

# T. S. ELIOT SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER

Number 41

Summer 2000

Published by the T. S. Eliot Society (incorporated in the State of Missouri as a literary non-profit organization), 5007 Waterman Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri 63108

Carl Phillips  
2000 Memorial Lecturer



Winner of the 1992 Morse Poetry Prize, Carl Phillips has also been a finalist in the National Book Award and National Book Circle Award competitions. Phillips' fourth book, *Pastoral*, has recently been published by Graywolf Press, and his translation of Sophocles' *Philoctetes* is forthcoming later this year.

### **THE 2000 ANNUAL MEETING: WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Recent events having led me to re-read the Society by-laws carefully. I am struck by the extent to which plans for the 2000 Annual Meeting address the purposes of the Society.

**"To constitute a living and continuing memorial to T. S. Eliot":** The whole weekend does this, of course, but *living* and *continuing* are emphasized, I think, by our reading Eliot aloud in the opening session. Please do plan to take part in this activity.

**"To encourage fellowship among persons interested in T. S. Eliot's life, his art, his ideas, and his times":** The several sites for 2000 Annual Meeting events are themselves related to TSE's life-- Washington University, an institution founded by the poet's grandfather; Tower Grove Park a landscape largely unchanged since the poet would have visited it; and First Unitarian Church, a congregation first organized by William Greenleaf Eliot.

**To encourage scholarship on T. S. Eliot's life, his art, his ideas, and his times":** While all of the papers accepted for the meeting satisfy this criterion, two sets of remarks are particularly appropriate for this very meeting, on these very sites. Earl Holt, author of a biography of William Greenleaf Eliot and a permanent member of the Board-- will speak on W. G. Eliot and Washington University. John Karel--director of Tower Grove Park

and a former TSE Society Board member--will explain how a knowledge of the park enhances one's appreciation of Eliot.

**The 2000 Memorial Lecture**, to be given by poet Carl Phillips, will, I am confident, stimulate discussion of what Eliot means to poets and to poetry in the twenty-first century.

*Here are some things to look forward to at the meeting:*

The Friday night session and the Saturday dinner will take place at Washington University, in rooms which one Board member numbers among her favorite St. Louis spaces. A former Board member calls Holmes Lounge, site of the Saturday dinner, "the most beautiful room in St. Louis." In addition to being beautiful, Holmes Lounge provides a piano, leading one to anticipate a happy reprise of the impromptu musicales which often add to the enjoyment of Society Saturdays. The room is ours until 10:00 p.m.

After lunch on Saturday, John Karel is offering a complimentary interpretative tour of Tower Grove Park to persons attending the meeting. Adjoining Tower Grove Park is the Missouri Botanical Garden, a world-class institution with the oldest greenhouse in America and the largest Japanese strolling garden in the United States. Wear comfortable shoes, and prepare to spend a delightful afternoon in these two lovely parks.

The Saturday morning session, including the Memorial Lecture and the luncheon which is to follow it, will be held in the beautiful, and beautifully restored, Piper Palm House at Tower Grove Park. Do plan to have lunch at the Palm House.

In the 2000 Annual Meeting, scholarship and fellowship will join to constitute a living memorial, providing stimulating papers and lots of time to talk about them in attractive and comfortable surroundings. I hope you will agree that one can scarcely ask for more.

**Reminder:** Please bring your Eliot text so that you may take part in the "Eliot Aloud" feature of the Friday evening program.

**Sincerest thanks** are owed to three institutions which in a time of sharply rising costs, have generously enabled the Society to keep its meeting affordable and to hold it in handsome surroundings: Washington University, Tower Grove Park, and First Unitarian Church. Thanks also to Jeanne Castillo of The Inn on the Park, who has offered complimentary shuttle service for guests wishing to go to Washington University and Tower Grove Park.

For their kindness, hospitality, and expertise in planning the 2000 Annual Meeting, the President would like to thank Dean Sharon Stahl of the College of Arts and Sciences, Washington University, and members of her staff, especially Amy Lehman and Verena

Weber; and John Karel, director of Tower Grove Park, and his staff, especially Rita Holt and Jacqueline Dougherty.

*Pictures and other artifacts from the Gloucester Meeting* will be on display at the September meeting in St. Louis. Persons having photographs to share are urged to bring them.

Linda Wyman

A long-time practice of the Society is to hold the closing session of its annual meeting at First Unitarian Church, the congregation founded by William Greenleaf Eliot, the poet's grandfather. Rev. Earl Holt III, minister of First Unitarian, bases his sermon for "Eliot Sunday" on a text from the poet. Services often include responsive readings from Eliot and musical works set to Eliot texts. First Unitarian has generously given over its "Sunday Forum" hour to the Society for the presentation of papers. Persons making plans to attend the annual meeting are therefore strongly encouraged to stay through the conclusion of the meeting on Sunday, as the sessions at First Unitarian often prove to be highlights of the year's events.

Professor Clifford Davidson, Western Michigan University, has written to inform us that his book, *Baptism, the Three Enemies, and T.S. Eliot*, has been published by the U.K. firm Shaun Tyas. The volume specifies "the exact ways in which medieval religious feeling is represented in Eliot's writings."

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**Pictures and other artifacts from the Gloucester Meeting** will be on display at the September meeting in St. Louis. Persons having photographs to share are urged to bring them.

News of Members: *Eliot's Dark Angel* (OUP, 1999), by Society Member Ronald Schuchard, has won the 1999 Robert Penn Warren/Cleanth Brooks Prize for literary criticism. Our heartiest congratulations to Professor Schuchard; his congenial presence will be missed by all during this year's Annual Meeting because he plans to spend the academic year on sabbatical research in Ireland. This Fall, Member Jayme Stayer journeys south from Toledo, Ohio to take up a faculty appointment in the English Department at Texas A&M University at Commerce. Professor Stayer will be teaching and researching in the area of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century British literature.

Exact TSE source anyone? "... this wobbliness of words is not something to be deplored . . ." or some words like these. Email to shyamal.bagchee@ualberta.ca. Thanks.

**The Twenty-first Annual Meeting of the  
T. S. Eliot Society  
September 22 - 24, 2000  
Program of Events**

**Friday, September 22**

3:00 p.m. **Board of Directors Meeting**  
*The Inn on the Park*

6:00 p.m. **Registration**  
*Brown Lounge, Washington University*

7:00 p.m. **Opening Session**  
*Brown Lounge, Washington University*

**Welcome**  
Lindsay Wyman, President

Eliot Aloud Allowed - - and Encouraged!  
Readings by attendees

**Presentations**  
Rev. Earl K. Holt III  
*First Unitarian Church, St. Louis*  
"Nearest to Truth and to God": William Greenleaf Eliot and Washington University"

Patricia Sloane, *New York City Technical College of The City University of New York*  
"Close Reading and Phoenician Sailors"

Robert F. Fleissner, *Central State University*  
"Eliot and Goethe"

**Saturday, September 23**

**Second Session**  
*Piper Palm House, Tower Grove Park*

**Greetings**  
Linda Wyman

**Welcome**  
John Karel, *Director, Tower Grove Park*

**Presentations**  
Christopher Wilkins, *Boston University*  
"That Uncorruptible Sincerity of Word": Eliot's Dryden and the Absence of Hopkins"

Alex Cadogan, *University of Wales*  
"T. S. Eliot and Peter Russell"

Lois A. Cuddy, *University of Rhode Island, emerita*  
"Caught in the Circle: The Paradox of Evolution and Personal Progress in *Ash Wednesday*"

11:00 a.m. **Twenty-first Annual T. S. Eliot Memorial Lecture**  
Carl Phillips, *Washington University*

12:30 p.m. **Lunch, Piper Palm House** (advance registrants only)

(Afternoon free for exploring Tower Grove Park, the adjacent Missouri Botanical Garden, and other attractions in St. Louis)

6:00 p.m. **Cash bar, Holmes Lounge, Washington University**

7:00 p.m. **Dinner, Holmes Lounge**

**Sunday, September 24**

**Third Session**  
*First Unitarian Church, 5700 Waterman Boulevard*

9:30 a.m. Rev. Earl K. Holt III, Address

11:00 a.m. **Presentations: Forum, Chapel**

Marcia Karp, *Waban, Massachusetts*  
"The Upset of Time in *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* and in *Edwin Morris*"

Katey Kuhns Castellano, *Bucknell University*  
"A heap of broken images': Unity in the Shattered Promises of Spiritual Transcendence in T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*"

Venus S. Freeman, *Thontosassa, Florida*  
"What Tiresias Sees': *The Waste Land's* Revision of Mythic Paradigms"

The next Annual Conference of American Literature Association will be held in Cambridge, Massachusetts, from May 24 to 27, 2001. More information will be available in the Fall issue of this *Newsletter*.

### ELECTION TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

At this time there is one vacant position on the Society's Board of Directors. A ballot, containing names of two duly nominated candidates, is provided below for the election. *A photocopy of the ballot bearing original signature considered valid.*

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### MEMBER'S BALLOT FOR ELECTION TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE T.S. ELIOT SOCIETY

TERM OF OFFICE: 3 YEARS

PLEASE VOTE FOR *ONE* CANDIDATE:

Chris Buttram

Jayme Stayer

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ 2000

Mail to the President: Professor Linda Wyman,  
621-6 Woodlander, Jefferson City, MO 65101, USA

To be valid, a ballot must be postmarked no later than 10  
September 2000.

### FOR HELP WITH SOCIETY MATTERS

To submit papers for any reading session sponsored by the Society, or to make suggestions or inquiries regarding the annual meeting or other Society activities, please contact the President:

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