

The Fossil

Volume 120, No. 4, Whole No. 400 ♦ Sunnyvale, California ♦ July 2024

Official Editor's Message

400 Issues of THE FOSSIL in 120 Years

by Dave Tribby

THIS MONTH we celebrate the milestone of the 400th issue of THE FOSSIL. But since we are also completing the 120th volume, shouldn't we be up to number 480 of this quarterly publication? I don't have all issues of THE FOSSIL, but do have several of the early bound volumes. The title page in the one covering 1914-1919 notes it was, "Published Sometimes Near Thrice a Year," and sure enough the tenth volume ended in March 1914 with issue number 30. There were only two issues per year in 1917-22 and in most of 1931-1940. Frequency went up to four issues per year during the 1945-46 fiscal year, with the July, October, January, and April publication pattern that continues to today.

Looking over the old issues, I found inconsistencies in the volume numbering. Vol. 1, No. 1 was dated October 1904. New officers were typically elected at the reunion banquet in April, and so the March or April issue was the last of the current volume and the next issue, usually in a summer month, was the first of the next volume. Issues in this era did not list the number within a volume — only a volume and whole number.

For example, Truman Spencer's issue dated April 1942 was "Whole Number 99" and the last of "Volume XXXVIII," published

38 years after the organizing meeting of 1904. Issue 100 for June 1942 started Volume XXXIX but issue 101 for April 1943 was labeled as Volume XL, and 102 for June 1943 was Volume XLI. Subsequent issues had a volume number one higher than the original pattern (for example, volume 51 was completed 50 years after the organizing meeting). This continued until Jack Dow advanced the volume number an extra time in 1964. After he abruptly resigned in 1965, there were no issues until Tillie

Haywood, with the title "Interim Editor," issued number 186 in March 1967 sans any volume number.

In fact, the volume number did not reappear until Russ Paxton took over in July 1975, and he chose to label issue 211 as "Vol. 73, No. 1," using the "plus one" numbering scheme (and reviving the issue number within the volume, which had been used in 1945-1951 but later dropped). During the 1982-83 fiscal year Russ labeled the July issue Vol. 80, No. 5, with Volume 81 starting in October 1983. This shift in fiscal year coin-



Number of Pages in THE FOSSIL Each Fiscal Year



editing (and also printing) 34 consecutive issues that averaged 44 pages per year. The greatest number of pages in a single year was Ken Faig’s 140 in 2007–08; his total output in nine years (2004–12) was an astounding 916 pages, or an average of almost 102 pages per year; Ken has also contributed significant articles that increased the page count of other editors. Additional editors with page counts exceeding 100: Fynes (886 pages in 1915–28), Tribby (512 pages in

2013–2024), Paxton (368 pages in 1975–83), Heuman (320 pages in 1912–13 and 1929–34), Miller (307 pages in 1904–12), Cole (282 pages in 1945–46 and 1952–57), Wesson (260 pages in 1957–62), Donaldson (232 pages in 1997–2004), Spencer (202 pages in 1934–45), Babcock (170 pages in 1951–52 and 1983–86), Diachenko (164 pages in 1987–90 and 1996), Bayuzick (156 pages in

cided with The Fossils holding its annual luncheon and meeting during the summer in conjunction with a National, United, or American APA convention rather than as a stand-alone event at the end of April. Publication of THE FOSSIL was irregular in 2000–2003, with Vol. 97, No. 4 (July 2000) followed by Vol. 99, No. 1 (October 2000), another labeled Vol. 99, No. 1 (June 2001), and later a Vol. 99, No. 5 (July 2003). The net effect was to put the volume numbers back on their original numbering scheme, and so this Volume 120 is ending 120 years after the founding of The Fossils.

The number of pages published in a fiscal year has varied over the years, from a low of 4 in 1966–67 and 1968–69 to a high of 140 in 2007–08; the average over 120 years is 47 pages per year.

In issue 142 for April 1954, Editor Ed Cole wrote about the earliest years in “Fifty Years of the ‘Fossil’”:

Only since 1945 has the FOSSIL appeared quarterly; 104 numbers came out during the first forty years of the association, two, or three at the most, annually. Yet those numbers make up the bulk of the first seven bound volumes [covering 1904 to 1951]; they were published in the lush days when, as Charles C. Heuman once recalled, as much as two thousand dollars might be pledged at a Reunion. In truth, that period ended with the Depression in 1929, as did so many other evidences of prosperity in American life. Indeed, from 1930, issues of the FOSSIL became noticeably thinner as, too, did the ranks become thinner with the passing of many of the oldtimers who had constituted its membership. The Decade of Emaciation was the editorship of Truman J. Spencer, which began with a divided association and ended with a membership restored to health only through the altering of the membership requirements, first to thirty years’ association with amateur journalism and, later, to fifteen—the present rule.

The “Number of Pages” chart, above, is consistent with Ed’s analysis: generally increasing pages counts before a precipitous drop in 1931, and then somewhat of a recovery in the mid-1940s. The nine year period beginning in 1966 was another lean period, with annual page counts below 12. Russ Paxton took over in 1975,

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| Editor | Years | Issues | Pages |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------|--------------|
| Joseph Dana Miller | 1904-12 | 24 | 307 |
| Charles C. Heuman | 1912-13, 1929-34 | 15 | 320 |
| Gustave Weinberg | 1913-14 | 3 | 64 |
| Joseph Salabes | 1914-15 | 3 | 80 |
| J. Austin Fynes | 1915-28 | 33 | 886 |
| Sam S. Stinson | 1928 | 1 | 30 |
| Frank L. Seaver | 1929 | 2 | 60 |
| Truman J. Spencer | 1934-45 | 23 | 202 |
| Edward H. Cole | 1945-46, 1952-57 | 25 | 282 |
| Albert Edward Barnard | 1946-48 | 8 | 80 |
| Edna Hyde McDonald | 1948-51 | 12 | 154 |
| Ralph Babcock | 1951-52, 1983-86 | 15 | 170 |
| Sheldon C. Wesson | 1957-62 | 20 | 260 |
| Jeffrey Jennings | 1962-63 | 4 | 32 |
| Victor A. Moitoret | 1963-64 | 3 | 32 |
| John H. Dow | 1964-65 | 5 | 48 |
| Matilda S. Haywood | 1967-69 | 4 | 18 |
| Joseph W. Curran | 1969-72 | 11 | 44 |
| Marvin E. Reed | 1972-75 | 10 | 40 |
| Russell L. Paxton | 1975-83 | 34 | 368 |
| J. Ed Newman | 1986-87 | 4 | 32 |
| Joseph A. Diachenko | 1987-90, 1996 | 13 | 164 |
| Elaine J. Peck | 1990-91 | 4 | 52 |
| Stephen Bayuzick | 1991-96 | 18 | 156 |
| Don W. Peyer | 1996-97 | 5 | 52 |
| Linda Donaldson | 1997-2004 | 22 | 232 |
| Ken Faig, Jr. | 2004-12 | 32 | 916 |
| Gary Bossler | 2012-13 | 2 | 12 |
| David M. Tribby | 2013- | 45 | 512 |
| Total | | 400 | 5,605 |

1991–96), and McDonald (154 pages in 1948–51).

Page size changed over the years, starting with the 9 by 12 inches that was used until Russ Paxton switched to 8 by 10 inches with issue 215 in 1976. Pages shrunk to 5½ by 8½ for issues 256 through 259 (1986–87), then returned to 8 by 10 until switching back to 5½ by 8½ for issues 304 through 321 (1998–2004). Page size has been 8½ by 11 inches since October 2004.

Although most issues were printed by anonymous professional print shops, at least three Fossils have handled the production duties. Russ Paxton letterpress-printed issues 174 through 180 from July 1962 to May 1964, and probably also 181–185 (Autumn 1964 to December 1965), although he is not credited. He printed the 34 issues he edited between July 1976 and October 1983, plus two of the issues edited by J. Ed Newman in October 1986 and January 1987. That would bring Russ's printing total to 48 issues. After Russ suffered a stroke, J. Ed had Fossil Joseph A. Diachenko digitally print the April 1987 and July 1987 issues; Joe then handled production on the twelve issues he edited in 1987–1990 plus the next 32 issues for subsequent editors, bringing his count to 46 issues printed from 1987 to 1998. Fossil Linda Donaldson printed 18 of the issues she edited between 1998 and 2004.

I wrote to Joe's son, Joseph D. Diachenko, to ask if he recalled anything about his father's time editing and printing THE FOSSIL, and whether any of the files used for publication are still around. Here is his reply:

Other than him being very diligent and perfectionist on the Fossils, he enjoyed the writing most. He liked an audience. He always tried to do his best even with his heart health issues. I helped print/finish many issues at that time.

My family is in the process of cleaning out my par-

Memories from Don Peyer

Official Editor 1996–1997

[Don was pressed into service as official editor upon the death of Stephen "Bay" Bayuzick. Joe Diachenko, printer for his issues, was also secretary-treasurer at the time.]

Thanks for remembering me. I am 102 years old, still mobile but not as mentally active.

I remember Diachenko and the vice president from Illinois [Bill Snodgrass]. Both called me to take the job of editor. I enjoyed my terms and Diachenko was a great help. I later resigned as I was bogged down with publishing some of my story and poetry books.

I now live alone. Jocquilyn, my wife of 77 years, passed away last year. I took care of her in her last years. I get help with chores by a daughter who lives close by. Thanks for keeping in touch. ♦

ents home. I think there are old fossils journals by my dad. Will look next time. Digital files are long gone.

Comments from past editors Don Peyer and Ken Faig appear elsewhere in this issue.

Ed Cole's remarks on the purpose of THE FOSSIL in that fiftieth anniversary issue remain relevant, although the page count is now about 5600:

In the approximately 2400 pages is to be found a wealth of information of every phase of the story of amateur journalism and of the multitude of those who have made it a notable activity. ... Not until one has paged through the volumes of the FOSSIL can he truly grasp the scope of amateur journalism or appreciate the part it has played in American life. ... Your present editor of the FOSSIL brings to completion the fiftieth year of publication with a deep sense of the honor and the responsibility of his task. He looks forward to going on with the work in an endeavor to continue the rich traditions of The Fossils and to make the official organ a worthy exponent of the best in amateur journalism.



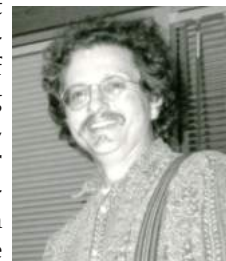
1993 AAPA Convention Followup

I heard from a couple of the folks who were included in last issue's photos from the 1993 AAPA convention held at Dayton, Ohio. Former Fossil Jack Scott provided a name for one of the unidentified faces in the auction picture:

Thanks for the pictures. Just celebrated my 95th. I forgot we had a convention in Dayton. The guy in the 3rd row looks like Dale Starr. We rode out together. I worked with him about 18 years (one day a week sometimes) at the Ohio Village Press. This was a long time ago!!

I also heard from the always entertaining Nils R. Bull Young:

Thanks for the updates/photos &c. Been a damn long time, all around. The ol' printery doesn't get the use it once did and it is now a line item in my will. (We did a will back when the plague first hit. Guy lives across the street's a lawyer and he fixed us up for a bottle of expensive hooch.) So the shop is going to go to Rob & Kim Miller in Muncie, Indiana, owners of the oldest poster printing shop this side of the Mississippi. Yeah, one year older 'n Hatch in Nashvegas. Don't want Cindy to have to deal with parting it out and Rob and Kim are totally dedicated to letterpress — obviously — and almost as bad a case of hoarding as the late Dave Churchman.



Nils R. Bull Young at the 1993 AAPA convention.

Looking back over the photos, man, there are a lot of now no longer with us faces. Guys that knew Dad, guys that Dad interacted with, many of 'em gone. Them what remains is a small number. Soon enough I'll be

among 'em, one way or the other. As my vet said onct, nobody gets out of this alive.

Have done some printing of late, QSL cards for a friend in Italy. I printed up a brazillion coasters for another Italian friend, Piero Begali of the famous Begali Keys telegraph keys. He got me back on the air after essential tremor took me out of the 25 word-a-minute Morse activity, so I kinda owe the guy serious big time. Every year at the Dayton Hamvention for the past couple decades I help his daughter and her partner sell the beautiful keys out of Piero's factory in Cellatica. I keep my eye peeled for other fellow shaky handed sufferers. (When I first got diagnosed my doctor told me that I'd won the lotto. At least it wasn't Parkinson's.)

I worked with Rai Peterson at Ball State Uni in Muncie for a while before budget cuts killed her book arts program. That's how I met Rob & Kim, whose shop was then in the same building as the university's book arts set up. Fun times trying to get kids to hold a composing stick straight and set type. Cognitive life saver too, since I retired and no longer get to interact with the smarter students and the extremely intelligent but horribly neurotic faculty.

So thanks for the info, photos &c. I'd get out to such shindigs if I could. Most lately my excursions have been back and forth between ophthalmologists, cardiologists, dentists, general practitioners, & nursing homes. That may decline some unless I'm next. We will be putting Cindy's mother to rest here in a week and some. She made it to 94, died in her sleep just as she'd wanted. Buried shipmates, cousins, friends all over. Aging ain't for wimps.

Take care, amigo. Stay well and stay sane. Ain't much sanity left these days.



More on Lovecraft in Los Angeles

Fossils president Ken Faig, Jr., had an additional thought on the unexpected listing of H. P. Lovecraft in the 1917 Los Angeles City Directory: "One possibility I have not ruled out is that the electronic directory record may be a modern hoax. I wish we could find a hard copy of the 1917 directory to inspect page 1293." An inquiry to University of Southern California Special Collections about their holdings of city directories brought a reply from Suzanne Noruschat with a link to a more recent and higher-quality scan. The entry for Howard P. Lovecraft, Boilermaker, was still there.



Presidents Field Followup

In THE FOSSIL number 382 for January 2020, I wrote about Presidents Field, a grove of 156 pine trees forming the letters "NAPA" planted by George Macauley in 1934 on his Pine Springs ranch near Hudsonville, Michigan, to honor past and future National Amateur Press Association presidents. The land was turned into



Presidents Field as seen in a 1970 aerial photograph (top). A recent view from Google Earth (left) shows much of the "N" still intact and a few trees from the other letters still in place.

a housing development in the mid-1970s, and I thought most, if not all, of the trees had been removed. I recently received an email message from David Hamming, who grew up near the ranch. He came across my article while searching the internet for information about the Macauley family in Hudsonville.

As a boy in the in the late 1960s and early '70s, I spent many hours exploring the woods and fields that were on the George Macauley property. I do remember the white pines that were the Field and the fieldstone marker that was inside the first A. It was kind of spooky to me and I always wondered what the property's story was. You could sense there was a history to it, as there was quite a bit of infrastructure that remained but had gone fallow.

The Lodge, or "Macauley's Mansion" as we called it, is still there, at 7093 Gettysburg Dr., on the intersection of Gettysburg and Chateau West. It has been repainted or re-sided since the Google Street View pictures were taken. Also, a tool shed or pump house seen in a 1947 aerial shot had fallen in on itself by the late '60s. George had built a pretty cool small dam across the spring creek with a cinder block pump house at the bottom of the ravine on that end of the property.

Many of the white pines that spell out NAPA also remain. I'd guess 30% to 40%. The N survived the best. The road that cuts through and the houses put a hurt on the rest, though I think trees from all four letters remain. The N starts in the front yard of 6900 Gettysburg Dr., and the other letters move north, ending before Crestlane Dr. crosses Gettysburg.

Thank you for the article and the research. Everything I remembered as a young boy suddenly made sense. The Macauley family must have put hours and hours of sweat and labor for many years to make Pine Springs Ranch what it was.

I revisited the neighborhood virtually, using the Google Earth website, and found the N. The individual white pine trees stand out when using street view. David wrote in mid-June with an update: "A bit of sadness...the trees on the top part of the N have been cut down since I was last there." ♦

Recollections of Being Editor (2004-2012)

by Ken Faig, Jr.



President Ken Faig, Jr.

I CAME to the attention of the organized amateur journalism hobby when *National Amateur* editor Bill Groveman printed an article about *Going Home and Other Amateur Writings* (Moshassuck Press) by Edith Minter, a collection I edited in 1995. The next year I joined NAPA and was invited to the convention held that year in Canton, Ohio. I remember meeting a number of hobby veterans and enjoying a canal boat ride. In quick order, I also joined AAPA and The Fossils.

Guy Miller, "Mr. Fossil," encouraged me to engage in amateur activity in small steps. I judged the Editorial Comment category for NAPA's 2000 laureate awards and served as chairman of NAPA's Bureau of Critics for almost three years beginning in 2002. I attended the AAPA convention in Cleveland in 2006 and remember a visit to the ajay collection at the Western Reserve Historical Society. I also took a walk from the downtown convention hotel to the lakefront; I remember that multiple bridal parties were having pictures taken.

In 2004, Guy recruited me as editor of THE FOSSIL. Guy served as printer during my entire term as editor, and looking back I think I saddled him with more work than he may have expected. I had done some writing for THE FOSSIL even before my editorial term, when I served as Fossil Historian. I remember doing an interview with Ralph Babcock and writing an article on Sam Steinberg. Back in the day, Guy also ran a Fossil bundle, and I think I did a few magazines for that.

The issues from my term as Fossil editor are all up on the Fossil website at www.thefossils.org/fossil. The only downside is that only the text portion of the issues from most of my era is included; to see the illustrations, you must find a paper copy of the journal. Looking at my first issue from October 2004 reminds me that Guy Miller faithfully provided me with his "President's Reports" during my entire term. I wrote most of the other content of the issues I edited, but others provided me with help as needed. Martha Shivvers was a very faithful helper and supporter during my term.

The issues from the period when LAJ was transitioning from Mike Horvat to the University of Wisconsin-Madison Special Collections covered all the details of the transfer in great detail. UW curator Robin Rider's own academic specialty is the history of science,

but nevertheless I hope she will recall the acquisition of LAJ as one of the significant achievements of her tenure. My friend David E. Schultz (a frequent user of the LAJ) recently told me that Special Collections will be disbinding the Edwin Hadley Smith bound volumes which constitute a large part of the collection. I think it is the right preservation decision and will help to preserve the collections for use by future generations of researchers.

I did do some special issues during my tenure. One highlighted sites associated with The Fossils in New York City, where our organization was founded in 1904. Another featured the work of Australian ajay James Guinane. I was amazed that he did right-justified margins for some of his journals using only the typewriter. I don't think I would have the necessary diligence and patience. I also did a special issue on Charles A. A. Parker. Stan Oliner provided assistance for that issue. The January 2012 issue paid tribute to Louise Lincoln in advance of her one hundredth birthday (February 12, 2012) and also featured the work of Fossil editor Russell Paxton (1975-83) for whom our Paxton Award is named. Many folks have contributed to THE FOSSIL over the years, but if I had to name a single editor whose work I admired the most, it would be Paxton.

The April 2012 issue featured the ajay career of Rev. Charles R. Uncles, who was the first black man ordained a Roman Catholic priest in the United States. (Rev. Augustus Tolton had earlier been ordained in Rome.) Uncles made his mark as a puzzler in the 1870s. The loss of the puzzle component of LAJ has always been lamented by me.

July 2012 marked my final issue of THE FOSSIL, and featured the remarkable career of Charles W. "Tryout" Smith.

My career as a working actuary was drawing to a close when I resigned the Fossil editorship in 2012. One might think that my retirement (which occurred in 2013) would have been the ideal opportunity to focus renewed energy on my hobby activities, but I didn't realize at the time that my working career was drawing to a close and I felt a lot of work-related pressure. So I handed Mr. Fossil, who had so carefully cultivated my activity, my resignation. Alas, the October 2012 issue of THE FOSSIL, produced on an ad interim basis by Gary Bossler, reported Guy's death on September 15, 2012. Reflecting his active nature, he had been on a bus tour at the time of his passing. I remember a few years earli-

er when Guy attended an amateur convention at the insistence of his spouse, only to be notified that she had died in his absence. The October 2012 issue has a remarkable photo of Guy being presented with a genuine fossil in tribute to his service to The Fossils.

I probably ought to have hidden in a corner and hung my head in shame, but in 2014 I was recruited as president of The Fossils, an office which I have held since that time. My current colleagues on the board are John Horn and David Goudsward. John, renowned for excellent letterpress work at his Shooting Star Press, created the Paxton Award. He joined the Fossil board in 2014. David, a noted independent scholar, agreed to replace Gary Bossler when Gary asked to be relieved of his duties in 2022 after many years of faithful service to The Fossils.

As president, I have followed in Guy's footsteps in providing a quarterly "President's Report." In recent years, I have mostly used my column to write about amateur journalists of yesteryear using the genealogical resources available to me through my home computer (mostly HeritageQuest and FamilySearch).

Following my retirement in 2013, my wife and I downsized to our present apartment in 2015. Before that transition, I donated my own *ajay* collection—mostly given to me by Bill Groveman and Stan Oliner—to the Special Collections at University of Iowa, which also holds Mike Horvat's fanzine collection. Iowa sent their truck all the way out to my home in Glenview to pick up the collection, which is now known as the William H. Groveman Memorial Collection. As Fossils president, I have been ably supported not only by our board but also by our editor, Dave Tribby, and our secretary-treasurer, Tom Parson. I don't think The Fossils could have continued without their efforts. Our membership may be down to twenty-five or so, but I think our online readership and influence is significantly larger. Guy Miller, "Mr. Fossil," hoped that our organization could survive to celebrate its 125th anniversary in 2029, and with the efforts of our board and our officers, his hope has a good chance of becoming a reality. That landmark is only five years away.

Of course, I would do a better job with my presidential columns if I had online access not only to genealogical data but also a broad range of yesteryear's amateur journals. (Health problems do not allow me to travel to do research.) The American Antiquarian Society collection of nineteenth-century amateur journals is online, but only on a subscription basis. The situation is changing gradually, thanks to the efforts of workers like Marc Brosey (and his *Jake's Journals* website) and in another twenty-five years the opportunities for online research in our journals will probably be significantly better. Born in 1948, I don't expect to live to see

that happen, but I have the hope that our efforts have helped to lay a foundation for future progress.

To conclude with a bit about me, I am a native of Cincinnati, Ohio and a 1970 graduate of Northwestern University. I began working as an actuary in 1973 and married Carol Gaber in 1979. We have two grown children, Edie and Walter. We have lived in Glenview—a north suburb of Chicago—since 1989, first in our home and then in our apartment since 2015. My wife and I are expecting the arrival of a first grandchild this year.

In remembrance of Guy, I hope to remain a Fossil as long as I and the organization live. I do not know if I will live to see the organization's 125th anniversary in 2029. The occasion would seem to offer a good opportunity to pass my duties along to another loyal member if I survive to that date. It's no secret that I emerged out of H. P. Lovecraft fandom and today there are many fans and researchers in that field who far exceed my energy and ability. Interest in mainstream amateur journalism is also building, witness academic interest in juvenilia. I do not know whether the Fossil mantle will persist beyond 2029. But I think with LAJ and other endeavors we have built a foundation for future study of our domain. I am grateful to all the loyal Fossil members who have kept our flag flying over the years since our foundation in 1904.

Editor's Note: Ken's eight volumes (32 issues) of THE FOSSIL include most of its largest issues, typically 24 pages but as large as 72, and filling 2¼ inches of shelf space. In recognition of Ken's work, Fossil President Guy Miller named him the 2012 recipient of the Russell L. Paxton Award for Service to Amateur Journalism. ♦

No 2024 Fossil Election Needed

by Dave Tribby

FOSSILS President Ken Faig, Jr. reports no amendments to the By-laws were submitted before the June 10 deadline.

Secretary-Treasurer Tom Parson received only two candidate filings for the two vacancies on the Fossil Board of Trustees before the June 30 filing deadline. Those two candidates, incumbents John Horn and David Goudsward, were declared elected and will join Ken to form the 2024-2026 Board. Their two-year term starts August 15.

Due to the lack of either additional candidates or amendments, no election was needed this summer.

The Board of Trustees appoints the remaining officers: Secretary-Treasurer, Official Editor, Historian, Librarian, and Webmaster. No changes in these offices are anticipated. (The office of Historian has been vacant since 2015.) ♦

Fossil President, Editor Bossler Succumbs at 87

by Dave Tribby

FORMER Fossil president Gary Taun Bossler was born February 17, 1937 in Altoona, Pennsylvania, the son of Clyde Samuel Bossler and Dorothy Bowers. He grew up in Altoona where his stepfather, Donald Ross Morrison, worked for the Pennsylvania Railroad. After graduating from high school in 1955 he moved to the Canton, Ohio, area, where he lived the rest of his life, except for two years in the U. S. Army.

Gary married Lois Irene Merri-man February 14, 1961. They had eight children between 1961 and 1977. The oldest, Richard, tragically was hit by a car in September 1968 and died after nine days in the ICU.

A 1960s Kelsey advertisement sparked an interest in letterpress printing, and he eventually acquired 7x11 Gordon, 12x18 C&P, and 10x15 Heidelberg presses. He later used computers to publish his papers.

Gary joined the National Amateur Press Association in 1972. He became NAPA mailing manager for three years beginning in 1988, then an executive judge in 1991 and 1994. He was elected official editor in 1992, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2009, 2010, and 2016, and as president in 1993. He served as historian in 2006-09, 2011-15, and 2017-22.

Although primarily active in the National, he joined the American APA in 1973 and served as AAPA convention chairman in 2001 and 2012. He also was a UAPA member for a short time. *Short Shots*, *Ohio Views*, *Mail Call*, and *Ohio Connection* are all his publications.

Gary joined The Fossils briefly in the mid-1980s, then reinstated in 1994. He received the Russell L. Paxton Award for Service to Amateur Journalism in 2006. At that time Fossils president Guy Miller commented,

Gary Bossler [is] 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. Fossils remember that Gary served as our president for 1995-96 and for five years as our secretary-treasurer. More significantly Gary has given full devotion to the NAPA as a publisher, by way of letterpress and computer, of both private and convention journals. Furthermore, he has served, not only when urged but also as volunteer, in various NAPA offices, including Mailing Manager, President, and Official Editor. In his latest stint as Official Editor, Gary has had to fill in as Critic, Historian, and Nominating Committee Chairman when for one reason or another these offices were

left vacant. In fact, had it not been for his diligence, the NAPA ballot for this year, except for nomination of the 2007 convention site, would have appeared with nary a candidate to choose from. As it is we in NAPA were favored with a complete slate. And in respect to the 2007 convention site, note that the NAPA convention will meet next July in North Canton, hosted by none other than the man whom we have chosen for this prestigious award.

Gary received The Paxton Award at the NAPA Convention which met in New Orleans this past July 2-4. Myself unable to attend, I prevailed upon NAPA Secretary-Treasurer Bill Boys to do the honors. He graciously consented to do so; and I am indebted to him for performing this service for the Paxton Award Committee.

Gary would later provide additional vital service to The Fossils. After Guy Miller's unexpected death in 2012, Gary replaced him on the board of trustees and Jack Swenson, the most senior trustee, became

president. No replacement for recently departed official editor Ken Faig had been named, so Gary edited two issues as "interim editor." The board discovered there had been little activity in The Fossils' treasury: Guy had been paying for printing and mailing of THE FOSSIL, and no membership renewal notices had been sent since 2011. Gary set up a Google spreadsheet shared among trustees and the secretary-treasurer to hold membership information, and then sent renewal notices with THE FOSSIL, providing a path to financial stability. I replaced Gary as editor in 2013, but he continued sending my PDF files to his low-cost printer (often catching proofreading errors beforehand) and then mailing the finished copies to members for most issues until 2018.

After Jack resigned as Fossil president in 2013, Gary replaced him. However, a letter he sent to other board members in September 2014 noted his lack of time:

I have to admit that my interest level is not where it should be to lead the Fossils at this time. My problem is that my immediate family is now at 57! That is my children, their spouses, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. There are lots of family activities that need my attention and they are all located within 2 hours. (Six are next door.)

Then the responsibilities I have taken on involving the local Senior Olympics mushroomed into a much larger project than I ever expected. One problem being



Gary T. Bossler

that our local Senior Olympics agreed to host the State games here for the last two years. This past year has been a nightmare as it was the qualifying year for the National Senior Games next year. I have already informed them that I am resigning when this year ends but the details are still driving me to my wits' end. And I still do not have it to the point where I can say I have finished.

Also as I approach my 79th year, things do not come as easy as they did even just a few years ago. I recall Joe Curren saying to me a number of years ago; "You know to some people amateur journalism is their entire life." Inferring that it was not so for him. I now find myself in

that frame of mind. My mind is too cluttered with other things.

Would you consider allowing me to resign the office of president and remain on the board? I am sure that John Horn and I could agree that you should be president.

Ken agreed to relieve him as president and Gary continued serving as a trustee until August 2022.

Gary died on May 4, 2024. He is survived by his wife, Lois, seven children (Rich, Kim, Carol, Tracey, Tina, Todd, and Jim), 30 grandchildren, and 17 great-grandchildren. ♦

Remembering Gary Bossler

by Ken Faig, Jr.

AMATEUR journalists with better records and memories than I will have to do the lion's share of recollecting Gary's long career in our hobby. In my case, memories are becoming more and more mixed (and sometimes inaccurate) while records went with the William H. Groveman Memorial Collection to University of Iowa Special Collections.



Jack Visser, Gary Bossler, & Ken Faig at the 2006 AAPA convention in Cleveland.

My best recollection of Gary comes, I think, from the 2002 AAPA convention in Cleveland. Gary was busy in the common room publishing a convention paper—an old ajay tradition which I suspect has perished with our diminishing numbers. Gary brought his computer along to do the publishing. I don't remember if he also brought a printer. I recall that Gary solicited many of us to write brief messages for the "folks at home" who weren't able to attend. I think that Gary's convention papers ended up in one of the associational "bundles" — whether for AAPA or NAPA or both I am not sure.

I first met Gary at the NAPA convention in Canton in 1996. I had just released my first Edith Minter book, and I joined NAPA, AAPA, and The Fossils in quick order after that. Guy Miller gradually coaxed me into amateur activity. I was for a time NAPA critic, and then I was Fossils editor in 2004-12.

I have another memory of Gary from the banquet at the 2002 NAPA convention hosted by Bill and Gigi Volkart in Cincinnati. Harold Segal couldn't eat his entrée, and when dessert arrived, Gary remarked that he hadn't eaten cheesecake in ages. I suspect Gary was a pretty compliant patient as doctor's patients go. Maybe his 87 years were a resultant blessing.

I also went to the 2001 NAPA convention in Wil-

lington, Delaware, and I saw Gary there.

Gary invited me to contribute to his book *NAPA: 1977-2007*. I am sure my contribution took up too many of its pages. The NAPA convention that year was in Gary's own hometown, Massillon, Ohio. I think that was the year Carol and I were all packed up to motor to the convention only to have our car break down on the Dan Ryan Expressway. I had to phone in our "regrets" to Gary. I recognize most of the folks on the front dust jacket of Gary's book, including Gary himself is a striped shirt.

I got to visit Massillon, Ohio a few times over the years. We went to visit Rev. Matthew Herttna's National Shrine of St. Dymphna at the former Massillon State Hospital. I wish we had looked up Gary while we were there, but we were "on the road" and didn't.

I see that Gary was Fossils president in 1995-96. He also took over for me as interim editor when I resigned in 2012. Dave Tribby became my permanent replacement in 2013. Gary graced our Fossils board for many years, and when he retired, Dave Goudsward agreed to replace him. John Horn and I (as Fossils president) continued on the board.

Of course, Gary's life touched many more people than the amateur journalists whom he knew. He was very involved with local sports in Massillon. And of course he was a treasure for his own large and beloved family. Gary's was a life well-lived, and I am honored that it touched my own. ♦

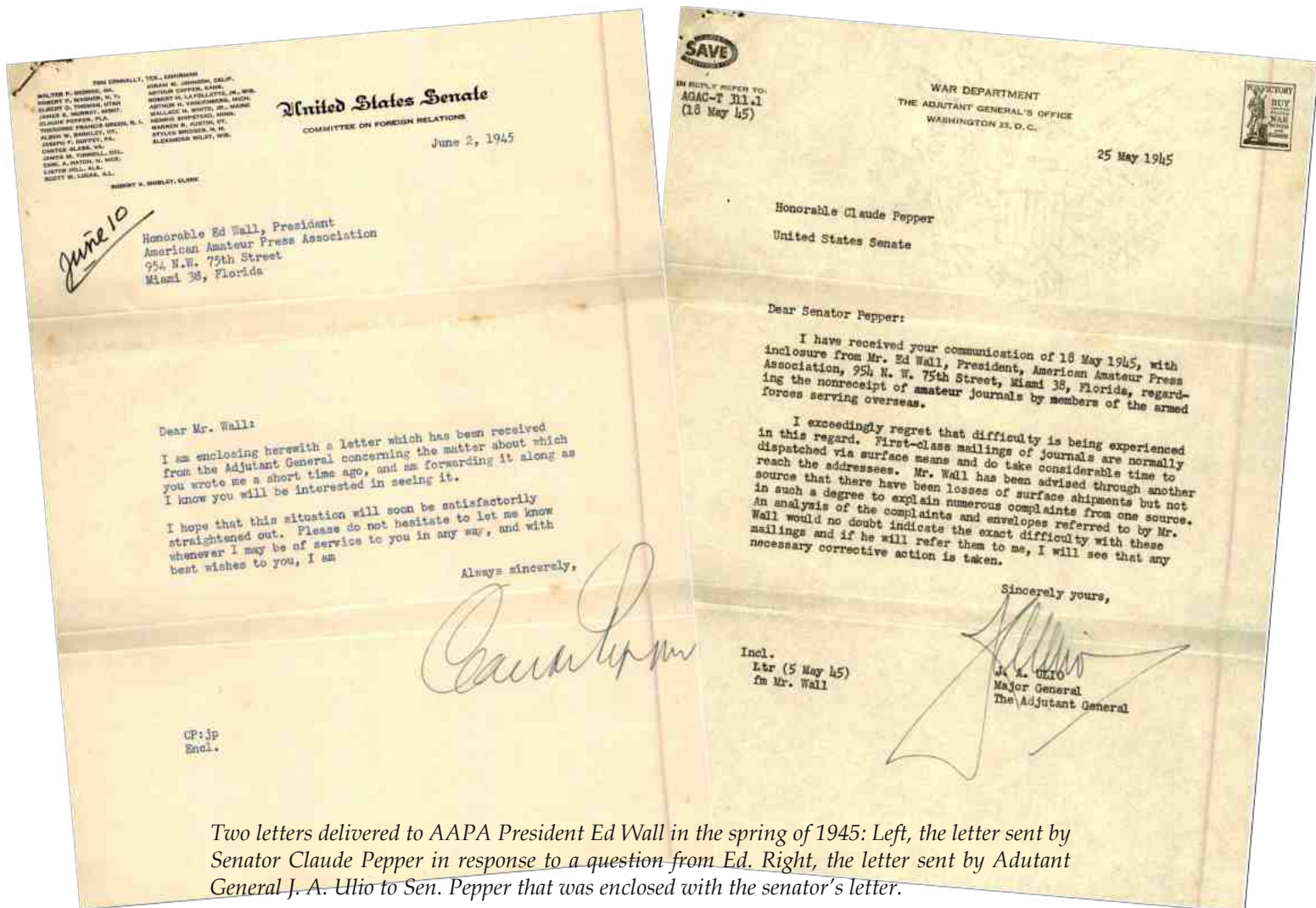
NAPA:
1977—2007



Gary Bossler produced a 100-page book distributed at the 2007 NAPA convention.

Two Letters From 1945

by Dave Tribby



Two letters delivered to AAPA President Ed Wall in the spring of 1945: Left, the letter sent by Senator Claude Pepper in response to a question from Ed. Right, the letter sent by Adutant General J. A. Ulio to Sen. Pepper that was enclosed with the senator's letter.

THIS issue's classic amateur journalism photos come from former Fossil Sean Donnelly, who provided scans of two letters "tucked into some other amateur papers I have in storage. They must have come from Lee Hawes." The letters, both from the spring of 1945, are in response to an inquiry from AAPA president Ed Wall. Ed mentioned the problem he was addressing in his presidential message from the June 1945 *American Amateur Journalist*:

This is primarily a private memorandum to overseas AAPAers experiencing difficulty in the receipt of their bundles. Since it is a matter of such direct, vital importance to the future of this organization I feel justified in discussing it in this space.

For some time I have been receiving complaints from GI ajays serving overseas that their bundles have been hopelessly delayed or have never been delivered. In checking with Mailer Irwin O. Brandt I learned that

overseas bundles are sent every month by first class mail, but are often returned as much as four months later.

Armed with this knowledge I wrote the War Department. The lengthy letter I received in reply from the office of Maj. Gen. J. A. Ulio, the Adjutant General, was the model of bureaucratic sidestepping and verbosity.

The letter in effect acknowledged the situation but explained that the problems were virtually insurmountable although "the Army Postal Service is striving constantly to provide the best possible mail service...."

Not only because the bundles are a Number One morale booster for AAPAers in uniform but because mail of all types is important to all soldiers, I carried our problem to the Congress. I wrote identical letters, explaining the situation, to Senator Claude Pepper and Representative Pat Cannon.

Cannon replied that he had asked the Secretary of War to conduct an investigation and I learned later through the courtesy of *The Miami Herald's* Washington bureau that action is expected soon.

Just as I started this I received a telegram from Pepper stating that he had requested the Adjutant General to make an investigation.

It is still too early to predict what the outcome will be, but in splendid cooperation of Cannon and Pepper we have already won round one. We will not drop this matter until we have scored total victory or exhausted every possibility.

The May 25 letter from Gen. Ulio shown above is quite different in tone from one President Wall describes as bureaucratic and verbose, no doubt because it was in response to a senator rather than a citizen. Ed reported on the issue again in the October 1945 issue:

Just because the war is over, let us not forget that

many of our members are still in service. Every effort should be made to make their participation in the hobby as easy and pleasant as possible.

We are still pressing the War Department for a complete investigation of the many difficulties we have experienced in getting bundles to members overseas. The War Department has promised complete cooperation in such an investigation, as have Senator Pepper and Representative Pat Cannon.

At that time, AAPA had 190 members, 77 (40%) of whom were in the armed services.

Writing a history of the AAPA's first ten years in 1947, Official Editor Lee Hawes would note, "In June President Wall announced an investigation to determine why bundles were not reaching GI's overseas. An Army investigation, conducted at Wall's behest, turned up no reason for the non-delivery. The affair still remains a mystery." ♦

James A. Hedges

May 10, 1938 – March 4, 2024

by Dave Tribby

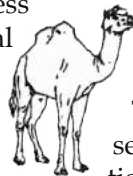
FOSSIL James Arthur Hedges was born on May 10, 1938 in Iowa City, Iowa, the first child of Robert M. Hedges and Mary Margaret Ayres. Jim grew up in



James A. Hedges

Iowa City with three brothers and one sister and graduated from City High School in 1956. He received a Bachelor's degree in Music from State University of Iowa in 1960 and a Master's degree in Geography from the University of Maryland in 1972. He served in the U. S. Marine Corps band for twenty years, playing tuba, and retired in 1980. Jim married Carolyn Dick June 16, 1990 in Hancock, Maryland. They lived in rural Pennsylvania, near Big Cove Tannery.

A long-time interest in exploring caves led to his editing the National Speleological Society's scientific journal, *NSS Bulletin*, from 1972 to 1983. He taught himself the basics of graphic design and printing, eventually establishing Camel Press with a Kluge automatic press and a substantial amount of type. In August 1982 he joined the American Amateur Press Association. He served for three years as AAPA official editor, beginning in 1987. His first two volumes were probably the last hand-set official organs of any amateur journalism group. A meticulous

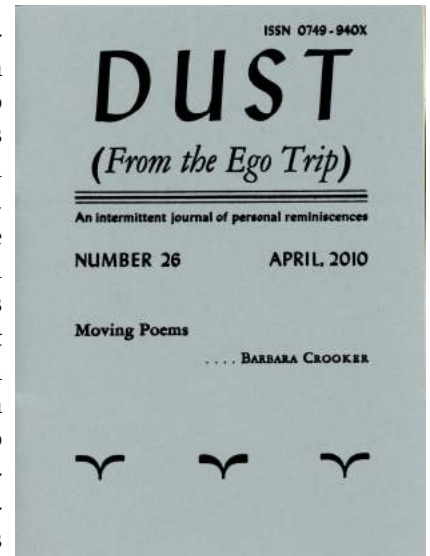


The Camel Press

printer, the time required for production caused many issues to be late. He let his membership in AAPA expire in October 1998, five months after he joined the National APA. He served as NAPA vice president from 2011 to 2022. Jim joined The Fossils in May 2020. He was also a member of the Amalgamated Printers' Association, a letterpress printing organization, from 1987 through 2021.

Jim printed occasional issues of his amateur journal *Dust* (12 to 40 pages plus cover) and *The Dust Bin* (8 to 12 pages plus cover) for AAPA, NAPA, and APA, but much of his printing activity was devoted to cards for the Amalgamated. In November 2021, he sent a private bundle to NAPA members chock-full of "poetry postcards and other ephemera not acceptable as regular bundle items." He noted, "The primary goal of my 'Camel Press' is design and letterpress printing, with writing being just something to print."

Jim was elected Tax Assessor of Thompson Township, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, in 2001 and served until 2007. A long-time member of the Prohibition Party, he was their candidate for U. S. President in 2016. Included on the ballot in Arkansas, Colorado, and Mississippi, he received a



Issue number 26 of Jim Hedges's *Dust* appeared in the April 2014 NAPA bundle.

total of 5,617 votes.

In a message to me in January 2022, he noted he hadn't printed in over a year due to a pinched nerve that made standing painful. He found time for other projects: "I have a political history website, begun nearly 25 years ago, which is one of those projects which expands to fill the time available to it. I'm also writing music – military marches which I sketched out

years, decades, ago but never finished. And people in all of my many hobbies keep bugging me to write things." He noted The Fossils are, "a handful of people guided by a few dedicated souls. ... We may be small, but we're essential. Someone will always pick up the reins (I hope!)"

Jim passed away March 4, 2024, at the age of 85, at Meritus Medical Center in Hagerstown, Maryland. ♦

Sonia Greene and Amateur Journalism

by Monica Wasserman

"Not until I had the rare good fortune of entering *Amateur Journalism* did I realize that, added to the joys I already possess, life held still another in store for me." Sonia H. Greene, "Amateurism of the Editor – Just Journals," p. 19, *The Rainbow*, Vol. 2.

FANS and scholars of H. P. Lovecraft are well aware of his impact and contribution to amateur journalism. What about his wife's impact and contribution to amateur journalism? What many don't know is that it was the spirit of amateur journalism that genuinely inspired Sonia H. Greene to write creatively, analytically, and professionally. Prior to 1921, there wasn't a single story or essay to Sonia's name. Sonia met James Ferdinand Morton Jr. in 1917, who in turn introduced her to amateur journalism, and also to the Sunrise Club, a New York City dining and discussion society. While attending these lectures, Sonia discovered "that she was none the wiser but perhaps more confused," and it occurred "to her that she must, indeed, be a very ignorant person." (*Two Hearts That Beat as One*, p.103)

What did she do, then? She decided to attend a private evening high school and later study a cultural course at Columbia University. Upon joining organizations such as The National Amateur Press Association (NAPA) and the Blue Pencil Club, the members of these groups began to encourage and stir within her a desire to create. Yet, it wouldn't be until meeting Lovecraft at the NAPA convention in Boston and joining the United Amateur Press Association (UAPA) that she would finally contribute to amateur journalism. Sonia joined the UAPA at some point between July 30 and

August 7, 1921, and by August 30, 1921, Sonia already had proofs of her first amateur journal, *The Rainbow*. While the UAPA had given her the freedom to express herself creatively, she felt "impelled to acknowledge a debt of gratitude to the National Association for introducing me to the United." ("Amateurism and the Editor," *The Rainbow*, Vol. 1., No. 1)

Now that we understand the impact that amateur journalism had on Sonia, we can then understand the impact that she had on amateur journalism with her contributions. In October 1921, the first issue of *The Rainbow* was published. Unlike the many journals emerging at the time, *The Rainbow* was perhaps the most beautiful and possibly also the costliest. *The Rainbow* was not only just outwardly attractive, with its soft textured cover, but it also contained thought-provoking articles surrounding the Nietzschean theme from well-known amateurs, such as Lovecraft, James F. Morton, Samuel Loveman, and Alfred Galpin.

The amateur journal even contained photographs of the contributors. Sonia had undoubtedly set the bar high, not only for other producers of journals, but also for herself going forward. Much of the beauty of her journal lends to Sonia's successful career as a milliner. At the time of its publication, Sonia was working for the high-end millinery store, Ferle Heller, where she had "charge of 60 girls in the workroom + 12 saleswomen in the showroom" (Autobiographical Writings Box 9, Folder 7, John Hay Library, Brown University). She was raking in nearly \$10,000 a year, hence the ability to spend whatever she wished to produce an aesthetically pleasing journal.



Mrs. Sonia Haft Davis, from *THE FOSSIL* No. 118 for April 1948. She was a Fossil for about two years.

However, since the bar was set high, the second volume of *The Rainbow* was met with slight adversity. There are two differing accounts for a delay in its publication. According to Sonia, the reason was that the “printer kept the copy for nearly a year, always making excuses for his inability to print it.” (*Two Hearts That Beat as One*, p. 137) Then, according to Rheinhart Kleiner, a crisis, unknown to him, took place, and “to pay for this issue [Sonia] made an arrangement with the printer whereby his wife could obtain all the hats she wanted up to the amount of the bill.” (“A Memoir of Lovecraft,” *Something About Cats*, p. 224) Eventually, the second issue of *The Rainbow* was published in May 1922. Sonia’s contributions didn’t end there. In 1923, Sonia was elected president of the UAPA, and she found being president of an organization is wholly different than preparing an amateur journal. Thus, Sonia asked “to be relieved of the unexpected & cataclysmic presidential burden.” (H.P. Lovecraft to James F. Morton, September 23, 1923, *LJM* 55.) However, with Lovecraft “urging her to hang on for dear life” (*LJM* 55) and being a woman who endured much cheerfully, she accepted the challenge.

It’s sad to say that we will never know the immense amount of good she could’ve brought on as the president if things were more in her favor. The UAPA was already in a state of deterioration when she was elected, and by mid-1924, Sonia’s life was in disarray. No longer working for Ferle Heller, Sonia was hospitalized in October 1924 for her gallbladder. What should have been only a year commitment stretched on until 1925, and Sonia’s withdrawal from amateur journalism would begin. In 1926, Lovecraft and Sonia canceled their membership in the Blue Pencil Club, and in 1929, they would divorce. It would seem that Sonia was done with amateur journalism for good, but that’s the beauty

of something that has had an impact on one’s life: it inevitably returns one way or another. In July 1948, Mrs. Sonia H. Davis, the widow of Nathaniel A. Davis, made her triumphant return to amateur journalism. She attended the 73rd annual convention of the NAPA in Los Angeles, where she picked up the pieces that she had dropped in 1926. She would attend a UAPA convention in 1953 in Milwaukee and would stay in the loop in amateur journalism affairs for the rest of her life.

Perhaps, at the end of the day, amateur journalism had a greater impact on Sonia than she did on it, but her involvement is worthy of acknowledgment and further study. After all, we now have two very beautiful journals to remind us that amateur journalism can be both high-end and scholarly.

Monica Wasserman is a scholar on the life and works of Sonia Haft Greene Lovecraft Davis, UAPA president, business woman, and onetime wife of Howard P. Lovecraft. Wasserman resides in San Diego and publishes her work at www.soniahdavis.com. She is the editor of Two Hearts That Beat as One, Sonia Davis’ autobiography, forthcoming from Helios House. ♦

The Fossil

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From THE FOSSIL No. 118 for July 1948

We Welcome to Our Ranks . . .

Mrs. Sonia Haft Davis is best known to amateur journalists as Sonia Greene Lovecraft, publisher of *The Rainbow* in the early 1920s, when she was a member of the Blue Pencil Club, and the National and the (Lovecraft) United associations and also an occasional contributor to the amateur press. In 1925 [sic] she became president of the United Amateur Press Association. In 1924 she was married to Howard P. Lovecraft, but was divorced in 1929; in 1936 she became the wife of Dr. N. A. Davis, formerly professor of Economics and Foreign Trade at the University of California. Since Dr. Davis’ death in 1945 she has resumed her former profession as designer of exclusive hats for “the fastidious and discriminating in taste.” ♦