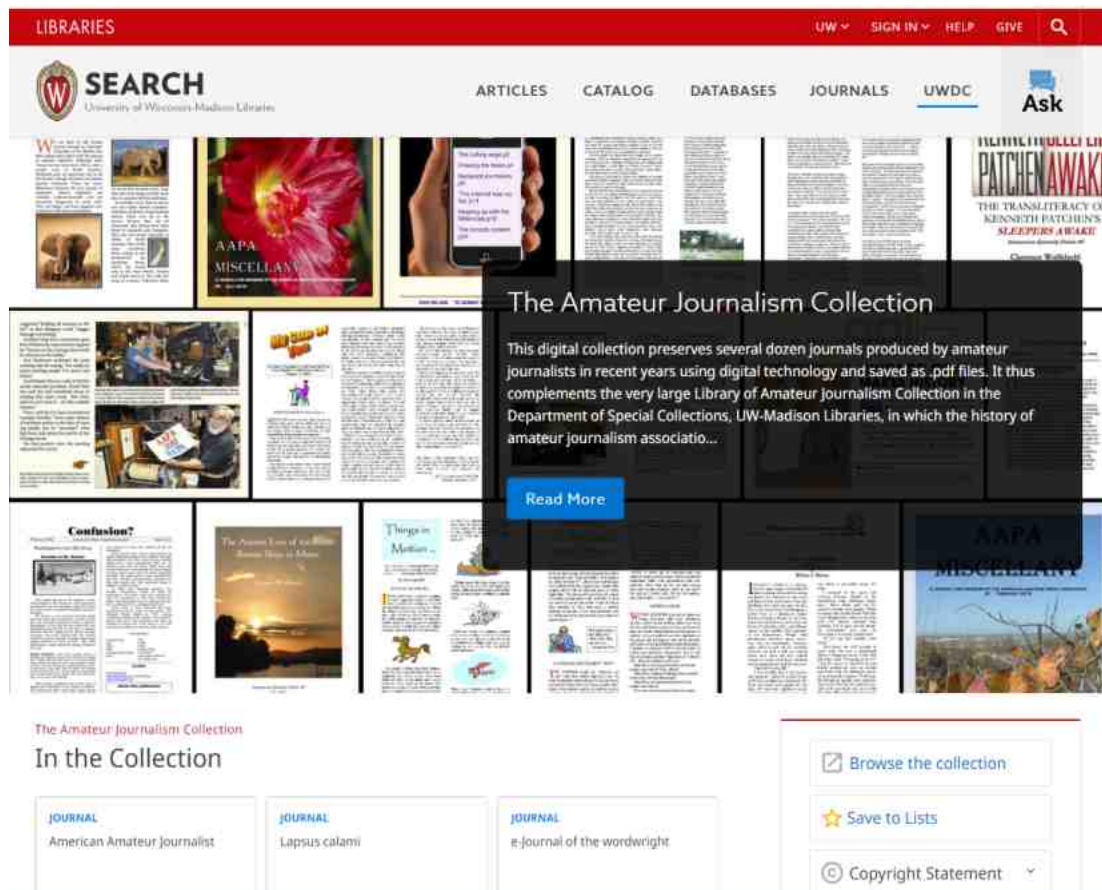
Two years ago, I began negotiating with the University of Wisconsin to include amateur e-journals in their online digital collection to complement the paper journals in the Library of Amateur Journalism (LAJ) housed in the Special Collections department at Memorial Library on the UW-Madison campus. They decided to deal with the larger AAPA repository first, and in July 2019 a Memo of Understanding (MOU) with AAPA was signed. I submitted the AAPA e-journals, a total of 372 issues of 24 different titles. A few of these are also in NAPA's repository.

The project ran into delays, but in March they completed the work and it is available at

<https://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/AmateurJournals>

When you visit the site, click on one of the "JOURNAL" boxes to see issues of that title, or scroll down and use the "Browse the collection" link to browse by title, author, or year. Once you get to a journal's title, click on "+ Available Contents" to see a list of individual issues, then click on one of the issue links to access it. Use the "Full view" link to see the entire PDF file.

I asked the project lead, Jesse Henderson, if UW is interested in proceeding to include the NAPA-only e-journals. She replied, "Feel free to send me a full count of the NAPA journals to be added. Once I can get together the full scope of the NAPA batch, then I'll get



*The University of Wisconsin Digital Collection web page for Amateur Journalism*

the MOU together and we can start from there." I count 19 issues of 6 titles unique to NAPA.



This issue's cover story is "overflow data" from Fossil Dave Goudsward's research on H. P. Lovecraft's trips to visit friends in Florida. Dave notes, "It's not AJ-centric other than HPL and RHB themselves," but what editor could turn down an article with that title?

While fact-checking, I did come across numerous Internet references to multiple Tarzan movies being filmed at Silver Springs, so it's good to set the record straight. I asked Dave if Silver Springs had changed much since the mid-1930s:

Silver Springs is now a State Park, and they've cleaned the place up. The electric motor, wooden boats were replaced with aluminum hulled boats, and there's a lot more emphasis on conservation, which actually presents the river in a state similar to how it was in 1934 (and 1935 when he returned). Probably the biggest



change is the removal of the sideshow attractions, like the Reptile House.

Amazingly enough, one of the wooden boats has survived and was restored and is privately operated in Dunnellon. So, you can ride on the same type of boat Lovecraft and Barlow road, and there's a 1 in 16 chance it's the actual boat!

His new book *Adventurous Liberation: H. P. Lovecraft in Florida* was scheduled for an August release to coincide with the NecronomiCon Providence conference. Because the pandemic has both pushed that gathering to 2022 and also kept Dave from researching a few final details, the book will not be out before autumn.



Former AAPA member Dean Rea can't stay retired. In February the nonagenarian helped launch a new "digital newspaper" website, Highway 58 Herald, devoted to local journalism along Oregon's Highway 58, running 87 miles southeast from Dean's residence town of Eugene. A number of weekly papers in this

corridor ceased publication in recent years, and a group of volunteers, many retired professional journalists, have pledged to fill the local news vacuum.

Dean's by-line was on several articles when the site went live at the end of February. He is chief correspondent for the communities of Pleasant Hill, Dexter, Lowell, Fall Creek, and Jasper. Access the Herald at [www.highway58herald.org](http://www.highway58herald.org)



Secretary-Treasurer Tom Parson reports all Fossils whose membership came due during the first quarter of the year have renewed. In addition to their renewals, Jack Scott and Peter Schaub each donated \$10. Thanks!

With his renewal, Don Peyer noted that he and Joquilyn celebrated their 75th wedding anniversary on December 21, 2020. Congratulations!

In December, Fossil subscriber Ivan Snyder completed a two-part move from his longtime home in Portland. His new address: 1441 S. Ivy St., Unit 1204, Canby, OR 97013-4369. ♦

---

## Webmaster 2020 Report

by Dave Tribby

DURING 2020 The Fossils' website received an average of 347 hits per day, or a total of 127,175. Spiders, automated probes that scour the web gathering information, accounted for 80% of traffic, so 25,493 came from actual visitors. That's 69 daily hits from 31 visitors.

This visitor traffic split 42% for page viewing, 16% for downloading files, and 36% for overhead (loading images, reporting errors, etc.). The home page continues to be the most popular, receiving 30% of the page hits. The Contact Information page was second, with 5%, followed closely by THE FOSSIL, Public Amateur Journal Collections, History, and Awards.

Issues of THE FOSSIL were the most popular downloads, particularly April 2012 (234 downloads), October 2017 (219), and July 2006 (147). Current issues saw more downloads than printed circulation: January 205, April 218, July 86, and October 46. There were 142 downloads of Ken Faig's history of the Library of Amateur Journalism.

We received 892 visitors from search engines. Traffic was also generated by references on other websites: 71 from Wikipedia, 34 from Facebook, 26 from the University of Wisconsin, 20 from Dave Goudsward's website ([goudsward.com](http://goudsward.com)), and a combined total of 19 from two different Lovecraft blogs.

The website uses 59 MB of disk space (limit is 100 MB), with PDF files of THE FOSSIL taking up the largest share, 41 MB. ♦

## The Fossil

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION of The Fossils, a non-profit organization for anyone 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, contact the secretary-treasurer or visit our website:

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

### Fossil Board: 2020 - 2022

Ken Faig, Jr., PRESIDENT, 2020 Chestnut Ave. Apt. 405, Glenview, IL 60025; [president@thefossils.org](mailto:president@thefossils.org)

Gary Bossler, 145 Genoa Avenue S.W., Massillon, OH 44646; [gbossler@thefossils.org](mailto:gbossler@thefossils.org)

John Horn, 24300 Chenal Parkway, #71, Little Rock, AR 72223; [jhorn@thefossils.org](mailto:jhorn@thefossils.org)

### Appointed Officers

**Official Editor:** Dave Tribby, 1529 Fantail Court, Sunnyvale, CA 94087; [editor@thefossils.org](mailto:editor@thefossils.org)

**Secretary-Treasurer:** Tom Parson, 157 South Logan Street, Denver, CO 80209; [s-t@thefossils.org](mailto:s-t@thefossils.org)

**Librarian:** Mike Horvat, 22275 SW 102nd Place, Tualatin, OR 97062; [librarian@thefossils.org](mailto:librarian@thefossils.org)

**Webmaster:** Dave Tribby (contact information above)