
INKLINGS and IDLINGS

The Newsletter of the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association

313 East Third Street • Galesburg, Illinois 61401 • (309) 342-2361

Spring 2002

Two More Friends

We are always happy to report the addition of new members of the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association. The welcome new friends are:

Polly Pettit
Dana Shallenberger

If you have joined the Association recently, and your name is not listed above, please notify **Inklings and Idlings** of the omission so it may be rectified.

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Sandburg Festival

The seventh annual Sandburg Days Festival, celebrating the life and legacy of Carl Sandburg, Galesburg's most distinguished native son, will be held Thursday through Sunday, April 18th to 21st. Many events comprise the Festival, which will be held at numerous locations in Galesburg.

The Carl Sandburg State Historic Site, at 313 East Third Street, will be the Festival Headquarters. There visitors may pick up maps and brochures, attend the Festival Kickoff and Folk Concert, or attend a free performance of "The People, Yes!" by the Theo Ubique Theatre troupe. They may also take tours of Sandburg's birthplace from 9 until 5.

The Kickoff Concert is part of the Songbag Series, which is described in a following article. The guest

artist is Chris Vallillo, whose work is described therein.

The events at other locations, which are too many to detail, include such varied fare as a 2 & 4 Mile Run/Walk, a concert by the Knox-Galesburg symphony orchestra, a play "Moon Over Buffalo" at the Carl Sandburg College Fine Arts Center, and a barbershop performance.

It will also be possible to have lunch on Seminary Street with Helga Sandburg Crile, the poet's youngest daughter and an author in her own right. Mrs. Crile has been a popular participant in past Festivals.

As well as being the Festival Headquarters, the Site will be the location of the awards for the Knox College Poetry Contest, sponsored by Knox College and the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association. The presentation will take place at 11 a.m. on Saturday, April 20th.

Just a half-hour later, at 11:30, in the Site's Visitors' Center, the awards for the Memoir Writing Contest will be given. The contest is sponsored by **The Register-Mail** and the Association.

The closing event of the Festival on Sunday, April 21st, will take place a 2 p.m. in the Barn at the Site. It will be the performance of "The People, Yes!" by the uniquely named Theo Ubique theatrical company. Admission is free.

"The People, Yes!" is based on Sandburg's 1936 volume of poetry of the same name. The cast consists of three actors portraying farmers,

voters, debtors, politicians,
gamblers, poets, construction
workers, the lonely, the rich, and
the poor.

The name Theo Ubique is a Greek-Latin hybrid for "God is present everywhere." It harkens back to ancient times when the theater was a communal, spiritual, and inspirational place.

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Songbag Series

The April 18th Songbag Concert will be among the first events of the 2002 Carl Sandburg Days Festival. The artist for the event is Chris Vallillo.

He is a singer-songwriter who entertains audiences wherever he plays with music that portrays the joys and sorrows, ups and downs of Midwestern life.

Performing on six string guitar and harmonica, his shows incorporate original and traditional material as well as the works of other contemporary folk songwriters. He blends them into a musical portrait of the history and lifestyle of the Midwest, recreated in a variety of techniques including fingerpicking, flatpicking, and bottle neck slide.

Chris has been described as "an exceptional guitarist" who "speaks from the heart of rural Illinois." Reviewers have called his music "infectious" as well as "haunting and restrained."

A graduate of Beloit College with a BA in anthropology, Chris spent his first few years out of school doing archeology throughout the Midwest. After settling in Western Illinois, he began pursuing music more seriously, writing and performing with various bands before beginning his career as a solist.

For Chris, a good song is as much a work of art as any painting. His music has one foot in the past and one foot in the future. He combines traditional and modern styles of fingerpicking and flatpicking to paint pictures using words and chords--pictures of a small town going through inevitable changes, a childhood baseball game, or just the changes of season on the prairie.

On May 15th, the concert will be performed by Bob and Kristie Black. They have bluegrass roots going straight back to Bill Monroe, "The Father of Bluegrass Music." Bob toured and recorded with the late great musical master during the 70's, learning much about songwriting and performing which he now brings to audiences with his wife Kristie. Together, they draw on country music traditions to enliven their shows, which feature many original duets and instrumentals. Going beyond bluegrass, Bob and Kristie blend mountain soul with their own creative musical style, giving each performance a uniquely individual flavor.

Both concerts will take place at 7 p.m. at the Carl Sandburg Historic Site, 313 East Third Street in Galesburg.

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From The Superintendent

It will be warm weather again soon and with it will come our annual increase in tourists. This year they will have the new "Barn" building to add to their tour of the Carl Sandburg Historic Site. There will be changing exhibits as well as our much welcomed new rest room facilities. A new sign will be hung in time for the Sandburg Festival.

There is a new addition to our exhibit room. The Inness family of

Galesburg donated a Lombard College "beanie" which was worn by Henry Inness who attended Lombard from 1928 until its demise in 1930. Several great-grandsons were on hand when the beanie was brought in on April 4th. Carl Sandburg attended Lombard a number of years before Henry Inness.

I attended a meeting at the Galesburg City Hall recently where a group of local people, headed by City Clerk Anita Carlton, considered beginning a sister city relationship with a city in Sweden. My vote was for Mjolby which is the town near where both of Sandburg's parents grew up.

They were from tiny villages about eleven miles from each other but met in this country in Bushnell, Illinois, where Clara was working as a chambermaid and August was staying when he was working on the section gang for the railroad. They must have been amazed when they began talking to each other to find that they had been close neighbors in Sweden!

We hope to see you at one or all of our Sandburg Festival events. They are listed elsewhere in the newsletter.

--Carol Nelson

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Noted Goat Coated with Quotes He Wrote

Yeah, sure. I know that's a bit much; so how's 'bout: QUOTE GOAT?

This is the name and theme of the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association's entry in the Sandburg Days Festival 2002 "Goats on Parade."

The "parade" is a new addition to

the Festival and is meant to be a tip of the hat to Carl's beloved companion of fifty-nine years, Lilian "Paula" Steichen Sandburg. It was she who began raising goats while the family lived on the shores of Lake Michigan outside of Harbert, Michigan. Indeed, it was her bounding success in raising top producing dairy goats (through her expert breeding plans) which eventually led to the family's move to the more temperate climate of North Carolina, in 1945. The Connemara Farm at Flat Rock is where Carl spent the last twenty-two years of his life. Even now, twenty-five years after Lilian's death in 1977, the goats are very much a part of the scenery at Connemara Farm, now operated by the National Park Service.

Anyway, back to the Quote Goat. Our fiberglass critter is splotched with goatish colors "a la Nubian," has genuine glass fake goat eyes, sports a leather collar and tin bell, and offers free Sandburg quotations from its feed bucket. BUTT the main feature is its coat of quotes. The majority of these deal with the specific anatomy (eyes, ears, nose) of the beast, although some are less specific ("Some things go unspoken in our circle; no one has the bad grace to bring them up...") ALL are quotations by Sandburg, published or unpublished. ALL are identified by "footnotes" appropriately located above its hooves.

Quote Goat will be available for viewing and photo ops at the Historic Site (either in or near the barn) beginning April 12, from 9-5 daily. All forty goat entries from Galesburg organizations and businesses will tritty-trot up to historic Seminary Street for public display on Saturday, April 20.

In creating Quote Goat I confess perhaps I have transgressed Sandburg's eleventh commandment: "Thou shalt not commit

nincompoopery." BUTT it was such a delightful transgression, I might do it again, should the occasion arise.

--Steve Holden

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The Impersonators

(Most of Dr. Richard Sandburg's articles deal with his recollections of his distinguished uncle. This time he writes of an occasion when he became Carl Sandburg.)



Dr. and Mrs. Richard Sandburg

A splendid event was held in February, 2002, for the benefit of a significant organization nestled in a beautiful wooded area in a fast-growing section of Rockford, Illinois.

The affair was called "An American Gala," in honor of the Midwest Village and Museum. It was a huge fundraiser to help support educational programs and to preserve Rockford's history.

The Gala featured the Honorable John B. Anderson, an independent candidate for president in 1980, who returned to his home town for his 80th birthday.

Also, the celebration of President Abraham Lincoln's birthday was aided by impersonator Max Daniels and his wife, Donna. Mr. and Mrs. Daniels are award-winning and nationally known Lincoln re-enactors. The pair have been portraying Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln professionally since 1988. Their research and acting skills earned them the nod for "Best Abraham & Mary Lincoln Team" from the National Association of Lincoln Presenters in 1994.

In addition to the Lincolns and John Anderson, Congressman Don Manzullo and Rockford mayor Doug Scott also added to the luster of the event.

A full-house of 320 guests and dignitaries were served an 1860s style chicken dinner, which was President Lincoln's favorite.

During the evening's festivities, a silent auction was conducted, which included donations from 63 groups and individuals. My wife, Janet, contributed a red frisbee, which was a presidential artifact used during Congressman Anderson's presidential campaign.

My offering was a boxed, paper-back, three-volume reprint of Carl Sandburg's "Prairie Years" and "The War Years." The original hard-cover volume contained over 1,700,000 words, or more than in the Bible, or all of Shakespeare's works combined. My gift contained only about half of that number.

After dinner, Janet and I struggled our way to the head table, and were greeted by Congressman Anderson. Janet reminded him of how her family shopped at his parent's grocery store on 7th Street in Rockford. Anderson beamed and said, "That's where I learned to negotiate, by dealing with customers who wanted us to shave our prices."

I reviewed his visit to Belvidere, Illinois, during a campaign. Before

speaking to our Rotary club, he positioned himself on a busy corner, greeting, smiling, and shaking hands with citizens passing by. He told me who he was and asked my name. An hour later, he again shook my hand and exclaimed, "Hi, Dick," a testimonial to his memory.

Congressman Manzullo also recalled the day he was supposed to speak at Rotary. A member had a heart attack and was turning black. Manzullo dashed from the podium to the victim shouting, "Open his collar and lay him down!" This was done and fortunately two registered nurses were present who applied CPR and mouth to mouth resucitation.

President Lincoln and his wife spotted us near our table and commented on my white-dyed hair, the black bow tie, a red bandana neckerchief, and a Rotary badge with my temporary name to simulate Carl Sandburg.

I told President Lincoln, "You're the guy who made me famous," but he remonstrated with, "Oh, no, Carl, you're the one who made me famous." He impressed us with several quotations of Carl Sandburg's books, which were familiar to us.

These incidents were memorable, but the high-light of the evening for me was when Janet and I found the table which contained my Lincoln books in the auction.

A young lady was standing protectively in front of the table, and her top bid for the books was \$40.

I opened my billfold for a check and prepared to bid \$50, in hopes of reclaiming my gift of books, as well as aiding the Museum.

The young lady observed me, gasped, and slapped the palms of her hands to her face. She confided, "I have been an intense admirer of Carl

Sandburg all my life, and my heart was set on purchasing these books for my collection."

I was impressed by her dedication to Carl, I gave her my best smile, and returned the check to my billfold insisting, "Good for you, they're yours," and the bidding time was over.

She grasped my hand and thanked me profusely, which made the evening a huge success for me. It was a joy to chat with public greats such as Congressmen Anderson and Manzullo, and to swap fibs with President Lincoln. However, the thrill of satisfaction I received from relinquishing the Lincoln books to the Sandburg admirer provided a glorious nightcap for an eventful and enjoyable evening.

--Richard Sandburg

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Acres of Diamonds

On March 31, 1891, the Reverend Russell Conwell had lectured at the Auditorium, which was located on the corner of Ferris and Broad streets, in Galesburg. The title of his lecture was "Acres of Diamonds."

By the time he died in 1925 at the age of 81, Conwell had delivered it more than 6,000 times; virtually without making any changes in it.

Conwell led an interesting life. He had been a law student at Yale University at the outbreak of the Civil War. He became a captain in the Union Army. After his military service was done, he attended the Albany Law School, from which he graduated. Although a member of the bar, he did not limit his activities to practicing law. He also worked as a journalist and as a lecturer.

In 1881, Conwell was ordained as a Baptist clergyman. From 1882 until 1925, he served at the Grace Baptist Church in Philadelphia. Due in no small measure to the power of his preaching, he developed Grace Baptist into one of the major churches in the United States. His greatest distinction was the founding of Temple University out of a night school for young clergymen.

Most of the proceeds from his lectures went to Temple, and to the Samaritan Hospital, which he had also founded. It is estimated "Acres of Diamonds" netted almost \$8 million dollars, a prodigious sum in those days. He had some thirty formal orations in his repertory, but "Acres" was the one in greatest demand.

Throughout the lecture, Conwell emphasized that the opportunity to become rich and useful was within easy reach of all. He would assert he did not believe the devil should have all of the money, for money was power, a power for good if properly used. It was therefore the duty of all to strive for wealth in order to accomplish the larger and greater good.

He contended wealth could be found in everyone's back yard, so it was not necessary to travel far to become rich. The time during which he traveled the lecture circuit was a fairly materialistic one, but it is probable his message would have been well received today.

At the time Conwell visited Galesburg, Carl Sandburg was thirteen years old. He was a frequent visitor to the Auditorium. Although he seldom had the price of admission to the various entertainments presented there, he often worked for Oscar "Husky" Johnson, the stage carpenter, and Charles "Cully" Rose, the property man. He was paid with free tickets or actual cash, with which he would

buy a seat in the balcony.

Virtually every Broadway hit heading west would take the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy railroad's main line to Omaha and Denver. As a result, it was easy for them to stop in Galesburg for a night or two.

Sandburg helped to shift scenery or to raise and lower the appropriate curtains. That was called "working the flies." He also performed as a "supe" or supernumerary. It involved being part of an onstage crowd, or making offstage noises appropriate to the performance.

None of that was necessary if a lecturer occupied the Auditorium's stage. Usually the cheapest ticket was fifty cents, which was a sum Sandburg could rarely scrape together. Consequently, although he wanted to hear Fridjof Nansen, the Norwegian Arctic explorer, and Henry Stanley, the explorer of Africa, he had to content himself with seeing them arrive at the Galesburg depot.

Even at the age of thirteen, Sandburg knew how hard it could be to acquire enough money for day-to-day living, much less to accumulate wealth. His father provided evidence of that on a daily basis. Therefore, he might have thought the secret of becoming rich, as set forth by Conwell, would be worth the investment of a whole half-dollar.

It is not known if Sandburg was in Conwell's audience. He made no mention of it. In later life, he left Galesburg. He worked as an organizer for the Socialist Party in Wisconsin, and wrote for Socialist publications.

Those were not the actions of someone who had taken Conwell's message to heart, and had acted on it.

--Christian Schock

* * *

Eating at Home

Many families have special dishes they eat on certain days of the week. That custom is common in Sweden. The name of the recipe tells the day on which the soup is served.

Cream of wheat is usually served as a breakfast dish in this country. In Sweden it is made into a pudding and frequently served on Tuesday evenings. Both of these dishes are simple to make. They also taste good and provide many nutrients.

If any of our readers have Swedish recipes which were served by their family in Galesburg in days gone by and would like to share them, please send them to Inklings and Idlings.

Tuesday Soup

3 carrots
2 parsnips
2 tablespoons butter (or other fat)
1 quart water
2 cans consomme (or stock)
1 small onion (studded with 1 clove)
1/2 cup rice
2 cups milk
Salt and pepper

Clean carrots and parsnips and cut into strips. Brown well in butter. Add water and stock and bring to a boil. Add onion with the clove, or else brown that, too, with the other vegetables. After 15 or 20 minutes add the rice and let simmer until done. Add milk and simmer another few minutes. Season.

Makes 6 servings

Cream of Wheat Pudding

1 cup cream of wheat
1 quart milk
2 eggs
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt

2 tablespoons butter (or other fat)
1 cup raisins
(5 bitter almonds or rind of lemon or orange peel)

Melt butter in kettle, add milk, and bring to a boil while stirring so as not to scorch the milk. Shake the cream of wheat into the bubbling milk, add salt, and let the mixture simmer until quite tender. Cool a little before adding sugar, eggs, and whatever flavor you prefer. Pour into baking dish, greased and breaded, and bake 35 to 40 minutes, or until golden brown. Serve warm from the dish with jam or a compote of dried fruit.

Makes 6 servings

--Barbara Schock

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A Hearty Breakfast

Many experts in the field of nutrition contend breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Because it is the first one consumed, it is expected to provide the energy needed to get through the morning. In these times, it is often given short shrift, largely because of time constraints.

In the 1890s, during Carl Sandburg's boyhood, breakfast received the attention it deserved. However early one went off to work, one made sure to have a hearty meal. To be sure, it was not always composed of the most healthful elements.

When Carl Sandburg was fourteen years old, he was employed full-time. He would arise at 5:30. His mother would serve him buckwheat cakes, fried side pork, prunes or applesauce, and coffee. All over Galesburg, workingmen began the day with similar meals.

His father, August, ate a repast like his son's before setting off. It might also include fried eggs. Although the meal was heavy in calories, August Sandburg would have dissipated them long before noon. He was employed as a blacksmith's assistant in the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy railroad shops. His work involved almost constant use of a sledge hammer.

There were a number of men whose employment was more sedentary than that of August and Carl Sandburg. However, many of them ate morning meals even more substantial. As a consequence, their girth increased, and their life expectancy diminished.

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The name, "Inklings and Idlings," comes from the title of Carl Sandburg's first column, printed in the Galesburg Evening Mail under the pseudonym "Crimson", in 1904.

The newsletter welcomes articles, particularly about Carl Sandburg, Galesburg, and Knox County. Space limitations may require that they be edited. The articles should be sent to:

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-Barbara Schock
Editor

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INSIDE:

- * The Quote Goat
- * Sandburg Days Festival
- * Impersonators
- * Tuesday Soup