

# Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial and Educational Foundation

VOLUME XVIII, Number 1

RED CLOUD, NEBRASKA



This portrait photograph of Willa Cather was taken during her younger writing years around 1912 or 1913. It was soon after this that she began work on *Song of the Lark*. W.C.P.M. Photo

## SPRING CONFERENCE

Spring, a time for festivals and celebrations, and time again for the Willa Cather Memorial Spring Conference. The Memorial and Red Cloud are preparing for this conference, the theme of which is *SONG OF THE LARK*, and you are invited.

### Morning Events . . .

The conference will begin with registration at the Memorial building from 8:00-9:00 a.m. on the morning of April 20. A 9:00 a.m. Mass will be celebrated at St. Juliana Faulkenerie by Father W. F. Sladky, Pastor. The tour will begin at 10:00 a.m. and will visit selected settings from *SONG OF THE LARK*. After such a morning, everyone should have developed quite an appetite for the Bar-B-Que to be held in the Red Cloud park at 12:30.

### Afternoon and Evening Events . . .

The program for the afternoon and evening will be no less filled, with a panel discussion on *SONG OF THE LARK* at 2:30 in the Veterans Hall. As in past

years, the program will be moderated by Dr. Bernice Slote, Board Member, and Mildred Bennett, President of the W.C.P.M., will be a panelist. Guest panelists are:

Prof. JoAnna Lathrop, Dept. of English, UNL

Prof. Richard Zwick, Dept. of English, Concordia College, Seward

Miss Elizabeth Knoll, graduate at midyear from Lincoln Southeast High and now a special student at UNL

Prof. Virginia Faulkner, Dept. of English, UNL.

Following the panel discussion, at 4:30, there will be an autographing session by the author, photographer and dedicatee of *WILLA CATHER: A PICTORIAL MEMOIR*, in the Veterans Hall. People who already own the book and would like it signed should bring their copies; those who would like to buy a copy can at the WCPM bookstore or in the Veterans Hall.

At 6:30 a banquet will be held at the Red Cloud High School, followed at 8:00 by the program. The banquet speaker will be Dr. Robert E. Knoll, Professor of English, UNL, and Chairman of the Willa Cather Festival Committee. The title of his talk is "Many Happy Returns." He'll tell about the behind-the-scenes work in staging the events of the Centennial Festival, with sidelights on the reactions of the distinguished guests and participants.

Dr. Knoll is the author or editor of seven books, among them *McALMON AND THE LOST GENERATION*, studies of Christopher Marlowe and Ben Johnson, and two textbooks. He has been a Woods Fellow and a Fullbright Lecturer (at the University of Graz, Austria), has twice been president of the Central Renaissance Conference, and is a Founding Trustee—one of eight—of the Shakespeare Association of America. In 1965 he was named "Outstanding Nebraskan" by students at the University.

How can you participate? Send your reservations for the conference to the Willa Cather Memorial before Wednesday, April 17. The cost of this very full day, including the two meals is fifteen dollars per person. **MAKE YOUR RESERVATION TODAY!** (See page 3)

## CONGRATULATIONS

In observance of Willa Cather's centenary, the College of Liberal Arts of Marquette University in Milwaukee has appointed Bernice Slote to the Association of Marquette University Women's Chair of Humanistic Study for 1973-74. During her stay on the Marquette campus from March 25 to March 29, Dr. Slote will give a public lecture on Willa Cather; will speak informally to the honorary English fraternity, Sigma Delta Tau; will give a Department Colloquium; and will visit selected seminars and undergraduate classes. A reception in her honor will be held by the Association of Marquette University Women.



Pictured in Grandmother's room in the Cather house as they listened to the tape recorded descriptions from Willa Cather's "Old Mrs. Harris," are some of the Cather Seminar participants. L to R: Prof Donald Sutherland, Boulder, Colo.; Prof. Aldo Celli, Florence, Italy; Dr. Ellen Moers, New York; Prof. John Hinz, Richmond College, New York; Miss Eudora Welty, Jackson, Miss.; and Alfred A. Knopf, publisher, New York. Photo courtesy of Lucia Woods.

## CATHER SEMINAR

The International Seminar on the Art of Willa Cather, Oct. 25-28, drew to Nebraska a group of more than ninety scholars and distinguished guests with formidable reputations from all over the world. In the words of one of the participants it was a "glittering affair" generating an atmosphere of intellectual ferment. The Seminar included talks by Pulitzer prize winners Leon Edel and Eudora Welty and smaller discussion groups covered such topics as: "Willa Cather and France: Effective Affinities," "Willa Cather and the Art of Fiction," and many others.

THE ART OF WILLA CATHER: REASSESSMENTS AND RECOLLECTIONS is now scheduled for September publication. The book will include addresses by the principal speakers at the Seminar, the papers delivered at the six sections of the Seminar, and the talk by Alfred A. Knopf, Willa Cather's friend and publisher for more than a quarter of a century. The book will be edited by Bernice Slote and will appear in both cloth and paper editions.

On Sunday, October 28, the participants in the Seminar traveled to Red Cloud to spend the day touring Willa Cather's country. These distinguished visitors were greeted on the loveliest of Nebraska fall days by friends of the Cather Memorial with a coffee in the morning. At noon they were treated to an old-fashioned fried chicken Sunday dinner at the Zion Lutheran Church.

As they were asking questions and taking pictures, the appreciation of what these Cather lovers found here was expressed in many ways. By the delight of Hiroko Sato from Tokyo, who knows Willa Cather's town as well as she knows her own city. By

On December 25, 1973, Mrs. Irma Cather died in Long Beach, California. Mrs. Cather was the wife of John Cather, youngest brother of Willa Cather.

the smile and nod of approval from Alfred Knopf. By the eloquent praise of Dr. Ellen Moers, New York, who said, "I think the sort of thing you remarkable Red Cloud collaborators are doing for Cather is the height of sophistication: America is just beginning to grow up to that sort of thing."

## CATHER HAPPENINGS IN NEBRASKA

In the centennial year of Willa Cather's birth, celebrations, commemorations, and seminars are being held throughout the world. We're happy to say that Nebraska, the land she wrote of so often and so lovingly, is a leader in these happenings.

### University of Nebraska . . .

The university which is the alma mater of Willa Cather and the first to give her an honorary doctorate has not been hesitant in honoring her again.

In 1973 the University of Nebraska Press published *UNCLE VALENTINE AND OTHER STORIES: WILLA CATHER'S UNCOLLECTED SHORT FICTION, 1915-1929*, and *WILLA CATHER: A PICTORIAL MEMOIR*.

October 25-28 The Art of Willa Cather: An International Seminar was held. (Described elsewhere)

December 7, 1973, a Centennial Birthday Concert by Yehudi, Hephzibah and Yaltah Menuhin was given at the Kimball Recital Hall. (The concert is described elsewhere.)

On April 23, the area around the new extension of Love Library which is being planted with native shrubs, trees and grasses will be dedicated as the Willa Cather Garden by Chancellor Zumberge.

### Around the State . . .

October 25-November 25, 1973, The World of Willa Cather, An Exhibition of Photographs by Lucia Woods was held at the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery. Be sure to see this impressive display of Cather settings and subjects when it is in your area. If you have not had a chance to see this exhibit yet, I hope you will. Public reaction has been so enthusiastic that the Sheldon Gallery is extending the schedule to fill additional requests for showings. This exhibit is now traveling throughout the state, the full schedule for the exhibit is: Feb. 9-Mar. 7 Hastings Public Library, Mar. 9-April 4 Holdrege Public Library, Apr. 7-May 2 Kimball Public Library, May 6-May 30 Imperial Public Library, June 2-June 27 McCook Public Library, July 1-July 25 North Platte Public Library, July 28-Aug. 8 Hanging Tree Gallery, Ogallala, Aug 10-Sept. 5 Cozad Public Library, Oct. 5-Oct. 31 Valentine Public Library, Nov. 2-Nov. 14 Bassett Public Library, Nov. 17-Dec. 13 Fremont Public Library.

From March 28 to March 31 "A Willa Cather Centennial Concert: A Program with Music from Willa Cather's Writings" will tour the state from Scottsbluff to Omaha. The tour will end with two gala performances in Lincoln on April 1 and 2 at Kimball Recital Hall. The program will be conducted by Professor Emanuel Wishnow and performed by the University Symphony Orchestra and the University Singers, with Sandy Dennis, star of stage, screen, and television, as narrator. Scheduled performances are: March 28, 8:00 p.m. McCook City Auditorium; March 29, 2:00 p.m. Sidney High School Auditorium, and 8:00 p.m. Scottsbluff-Nebraska Western College Gymnasium; March

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**CATHER HAPPENINGS IN NEBRASKA CONTINUED**  
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30, 8:00 p.m. Hastings High School Auditorium; March 31, 3:00 p.m., Omaha-Creighton University; April 1, 8:00 p.m. Lincoln-Kimball Recital Hall; April 2, 8:00 p.m. Lincoln-Kimball Recital Hall.

**Omaha . . .**

WCPM Board Member Josephine Frisbie reports she has been asked by the Omaha Public Schools to act as their consultant on Willa Cather. Already she has worked with them on a TV documentary. She was interviewed by a panel of high school students on a program that was taped, then broadcast at various times on the school's TV and radio stations for use by all the city's English classes.

**Watch For . . .**

"Bookshelf" telecast from KUON-TV on March 29 at 9:00 p.m. will be a discussion of UNCLE VALENTINE AND OTHER STORIES: WILLA CATHER'S UNCOLLECTED SHORT FICTION, 1915-1929, edited with an introduction by Bernice Slote, and WILLA CATHER: A PICTORIAL MEMOIR. Drs. Clarence Forsberg and Otis Young will be the discussants with Virginia Faulkner, editor of the University of Nebraska Press.

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**MENUHIN CONCERT**

The evening of December 7, 1973, was a memorable one in the Cather Centennial year. It was on that evening that Yehudi, Yalta and Hephzibah Menuhin and the University of Nebraska Symphony Orchestra presented the Willa Cather Centennial Birthday Concert. This was an unprecedented musical event for the University, and the first time Yehudi, violinist, and his sisters, pianists, had performed together since 1966.

The internationally acclaimed Menuhins came to Lincoln from London to perform out of respect for the memory of their "Aunt Willa." As children in New York, they had become extremely friendly with Willa Cather, who adopted the three child prodigies of the music world rather as "godchildren."

Yehudi Menuhin, who won international fame following his appearance at age 11 with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, played the Beethoven concerto for violin and orchestra. His two sisters, both international concert pianists, presented the rarely heard Mozart two piano concerto. Emanuel Wishnow and the University Symphony Orchestra accompanied them.

After a standing ovation, Yehudi Menuhin asked for quiet and proceeded to offer his "Aunt Willa" as an example to the young student musicians in the orchestra. Her most important quality was, "her diligent search for perfection." In a subdued but emotional voice he told the audience, "I'm happy to be a part of the tribute to this great lady."

The entire concert in addition to an informal talk with the Menuhins, "A Menuhin Tribute to Willa Cather," was broadcast by the Nebraska ETV Network on February 25, and March 3. PBS will broadcast the concert nationally later this year.

**A TRIBUTE**

The author of the following poem, Cornelius Joseph Draves, is studying for the priesthood at St. Mary's Seminary and University, Baltimore, Maryland. He is quite a Cather enthusiast and owns the Houghton Mifflin Autograph Edition of Cather's works presented by Franklin Roosevelt to his wife, Eleanor. He is missing one volume, DEATH COMES FOR THE ARCHBISHOP. We thank Mr. Draves for his contribution and are publishing it so all of our readers may enjoy it.

**A CENTENNIAL VERSE: TO WILLA SIBERT CATHER**

Cather came one afternoon.  
A lady from the dusty bookshelves  
Pulled down for Spring reading.  
It was difficult to really know her,  
An assignment rather than an encounter  
With an artist who was breeding  
An epic of an earthen man  
Created from the prairie sod,  
A Genesis on the Plains.  
Years have passed since I first heard  
The song of that lark in my early years  
That planted in me a historic grain:  
Grown, like the wheat that sacramentalized her life,  
Golden and flowing from their grandmother earth,  
The common story of the pioneer.  
Now in certain twilights I reflect  
On the echoing story of myself  
That's only half lived in her centennial year.  
Think never, then, that I shall forget  
The woman taken down for Spring reading  
Who refused to be silent, but rather,  
Chose to continue in her art as one of ours,  
Who valued struggling man,  
Yes, life, not death, has come for my Willa Cather.

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**PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST**

ARIZONA QUARTERLY, winter 1973, vol. 29, number 4. Three articles on Willa Cather by David Stineback, Mary E. Rucker, and Mary-Ann and David Stouck.

KANSAS QUARTERLY, Fall 1973, vol. 5, number 4. Two Cather articles by Sister Lucy Schneider, and Bruce E. Miller.

NOVEL: A FORUM ON FICTION, Fall 1973, "Willa Cather's Last Four Books" by David Stouck.

NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW, 27 Jan. 74, p. 19. "The Physical World of Willa Cather," by Eudora Welty.

COLBY LIBRARY QUARTERLY, Sept. 1973, Colby

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**SPRING CONFERENCE RESERVATIONS**

Please reserve the following tickets for me for April 20, 1974:

----- Full day (including tour, Bar-B-Que, Panel, Autograph Party, Banquet) . . . \$15.00  
----- Morning only (including tour and Bar-B-Que) . . . . . 7.00  
----- Afternoon and evening only (including Banquet) . . . . . 8.00

Enclosed is a check for \$\_\_\_\_\_

I will pay when I pick up tickets at the Museum.   
CLIP AND MAIL BEFORE **APRIL 15**. Must be received no later than **APRIL 17**.

**PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST CONTINUED**  
(Continued from page 3)

College, Maine. "For the 100th Anniversary of Willa S. Cather" with articles by: Harry B. Eichorn, Theodore S. Adams, John J. Murphy, James R. Bash, and Richard Cary.

Cather enthusiasts have been sending the Memorial articles, reviews, and essays written about Willa Cather in newspapers, magazines, books and journals. This material is kept for the use of those persons in-

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

William Thomas Auld, M.D.	Ella Cather Lewis	Dr. C. Bertrand Schultz
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terested in Willa Cather (which is a great many people indeed). We want to thank everyone who has taken the time and effort to send the material to us and let you know that it is greatly appreciated.

So much has been written about Willa Cather in recent months that there isn't room enough to list all the magazine and newspaper articles. But hasn't it been a fun and exciting reading time for Cather lovers.

Your interest and enthusiasm during the past year has created such momentum that the coming year should be even more successful.

Thank you and we'll see you in Red Cloud/Moonstone April 20.

Sincerely,



**YOU CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE LIFE AND GROWTH OF THE ORGANIZATION**

- By being a Cather Memorial Member and financial contributor:

BENEFACTOR . . . . . \$1,000 and over

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIPS**

Patron . . . . .	\$100.00
Sustaining . . . . .	25.00
Husband and wife . . . . .	15.00
Individual . . . . .	10.00
Newsletter subscriber . . . . .	5.00
Student . . . . .	3.00

- By contributing your Willa Cather artifacts, letters, papers, and publications to the Museum.
- By contributing your ideas and suggestions to the Board of Governors.

All memberships include a subscription to the Newsletter; all except Newsletter subscribers and student memberships have free admission to restored buildings.

Special group memberships (such as clubs or businesses) are available. Write to the Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial for details.

LARGER DONATIONS AND BEQUESTS (DELAYED GIVING) TO THE MEMORIAL ARE WELCOME. (Consult your attorney for advice on your particular form of legacy.)

**ALL MEMBERSHIPS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND BEQUESTS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE**

**AIMS OF THE WCPM**

- To secure the bonding, insurance and housing of a permanent art, literary and historical collection relating to the life, time and work of Willa Cather.
- To identify and restore to their original condition, places made famous by the writings of Willa Cather.
- To provide for Willa Cather a living memorial in the form of art and literary scholarships.
- To perpetuate an interest throughout the world in the work of Willa Cather.



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