

Official Publication of *The Fossils, The Historians of Amateur Journalism*

The Fossil

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Gary Bossler Leaves Fossil Board

by Dave Tribby

As reported in the last issue of THE FOSSIL, the longest-serving Fossil trustee, Gary Bossler, left the board at the end of the last fiscal year on August 14. He is replaced by David Goudsward, who was profiled in that July issue.

Gary completed nearly ten years on the board of trustees, including almost a year as president. Gary replaced long-time Fossil president Guy Miller on the board after Guy's sudden death in 2012. The next year Guy's replacement as president, Jack Swenson, resigned due to health issues and Gary stepped into the top spot. Gary's leadership during both transitions provided needed stability for the organization. Just prior to Guy's death, Ken Faig chose to step down after eight years as editor. Since nobody had volunteered to replace Ken, Gary turned out two issues of THE FOSSIL as "designer & publisher." For several years after I became editor, Gary continued to have printing done at his printer in Ohio, and he also handled the labeling and mailing of issues.

In the aftermath of Guy's death, the board discovered that he had been paying production costs of THE FOSSIL out of his personal bank account, and that no renewal reminders had been sent to members since

Martha Shivers had left the position of membership chair in 2011. Gary quickly set up an online Google spreadsheet to hold The Fossils' membership and financial information, and he sent renewal notices when he mailed issues of THE FOSSIL. His efforts ensured financial stability.

Fossils President Ken Faig offered his thanks in an August 15 message to Gary:

Dear Gary,

My thanks to you for all that you have done for The Fossils and for the amateur journalism hobby at large, on the occasion of your retirement as a member of The Fossils' board.

I'm pretty sure I first met you at NAPA's 1995 Canton convention and we've met several times since including AAPA Cleveland 2006. I remember your publishing a convention zine at one of these meetings. I remember your graciously including my essay in your collection of essays devoted to the future of NAPA. I remember our car breaking down while we were still in Chicago when we were headed to another NAPA convention (I think in Canton). I was sorry to miss the con. Perhaps the 2016 amateur convention in Madison was our most recent meeting--sometimes my memory gets foggy. If not then perhaps the joint NAPA/AAPA meet in Elk Grove Village a few years before.

I'm especially grateful to you for stepping in as Fossils president/editor for a time after the death of Guy Miller in 2012. I am not sure The Fossils would have survived this crisis point without your critical help.

In any case, I wish you a well-deserved retirement from your duties on The Fossils' board. I hope to see your name on our membership rolls for years to come.

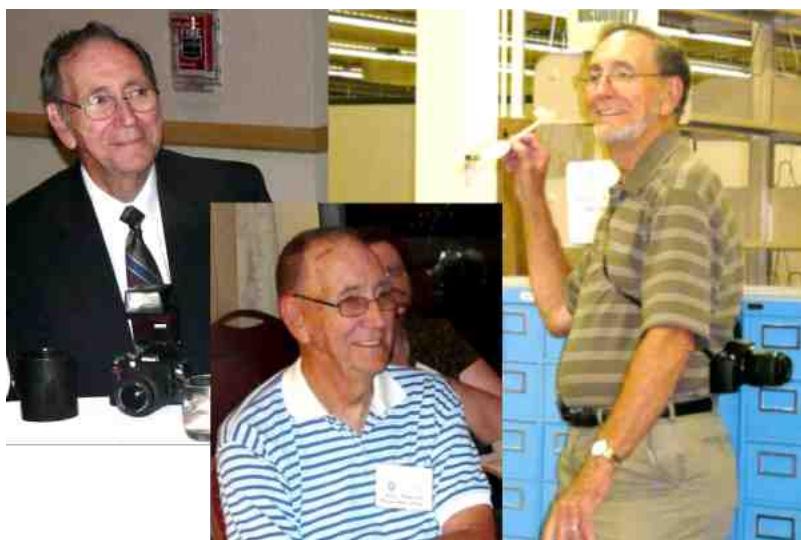
With thanks,
Ken Faig, Jr.

Gary responded a few days later:

Dear Ken:

Thank you for your kind words. I have met so many kind and talented people through my associations with The Fossils and amateur journalism.

I believe my first meeting with real live Ajays was in



Gary Bossler at ajay conventions in 2010 (left), 2012 (middle), and 2009 (right)

the 70s. It was an area meeting of an NAPA group at the home of Bill and Ruth Boys who were living at that time in Mansfield, Ohio.

Dave Goudsward will do an excellent job for the Fossils. If I'm not mistaken, he is a relatively new member of the Fossils but has been a frequent and longtime contributor to the Fossil and definitely well acquainted with the history of amateur journalism.

I am sorry but I did not attend the meeting of 2016 in Madison but it was not because I didn't want to. It was because of family obligations. You're probably aware that I have quite a large family, including seven children, 30 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.

Anyway, I wish only the best to the Fossils and hope the organization continues for many years to come.

Sincerely,
Gary Bossler

Gary received one of The Fossils' highest honors, the Russell L. Paxton Memorial Award for Service to Amateur Journalism, in 2006. At that time, President Guy Miller described Gary as "an exceptionally active member of NAPA who has also served AAPA and The Fossils over his more than 30 years association in our beloved hobby." ◆

President's Message

Richard Gerner: An NAPA Founder

The man with all those bound volumes in the LAJ: Who was he?

by Ken Faig, Jr.

Richard Gerner's portrait, in Howard K. Sanderson's "Excelsior Cabinet No. Two" dated Mar. 25, 1882, shows a bespectacled young man of rather formal aspect. This photograph is reproduced in the photographic section of Truman J. Spencer's *The History of Amateur Journalism* (The Fossils, 1957). This account of Gerner's amateur journalism career is based mostly on Spencer's work.

Gerner had been born in England to Henry [Henrik] Gerner, born in Norway, and Anna Amalia Haase, born in Germany, but when NAPA met for its organizing convention in Philadelphia in July 1876, he was of Hoboken, New Jersey, and publisher of *Young Scientist*. Gerner was between his sophomore and junior years at the Stevens Institute of Technology when he attended that convention. He visited Philadelphia on May 10, 1876, for the opening of the U.S. Centennial Exposition, and that evening he paid a call on Evan Ried Riale, secretary of the organizing committee for the amateur journalism convention. Gerner consented to be nominated as temporary chairman of the convention, a choice ratified by the local sponsors on May 18.

Gerner advertised himself as an "author of upwards of a thousand popular tales and sketches." At the first session of the convention on July 4, he concluded his opening address with: "The Amateur Journalists' Centennial Convention is hereby declared organized, open and in order." When James M. Beck asserted that "Mr. Gerner is one of the smartest amateur authors in the country," he was greeted with "mingled applause

and shouts of disapproval" (Spencer, p. 31). When the first vote was taken for a permanent chairman, Gerner had 22 votes, John W. Snyder 18, Edgar R. Hoadley 7, Correl Kendall 6, and Clarence G. Allen 3. Kendall successfully objected that a majority of the votes cast was necessary for election. After Gerner's opponents huddled, a second ballot resulted in 33 votes for John W. Snyder and 27 votes for Gerner. Thus, John Winslow Snyder, and not Richard Gerner, became NAPA's first president.

Gerner waged a vigorous campaign for the presidency in advance of the second NAPA convention in Long Beach, New Jersey in 1877. When the time came for Gerner's name to be placed into nomination, his supporter Charles C. Heuman limited himself to: "Mr. President: I nominate Richard Gerner of New Jersey." Gerner's friend Max A. Lesser, publisher of the *Jersey Amateur Journal*, gave a much longer seconding speech, which the nominee himself finally had to terminate. A second ballot produced the result: A. W. Dingwall, 38, Richard Gerner 26, J. Winslow Snyder 11. Dingwall became NAPA's second president.

Not only amateur politicians but amateur artists could be cruel. In her article "The Emancipation of Boyhood" in *Common Place – the Journal of Early American Life* (vol. 14, no. 1, fall 2013)

<http://commonplaceonline/article/the-emancipation-of-boyhood/>
Lara Langer Cohen reproduces a bird-like caricature of



Richard Gerner, from *The History of Amateur Journalism*



President Ken Faig, Jr.

Gerner from the *Amateur Gazette* published in Fostoria, Ohio in August 1877:



I can't imagine how Gerner could have considered this depiction as anything other than derogatory. When Edward A. Oldham put forward his name for the NAPA presidency in 1878, Gerner refused. Writing to Oldham on Jan. 26, 1878, he declared (Spencer, p. 37):

My old campaign enemies today greet me on the most friendly terms. I resent these avowals of friendship at the hands of those who completed my ruin, and desire to have nothing to say or do with those who struck Amateurdom that blow, for it must be acknowledged that a split has occurred which has removed from the ranks many of its proudest ornaments and journals, which was to be foreseen, but, like blind fools, the rabble brought the structure down over their own heads.

No, no, the field is barren and cheerless. My love for amateur journalism is extinct, completely, radically, wholly. My enemies will raise a hue and cry over this, I doubt not. They well may. They have won the victory. But another such victory and they will be undone. I will give Amateurdom one year more to live and die in, unless there arises an amateur Napoleon in the interval, a powerful mind to seize upon the reins of government, kick the rabble into a corner and devote half of his life to the 'dom's interest.

William T. Hall of the host city was elected NAPA's third president at the Chicago convention in 1878. Politics persisted within the organization, but Gerner's prophecy of doom was not fulfilled. NAPA celebrated its 100th anniversary in 1976 and will celebrate its 150th anniversary in 2026. Gerner's great (80 page) plan for organizing the amateur journalism hobby, modeled on the federal and state governments of the United States never even came close to implementation.

Gerner's father Henry first arrived in New York on Dec. 7, 1852, aboard the *Andrew Foster*. He was 32 years old, came from Norway, and had sailed from Liverpool. However, he returned to England in time to become the father of Richard in 1856 and to marry Anna Amalia Haase (born ca. 1836-41 Prussia) on Jan. 5, 1859 at Holy Trinity Church, Paddington, Middlesex. (The groom's name was given as Henrik Gerner and he was stated to be the son of Henrik Gerner.) The *London Gazette* reported on Dec. 10, 1858 that Henry Gerner, civil engineer, of Bayswater, Middlesex had on Nov. 27, 1858 applied for a patent (no. 2705) for an "improvement in the mode of and apparatus for manufacturing gas for illumination and heating"; and on Apr. 19, 1861

Spencer Critiques Gerner

Gerner is the first writer Truman Spencer discusses in his 1891 book *A Cyclopedia of the Literature of Amateur Journalism*

The most prolific writer of the early days of amateur journalism was Richard Gerner, who wrote sketches and poems with equal facility, his productions being numbered by the hundreds, and who undeniably achieved an immense popularity as an author. But it is equally as undeniable that his sketches were poorly written feebly sustained, sensational and trashy, while his poems were exceedingly commonplace, seldom if ever, rising above the merest doggerel. ◆

reported that he had on Mar. 24, 1861 applied for a patent (no. 614) for an "improvement in apparatus for the manufacturer of gas from oils or fatty or resinous matter." I am skeptical that earlier patent applications by Henry Gerner, architect, of Moorgate Street, London for patents on an omnibus construction methodology (Aug. 3, 1854) and a writing or drawing apparatus (Apr. 7, 1855) were made by our Henry Gerner. I have not succeeded in finding Henry Gerner, his wife Anna Amalia, or their son Richard in either the 1860 U.S. census (enumerated June 1, 1860) or the 1861 U.K. census (enumerated April 7, 1861). I conclude that Henry Gerner and his family probably returned to New York later in 1861 or in 1862.

I have not, so far, succeeded in finding an English birth record, civil or church, for Richard Gerner. Two possibilities are Richard Valentine Gerner (born January-February-March 1856 Liverpool, Lancashire [8b:221]) or Richard Gerner (born April-May-June 1856 Wigan, Lancashire [8c:101]), but both of these men would have been thirty, not twenty-nine when our Richard Gerner died (see below). In addition, I suspect that our Richard Gerner was probably born in the London metropolis.

On Aug. 31, 1863, in the Common Pleas Court in New York City, Henry Gerner became a naturalized U.S. citizen. (His nationality was Swedish since Norway was then still part of Sweden.) He saw service as an engineer with Regiment 28, Brigade 5, Division 2 during the Civil War, and was released in 1866. The 1867 Jersey City directory listed him as an engineer, residing at 1 Washington in Hoboken. In 1873 and 1874, Gerner was listed as a patent agent residing at 53 Seventh in Hoboken. In 1875, he had removed to 2 Eleventh in Hoboken and in 1877 to 4 Eleventh. He remained at this address in 1883, when both he and his son Richard were listed as engineers. (Hoboken was covered by the Jersey City directories.) This block of Eleventh Street is today all modern buildings, but walking west to Eleventh & Hudson brings one to a residential building which may date to Gerner's time.

The 1870 U.S. census enumerated this household in New York City Ward 16: Henry Gerner, age 50, engineer, born Norway; Anna Gerner, age 34, housekeeper, born Prussia; Richard Gerner, age 14, born England, student. The 1880 U.S. census enumerated at 4 Eleventh Street in Hoboken: Henry Gerner (head), age 60, rubber manufacturer, born Norway of Norwegian-born parents; Anna Gerner (wife), age 43, born Prussia of Prussian-born parents; Richard Gerner (son), age 24, single, rubber manufacturer, born England.

From 1874 to 1878, Richard Gerner attended the Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken. The school had been founded in 1870, and would have been an easy walk from the Gerner family home. Richard graduated with the class of 1878 with a degree in mechanical engineering and served as class historian. His thesis was "The German Marine Engine."

The following sketch of Gerner appeared in Franklin LeRonde Furman's *Morton Memorial: A History of the Stevens Institute of Technology With Biographies of the Trustees, Faculty and Alumni and a Record of the Achievement of the Stevens Family of Engineers* (Hoboken: Stevens Institute of Technology, 1905) (p. 398):

Gerner, Richard (M.E., '78) was associated with his father under the firm name of Henry Gerner & Co., in the business of patent solicitors in New York from 1878 to 1880. During that time the firm issued a periodical called the *Patent Right Gazette*, the matter for which was principally written by Mr. Richard Gerner, who at the same time contributed to *Oliver Optic's Magazine*, *The Youth's Companion*, *Scientific Amateur*, *New York Herald*, *Commercial Advertiser*, *Telegram*, *Harper's Weekly*, and *New York Mirror*. He wrote several poems and serial stories; including among the latter "The Death of Haroun al Raschid," published in the *Herald* of Halifax, N. S., and "Sweet Marjory, a Story of the Revolutionary War." He was in the employ of the Heveenoid Manufacturing Co., New York, for about a year. About this time his health began to fail, and he went to Mexico [sic], and thence to London, England, where he accepted a position as draughtsman and general foreign correspondent for the firm of Herbert & Co., patent agents. He continued in this position until compelled to leave it owing to his weak physical condition. He returned to the United States, and died in 1885.

As recited in the *Morton Memorial* sketch, Richard went into the patent business with his father Henry following his graduation from Stevens Institute. The *Patent Right Gazette*, established by Henry Gerner in 1866, was a twenty-page, 10x14 monthly with an annual subscription price of fifty cents. The *American Newspaper Directory* (George P. Rowell & Co., 1877, p. 223) stated that Henry and Richard Gerner were editors and publishers with offices located at 24 Barclay Street in New York City. The claimed circulation was 4,500.

On Oct. 1, 1880, in Manhattan, Richard married

Emily Knausche (born Feb. 19, 1861 New Jersey), daughter of Johann Knausche and Sophie de Goerk (also transcribed as Degreck). Their daughter Nita E. Gerner was born in Hoboken on Sept. 20, 1881.

Despite his separation from the amateur journalism hobby by 1878, the *Morton Memorial* sketch makes clear that Richard continued his writing endeavors. Perhaps his greatest literary endeavor since leaving amateur journalism was an 11,276-line poem *The Infernal Comedy*, which he self-published from New York City in 1881. However, his work did not receive good notices, witness the following in the *Literary News* for April 1881 (p. 123):

THE HOBOKEN MILTON.—Mr. Richard Gerner, of Hoboken, appears as a rival of Milton with "The Infernal Comedy," a thick pamphlet with a death's head and cross bones on the cover, a long preface and 120 octavo pages of verse in the finest type. One page is given to "Infernal Statistics," by which the author means a tabulated account of the number of books, cantos, stanzas and lines in his work. It appears that of the last there are 11,276. The eleven thousand two hundred seventy fifth and sixth run as follows:

My pen is dull, my ink is pale.
I bid you all farewell.

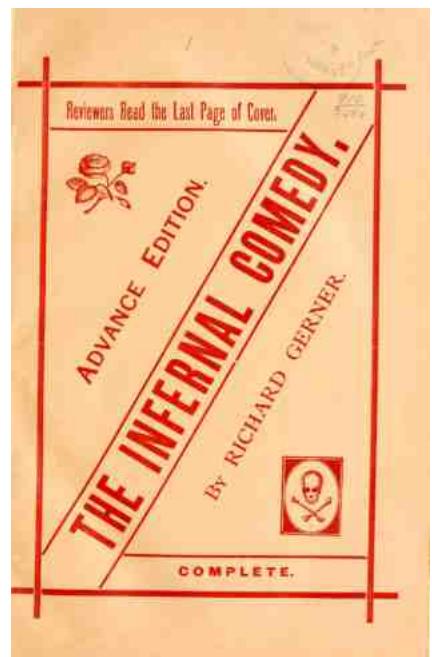
—N.Y. Mail

The *Atlantic Monthly* says of it: "Mr. Richard Gerner (Hoboken, N.J.) sends what he calls an Advance Edition of the Infernal Comedy, with request to reviewers to read the entire work, and then give their candid opinion; ours can be had easily—that the book had best go in the list of errata on the second page of the cover: it is all a mistake."

The Library of Congress has made its copy of *The Infernal Comedy* available electronically at

<https://archive.org/details/infernalcomedy00gern>

As above noted, Gerner and his father had turned their attention to rubber manufacturing in Hoboken by the time the 1880 U.S. census was enumerated. On May 28, 1880, Henry Gerner filed letters of patent number 229,817 for a rubber-based compound called "heveenoid" which he hoped would serve as a less expensive substitute for vulcanized rubber for many uses, e.g., in



Cover of Gerner's *Infernal Comedy*

dental appliances. Professor Henry A. Mott, Jr., championed its cause in his article "Heveenoid—the Rubber of the Future," which appeared in the 1881 volumes of the *Odontographic Journal* (pp. 83–86) and the *American Journal of Dental Science* (pp. 514–517). The Gerners anticipated their Hoboken works would be able to produce three thousand pounds of heveenoid daily. Whether they ever attained that level of production I have not been able to discover.

Not all of Richard's efforts on behalf of heveenoid had a positive result. The *Portland Daily Press* for May 25, 1882 (p. 1) reported:

Richard Gerner is under arrest for swindling parties into buying shares of a bogus concern called the "Heveenoide Company." One man was swindled out of \$6,000.

Trouble seems to have followed Richard, whether in his literary or business endeavors. The threat of declining health soon raised its ugly head. Just before his arrest for promoting shares of the Heveenoid Company, the *Las Vegas Daily Gazette* (Las Vegas, New Mexico) for May 3, 1882 had reported in its "Personals" (p. 5):

Gerner in New Mexico

by Dave Tribby

A search of nineteenth century publications turned up additional details of Richard Gerner's life, including the time he spent in New Mexico during 1881–82.

I found a reference to his story, "My Wife, My Pard and I" as having been published in the Nov. 1881 issue of *Fiction* magazine, but only found the text when it was reprinted in several newspapers during May and June 1885. It starts,

You see, I had tuberculous disease of the lungs, and so they wanted me to go to New Mexico, somewhere on the plateau.

"Take your wife and baby along?" exclaimed Dr. Sumner. "Never! Why the poor little thing isn't six weeks old. I couldn't think of permitting you to expose its frail existence to the rigors of a winter on the New Mexican plateau." ...

Time hung heavily on my hands, and between reading stories in the newspapers and writing melancholy letters to my wife, I just managed to escape committing suicide.

He goes on to describes several dramatic turns in the eventual arrival of his family. "My wife and daughter took some time to get used to Las Vegas, but she's acclimated now; and as for the baby, it's alive and kicking yet, and no mistake."

The *Las Vegas Daily Gazette* included several items about Gerner in 1881–82. On Nov. 29 it noted he had

Richard Gerner writes from Hoboken, New Jersey, that he arrived home safely and in good spirits. He will go back into the rubber business with his father.

I have not attempted to try to follow the fortunes of heveenoid nor of Richard's arrest. Heveenoid did not disappear entirely from the scene, although Henry and Richard may have disposed of their interests by 1883 or 1884—it was still mentioned in *Scientific American* as late as 1890, when both father and son had been dead for five years.

I suspect that it was in 1883 or 1884 that the Gerners—Henry and his wife Anna Amalia, Richard and his wife Emily and their daughter Nita—packed their bags for England. They all lived on Bath Road in the west London suburb of Heston, in the Hounslow borough. A reader who has ever traveled through Heathrow Airport, has probably been not far from where the Gerners lived.

The following title—if by our Richard Gerner—may provide a clue regarding the cause of his early death: *The Theory and Practice of the Cure of Phthisis by Hard Mountaineering, as Embraced in What I know About Consumption: A Memoir* (Glasgow, Scotland: Alex MacDou-

"returned from Santa Fe. He will remain permanently in Las Vegas and act as correspondent of the *New Mexican* furnishing a letter daily."

The Dec. 17 issue reported he and a friend wondered who was the better marksman. "They decided to settle it by an actual test, and picking up one of the numerous revolvers lying around" they proceeded outside to shoot at a target. He missed and "the bullet shot through the transom, breaking the glass, and struck on the inside of the opposite stone wall of the store." Gerner was arrested on the charge of firing arms in the street.

The Dec. 22 issue reported he was slapped by a local man because of a story from *Fiction* that included scathing descriptions of the town: "Las Vegas is half stores and half public-houses. The latter are dispensaries of bad whiskey, faro chips, and unheard of depravity. Desperadoes and low women fill them at night. ... A gentleman is looked at twice in Las Vegas, as a rare animal; a lady it has not yet been my good fortune to behold here." Gerner was "taken into custody for libel." The next day the paper reported "everything appeared to be amicably arranged" at the hearing and the judge said "I have dismissed the suit ... he having paid all costs."

The Jan. 19 "Personal" column included, "Richard Gerner left for Santa Fe last night. He hardly knows what he'll do there, but we hope he will leave the newspaper business alone." ◆

gall, 34pp., 1884). Colorado College in Colorado Springs has the only copy recorded in Worldcat—the pamphlet was published as a reprint from the *Glasgow Medical Journal* for October 1884. Based on his history of travel to New Mexico, and possibly of Scottish mountaineering, I would venture to guess that Richard Gerner suffered from and died of tuberculosis.

Alas, Richard's father Henry Gerner died in Brentford, Middlesex in January-February-March 1885 [3a:44], age 65. He was a resident of Bath Road at the time of his death, and was buried by A. E. Bull at Heston, Hounslow on Mar. 27, 1885. Thus, he most probably had died in late March 1885. As narrated in the *Morton Memorial* sketch, his son Richard Gerner worked for a time for patent agent Herbert & Co., but eventually had to give up his position on account of his deteriorating health.

Additional misfortune was not long in following the Gerner family. Richard Gerner, aged only 29, died in Brentford, Middlesex July 30, 1885 [3a:34]. He was a resident of Bath Road at the time of his death, and was buried by A. E. Bull at Heston, Hounslow on Aug. 3, 1885. (The Church of England parish church was and is St. Leonard's.) Richard probably died in the very last days of July or the very first days of August 1885. I believe the *Morton Memorial* sketch is in error in stating that Richard returned to the United States before he died. I don't know whether Richard and his father were buried in Heston Cemetery, but it seems a logical presumption. Richard's widow Emma and his daughter Nita did not remain in England for long after his death. On Sept. 18, 1885, E. Gerner, age 24, residence Hoboken, and Nita Gerner, age 4, arrived in New York aboard the *Persian Monarch*.

Richard's mother Anna apparently remained in England. The 1901 U.K. census enumerated her (under the surname Garner) as superintendent of the Mission School in Blackheath Village, Lee, Lewisham, London. She was a 61-year-old widow and had been born in Berlin, Prussia. On Feb. 7, 1903, she applied for widow's benefits in respect of her husband's service in the Civil War. I have not found any death record for her and there are too many death records for contemporaneous Anna Garners for me to make a probable choice among them.

The 1900 U.S. census enumerated Emmy Gerner, age 39, widow, and her daughter Nita E. Gerner, age 18, single, in Manhattan. They were both then working as stenographers. However, on June 24, 1905, in the German Evangelical Church in Hoboken, Emmy took as her second husband Otto Curt Plessner (born June 25, 1874 Germany), the son of Otto Plessner and Hedwig Weber. Otto had emigrated to the United States in 1897. In 1900, he was an unmarried notions salesman in Manhattan.

The 1910 U.S. census enumerated the following household at 643 Wrightwood Avenue in Chicago Ward 25: Otto C. Plessner (head), age 35, in first marriage for four years, born Germany of German-born parents, citizenship application pending, railway supplies salesman; Emma Plessner (wife), age 49, in second marriage for four years, born New Jersey of German-born parents, one child borne, one child living; Nita E. Gerner (step-daughter), age 28, single, born New Jersey of English-born father and New Jersey-born mother, stenographer (office).

The Plessners had returned to Manhattan (16 Morningside Avenue) by the time of the 1915 New York state census. Otto was working as a manufacturer's agent and Nita Gerner as a bookkeeper.

Nita married Edwin Hadley Smith (1869-1944) in Manhattan on May 5, 1917. Smith was the founder of the Library of Amateur Journalism, which today resides in the Special Collections of the University of Wisconsin Library in Madison.

The Plessners remained at 16 Morningside Avenue in Manhattan when the 1920 U.S. census was enumerated. Otto died in May 1927 and his widow Emma died in January 1940. They are buried in Green-Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn, New York. Emma's daughter Nita E. (Gerner) Smith (died July 1969) and her husband Edwin Hadley Smith are also buried there.

Spencer (p. 225) lists two books by Gerner: *The Winning O't* (Memphis, Tennessee: W. L. Surprise, 1876, 24pp.) and *A Beautiful and a Noble Work* (Edgerton, Ohio: H. A. Cranberry Bros., 1878, 23pp.). Additional titles listed on Worldcat include: *The Curse of Passion, or, \$10,000 Reward, Dead or Alive!* (Haverhill, Massachusetts, Charles W. Smith, 1873); *The Lord of Monteith, or, the Secret of the Red Chamber* (Haverhill, Massachusetts: H. C. Smith & Company, 1873); *A Dream of the Past* (Edgerton, Ohio: H. A. Cranberry & Brother, 1878); "?": *A Tale of Baden-Baden* (with Glenn M. Farley) (Dubuque, Iowa: Glenn M. Farley, 1876); *As I Like It!* (with William L. Terhune, Will A. Fiske and Ralph W. Onderdonk) (Batavia, New York: Ralph W. Onderdonk, 1875). *Born To Be Hung* (Akron, Ohio: Almon Pitts, 1874) was an additional title by Gerner. Some of Gerner's early titles seem to partake of the "penny dreadful" school which was so controversial in early amateurdom.

Even today, there are a half-dozen or more bound volumes of the writings of Richard Gerner preserved in the Library of Amateur Journalism. Edwin Hadley Smith had these volumes bound in handsome dark blue cloth and stamped on their spines to identify them as the works of Richard Gerner.

Gerner was a very bright young man, and his ambitions within the amateur journalism hobby were undoubtedly frustrated by political opponents. By 1880, he had a wife, and by 1881 they had a child, so that

between family and work responsibilities, Richard's attentions were doubtless fully occupied after his break with the amateur journalism hobby.

Whether he could have been sufficiently reconciled with the amateur journalism hobby to have become one of the "grand old men" of The Fossils once it was organized in 1904, we will never know, since he had already been in his premature grave for nearly twenty

years. However, most of us will probably agree that amateur journalism was fortunate to provide a home for the talents of Richard Gerner during 1870-78. The honor of serving as temporary chairman of the 1876 convention will always adhere to his memory. He might well have served as NAPA's first president had his political opponents not been so assiduous in their efforts. ◆

Official Editor's Message

Time For More Color

by Dave Tribby

My message in the July issue reviewed the use of color printing in the last two issues of volume 118. Several Fossils wrote to share their reactions:

Ken Faig: This very handsome issue benefits from its color, particularly the AAPA 1986 convention photos provided by Ivan Snyder.

Hal Shepherd: I would like to provide a "Technicolor/Color TV" donation to the Fossil, to provide full color issues as needed. As editor you can determine how many or if ALL issues need to be in color.

George Chapman: I don't find color any great addition. I know I am behind the times. We were probably the last people on the block to get color TV! I started taking photographs at about age 6 and I was in my 40s before I shot a roll of color. In 1988 my wife and I went on a trip/trek to India and Bhutan. She shot color and I shot black and white.

Pam Wesson: Worth it to print in color. I'll try to remember to send a little extra to contribute towards it when appropriate

Since the ability to use color depends upon finances, let's review the records maintained by Secretary-Treasurer Tom Parson for The Fossils' fiscal year that ended August 14.

Membership and Subscriptions

The number of members remained stable throughout the year, with no expirations or deaths. There are 29 on the membership roll, including 3 family members. There was one new subscriber during the year, Michael Taylor of Portland, Oregon, bringing the total number of subscriptions to 5.

FY22 Income and Expenses

Fiscal Year 2022 had slightly more expenses than income, but the bank balance remains strong:

Income for Fiscal Year 2022:

Memberships (23)	\$340.00
Subscriptions (4)	\$50.00
Donations (3)	\$45.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$435.00

Expenses for Fiscal Year 2022:

Bank Fees	\$20.00
Website - Internet Service Provider	\$29.95
Website - Domain Registration	\$12.16
The Fossil - Postage	\$111.00
The Fossil - Printing	\$330.21
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$507.32

Net Loss

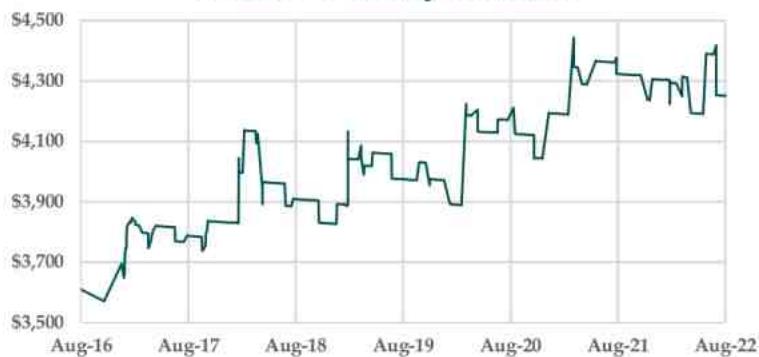
Bank Balance on August 14, 2022 \$4,251.63

Here's the detailed cost for each issue of THE FOSSIL:

Issue	Pages	Printing	Postage	Total
Oct 2021	12	B&W	\$51.70	\$79.79
Jan 2022	12	B&W	\$53.81	\$78.51
Apr 2022	8	Color	\$89.88	\$117.97
Jul 2022	12	Color	\$134.82	\$164.94

Membership income would have been \$60 higher — covering nearly all of the deficit — if a deposit had not been lost in the mail (most members replaced the lost checks) and another member had not been tardy with his renewal check. With 22 paid single memberships (\$15 each), 3 joint memberships (\$20), and 4 paid sub-

Fossil Treasury Balance



The Fossils' treasury balance has grown over the past six years

scriptions (\$10), we should receive \$430 per year. Some pay for multiple years at a time, shifting income from one year to another, but that evens out in the long run.

The three donations came from Melvin & Linda Shivers (\$25), Ivan Snyder (\$10), and John Shepherd (\$10). Many thanks for your support!

Looking Ahead

If membership and subscription numbers remain the same, The Fossils should receive around \$430 during FY23. Bank fees and website costs ought to remain about the same in the coming year, but postage costs increased 8% just after the July issue was mailed. These projected annual expenses sum up to \$186, leaving \$244 (\$61 for each of the four issues) for printing THE FOSSIL. The print shop that handles production has seen paper costs rise, and those will be passed on in the coming year. Black and white printing is 63 cents per four page signature, while color is \$1.53; 32 copies of an 8 page issue totals out to about \$40 while a 12 page color issue would run almost \$147.

Donations, which in recent years have ranged from \$40 to \$102, have covered higher printing costs in the past, and it's heartening to learn that members will contribute more in order to support color printing. We could also dip into the bank account, which has generally been growing since the beginning of FY17.

My plan going forward will be to base the size of the issue (usually 8 or 12 pages) on the amount of interesting material available, and the use of color on whether the presentation for that issue benefits. I'll keep an eye on the bank balance and let readers know if additional donations are needed. ◇

Classic Ajay Photo

Mr. Fossil Gets a Fossil

by Dave Tribby

This month's classic ajay photo comes from the 2010 AAPA-NAPA Concurrent Conventions, held in Elk Grove Village, Illinois. The gathering attracted 47 members and guests.

The Fossils Appreciation Luncheon, included several awards. Two were well-known: the Russel Paxton Award went to Ivan Snyder and Stan Oliner received the Gold Composing Stick.

Barry Schrader prepared a special Fossil of the Century Award as a surprise to Fossil President Guy Miller, which included an "authentic" fossil bone. In the picture, AAPA President Mike O'Connor (left) and NAPA President Jack Visser (right) present the award to Guy. ◇

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

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