

# The Fossil

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## Hawes Endowment Doubles in Four Years

by Dave Tribby

IN 2014, amateur journalists sought to both honor the memory of prominent ajay Lee Hawes and ensure the long-term stability of the Library of Amateur Journalism (LAJ), housed in the Special Collections department of Memorial Library at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The university suggested a permanent special-purpose fund under the umbrella of the University of Wisconsin Foundation (UWF). Such endowment funds require at least \$10,000 in donations. After a fund reaches this milestone, it earns a share of the Foundation’s portfolio income, and then each year about 4.5% of the value of the fund is spent to support its goals.

By late 2016, a combination of gifts from The Fossils, the American Amateur Press Association, the National APA, and individuals pushed the “Leland M. Hawes, Jr. Fund for the Library of Amateur Journalism” over \$11,000 and it became an official part of the UWF. Income for the final quarter in 2016 provided \$147 toward LAJ support.

This May the UFW released its annual Endowment Financial Report, which describes the performance of

the overall portfolio as well as these specifics for the Hawes fund:

Value at start of 2020	\$20,023.62
Gift additions	\$3,085.00
Investment return	\$2,408.07
Support for LAJ	-\$892.77
Administration fee (1%)	-\$195.94
Value at end of 2020	\$24,427.98

Through a combination of ongoing donations and portfolio income, the Hawes Fund had more than doubled since 2016 (see chart 1, below left). Performance of the UWF portfolio was 11.4% in 2020, and has averaged 9.3% over the last five years. 2018 was the only recent negative year, when it lost 3.6%.

Support generated by the fund for the LAJ has gone up each year: \$653 in 2017, \$753 in 2018, \$830 in 2019, and \$8923 in 2020, bringing the total amount of support to \$3,275 (see chart 2, below right).

Robin E. Rider, Curator of Special Collections in Memorial Library, described the work to catalog the LAJ and preserve its materials in the April 2015, October 2018, and October 2020 issues of *THE FOSSIL* (all

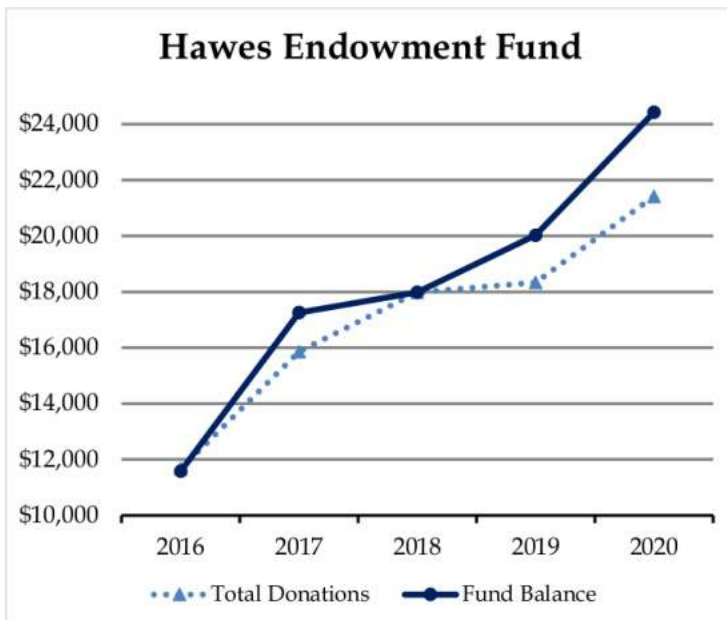


Chart 1: Donations to the fund and year-end fund balance

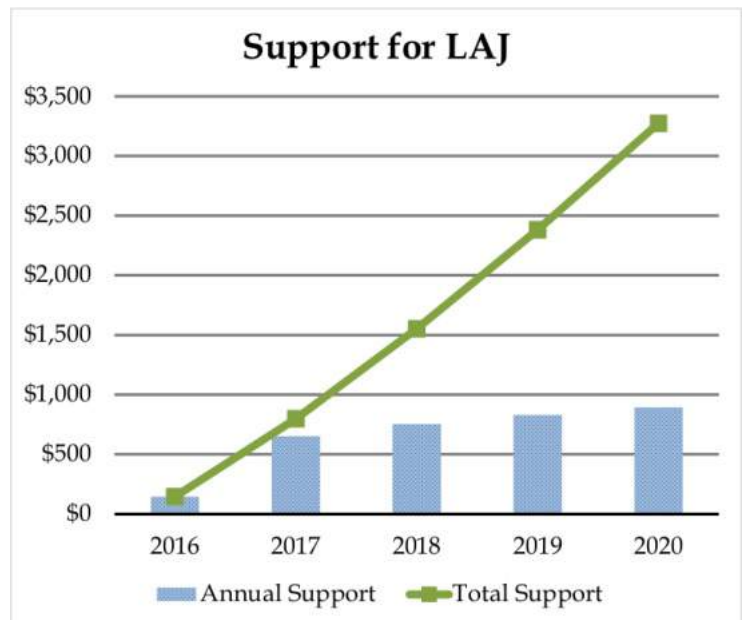


Chart 2: Amount provided to LAJ each year and in total

available online). Those who attended Amateur Journalism Conference 2016 at Memorial Library heard about Special Collection's activities and saw amateur journals and other artifacts from the LAJ. (See THE FOSSIL for October 2016.)

This April I spoke via Zoom to Frances Steiner, Director of Development, Campus Libraries and Student Affairs, for the Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association. She noted the LAJ cataloging came to a halt during the Covid period, but the student who had been doing the work is expected to be hired as a graduate student during the 2021-22 academic year.

At the time of our conversation, Memorial Library was open to faculty and students by appointment only. Robin Rider provided this update in mid-July:

In 2020, even when campus researchers did not yet have access to Memorial Library, Special Collections staff provided email reference and scanning for researchers from near and far. That service continues. A system of Library By Appointment added in-person access for campus library users beginning in summer 2020. Appointments are no longer necessary, and access to Memorial Library, including Special Collections, has been expanded to include researchers without UW-Madison IDs. The Special Collections reading room hours for summer 2021 are Monday-Friday 1-4 PM. For information about visiting Memorial library, see

<http://tiny.cc/VisitMemLibrary>

and for visiting Special Collections this summer see

<http://tiny.cc/VisitSpColSummer2021>

We expect to expand Special Collections reading room hours in fall semester 2021. If you have questions,

please contact us at [askspecial@library.wisc.edu](mailto:askspecial@library.wisc.edu).

Donations to the Hawes fund, which are tax-deductible, are always welcome. Write Frances Steiner at [frances.steiner@supportuw.org](mailto:frances.steiner@supportuw.org) for information on how to make a cash or stock gift. ♦

## What is the LAJ?

THE LIBRARY of Amateur Journalism traces its beginning to 1896 when Edwin Hadley Smith began amassing a collection of amateur journals and having them bound into book-like volumes. His collection of over 27,000 papers went on display in 1908. Although he sold the collection to The Fossils in 1916, he continued adding contemporary journals to the collection until his death in 1944.

The Library was kept at various locations in New York City, Philadelphia, and finally Stayton, Oregon. In 2004 The Fossils came to agreement to transfer the LAJ to the Special Collections department at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. At that time there were 340 bound volumes from the original Smith collection; 600 other bound volumes; 193 boxes of unbound, sorted journals; 81 boxes of unsorted journals, 3 boxes of photographs and memorabilia; and 25 boxes of correspondence.

In addition to ongoing work to catalog and preserve the LAJ, Memorial Library makes it available to scholars and researchers. ♦

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### President's Message

## It's a Great Hobby

by Ken Faig, Jr.

I GENERALLY WRITE my columns far in advance of publication, and as I write this on New Year's Day 2021 we have little real idea of what conditions will be like when we reach mid-year.

But one thing that I can attest to is that I am glad I rejoined AAPA and NAPA at the beginning of 2020. The mailings of the two APAs have provided me with some very congenial reading during the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

There have always been amateur journalists who have felt compelled—and even been primarily motivated—by the desire to comment upon issues of national and international import. Back

in the nineteenth century, there were socialist amateur journals, I suppose there were even anarchist amateur journals. Perhaps we might wish to hide the history today, but there were segregationist amateur journals that advocated the exclusion of blacks from our hobby.

Making any kind of public comment is risky business today. Just last month (that is, December 2020 as I wrote) one of our well-known Chicago chefs, Stephanie Izard of Girl and Goat, was bragging about a new "fusion" creation of hers that, according to her perception, melded elements from two classic Asian dishes. A storm of criticism maintaining that she was disrespecting the original dishes and their cultures descended upon her. She was forced to apologize, and she vowed to consider her public pronouncements more carefully in the future. Stephanie's name caught my eye, since my son and daughter-in-law had their wedding recep-



President Ken Faig

tion at her restaurant back in 2017.

Many folks today would probably criticize our paper-based APAs as outdated. It is possible that a password-protected electronic bulletin board could offer a similarly-protected environment. But the truth is that our Luddite-ism in clinging to paper mailings does provide us a measure of protection against the kind of onslaught Stephanie Izard faced after the promotion of her culinary creation.

But another aspect of the situation is the fact that most of us amateur journalists today do not aspire to comment on matters of public import. It is the joys and cares of ordinary life that for the most part occupy the pages of our journals. I am reminded of the beautiful writing of the late Martha Shivvers, who gave much of her time to poetry circles and graced *THE FOSSIL* with some of her writings. The writing of the late Delores Miller also comes to mind. Delores and her husband Russell were farmers, but their busy lives did not preclude them from sharing their most meaningful events with fellow amateurs. I remember their presentation at our amateur journalism conference in Madison, Wisconsin in 2016. They even brought a generous supply of genuine Wisconsin “squeaky” cheese curds for everyone to sample. Not the breaded, deep-fried version you can get at Culver’s if you are lucky enough to have a Culver’s in your neighborhood, but the fresh variety with a “snap.”

My fatal tendency as a writer is to try to venture into realms where I do not belong. I worked for forty years as an actuary but was never a leader in the profession. When the profession was racked by controversy (mainly engendered by rivalry between organizations) ten years ago, I ventured to comment on some of the issues and was roundly reminded that I had no stature to comment on issues to be resolved by the leadership of the actuarial profession. As a Catholic convert, I find myself fascinated by issues better left to theologians: Did the Virgin Mary suffer death before she was translated to heaven? Do canonizations enjoy papal infallibility? Thankfully, I know better than to try to make any public pronouncements on politics, religion, or sex. I can enjoy formulating my own ideas, and then testing them against those of folks who are paid to make pronouncements in these realms.

My personal life has been so restricted that you might think the pandemic has had little impact on me. I suppose it is easier for an introvert to adjust to pandemic restrictions than for an extrovert. But I find that I have missed my small ventures into the public world –e.g., going out to eat for an occasional meal. I hope that by the time you read these lines the situation will have eased, for introverts and extroverts alike.

Nevertheless, I worry that I might offend even if I restrict myself to the personal domain in making con-

tributions to a journal mailing. It’s tempting to assay a submission for Bill Boys’ “one page” stories, but concision has a tendency to result in hard-hitting prose, and I want to get along with everyone badly enough that I hesitate to compose a concise statement on any issue—even the likes of whether toilet tissue should dispense from the top or the bottom of the roll. (Goodness knows, we’ve worried enough over toilet tissue during the pandemic.) So, generally, I have kept my silence. I know well enough that you don’t want to know whether I favored Trump or Biden. I don’t think you want to know whether I favor “upsies” or “downsies” when it comes to toilet paper-dispensing. In fact, some of you may consider the entire subject offensive—which explains my silence.

But reading the AAPA and NAPA mailings over the past months has convinced me that many amateurs do retain the ability to write entertainingly and unoffensively of the things that are important—or maybe just entertaining or amusing—in their own lives. Believe me, it is a gift, a gift that has enlightened my own life during the dark months of the pandemic. So that’s why I say that amateur journalism is a great hobby, in good times and in bad.

*In late June President Faig added a postscript to his message:*

I did make bold and wrote a contribution to Bill Boys’ *One-Page Stories* for March 2021. I wrote about my recollection of the day my mother died back in 1976. I trust I did not offend any readers (those who like to use the slang word “croak” for “die” are welcome to it), but I worry whether my mother (had she had anything to say about it) would have approved of my article. So I suppose I remain the “reluctant writer” for anything that might even be remotely controversial. But I will say that I think Bill is doing a service for the hobby with his handsome zine. I have never approved very strongly of “tweets,” but I think that saying something worthwhile in a single page (say 400 words) is a worthwhile ambition.

I am glad to see pandemic restrictions relaxed somewhat in the U. S. A. as we enter summer 2021. I worry about the billions of unvaccinated persons around the world and the continuing mutations of the Covid 19 virus. I don’t think humanity is anywhere close to declaring victory over the virus at this point. I have no ambition to join crowds of people for athletic, cultural, or entertainment events, but I am glad those U. S. residents who yearn for such assemblies will have the opportunity to join in. For myself, I am looking forward to the forthcoming AAPA and NAPA mailings and the forthcoming numbers of *THE FOSSIL*. I thank the contributors, editors and mailers who keep the entire hobby going for us. Even for the mostly silent members like me. ♦

# April Fossil Goes Viral

by Dave Tribby

EACH MONTH, I collect the access statistics for The Fossils' website, [www.thefossils.org](http://www.thefossils.org), to see which pages and files have generated the most activity. At the end of April I was surprised to see the number of times that month's issue of THE FOSSIL had been downloaded. Recently, there might be 30 or so downloads for an issue in the week after it has been announced, then a trailing number afterward until there are 40 to 60.

The access pattern for the April issue (number 387) was quite different, as shown in the chart to the right. It had about a dozen hits on each of the first two days after it was uploaded, then on April 25 there were 70 downloads. By the end of the month there were 136 downloads, and after another month the total was 159.

Looking deeper at the web data, I found some of the traffic was coming from Reddit and then discovered a link to the issue on a Lovecraft community discussion board:

AncientHistory OP / Et in Arkham Ego:

This is a fun one: Lovecraft, Tarzan, and Silver Springs, FL. A teaser from Dave Goudsward's book on Lovecraft in Florida coming out later this year.

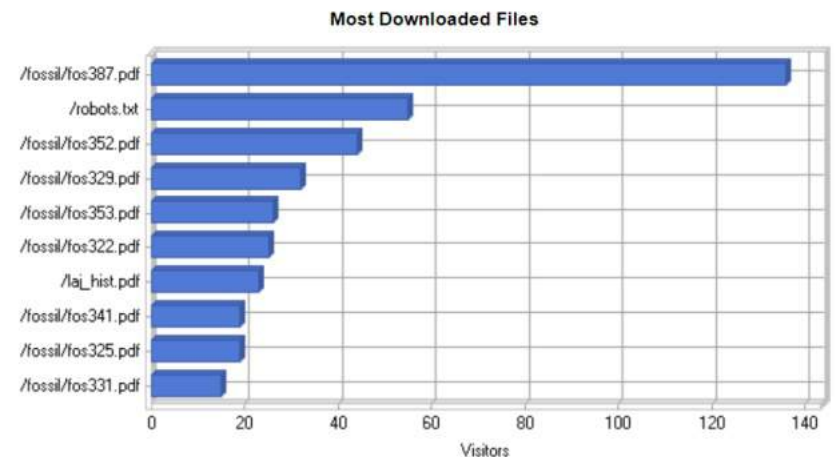
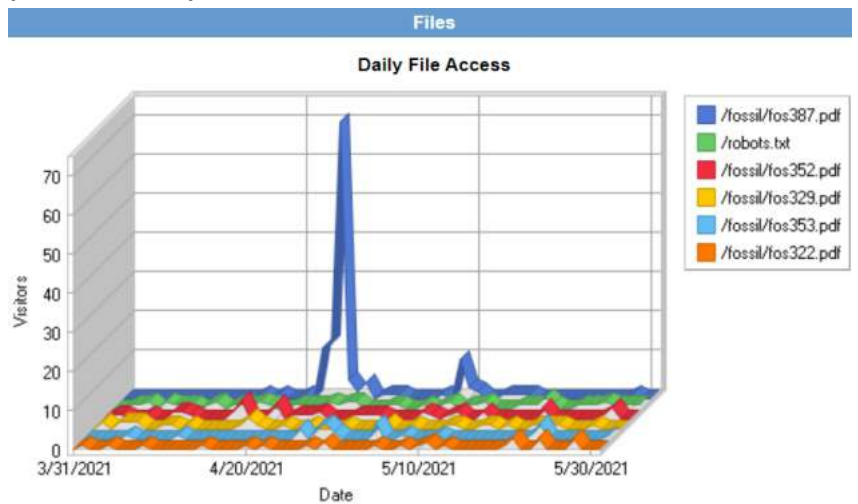
SandyPetersen / Call of Cthulhu RPG Creator: thanks for sharing. Found it quite interesting

Apparently that issue's lead article, "Lovecraft and Loincloths," was a hit with H. P. Lovecraft aficionados. I wrote to Dave Goudsward and he had additional information:

One of the Facebook Tarzan groups picked up on it around the same time a British Lovecraft aggregator spotted it. The Reddit traffic is interesting. It was posted by Bobby Derie, one of the top pulp history scholars. The follow-up comment is Sandy Petersen, the man who developed the Call of Cthulhu Role-Playing Game system. So some rarefied air there.

Dave has already submitted an additional article based on research for *Lovecraft in Florida*, a biographical sketch of John Russell, whom Lovecraft recruited into the United APA.

Another reference caused a different page on the website to have a record number of accesses in June. "A History of the National Amateur Press Association" from Truman Spencer's book *History of Amateur Journalism* was read by 325 visitors beginning on June 9.



Charts showing file access on [www.thefossils.org](http://www.thefossils.org) for April and May 2021. The top chart shows the number of visitors who selected each file. Fossil 387 spiked with 70 visitors, far above any of the other top six files. The bottom chart shows Fossil 387 was downloaded by 136 visitors. The previous issue was downloaded 58 times during an equivalent time period.

The reference appears to have come from the website [graymirror.substack.com](http://graymirror.substack.com)



## Miller Family News

In response to Delores Miller's obituary in the April issue of THE FOSSIL, her daughter, Robin, sent the following message:

Thank you for your kind words and the link to my mom's obit. We miss our parents dearly. We have cleaned out the farm, and will be turning that legacy over to a very nice young family the beginning of next month [May]. They have plans to continue my parent's

garden, storage, and renting of the hay field. They have three young children who will be running, playing and laughing on the land where Russell and Delores's children once did. Although painful to leave the farm behind, we are happy with our choice of family to take it over.



## Brosey Rescues Hawes Papers

My January 2020 column led with news of the University of South Florida deaccessioning their extensive

collection of amateur journals donated by William Haywood in the 1990s. Former Fossil Sean Donnelly accepted the collection on behalf of the University of Tampa and planned to integrate it with papers that had belonged to Leland Hawes. My January 2021 column reported Sean had completed combining the collections and needed to place boxes of duplicates. NAPA's Marc Brosey expressed interest, but could not get to Tampa until Covid-19 restrictions were lifted.

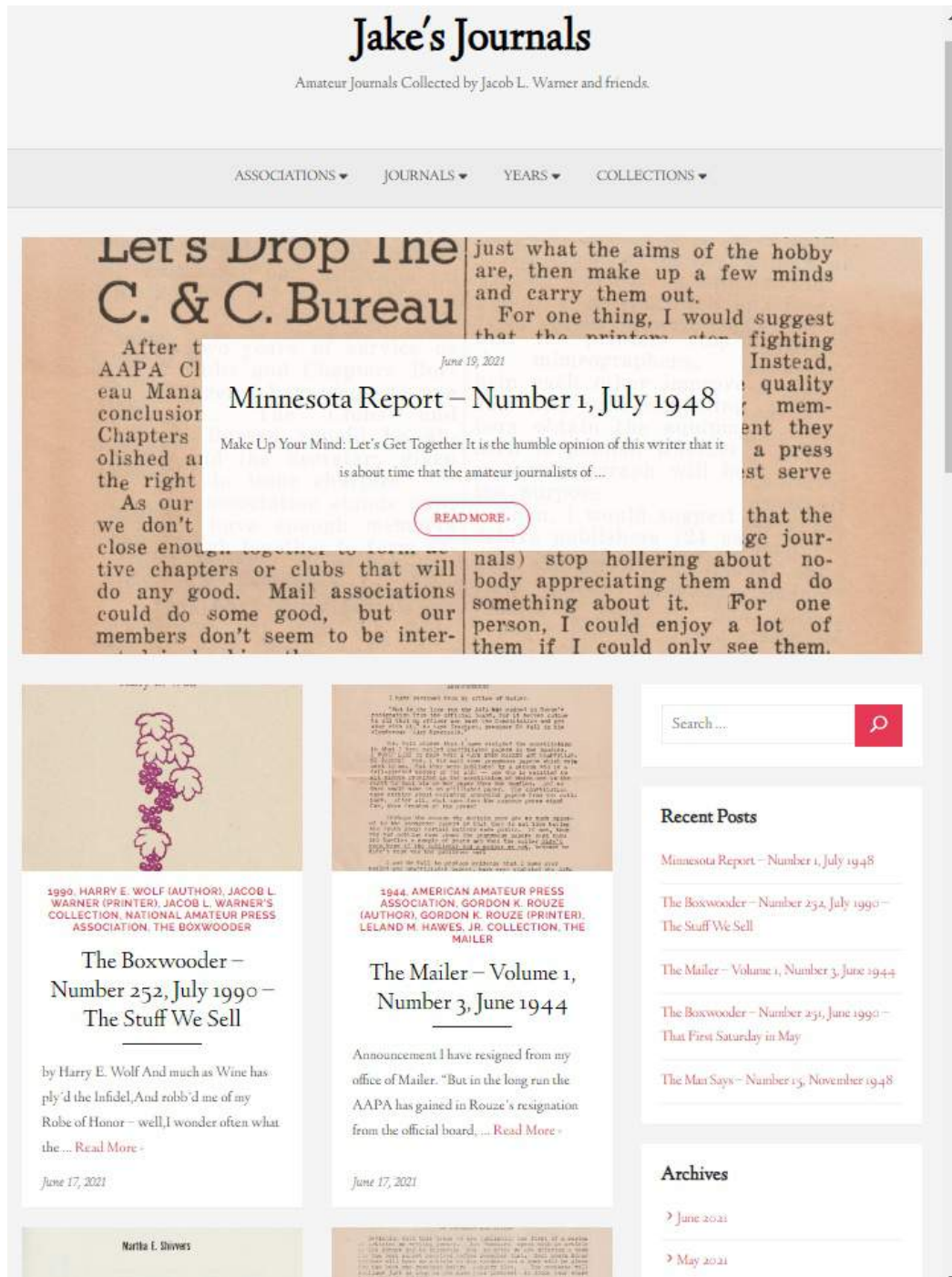
The May 2021 issue of Marc's *Manuscript Monthly* reported on his trip to Florida with wife Alice and son Elijah. After a visit to Lego Land they got the papers:

The next day we went to the University of Tampa to pick up the boxes of journals. We easily drove right up to the loading dock where we were to meet Sean Donnelly and Richard Matthews, retired faculty and knowledgeable ajays. There sitting at the loading dock already was a stack of boxes. I began loading the van and soon they had come down the building's elevator with more boxes. All told the collection fills fifteen and a half boxes; boxes about the size of a case of papers.

Marc recently received another large batch of papers, AAPA bundles saved by L. W. "Jiyani" Lawson going back to 1973. Fossil subscriber Ivan Snyder picked up the materials from Jiyani's widow, Twyla, and in late June shipped four large cartons to Marc.

Marc continues to digitize and transcribe amateur journals and put them on his website <https://jakesjournals.com>

The initial scans were papers inherited from Alice's grandfather, Jake Warner. He also is adding papers from deceased Fossils Barry Schrader, Russ Paxton (recently sent to him by Fossil John Horn), and now Lee Hawes. Since the start of the project in August 2019 through June 2021, Marc has processed 258 issues of 65 different titles. His most productive month: 40 in May 2021. ♦



Opening page of Marc Brosey's "Jake's Journals" website

## AAPA's 1939 New York Convention

by Dave Tribby

I FOUND another classic ajay photo in the box sent to me by Fossils Librarian Mike Horvat in 2016. This one is from the 1939 American Amateur Press Association convention, held in New York City.

The AAPA was founded in the aftermath of election manipulations at the 1935 United APA of America convention. To avoid nefarious activities, all of the new association's business was carried out by mail. The only reason to have a convention was for fun.

AAPA's first convention in 1938, held in Chicago, drew only four participants: Bruce W. Smith, who made the arrangements, James Francis, Robert E. Kunde, and Harold Smolin.

This second convention, hosted by AAPA's Metropolitan Chapter (members from the New York City metropolitan area), held sessions on July 21st and 22nd

in the Hudson Park branch of the New York Public Library. Organizers hoped the World's Fair would boost attendance, and at least four in the picture (Tom Farnsworth, Bill Groveman, Normy Levine, and Bruce Smith) spent time there. Others who were at the convention but are not in the picture include William Haywood, Vincent & Felicitas Haggerty, William Mack (Byron's twin brother), Bernice McCarthy, Mrs. McCarthy, and George W. Trainer (who took the photo).

Helen described the convention in the July-August 1939 *American Amateur Journalist*. Her conclusion: "...we did prove that the AAPA can make an impressive turnout—if this Convention was successful with only a month's notice, and planned by a chapter which had held only two meetings previously, and without the guidance and backing of the Association's presi-



*Delegates to the 1939 AAPA Convention; Front row: Norman S. Levine, Tom Farnsworth, Helen A. Vivarttas, Francis S. Calioa; Middle row: Bruce Smith, Richard C. Schleihauf, Edgar A. Martin; Back row: William H. Groveman, Byron D. Mack, Walter Voll, Walter Lawrence (guest).*

dent—until Kay assumed the office at the last minute.”

The ten AAPA members shown in the picture (there is also one guest) ranged in age from 13 to 21. All were active publishers at the time. Some retained a connection to the hobby for years, while others soon left. I used genealogy tools (mainly Ancestry.com, Newspapers.com, and Find-A-Grave) to discover what became of them.

**Norman S. Levine**, 13, from Hempstead, New York, published *The Islander*. He was elected AAPA's Clubs & Chapters Manager in 1940 and Historian in 1941, and remained a member until about 1947. When he died in 2007, age 81, he was living in Boiceville, New York.

**Thomas W. Farnsworth**, 17, from Ridgewood, New Jersey published *Eh, What?* His membership lapsed in 1941, about the time he entered Colby College in Waterville, Maine. He served in the Army Air Corps during World War II, then from 1947 to 1989 had a career as a teacher and principal in Rhode Island and Massachusetts public and private schools. He died in 1997, age 75, leaving a wife and two sons.

**Helen A. Vivarttas**, 20, from Weehawken, New Jersey, co-published (with Erich Werner) *The American Dawn*. She won 19 laureate awards between 1938 and 2000, and was elected AAPA president in 1939 and 1943. She married fellow ajay Sheldon Wesson in 1943, and their three children each were involved in amateur journalism. Both Helen and Sheldon were Fossils and jointly received the Gold Composing Stick award in 1955. Their *Siamese Standpipe* was circulated to both AAPA and NAPA, and they attended many conventions and local gatherings of both organizations. Their daughter, Pam, is currently a Fossil. Helen died in 2006 at age 87.

**Francis S. Caliva**, 14, from Syracuse, New York published *Le Plume* and co-published (with Walter Voll) *Extra Money* and *Vox Juvenis*. Winner of the short story Laureate Honorable Mention in 1940, Francis maintained his AAPA membership until 1947. He graduated from the College of Medicine, Syracuse University, and became an instructor in medicine at New York State University Medical Center. When he died in 1972, age 48, he left a wife and four children.

**Bruce W. Smith**, 16, from Green Bay, Wisconsin, published *The American Emblem*, *Badger State Amateur Journalist*, *The Mailbox*, and *Vacuum Cleaner*. He held many AAPA offices beginning in 1939 and culminating with two terms as President in 1957-59. He was a B-24 navigator in WW II. Bruce married Alida Kostka in 1948 and they had four daughters. He had a long career in Wisconsin, editing and publishing several agricultural trade publications. Bruce died in 2004 at age 81. He remained active in AAPA, attending the 2002 convention and publishing the final issue of *American Em-*

*blem* only six months before his death.

**Richard C. Schleihauf**, 16, from Birmingham, Alabama, published *The Alabamian* and *The Convention News*. His AAPA membership expired in 1941. During WW II he served in the Navy. Richard married Joan Barry and they had four children between 1946 and 1959. Richard died in 2004 at age 80. His final residence was Parkersburg, West Virginia.

**Edgar A. Martin**, 21, from Manchester, Connecticut, published *The Contributor* and *Convention Folder*. A charter member of AAPA, he won three laureates (two for Poetry, one for Editorial) in 1938 and 1939. He served as Manuscript Manager in 1940 and three terms as Director beginning in 1954. He maintained his AAPA membership (with some multi-year gaps) until his death, and was also a Fossil. He served as an ensign in the Coast Guard during WW II, then worked for the Veterans Administration for 37 years, retiring in 1977. When he died in 1982 (age 64), he was survived by his wife Mary and a daughter.

**William H. Groveman**, 14, from Brooklyn, New York, published *By Heck*, *Fantaseer*, *The Informer*, and *The Round Robin Amateur*. He remained an AAPA member off and on for the rest of his life, although the focus of his ajay activities shifted to NAPA. He was a Fossil for a while, and later assisted Fossil Editor Ken Faig with research in the 2000s. After serving in the Army during WW II, he graduated from Antioch College (1949) and worked at book publishers Simon & Schuster and Double before launching Transatlantic Books, an antiquarian book search firm. He married Gertrude Kaplan in 1948 and they had two children. He died in 2011, age 86.

**Byron David Mack**, 15, from Ridgewood, New Jersey published *The American Commentator*. He entered Harvard University in 1941. Byron remained an AAPA member until he joined the Marines in 1943. He married Mary Peter in 1948 and they made their home in Manhattan, New York City. Byron passed away in 1984, age 60.

**Walter J. Voll**, 16, from Syracuse, New York co-published (with Francis Caliva) *Extra Money* and *Vox Juvenis*. Walter let his AAPA membership lapse about the time he entered the novitiate of the Order of Preachers in 1942. Father Voll taught at a variety of Catholic colleges and seminaries from 1950 to 1997. He died January 24, 2021, at age 98.

After most of this article was written, I discovered this photo was also used in THE FOSSIL for April 2011 (no. 348). That issue, which is available on The Fossils's website, also featured a reprint of Helen Vivarttas Wesson's "The Merry Metchaps," her 1959 reminiscence of AAPA's Metropolitan Chapter and its colorful members. ◆

## Welcome, New Fossils!

SHERLOCK'S CLEVER PRESS PROPAGANDA AND  
TILDEN'S PERTINACY BRING IN RESULTS

DURING January last the following "Letter to the Editor" appeared in a number of leading newspapers in the larger cities:

DEAR SIR: Along in the '70s and '80s your city was included among scores of other cities and villages all over the United States in which "amateur journalism" was a flourishing institution. Under that name there were edited and printed hundreds of little papers by boys and girls who took pride in being "amateur journalists." As interesting an institution as it was, "amateur journalism" is now a thing of the past.

Scores of these boys, grown to manhood, are now out in the world enjoying the reward of great achievement. Like James M. Beck, they have distinguished themselves at the Bar; like Cyrus H. K. Curtis, publisher of *The Saturday Evening Post*, they are known to fame as publishers, or, like Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels and Gov. William Sproul of Pennsylvania, they are conspicuous in public life. They are editors, authors, clergymen, inventors, captains of industry, railroad presidents, financiers, artists, etc., as famous as those named. It is a long and honorable roll call.

A few years ago an organization called the Fossils was formed to perpetuate the memories of that period. Its present membership of 300 embraces the United States. It well deserves the distinction, for it represented a phase of American life which never before or since has had a counterpart.

The Fossils publish for private circulation a record of their semi-occasional gatherings and the reminiscences which they develop. This publication is called *The Fossil*, copies of which can be had by addressing the editor, J. Austin Fynes (once dramatic critic of *The New York Evening Sun*), at 150 Nassau Street, New York, where the Fossils maintain a library containing the memorabilia of their period.

The Fossils are now seeking to round up as many of the old boys as have survived the intervening years and will welcome them to the fold whenever they make themselves known.

AN AMATEUR JOURNALIST OF '75.

The writer of this letter was our worthy President, Charles R. Sherlock. Almost immediately letters of inquiry began to reach us. Leonard E. Tilden, who has long been active in searching for new members, joined

in a "follow up" of Sherlock's clever work, and as a result our membership roll has been increased by the addition of over a dozen real old-timers, none of whom had ever before heard of the Fossils.

[The membership list with about 190 names filled the last page of the issue. It included the following note.] For the past sixteen years we have carried a mailing list of close to 350 names in addition to our membership list. We believe it is time, on account of the extraordinary cost of printing, to limit the mailing list to members and those who pay the sum of one dollar per year. ♦

## 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

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