

important jihad is with ourselves to achieve holiness" or so sayeth Dusty.

Quoran = Koran.

BUDGET

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1

One Hundred Fifty Years Young

The 150th anniversary of any institution is surely grounds enough for celebration. How much more so when that institution has remained a vigorous, vibrant, and lively adornment of a city that in its turn has changed from the sprawling, brawling river town that so disappointed the mother of Anthony Trollope into one of the modest cultural oases that dot our mid-American landscape. The character of the Club has no doubt changed over the years. It was founded, as Eslie Asbury put it some years ago, by "young men who didn't know better" and certainly who never dreamed it would endure for a century and a half. Dr. Asbury was for many years the historian of the Club and then was succeeded by John Diehl. Like others before them, they have been the memory of our organization, but both have added a dimension that has greatly enhanced the

pleasure of those of us fortunate enough to have been and to be members while they have commented upon our past with grace, humor, occasionally iconoclasm, but always with integrity.

Early members no doubt reflected a variety of opinions and attitudes, but a recent paper by Robert Watkins has pointed out that a number of them shared the moral aversion to slavery that prompted them to participate in the underground railroad whose history is now being memorialized in the Freedom Center here in Cincinnati. A leader in the movement to limit slavery was Salmon P. Chase, Senator, Lincoln's Secretary of Treasury, and a member of the Literary Club from 1855. Without doubt, some of the new Club's members shared Chase's passion, but there were strong and very divergent opinions among the founding fathers. Perhaps that is why, after setting aside one meeting a month for debate on some topic of the day, they soon abandoned the custom so that today there is no formal discussion of a paper, but a great deal of informal give and take as the members enjoy a light - sometimes not so light - supper after it is delivered.

From the beginning notable, sometimes famous, men found it rewarding to belong to the Club. Among them have been the heads and board members of the Cincinnati Art Museum, the May Festival, the Cincinnati Public Library, the Cincinnati Historical and Philosophical Society (now the Cincinnati Historical Society), presidents and trustees of the University of Cincinnati, Superintendent of Schools, and numerous medical educators and practitioners, lawyers, churchmen, businessmen. Authors, too, of fiction, of history, of science, and of other subjects have been members, although neither Lafcadio Hearn nor Gustave Eckstein, two Cincinnati luminaries, can be counted among them.

Even Presidents of the United States are on the roster. Rutherford B. Hayes, to be sure one of the less distinguished Presidents of our country, was a member from 1850, although the records indicate that his sole literary endeavors were a letter in 1879 and a single contribution to a budget - two or three papers presented as a package at one meeting. On the other

hand, William Howard Taft, the other President to be a member, read several papers, including discussions of "Crime and Education", "The Molly Maguires", and "Criminal Law in Hamilton County."

Over the years, the Literary Club has been visited by a variety of illustrious guests. Among them were Ralph Waldo Emerson, Oscar Wilde, Booker T. Washington, Israel Zangwill, Amos Alonzo Stagg, Mark Twain, Robert Frost - probably a more heterogeneous company than the Club membership itself. Emerson delivered a series of five lectures, which later formed the core of his book on "The Conduct of Life." He must have been surprised at the proceeds of \$560, a very large sum for those days and commented that his brother, who knew about such things, would help him invest the money. Frost's good friend and neighbor in Southwestern Vermont was our own Rabbi Victor Reichert, several of whose papers gave us delightful insights into one of the great poets of our generation. When I was at Rutgers, Frost also habitually stopped there each spring on his way back to Vermont from Florida. Like Rabbi Reichert, Harry Owen, the Dean of Rutgers College, for whom I worked for a while, was a neighbor and friend of Frost, who incidentally was a great deal more difficult than some of the biographical material suggests.

What did Literary Club members write about? Just about everything. During the first half century, for example, there are papers on abolitionism, secession, Darwinism, fundamentalism and liberalism in the churches, the tariff, even the philosophy of Hegel. I read of civil reform and the telephone as a social evil, of free silver and the impracticability of bimetallism, of a visit to Jefferson Davis and the crisis of 1893, of the retina and its physiology and the architecture of Cincinnati, of hundreds of other subjects that range across vast areas of human knowledge. A disproportionate share of those papers were written by Charles Wilby, who was elected in 1871 and in the course of attending about 2,000 meetings wrote some 310 papers as diverse as women's suffrage and the menace of socialism to the vagaries of the Literary Club and its accumulating traditions. During that time he witnessed, in the 1924 catalogue of Club historian Robert Ralston Jones, the first submarine

cable, the first weird whisper of the long distance telephone, the first feeble flutterings of the aeroplane, discovery after discovery that made nothing in the way of invention seem impossible. What would those members of an earlier time have made of the world we have observed - the world of television and the computer, the internet and the cell phone, direct flight from Cincinnati to London, Paris, Rome, Madrid, Zurich, Frankfurt, to say nothing of flight to the moon? And what, above all, would they have made of the harnessing of nuclear energy with all its implications for the good and for the peril of our children and our grandchildren?

At present, papers delivered each Monday night are as varied as those of the past. My own sense - and it is of course a very personal preference - is that generally the most interesting and indeed the most effective papers are those that grow out of some aspect of one's personal experience. My own memory is not what it used to be - and some would say, no, and it never was - but the papers that I go back to in the Literary Club Sampler lovingly put together by Bob Hilton, Bob Allen, and John Caldwell, are those that tell me as much about the author as about the subject he has chosen. There is Gibby Carey's "Gone with the War", a sensitive recollection of the friendship, the love of a small boy for the illiterate sharecropper who came to help on the family "farm" during the Second World War. Or Stanley Troup's "Me and Mozart", which uses the life and the work of the astounding 18th century musical genius to give us insight into the life of a boy growing up in the 20th century Minnesota. Or a dozen or more others it would be tedious for you and invidious of me to list, so I will refrain.

But the most striking papers have been a trio written by the late Robert Norish after he was diagnosed to have melanoma, one of the more virulent forms of cancer. "Unfinished Business - Dear Mom" and "And You, My Father" are what their titles imply. They deal with what was said and what was left unsaid, with honest memories of differences and with the recollection of love and affection only half expressed when mother and father were alive. Most of us, I would guess, would share his feelings when he wrote: "Maybe

I'll just reach out and hold him - that would be good. I want to hear the scratch and scrape of his whiskers on my face again. I want to smell again the pipe tobacco smell and touch of Sen-Sens on his breath. I want to rub my hands again on that soft leather jacket, squeeze his neck like I did as a kid, give him a good hug. And just start talking. What difference does it make what we talk about?"

Bob's third piece, "Most This Amazing Day" was written after he learned that the cancer had spread to his kidney and that the prognosis was not a good one. He writes about how the knowledge helped him to sort out the important from the ephemeral, how in e.e. cummings words, he entered into a quest for "everything which is natural which is infinite which is yes." He describes in excruciating detail how day by day and month by month he deals with his illness and all through the descriptions his objectivity and simple courage sends chills up and down one's spine. To read the paper is to learn about courage and dignity and all that is noblest in the human spirit. I feel privileged to have known Robert Norrish and I am glad that he shared his insight and its lessons with his fellows in the Literary Club.

So much for the past. What about the future? Our President, Dr. John MacLeod, will have something to say about that, I am sure, in his address at the anniversary observance tomorrow night. Accordingly, I will be brief. Many of our members have told me that they relish the "heterogeneity" of the Literary Club. By this they mean that the membership includes lawyers and physicians, engineers and historians, businessmen of various sorts. In fact, we are a most homogeneous crew, a group whom some outside observers might label as nearly-dead or not-so-nearly-dead white males. We have made some real strides in recent years in lowering the average age of the Club, so that its future is likely to be in very good hands, but we have made almost no headway in the recruitment of able and interesting candidates from the minority community. In a society whose profile is changing so dramatically - even in Cincinnati - it is apparent that if the Literary Club is to live up to its self-image as one of the cultural icons of our community it will have to

broaden out, aggressively seek to provide its members with the opportunity to have new insights and different perceptions - in other words to continue the hope of those who founded the Club a century and a half ago.

Similarly, while the rumor occasionally surfaces that the original club considered the inclusion of women, that clearly was not the case. Dr. Asbury's explanation in the 125th anniversary volume reflects the attitudes of his time and I cannot refrain from quoting at length: "The Club had no plan to include women. The reason was that some members liked to drink. Until prohibition, drinking in mixed company was not acceptable, thus for 77 years the Club met on Saturday night, universal stag night, with the least interference to the social life of the family. When Saturday night became socially fashionable, the Club changed its meetings to Monday night and drank less. Another reason against women members was that in the Victorian period, some women in any organization were apt to be activists, unpopular with both men and women. Cincinnati had such genteel reformers as Catherine Beecher, Frances Wright (free love and trousers for women) and Lucy Stone, wife of member Henry Blackwell, but most of them over the country were shrill, raucous and uninteresting. The clincher is that the wives of members are proud to have their husbands in the Literary Club and have no desire to change it into some other kind of organization."

Quite aside from what most contemporary scholars would regard as a colorful but inaccurate misreading of the nineteenth century, the question arises whether the time is not far distant when it would serve the Literary Club well to expand its perspectives and to give itself the luxury of a much richer menu of points of view. As we approach the next millennium, it is a thought, I believe, worth pondering.

However that may be, we are here this afternoon to celebrate, not to prescribe. So please join us in saluting, with pride and affection, an organization that is 150 years young. To the next 150 years.

Henry R. Winkler

October 25, 1999



B. R. Spofford

2

The Celestial Branch

Our 150th anniversary is a very memorable milestone in the history of the Literary Club. It calls for some extra digging into the archives by the historian to get back close to our roots. It would be wonderful if one of the stalwart young men who started our ancient and beloved club back in 1849 could tell us just what went on during our infant beginnings. I recalled that Eslie Asbury made such an effort over thirty years ago and claims to have contacted our early forebears.

Most of you remember Eslie Asbury, who was Mr. Literary Club while he held forth in these rooms. His many papers were written in an unpretentious style with colorful charm and humor as well as solid substance, and whose generous-sized historian's shoes I've been struggling to fill for the past ten years. Many of you will recall, too, the fascinating letter he read in April 1965. It occurred to me that the letter might provide some clue to help with my search. As didn't explain how he got it but claimed it was from the

Secretary of the Celestial Branch of the Literary Club. I believe it might be appropriate to reread some of that letter this evening. The heavenly secretary wrote:

"Dear Editor of the Budget, Please report to your members that regular meetings are held by the Celestial Branch of the Club. It may come as no surprise to you that through a decree of St. Peter, all members of the Literary Club who are in good standing when they leave the Earth, automatically enter heaven and automatically become members of our club - All of your doctors and even lawyers are here, thanks to their Literary Club membership, but it is true that these two professions are (otherwise) poorly represented. A study of the classified (Heaven) roster revealed only two other doctors and one other lawyer.

"Our meetings are held only once a month because most of our members are busy with other interests. By special dispensation, a few, including Walter Draper, Charlie Wilby and Walter Keagy are literally tied up by the club officers on the last Monday in October. They were caught trying to escape back to Earth for your anniversary dinner. At our meetings the appointed reader selects one of the papers he wrote for the living club. We require the body of the original paper to remain the same but we permit and encourage the revision within certain limits. It may be shortened, lengthened and mechanically improved to meet the higher standards of Celestial Belles-Lettres.

"Much lively conversation at the tables is engendered by this variation. We recall our many mistakes and absurdities especially of our over-long and over-serious first papers and are pleased to be able to correct them. What more could a Literary Club member ask of heaven? We immortals also make the author the center of congratulation and are glad you continue the custom since it provides one place on Earth where a high-class mortal can earn a kingship for one night every two years.

"As you can see, we continue to feel about tradition as you do. We respect it and usually follow it, but we are not ideologically hide-bound. Like all

intelligent people, we believe that true conversation means the orderly management of inevitable change. On the whole, we find ourselves in the same position as some of your older members - we have arrived. They found Pacem in Terris, we have achieved Pacem in Paradisus. We fill out no forms. We have no bureaucracy. Having fulfilled all Calvinistic requirements and meticulously paid our taxes while on Earth, we have attained permanent angelic security. Old political opponents look back with many a laugh at their sham battles having found their total motivation as earthlings to be consistently protoplasmic. To wit: 1) All of us liked to eat to preserve ourselves. 2) All loved at least to go through the motions and emotions of reproducing ourselves. And 3), when we sought power, actually all we needed was appreciation and applause. Since our reactions were exactly the same as any good bird dog, we must confess to have taken ourselves a bit too seriously.

"I apologize for moralizing from an unassailable position and all heaven knows we abhor preaching, but in closing I must congratulate you on not reverting to a debating society and not becoming a downtown branch of some professional club, political party or reform organization. Above all, it pleases us that you still cherish literally your motto, "Here comes one with a paper".

Sincerely yours,

The secretary of the Celestial Branch of the Literary Club"

Since As heard from the Celestial Branch and is now a part of it himself, it seems there should be a way to get a message through. The immortals all realize the importance of our 150th anniversary. I thought the breath-taking progress in the development of the computer might make communication somewhat easier. I tried browsing the internet using all of the available search engines include Alta Vista, which one would think most likely to reach the heavenly branch clubhouse if any could. But no luck. The e-mail wizard is still not quite skillful enough to span that

great gap. I had hoped to make a grand breakthrough to our club forebears and am sorry to disappoint you.

All is not lost however. By a stroke of good fortune, I did find a bona fide message. It's from one of the twelve bright young men who, in October 1849, gathered in Nelson Cross' Spartan, second-floor office in an old building at Third and Hammond Streets and planted the seed that flourished into our cherished Literary Club. It's been buried in our dusty archives for well over a century. The message is a remarkable five-page letter written and signed by Ainsworth R. Spofford in his own hand. It's a reminiscence of beginning days of the Club with brief, piquant comments about some four dozen of our early members. It's dated, Washington, Oct. 25th 1886, 113 years ago to the day. Spofford was only twenty-four in 1849 when he and his eleven alert young associates founded the Club. By 1886 he had become the chief Librarian of Congress. He had been invited to attend the Club's 37th anniversary celebration. His reply is one of our long-hidden treasures. Now that it has come to light, what could be more appropriate on our 150th than to include it as part of the historian's paper. You'll hear directly from one of our founders of 1849.

Ainsworth Spofford wrote:

"Washington, Oct. 25th 1886

"Mr. President,

Honored by your invitation to attend the 37th anniversary of the club, or to send a brief token of my regard, I will give you a fragment of reminiscence. Having been one of the original Forty-niners, who founded the Club in that year of our Lord, I cherish a lively memory of all its members during its first decade. Our early meetings differed somewhat from the order which has since become current. Debate, or oral discussion of a topic chosen a week or two in advance, was the leading feature, and written essays occupied a secondary place. Almost from the beginning, we celebrated the last Saturday in every month (as you now do) by an "Informal" gathering, in which songs, stories, and recitations, preceded by a "Paper" of

miscellanea read by an Editor chosen for the occasion, were the order of the evening. Refreshments on these convivial occasions were simple, seldom extending beyond sandwiches and Catawba, or crackers and cheese, the only more elaborate banquet being reserved for the Anniversary evening in October.

"The early debates were very diversified, covering in the questions canvassed, a wide field of literary, historical and social topics. As nearly all the members were young, the discussions were animated, and often ardent, tho' never once degenerating into wrangling or personalities. At the close of each debate, the President of the evening was expected to sum up the leading arguments advanced on both sides, and render a decision as to which side had been best maintained. This was followed by a viva voce vote upon the question, in which members recorded their real opinions, which were sometimes the opposite of what they had been zealously maintaining in debate.

"Among the early members of the association whose figures rise freshly in memory, though separated by more than a generation in point of time, are Henry A. Warriner, a keen idealist; the subtlest brain among us (now departed), Algernon S. Sullivan, the jaunty and chivalric orator, whose white head now ornaments the New York bar, - Salmon P. Chase, who spoke but once in the Club, but who spoke so well that we wished he would speak always, - Murat Halstead, rosiest of hard-worked editors, a happy compound of the Philistine and the wag, - C.C. Hine, the most guileless of radical reformers, - Edwin D. Dodd, earnest and hard-headed, whose one song - The Tall Young Oysterman of Oliver Wendell Holmes always brought down the house, - Robert B. Warden, a notable spinner of stories at Informals and weaver of webs at regular meetings, - Nelson Cross, the bright and witty young lawyer, - Charles P. James, slow and deliberate of speech, but keen and clear of mind, - Wm. C. McDowell, a brilliant and fervid speaker, with fine powers of mimicry, often exercised for our entertainment, - Edward Mills and his brother Lewis E., now both gone over to the majority, - Dr. S.G. Menzies, a born conservative, and Dr. William Owens, a born radical, - Edward F. Noyes, whose fine, rotund voice was never happier than in a poetic

recitation, - Charles C. Pierce, a dark and solitary soul, who vanished from among us no one knew when or where, - Isaac C. Collins, the genial, the ever-ready, the lamented, - Frank Collins, his high-spirited brother, - T. Buchanan Read, poet and artist, - Rutherford B. Hayes, whom some thought inclined to indolence, but who was some times roused to earnest and glowing eloquence, - George A. Strong, author of many exquisite parodies written for the Club, of Longfellow, Tennyson and Bryant, - Dr. F. Roelker, the genial, scholarly and gentle humorist, - Henry B. Blackwell, a fertile, erratic, luminous intellect, - James Warnock, astute and long-headed, - B.M. McConkey, scholar, artist, wit, whose inimitable imitation of Mr. Emerson's style is still among the archives of the Club, - R.H. Stephenson, high-minded and whole-souled, now no more among us, - John W. Herron, whose strong, sledge-hammer utterance always bespoke the man of clear convictions, - William T. Rogers, mildest of metaphysical philosophers, - William Guilford, printer and poet, now in the Register's office at Washington, - Manning F. Force, a careful investigator, master of the art of clear reasoning, - W.J. Flagg, wit and writer, - William Ferguson, heavy but reasonably safe in argument, - Dr. H.P. Gatchell, man of many hobbies and brilliant regenerator of the world, - Edward P. Cranch, a wandering escaped angel from another sphere, whom we used to entertain unawares, and who, on much persuasion, would sing a comic song so unutterably droll that some of us rolled off our seats, - Dr. N.E. Soule, a clean-souled, pale-visaged scholar, - Thomas Ewing, Jr., a shrewd and rather speculative mind with a strong bent toward politics, - J. Bloomfield Leake, afterwards U.S. District attorney at Chicago, - J.D. Buchanan, printer by profession, and hater of aristocrats and capitalists by instinct, - Patrick Mallon, the genial, quick-witted, ever-popular genius of good humor, - William Miller, the little artist, whose song, The Widow Machree, used always to convulse the room, - W.U. Dickson, of emphatic opinions, emphatic expression and emphatic manner, - R.D. Mussey, the stalwart, good-humored, ever-ready speech-maker, - Thew Wright, an old school cavalier who used to delight in prodding every Quixotic novelty that lifted its head above the horizon, - Wm. B. Wright, one of our nimble wits, whom the fates have translated into a Boston

clergyman, - W.M. Bateman, the hard-headed, persistent hammerer at an argument, - A.F. Tait and James H. Bear, artists both, who migrated early to Eastern cities, - C.A.L. Richards, poet and literary artist who took to the pulpit spite of Thew Wright's warning - 'If you do, you'll dry up as sure as you are born', and M.D. Conway, a born literary man, whose multifarious writings have reached the people of two worlds.

"This is more than half a century of names; yet I must have omitted some - equally notable members, of the years before the war, for I have no list of the Club and write from memory alone.

"Looking backward to the many serious as well as joyous hours spent in intellectual companionship with the men I have named, I do not hesitate to reckon my twelve years membership in the Literary Club as the most valuable part of my education.

A.R. Spofford"

For tonight, that's as close as I can get to our beginning. Perhaps on our 200th or even our 175th, the electronic wizards will have unlocked enough of the secrets of this wonderful universe so that you youngsters can talk directly with Ainsworth Spofford and us other members of the Celestial Branch.

John Diehl

In the Company of Men

Our gathering this evening for the observance of the 150th birthday of The Literary Club is surely remarkable and not the least as we find the Club, though advanced in years, in good health and surely - and we can give special emphasis to this tonight - in good spirits. How to explain the vitality, the

heartiness of our ways and pleasures? Certainly a good measure of the success of the Club is the respect that is cultivated for our predecessors and what they built, as we do as we honor them tonight. Also the balance of being faithful to our rules and traditions, both written and otherwise, while at the same time exploring new paths and methods - feeling free to express ourselves creatively, personally, with risk-taking - and with the assurance that what we write and have to say will be listened to thoughtfully and with appreciation.

A Club that has found ways to prosper and grow, to remain lively and relevant, through all the varied times of the past 150 years should be studied and appreciated. Through wars, depressions, the industrial revolution, through the transformation of a country from dispersed and rural to urban, to megalopolis, through the sweep of scientific developments in communication, medicine and manufacturing - the Club has more than survived, it has engaged with the times, adapted and moved ahead, sometimes with dignity and grace but far from always - human foibles are regularly in evidence.

As I reflect in this way it appears to me that the changes in society over the life of the Club to date have been major and profound yet, for the most part, gradual enough to give some opportunity for reflection and accommodation. Though now, as I have commented on other occasions, I feel that there is a marked acceleration occurring as we enter the home stretch and approach the finish line of the twentieth century, and possibly we are coming into even more challenging times.

In the twenty five years since the last significant anniversary meeting we have of course lost many respected and well loved members. I wanted to take note of four who especially touched the life and development of the Club over the past twenty five years and are no longer with us, Charlie Aring, As Asbury, Victor Reichert and Sam Sandmill. The respect and affection we have for those who have cared about the Club and worked unselfishly to promote its well being are more important to express this evening. And in

this vein we should turn to Oliver Gale, the only Club member who was at the centennial observance fifty years ago and remains with us this evening as a contributing member of the Club.

Where we gather is important and since 1930 we have been meeting here on Fourth Street in our venerable and storied clubhouse. During recent years care of the Club has been re-energized and re-focused - and more generously financed - in the work to repair, maintain and add to the attractiveness of our quarters. Most recently the work of our conservators Jim Alexander, now our most recent past president, and Bob Dorsey, our current conservator, has been remarkably effective, another way we have demonstrated our care and respect for the past. The clubhouse has never been in better condition - though you should count on significant conservation laying ahead.

The importance of respecting tradition while staying in tune with the contemporary scene is aided by the presence during the past twenty five years of the "Vice President's Book" introduced at the Club celebration in 1974, having been created by Ed Merkel - another very influential Club member who is no longer with us - and now annually handed from Vice President to Vice President as a means of assuring ourselves that some measure of continuing organization exists in the club - a presence that the membership may at times come to doubt. I know that most of you are not aware of this book, I was not until Jim Alexander passed it on to me, letting me know that all I needed to know was contained in this looseleaf, loosely organized notebook, paradigmatic of the Club's administrative style - just right.

The ambience of pleasurable fellowship does not overlook the acknowledgment of the earnest work of those "who come with a paper". The admiration for the generally high quality of the papers, the evidence of careful, thoughtful preparation, the impressive span of subject matter and style. I haven't gone archival in this but in my fifteen years of membership in the Club my view is that the general quality of the papers has been well maintained with a good seasoning of exceptional offerings and despite the steady maturation

of the members - geezers are certainly generously represented - the dozing index during readings is holding steady if not in fact improving. I dwell on this a bit as I think it especially remarkable that the Club has maintained its literary focus meaningfully, enjoyably and with quality for 150 years. Our ineffable mix of observing tradition, and the non-observance of tradition, the encouragement of individual spontaneity and creativity has been notably successful. Here in the club the senior years have golden qualities and here at least our accumulated wisdom and good sense will not go unrecognized and unappreciated.

One of the most fundamental changes in the world during the past 25-50 years is indicated in the general increase in the longevity of the American population - I phrase it that way as increased longevity has not been the experience world-wide during those years. In parts of the world - most notably Russia - longevity has declined. The American experience, though, is evident in the membership of the Club. You may recall - though I can be mildly surprised if you do - that the founding members of our Club were all about 25 years old. I referred to that phenomena in a paper a number of years ago, "From Golden Boys to Golden Buckeyes". However, you probably will not be surprised to hear that, now, of the 109 current members of the Club, of various categories, whose birthdates are available to Bob Hilton, the skillful and indefatigable gatherer of this information, that 56 are over the age of 70. In my mind that's to be celebrated. Geezers make the club a good place, and the Club, I believe, is good for geezers. My more speculative thinking is that Club membership and participation promotes longevity, but that sounds like a whole new paper not to be further developed this evening.

While I obviously celebrate longevity, at the same time I experience concern about that future of the Club. At present we have 10 regular members of our 100 between the ages of 36 and 50, not a sufficiently sturdy representation. I can see the difficulties of being a Club member in younger years - the experience though gratifying also carries some challenge in finding the time and energy for reasonably regular

attendance and a "room of one's own" in which to create remarkable literature while in the midst of challenging fatherhood and familyhood, and likely a deep immersion in a developing career. And while the more senior among us can recall those busy years, my reading of the contemporary family experience is that it is qualitatively different from what we navigated, more is required of the husband/father.

I want to develop this material further about younger members - but somewhat parenthetically - I have given some thought to creating a new class of membership for the most senior members, in addition to or in parallel with the Honorary Membership that we now use - we currently have nine Honorary Members. To refresh your understanding - Honorary Members do not fall within the 100 member ceiling the Club has maintained since 1875. We have 10 members over 80 years of age who are not, or not as yet, honorary members. My notion is to create a senior membership class, not within the 100 member ceiling, so that the recruitment of younger members is facilitated. Such senior members would continue to carry the usual responsibilities. The suggestion will need study if it meets with some interest on the part of the Club. A method for accomplishing this goal is to enter a member into senior membership when the combination of his age and years of Club membership total 90, or some other to be decided number. My last suggestion related to numbers - you likely felt or heard as a small signal my saying the Club had a ceiling of 100 members for 125 years - can the millennium create an opportunity for consideration of a higher ceiling?

Do I digress - I don't believe so - it all seems of a piece, very interwoven. I will go back to the everyday living experience young people are having these days that leads me to wonder how often membership in the Club may seem relevant to qualified young people and what might be done to increase that sense of relevance.

My turning to the average life experience of men in their 30's or 40's has the point of identifying some reasons that there can be hesitation in these men in considering or moving toward Literary Club membership.

The pattern of both parents working and both parents sharing much more significantly the routines and tasks of homemaking and child care feels different and significant. And the sharing of recreational time and how that recreational time is jointly allocated is crucial. Of course my thoughts go to the recent and totally hilarious paper on that theme given by Albert Pyle, a younger member of the Club, Boadicea Et Al. That paper is also a serious and thoughtful contribution. Albert describes the cleverness of men in employing a Jujitsu maneuver - turning the eagerness of women to share power in the world against them and into a victory for men, who could not be free of the woman's hold over them and go find a quiet place to talk about sports. Albert whimsically ends his paper by declaring that the war between the sexes is over. He knows better.

But he had much to say that was more than hilarious including observing the restlessness in this room as he dealt with the war between the sexes. "Gentleman," he said, "If we can't feel safe in this room what's the point of locking the doors?"

The doors of the Literary Club have not always been locked to women. Over 100 years ago, in January 1897, the Cincinnati Enquirer carried this headline "Ladies Night at The Literary Club May Become an Annual Event". The item read, "The Literary Club, which is the oldest of its kind in Cincinnati, inaugurated a Ladies Night on the evening of the 13th, which was the first time that it has entertained in this way since its organization in 1847 (the Enquirer had been misinformed about that date). The meeting was held in the elegant and commodious rooms of the club on West Eighth Street. The president, Mr. F.M. Coppock presided and read selections from previous budgets, after which refreshments were served. A musical program, and singing and lastly a social hour followed. - The affair proved such a success that it will probably become an annual event". I thank Roger Newstedt for bringing this piece of history to my attention.

Let me assure you that there will not be a MacLeod motion this evening - mirroring Bruce Petrie's

memorable paper "Mihaly's Motion" a motion moving that women be offered membership in the Club. (That paper was delivered in 1984). Bruce's paper was a delightful spoof on The Literary Club's acute discomfort with the possibility of female attendance and membership. My hunch about what has transpired from 1897 to the present time takes the following line.

In 1897 the women's suffrage movement had not as yet developed a full head of steam. Patriarchy was relatively unchallenged, women's place was in the home, not only did they not vote but they had restricted rights to property and limited legal recognition about making decisions regarding children. It seems possible to me that men were sufficiently unchallenged regarding women gaining power that they could feel totally unthreatened by admitting women to the Club's rooms. I see the atmosphere very differently in recent years.

Let me refer to the thinking of another Club member, Alan Winkler, who has given sustained study and attention to the issues I am addressing. You can understand I feel they are relevant as we make ourselves available to younger people. Earlier this year, in January, in one of his Cincinnati Post columns, "In Other Words", Alan, under the heading "Feminism Has Matured But Still Isn't Central in American Life" describes his puzzlement when his daughter revealed she didn't regard herself as a feminist. He found her position curious and wondered why his daughter had this reaction to a movement that has had such a powerful impact on all of our lives. And why his daughter's reaction when circumstances are so different than they were thirty years ago? He reviews the situation as having been quiet during the 50's, after World War II and Rosie the Riveter, but restlessness grew in the 60's. He sees a turning point being the publication of "The Feminine Mystique" in 1963, a book by Betty Friedan that quickly became a best seller and helped launch the feminist revolution. But as the movement gained steam he identifies, as do I, a counteraction and believes that even as change occurs - or possibly because change occurs - opposition remains as deeply rooted as ever. That opposition, possibly now intensified, Alan feels is related to the fear young women, and men, today feel about

acknowledging they might be feminists. Being a feminist means, among other things, questioning the assumptions of patriarchy. His column includes the followup that his daughter became "more educated" and works today on women's issues in the field of public health.

My own education in these areas has been deepened by reading Gerta Lerner's two books "The Creation of Patriarchy" published in 1986 and "The Creation of Feminist Consciousness" published in 1993. Gerta Lerner is a well recognized and respected historian at the University of Wisconsin and I find her writing scholarly and fundamentally enlightening. You might imagine that I had some learning to do, and a long road to travel as a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, if you recall that Freud's patriarchal orientation was deeply ingrained in his thinking and work and that he found feminine psychology - so foreign to his own - "a dark continent". To embrace a historical approach to patriarchy was eye opening for me. Lerner traces the development over some four thousand years of the ideas, symbols and metaphors, by which men institutionalized their dominance of women. And in her second volume Lerner documents the 1200 years of struggle of women to free their minds of patriarchal thought and to find their own voices.

How does all this relate to the Club. I believe that, unwittingly, the Literary Club has come to be viewed - whether accurately or appropriately, or otherwise, as something of a bastion of patriarchy and I believe we are badly served to the degree that that is true.

My belief is that during the past century a profound restructuring of male/female relationships has occurred. There has been an ebb and flow in the progress of this restructuring but the forward movement is undeniable and I see this restructuring being as central a change in our society, in our world - as influential a force now and in the coming century - as the struggle to productively use - and safely use - the profusion of scientific advances we are witnessing, the struggle to develop health environments in which to live - or the proliferating conflicts attending the

efforts to create and maintain international peace and stability.

With regard to the Club I do not advocate any concrete changes in the way we function but rather an awareness of the tensions we are all living through as men and women share power and responsibility more equally and more equitably. It is a serious transformation, sometimes grim enough that we have a burst of relieving mirth when someone like Albert Pyle can be a modern Aristophanes and make our own gender battles into entertaining play. My hunch is that a thoughtful awareness on our parts of the tension laden ambience in which the Club exists will reduce the tendency to regard the Club as the seat of patriarchy - that our all male membership will continue to work best for us. At the same time I can imagine that a younger group of male members, more in tune with the changing times, may arrive at a different point of view.

I do indeed recognize that this notion of single gender meetings, rather than mixed gender, is a highly charged concept and I have in mind the contributions of two quite contrasting individuals that allow an interesting scanning of some of the relevant feelings and ideas.

The first scanning is of Mary Daly, the well known feminist philosopher, a tenured faculty member at Boston College, who is often in the news as she has published seven books that are often used as texts in universities, but most recently has gained public notice, again, by refusing to accept male students in her course called "Introduction to Feminist Ethics". The 70 year old self-described radical contends that young men's presence would be distracting and disruptive to female students engaged in emotional and intellectual feminist debates. In the revolutionary spirit of the 1960's, when she began teaching at the Jesuit College, Daly refused to be backed down, opting for a leave of absence in the face of an ultimatum from the administration: Teach men along with women or stop teaching. And now, again, she says, "I chose to stand my ground." Saying further, "To me, the root of the mess in society is patriarchy, what I'm trying to do is get at the core of what oppresses women." To the men

as she escorted them from her class, she said, "You are not welcome here." Strong language - Albert Pyle now knows that 70 year old women still wield sharp well prepared tongues with even more facility and ferocity than hat pins.

However, contrary to the administrators at Boston College, The Literary Club is free to find its own way, free to choose a single gender approach and perhaps Mary Daly has a point when she declares there are times and/or subjects when a single gender audience works best for contemplative work. I'm inclined to agree with that while also applauding the re-balancing of power and privilege between men and women that has occurred especially during the past century. But surely as the Berlin walls of patriarchy have been undermined and fallen, the attendant release of forces and concepts has created flood conditions now and then, here in America and all over the world.

A quieter voice than Mary Daly's is available to us as we digest some of these issues, Robert Bly, a poet, storyteller, and lecturer. I refer especially to his book "Iron John," published in 1990. In this book he speaks of growing up and personal development - of forms of community initiation. He emphasizes primarily and essentially the responsibility of older men to teach younger men. He makes it clear that he does not seek to turn men against women, nor to return men to the domineering mode that has led to repression of women and their values for centuries. He sees a men's movement and a woman's movement as not inherently challenging to each other but moving with separate timetables. Bly sees the development of men as getting in touch with the "dark side" or the Wild Man in all of us and gradually leading us to become more of a shaman, a woodsman, or wise man. And to do this work of transforming the Wild Man Bly promotes the use of stories that touch our histories and deeper experiences - fairy stories, legends, myths, hearth stories - tapping our reservoirs where we keep new ways of responding that we can adopt when the conventional and current ways wear out. You can feel and hear that I believe I'm describing The Literary Club. In our Company of Men we tell war stories (a member should not be limited to only one as our custom has it), poems,

fictional tales, sports sagas, biographical accounts, our own myths and legends. And in this telling and sharing, Bly believes, and I share this belief, we initiate a pathway to our continuing development and to what Bly terms "positive male energy".

What is remarkable is that the men in this Club, over a period of many years, have created a fellowship and a forum, that has generated the quality of development and positive male energy of which Bly speaks. We can again salute our predecessors. What I hope for is that we can make it easier and even more attractive for the Club to bring in young men to be initiated and immersed in our ways, to carry on the good work. And I do imagine that if we are less concerned about the power and presence of women about the Club that the positive male energy of our activities will create even more inducement.

So we observe our Sesquicentennial on a strong, high note, we close out the twentieth century with a sense of keeping pace with our times and we enter the new millennium with a pledge to carry forward the good works of our forefathers earnestly, enthusiastically and in our tradition of having a jolly good time.

John A. MacLeod, M.D.

ASTONISHING

November 1, 1999

John H. Wilson, III

Holy Mary, Mother of God.

Pray for us.

Saint John the Baptist

Pray for us.