

Memorandum To: The Board of Management
From: Gordon A. Christenson, Junior Trustee
Subject: Literary Club Innovation
Date: January 8, 2007

Over the holidays I wrote up the enclosed results of some research I'd been doing into past club innovation, thinking of making it into a paper to read sometime in the future. I became interested in how club innovations were introduced in custom, beginning with recording papers which started in 1884. This inquiry grew from issues presented by the website proposal that lead some members to wonder about the Board's persistent urge to want to change things.

Ethan Stanley and David Edmundson have encouraged me to send this to you in advance of taking up the proposed website.

Enclosure: Innovation in the Literary Club

INNOVATION IN THE LITERARY CLUB

INTRODUCTION

A few objections to the website proposal led me to wonder what innovations ever changed club traditions for the better. I looked into it and found some quite apt innovations, which lead to the custom of recording our papers. These changes improved the quality of papers, preserved them for research and public access and initiated the new custom without any opposition that I could find. The following summarizes what many already know. But since this early innovation flows directly to our present consideration of a club website, I thought it might provide a useful context for our further discussions about digitalizing papers—with some personal comments of my own.

I. RECORDING PAPERS: FROM SCRIPT TO TYPE

It has long been a custom and tradition for The Literary Club to record papers read by members. It was not always so. The *Introductory to Edition of 1890*, dated September 8, 1890 (printed in the club's anniversary edition 1849-1903), states: "Since March, 1884, the papers read before the Club have been copied into its records." The *Introductory to Edition of 1903* adds that these papers "have, with few exceptions, been copied into the records and are preserved in a fire-proof safe. Each volume is indexed under the names of the authors, and another index, showing the periods covered by the volumes and their places on the shelves, may be found on the inner side of the interior door of the safe." As our librarian explains, copies of papers are sent to the Cincinnati Historical Society which, at club expense, binds and keeps volumes for their archives with the first copies bound and retained in our library.

Eslie Asbury and David Reichert also made references to the beginning of the recording tradition in their presidential papers. In his 1974 paper, Eslie writes: "In 1884, when the custom of recording our papers began, the sole argument for the procedure was that it would encourage better papers. No one thought of them as valuable historical documents and for many years recording was still left to the option of the author. Previous to 1884, some papers were preserved in private scrapbooks and abstracts of others in old newspapers, but at least the titles of all papers have been recorded in the Minutes, and all except the titles of pre-Civil War essays and debates have been indexed in our anniversary volumes. If the titles of all serious papers indicated the real subject, the index would be even more valuable for research." The "soul of the club" for Eslie was to be found in a congenial discussion group with no subject barred. "The purpose of the members was to better inform themselves, and they didn't mind if the information also spilled over to the public."

How exactly did the tradition of recording papers come about in 1884 and why? After a bit of research, I found that the practice of recording papers in script written by hand first began right after a committee recommended printing club essays in numbered volumes. While taking no action for printing, the club recognized the desirability of recording papers in the minutes by script in their entirety. In 1885, the following year, another step was taken when papers were recorded by script in their entirety in separate numbered volumes. By 1892, the newly-invented typewriter was sufficiently developed to displace written script and became the means for recording our papers. This method until now has been our customary practice. Let me describe the three stages in this evolution:

A. **Report of the Committee on Printing.** A committee was appointed February 2, 1884, to consider the feasibility and costs of printing club essays. The committee presented its written report on February 23, 1884. After much discussion, it was laid on the table. The following week, the full report was taken off the table and written verbatim into the minutes of March 1, 1884, without action. The report in script reads:

Your committee are unanimously of the opinion that the essays of the Club should be preserved by being put into printed form. This for the following among other reasons.

1. Not only for the intrinsic value of many of the essays that one has read but as a memorial of what the Club is doing, which would in a short time make the series of volumes of great interest & value.

2. Because it would add to the literary reputation and increase the influence of the Club.

3. And perhaps most important of all, because of the effect it would have in raising the standard of excellence of the papers which are read before the Club.

Your committee would recommend as the only feasible plan, that every essay read before the Club, be printed, unless the author otherwise direct. . . . [Here the committee spelled out its recommendation that the costs be borne by an annual subscription of \$3.00 for members and ex-members, who would receive installments of 50 to 60 printed pages of papers read and informals, to be bound as the members chose for themselves. A total of 200 copies of all the papers read each year would be printed, 100 distributed to members and 100 retained by the club for distribution as it sees fit. The total cost was estimated to be in excess of \$400. If 100 members each paid a subscription, the balance would be paid from the club treasury]

Your committee would further recommend that the essays as issued be copyrighted, with the understanding that the copyright belong to the author.

*C. W. Merrill
Thornton M. Hinkle
F. M. Coppock
Committee*

B. Copying Essays by Script: The printing committee's reasons for recording full texts of essays seem persuasive. But the subscription price amounted to an increase in club dues. No action was taken on the committee's recommendation. Almost immediately, however, the club began to record the essays by hand into the minutes. Within a year, they were copied into separate volumes also by script. Most likely, the means proposed to pay for the cost of printing was unacceptable. But a less onerous method of recording still led to important club enhancements as mentioned in the committee report--a memorial of volumes of great interest and value; enhanced literary reputation and club influence; and raising the standard of excellence of papers.

The first full essay recorded in script, *Parliament and the Crown*, was read by E. R. Donohue April 5, 1884. The copy of the full essay appeared in the minutes of that meeting. The script may be read with pleasure and ease. The new series of separate volumes was initiated in 1885, in which essays were recorded and indexed, again in hand script. This series of bound volumes continued for ten volumes, until 1892, when typed copies first appeared in volume 11. By then the typewriter had become cost-effective.

C. The "Type Writer" Innovation: The first "Type Writer" was invented by publisher/scientist/philosopher Christopher Latham Sholes, in 1868 from work in Kleinstenber's Machine Shop in Milwaukee during an age of invention. His model received the first typewriter patent and was reproduced for market by gunmakers E. Remington & Sons from 1874 to 1878. The first model was not a great success, but by 1883 improvements had been made, and a new model came to the attention of Mark Twain, who tried it out. In 1883, he submitted a typed copy of his handwritten manuscript, *Life on the Mississippi*, to his publisher and thus became the first person to submit a novel in typed form. Apparently, he learned to use the typewriter because his right hand was impaired and writing with his left produced manuscripts hard for printers to use as copy. By the time of Mark Twain's visit to The Literary Club on January 3, 1885 (the minutes recorded the visitor as Samuel L. Clements) the club was recording its essays in script and he was using the typewriter. A week after his visit, club minutes of January 10, 1885, recorded *The Theory of the Development of Color Perception*, "Mr. Spraul's essay in full" copied in script. The first paper to be recorded by script in separate volume 1, page 1, was M. F. Force's *Black Point--San Francisco--Santa Barbara*.

The first typed paper recorded in volume 11 is C.B. Wilby's essay, *A Cincinnati Japhet*, dated April 30, 1892. The change was readily accepted as an improvement over

the old method. I have found nothing in the minutes recording objections or even discussions of this innovation. At the time, a purist may have wondered why the club could even think of copying papers in duplicate using carbon paper, ugly type with erasures and corrections, instead of the artful script. But the innovation enhanced club purposes--saving time and money and improving readability for research purposes. What Guttenberg did to the Book of Kells, the typewriter did to our script.

Under the tradition of typing, the secretary hires a typist to make copies of minutes and of original papers by typewriter to be bound in duplicate volumes, the minutes and papers to be retained in our library and the copied papers sent to the public library. Nothing in the constitutional duties of the secretary required him to send records of papers to the public library, but an informal arrangement was made with the director, who by tradition was a member of the club, most likely for protection against fire hazard and archival protection. This practice was changed, for reasons not pertinent here, under the "Manuscripts Deed of Gift Agreement" between the Literary Club and the Cincinnati Historical Society effective February 11, 1974, signed by Victor E. Reichert (then club president). It transferred the bound volumes in the custody of the public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County to the Cincinnati Historical Society together with "all papers read before the Literary Club hereafter to be delivered to The Cincinnati Historical Society when typed."

There were conditions. Any literary rights of the Literary Club in the papers were dedicated to the public; all qualified researchers had access to the papers transferred, but access was denied to "the general public (other than members of the Literary Club) to Literary Club papers less than five years old"; "any member of the general public" wishing to quote from or make use of any Literary Club paper shall cite both the Historical Society and the Literary Club as the source, to include the "writer of the paper by name and as a member of The Literary Club of Cincinnati"; and the Historical Society shall index and bind annual volumes of the papers read, as supplied when typed and at the expense of the Literary Club.

The present cost of typing copies for our library and archives remains part of our annual budget estimated at about \$2,000, but by 2006 four years of papers and minutes stacked up waiting to be typed. Recently, former secretary and president, Robert Smith, reported, however, that the minutes have now been typed at the expense of about \$1,500.00. I assume we still intend to pay for binding annual volumes of papers as they are sent to the Historical Society, which has lagged pending copying, much to the dismay of our former and present secretaries. Our present secretary, David Edmundson, has made much progress and considerable savings through his efforts at digital reproduction of papers. He now uses computer technology to make archival copies of papers.

Today it is rare to find members writing by hand or even using typewriters to prepare their own original texts. Most of us write using word processors ourselves or scribble on yellow pads by illegible hand to be copied by our secretaries or assistants. Few of us even own typewriters anymore. If we are to follow tradition, however, our club secretary must still get a typist (if he can find one within budget) to copy minutes

and essays from our original texts. Using digital technology, much of the inefficiency in preparing library and archival hard copies is now being completely eliminated with savings of time and money. Who among us would say we must continue to copy by retyping from the original paper as read rather than copying by digital scanning and printing?

Sometimes we are admonished (in the abstract) that the board must not innovate but must follow tradition and custom. Just as the typewriter allowed previous innovation when cost and quality improved so now digital technology allows instant copying or scanning for much less cost with a better result. The four years of untyped papers have been scanned and are available on CD to any member. The secretary sends digital copies by email to those members requesting it within days after papers are read (well over half of the members have made this request so far). Most members furnish hard copies of papers they read, at their own expense, for other members' convenience. No one seems to object to this practice. Often, perhaps weeks after a paper is read, a member who has not requested email copies might ask the reader for a copy of his paper. Like everyone, I make about 25 or 30 hard copies for those who want one at the time read, but sometimes I run out of copies. If I ask whether I might send a digital copy by email, many prefer that and say yes. Within moments, I can send a copy in Word or pdf format attached to an email. This is much simpler and quicker for me than reproducing another hard copy, though I always will if a member does not want to get it by email. As members elect to receive email copies from the secretary, the requests for copies from the reader seems in decline, though I have not attempted to measure this effect.

In making digital reproductions for the archives, which saves time and money, it is prudent to use archival paper and strict conservator specifications. We shouldn't, however, confuse digital reproduction of copies we send to the archives with posting copies on a website. I don't recall anyone proposing that we should substitute digital records on a website for library and archival hardcopies. I would have strong and serious objections to any such proposal. But why should any member reasonably object if digital copies are printed to hard copy by computer technology for deposit with the Historical Society and our library? When our secretary replaces labor-intensive typed-copying with better quality and more efficient digital reproduction of papers that meet archival standards, he is doing a functional equivalent of replacing hand-copying by the typewriter. This is the kind of innovation the club membership embraced quite readily in the past and for good reason.

My Conclusion: It seems unexceptional to me that the board's duty to manage the affairs of the club under its traditional responsibilities includes arranging for digital reproduction of record hard copies for the library and archives if it can be done meeting archival standards more efficiently than employing a typist. I find nothing inconsistent in this practice with our agreement with the Cincinnati Historical Society nor is it a change just for the sake of change.

II. CLUB CUSTOM OF MAKING PAPERS ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC

When he wrote of the value of research in 1974, Eslie Asbury was quite aware that the club through President Reichert had just signed the manuscripts deed of gift agreement with the Cincinnati Historical Society. He understood fully that this new custom of recording papers and sending copies to public archives enhanced our club purposes and made papers more accessible to the public. The desirability of this innovation was made plain as early the report of the 1884 committee on printing. This custom developed by tacit consent.

We also know that until the Civil War debates were held frequently on agreed propositions and essays were read and discussed. The membership would vote on who won debates. When a subject was interesting or newsworthy, such as whether the Fugitive Slave Law was unconstitutional, the results of the vote found their way into public discussion both informally and via the press. In those years, the club was an intimate part of the life of the city and the discussions often were summarized in the press through members. Some members apparently even prepared summaries for release. An early innovation occurred when the club's tradition changed to reading essays with discussion as well as debates. Each essay was read from a hand-written copy, an important custom then for maintaining high standards instead of allowing off-the-cuff ramblings.

Hearing a paper read in the privacy of club rooms, however, was still an oral tradition. The public might see published reports in newspapers summarizing newsworthy topics and discussions in the club, but the text of an original paper in its entirety only could be made available even to members of the club by copying it by hand or possibly by printing it. Some original hand-written papers, as Eslie says, were preserved in private scrapbooks or by abstracts in newspapers. While titles were recorded in the minutes and indexed for research, no paper was recorded in its entirety for nearly twenty years after the Civil War ended.

When typed copies of papers in their entirety first appeared April 30, 1892, the change made was not just for the practical reasons of efficiency. As Eslie suggested, in addition to improving the quality of the papers, the club must have come to the conclusion, even before using the typewriter, that the papers were valuable historical documents that should be preserved by copying the originals in their entirety and recording them.

My Conclusion: Following tradition and custom, any website should state that records of papers read by members are preserved by copying and recording the originals in archives of the Cincinnati Historical Society as valuable historical documents available to researchers and the general public within certain limits.

III. OVERSEEING A LIMITED CLUB WEBSITE

A club website should not be confused with digital reproduction of our archival records. But the reason for initiating the recording tradition in the first place--to improve the quality of papers and historical research—is relevant to both. Depositing archival records in the Cincinnati Historical Society under the agreement of 1974 makes our public research tradition quite clear even if limited. Historical research in the archive of papers is available to qualified researchers as well as members without limitation and to the general public after five years from reading. Our present librarian also receives increasing numbers of inquiries from scholars and others about material in papers indexed in the library collection. He is as helpful as time allows for members but refers public inquiries to the Historical Society where they are available under established policies.

A website with advanced security protection could also be designed to assist in this long-standing club tradition of limited public research even if it only lists indexes and limited texts. Members-only sites could be designed to make available those papers of members who wish to post for the edification of other members, especially newer members.

My Conclusion: We should consider a publications committee, as suggested by some members, perhaps chaired by a “webmaster” to guide website design and materials to be published on-line within our traditions and customs. Indexes of papers read and names of members easily can be online, just as they are available in club publications and anniversary volumes already in libraries. Links to papers listed online might be made accessible to members-only sites (unless tacit consent is withdrawn by the author) or, at a future time, to the public with consent of the author.

IV. WILL A WEBSITE INVITE UNFAVORABLE PUBLIC SCRUTINY OF CLUB TRADITIONS?

I can understand why setting up a website might lead one to imagine a list of horrors--that a website would open the entire past archives, minutes, finances and club skeletons to public scrutiny, even to eliminate any incentive of publishing books of selected members' papers. It is unclear where one finds in the website issue any proposal for such instant access to these private materials. But I also think it would be prudent to allow any member to opt out of posting their papers on any website even secured members-only sites, irrespective of public access at the Historical Society. No financial records, minutes or private information have been suggested seriously for posting. And my own view is that the issues of past and future applications of digitalized scanning should be considered separately. If a website is designed properly a lot of this concern fades or narrows. Still, the central question is whether club traditions and purposes will be enhanced by a website.

A. Should We Withdraw From Public Attention? A question is asked, “Why do we have the urge to publicize club activities, especially during anniversaries?” This is a fair and serious question. Why do we need to shine more light on the club, exposing us to undue scrutiny and trouble? Yet, as one member put it to me after our discussion during the September 25th meeting last year: “We are already posted on the internet!”

Articles from the Enquirer pop up when you Google “The Literary Club” and the page posted in the Historical Society’s website about the club appears instantly. Others have commented that these pages do not necessarily place us in the best light. Nonetheless, why do we wish to call more attention to ourselves and only invite more scrutiny? Some members think the strongest reason for a modest website is to take control over how we wish to be presented, rather than acquiesce in how others depict us. A positive approach would outweigh the unfavorable current reputation some think we already have as a secretive society withdrawn from the life of the city. Other members think we are more withdrawn than we have ever been from city life for good reason and even prefer this as more in line with our history and traditions.

Perusing the subject index of our 75th anniversary publication of 1924, however, I counted 91 entries listed under the subject “Cincinnati”--with many papers written during a time when we were far more engaged as a club in city affairs and issues. Why should we withdraw from this traditional engagement now when in the past it seemed even more fulsome?

My Conclusion: We should have no fear of saying publicly or on a website who we are or what we write about.

B. The Club’s Social Contract: In my view some members are rightly concerned about digital scanning of all the past papers now in the library and archives and putting them on-line. “From the beginning,” Mr. Lewis Gatch tells us, “members wrote papers under certain conditions, with certain expectations. . . . We have a contract with our literary ancestors. . . . [and] papers were written with the understanding of the limited access the public would have thereafter.” I looked into what these expectations are and when they were created and for myself have concluded the following:

First, expectations have changed over the years. Development of custom is an ongoing process. Were original understandings to be our true guide, we would still be having debates on issues of the day and taking a vote to see who prevailed or having a discussion of an essay after it was read. And we wouldn’t have survived. David Reichert’s paper of 1992 describes in detail what those debates were like. Results regularly appeared in newspapers. Early comments in papers and addresses also make clear that the club looked not just to the past but to future generations. New ideas that future generations might bring was an important original expectation, as a founder Ainsworth Spofford said so eloquently in his invocation for the future with a message from the past.. Our gift of club papers with public access to the Historical Society in 1974 for future generations also broadened and changed our expectations. They were to be available without limit to qualified researchers and with a five year lag time to the

members of the general public. Literary rights of the Literary Club were dedicated to the public.

Second, the early tradition of recording papers, which started with volume 1 of the Schedule of Papers in 1885, resulted from an innovation that changed expectations about how records were kept and how the club improved the quality of papers and access for researching content.

Third, our own expectations of the kinds of papers we write have changed. There is not a member among us whose papers have not reflected the kind of world we live in--personal stories or histories with psychological insight, historical drama and understanding, sophisticated biographical papers, fiction, explanations of cutting-edge science, theorizing about music and art. Our members bring intimate knowledge of music and theater, advances in medical science and neuroscience from global centers of excellence, developments in legal science, microbiology, astro-physics and on and on to the inner world of human experiences of living within ordinary circumstances of time and place. We have members who read literature and information daily on the internet and through websites. Others prefer the solitude of a quiet library. Some members “Google” the internet for instant information on any subject at any time. Others prefer going to the library and using the Encyclopedia Britannica (which also can be accessed digitally). All of these perspectives flow in our club rooms.

As a reasonably informed member, I find it impossible to deny that I am part of this changing external world. I have not bought or read fewer books because I use the internet. I have read more books, most of them ordered online because I want to add a book my library. I still go to bookstores to browse--maybe not as much. My world has expanded, not shrunk, and the club and the papers I receive digitally and read often plays an important part in this expanded world. I have more choices, greater freedom, and greater awareness from my association with members. All this adds to--not detracts from--conversations on tough issues that take place in a refuge around our tables after supper.

Though we are not the same group of men we were 125 years ago, our purpose remains the same. As Eslie Asbury said, we still maintain “traditions and rules, written and unwritten, that stood the test of preserving an educational and literary center. . .” Why should we mind if the important insights we share with each other privately seep out into the world at large? Why should we fear saying who we are now in the 21st century? We didn’t mind saying who we were in the 19th century, when the city was flourishing with energy, a moving force in medical science, engineering, astronomy, legal science, music, voluntary associations, commerce and the liberal arts and sciences. Is it that we fear attack for being an all-male, insular club? Do we just want to be left alone in our congeniality? Even if we could, do we really want to withdraw from any manifestation of who we are from within our own history and tradition?

My Conclusion: My final conclusion urges time for reflection. Some websites now contain message boards, instant messaging sites, email options,

blogging forums--all opening channels for communication by an instant typewriter where all forms of delay and reflection that contribute to civilized discourse are gone. No club website could ever be a substitute for club discussion during cocktail hour or around the tables enjoying food after papers in our weekly meetings. One of our most important purposes is to maintain this civilized tradition of reading papers and having private conversation about any subject. We should reject any design that would open our website to such instant messaging with the public. Our central purpose must maintain a calm of time for human conversation and reflection within the weekly meetings at the club.

V. A DIFFERENT PATH: THE CHICAGO LITERARY CLUB

The Chicago Literary Club has a website. Most of you know about it, so I write this part of my inquiry to satisfy my own curiosity. Not knowing very much about that club, I used its website to gain very quickly a clear picture of its own sense of place in Chicago culture. From its website, I learned that its own beginnings were profoundly influenced by our own. But it has chosen a different path.

I didn't know, for example, that William Frederick Poole, a member of the Literary Club and librarian of the public library in Cincinnati, moved to Chicago in 1874 to become the first librarian of that city's new public library, which soon ranked as the largest circulating library in the country. At that time, Chicago had a number of clubs, some of which were devoted to the arts and literature. Poole brought with him a copy of our club's constitution, and in 1874 a group of men used it to establish the Chicago Literary Club, based on our customs and using our constitution almost word for word initially. In 1887, Poole was asked to organize a new library under the will of Walter Newberry and held the position of librarian until he died seven years later.

Our club historian knows all about Poole, as do other members. I didn't know, but found out quickly from the club's website. As part of The Chicago Literary Club's 125th anniversary year celebration in 1999, a paper by Earle A. Shilton, *A Twenty-Minute History of the Chicago Literary Club*, presented November 28, 1960, was published by the club and made part of the proceedings. I read the paper online through the club website then saved it to my files. The paper tells how Poole came to be known as the "father" of The Chicago Literary Club:

Luckily for The Chicago Literary Club, it had a sort of "wet nurse" in its beginning in the person of Dr. William F. Pool, who was elected a member at its first regular meeting held March 31, 1874. Dr. Pool came from Cincinnati, Ohio, where he had been a member of the famous Cincinnati Literary Club founded in 1849. It is reported that the Cincinnati club is second only in age in the United States to the famous Boston Literary Club. Dr. Poole brought with him the constitution and bylaws of the Ohio club, and our early laws and customs were fashioned

largely from the practices of that older organization. Over the years, our Club has maintained a tenuous connection with the Cincinnati Literary Club, and at one of its anniversaries, several of our members bore our greetings to that older society.

The Chicago Literary Club now has 250 members, including women. Its website lists officers and committee members and literary exercises for the current season with links to copies of papers available online after presentation. The club archives are housed at The Newberry Library, with most papers dating from the 1930's. Papers available online are listed by subject in the [Index of Papers Online](#) site with links (many are listed in the index but not accessible online). The public may search for the papers of a specific author under the author's name in the [Roll of Members](#) site. Among the officers listed is a webmaster.

The home page states: "The Club is a voluntary association of men and women interested in writing original essays on topic of their own choosing and in listening to other members present their essays. Meetings are held on Monday evenings from October through May; one essay is delivered each evening. Most members are not professional writers, but all are expected to express themselves competently in English, and to present their essays in typewritten or printed form to the Secretary for inclusion in the Club archives."

The site at <http://www.chilit.org/> signals that the club is proud to be a vibrant part of Chicago and its literary and intellectual world. A former club president, Roger Ball, read a paper at its 125th anniversary dinner in 1999, *A Club for a New Millennium*, which I also read online. It began with two specific scientific advances the author thinks will change society--neuroscience and information technology. After spelling out with imagination what these discoveries mean, he issued the following vision of the Club's future:

The Chicago Literary Club stands firm in its defense of literature and the world of the imagination. During the next millennium the world will change but this club will continue to meet each Monday. A member will read a paper that has been carefully and lovingly prepared. Our interests and imagination will be stirred, and we will gather for conversation and discussion.

As the Club moves into the new millennium it must avoid the danger that besets all venerable institutions - the tendency to become excessively conservative, hidebound, and set into long-established patterns of thinking and operation. I have a few suggestions to counter this trend. They are my personal wishes and will need to be debated and thought out by the membership. It is important that this debate start and be continued. . . .

I believe that many of the papers that are produced by our members merit publication to a wider audience. I suggest that we explore opportunities for publication in media such as the Chicago Tribune or Chicago Magazine.

We should make a determined effort to attract younger members. It is not true that young people are uniformly uninterested in literature and the arts.

I think we should encourage more papers dealing with current problems rather than biography and reminiscence. The problems discussed in this paper could well be the inspiration for a number of interesting papers. . . .

The Chicago Literary Club is a jewel in the cultural life of the city. We move forward with confidence into the new millennium, and I feel honored to participate in this great adventure.

The Chicago Literary Club's website became a considered reality in aid of such goals. While relatively few club papers are accessible online to the public, the papers I read online are of very high quality. One stands out among the others. It is an excellent paper by club member and teacher of classics at the University of Chicago, Amy Apfel Kass: *Sons and Fathers: The Education of Telemachos*. Mrs. Kass read her paper before the club on April 20, 1998, and the club published three hundred printed copies in 1999, in time for its 125th anniversary celebration, with copyright in 1998 retained by Amy Apfel Kass. She is wife of University of Chicago professor Leon Kass, head of President Bush's bioethics commission. The club's publications committee apparently oversees and arranges these kinds of publications with full protection to the author.

The Chicago Literary Club has moved in three directions that differ from those we have chosen in Cincinnati. Their key choices are 1) to admit women as well as men; 2) to increase in size to 250 members; and 3) to assert a literary presence in Chicago through publications and a website. It is clear, however, that they do not think they have thereby changed the character of the Club.

I would never suggest that we imitate our progeny. Our tradition to remain all male flows deeply from our own reasons and circumstances. We should keep our size as it is. But we might consider for inspiration an earlier era when our presence was greater in the life of the City of Cincinnati than it seems to be now. We should be proud to say who we are through our archives of papers, publications and, yes, even a website.

Gordon A. Christenson
(revised February 27, 2007)