

INKLINGS and IDLINGS

The Newsletter of the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association

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

Summer, 2000

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.

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Annual Meeting

In accordance with Article III of the By-Laws of the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association, the annual meeting of the organization will be held at 7 p.m., Tuesday, July 11, 2000 at the Visitors' Center, 313 East Third Street, Galesburg, Illinois.

At that time, officers and directors of the Association will be elected for the coming year, and such other business as may properly come before the Association will be transacted.

All members of the Association are encouraged to attend.

Light refreshments will be served.

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Raleigh Barnstead

Raleigh Barnstead, who was for many years a member of the Board of Directors of the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association, passed away after the last issue of *Inklings and Idlings* was published.

Mr. Barnstead was active in many community organizations, but perhaps his most enduring work was that done in the area of historic preservation. As president of the

Galesburg Historical Society, he was one of the leaders of the effort to heighten awareness and appreciation of Galesburg's past.

To the Association, he brought a wealth of knowledge and experience which he shared freely and generously.

To commemorate his incalculable contributions, the Association has provided extensive plantings at the entrance to the Visitors' Center. These will be enhanced in future years, so that Mr. Barnstead's work for the Association and the Site will be remembered.

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Welcome Additions to the Membership Roll

It is always a pleasure to welcome new members of the Carl Sandburg Historic Site Association. They are:

Barbara Brown
M/M Gene (Mary Lou) Cochrane
Will Gustafson
M/M Terry (Doris) Holmes
Jane Clark Koldahl
Mathilda Mangieri
Mark Perelman
M/M Jerry Schroeder
Joseph Semenza
Mary Strawn
M/M James (Myrna) Young

Through inadvertence, the name of Jeanne Struble was not included in the last list of new members. We apologize for the oversight.

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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Songbag Series

The popular Songbag Concert Series will resume at 7 p.m. on September 14th at the Visitors' Center, 313 East Third Street in Galesburg.

It will feature Any Olde Tyme, a band from Peoria. The members will be presenting traditional American folk music on guitar, mountain and hammer dulcimer, and auto harp.

According to John Heasley, the series coordinator, the other concerts will be held on the second Thursday of October, November, February, March and April. If you have enjoyed the Concerts in the past, you will want to keep those dates free.

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From the Site Superintendent

Steve Holden, our site interpreter, has spent the last several weeks working with Kaulfuss Designers, Inc. of Chicago and exhibit designers from the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. They are creating a new exhibit for the north room of the Visitors' Center.

It will encompass all of Sandburg's life including his Chicago years and later in Michigan and North Carolina as well as the story of his life here in Galeburg. Steve is coordinating the work and searching the files for images, quotes, and general information for the exhibit labels. These will be permanent exhibits so we want to make sure the information is correct, and that it and the photographs are interesting.

The completion date is set for the

second week in September. If everything goes as planned, we want to hold a grand opening and have a party open to our members.

Katie McGunnigal, fresh from her first year at Cedarville University, will be helping us again this summer at the Site.

The flowers are blooming in the Sandburg garden, so come for a visit if you haven't been here recently. Just take a walk through the garden--a lot folks have been doing that lately.

I was in Sweden in May for almost two weeks with my daughter Jennifer. We found long-lost cousins, toured Stockholm and Malmo and spent a lot of time visiting quaint villages. What a beautiful country!

We visited the Emmigrant Institute in Vaxjo where one can find information about one's ancestors--the Swedes kept wonderful records. My great grandfather, Peter Hedbloom, lived in Avon, Illinois. We knew little about him, but we found him in the records. He was from Alfta, Sweden, and had left three sisters there. If their grandchildren are living still in Alfta, we may have lots of new cousins to discover and visit. We will save that for our next trip.

- Carol Nelson

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Wrinklings and Wild Things

*"Love and marriage,
Love and marriage
Go together like
a horse and carriage..."*

Old Blue Eyes, et al

Nearly everyone familiar with Sandburg's Rootabaga Stories knows of "The Wedding Procession of the

Rag Doll and the Broom Handle and Who Was in It" (available in the Visitors' Center shop, under separate cover). Less familiar, perhaps, is a sequel, "The Honeymoon Tree," published in Potato Face, 1930.

As June is the traditional month for weddings, the story seems to be perfect for this issue's column. Enjoy!

...On a little road to the southwest of the Village of Cream Puffs you might see the golden thumb buckwheat flowers if you come in the right time of the year.

Two white leaves run out of this flower. On one leaf is a golden thumb print of a man. On the other leaf is the golden thumb print of a woman.

If a rainstorm comes and blows the leaves off the stems the thumb prints of the two leaves stick together. Through the wet rain on the black dirt they stick together.

And afterward when they dry in the sun the white leaves turn to grey ashes and dust but the two golden thumb prints of the man and the woman, they stay as golden skeletons for many years.

There is one case of a couple of golden thumbs hanging in the sun on a high booblow tree limb where the wind had blown it--and there for a thousand years and a hundred days this couple of golden thumb prints was hanging in the sun, two little golden skeletons.

And there are stories told by men who slept for a night under this booblow tree and they say when the wind was blowing softly from the southwest there was a singing like a man and a woman humming a soft song together.

And sometimes there were little fire lights ran along the lines of the two little golden thumbs of the man and the woman. So for those who slept under this booblow tree there was a little fire picture of two golden thumbs together humming a song up in the tree top.

And it is easy to understand why this tree was named the Honeymoon Tree and why lovers with the ringing of the wedding bells still in their ears wished to come to the Honeymoon Tree on their honeymoon trip.

Now when the Rag Doll and the Broom Handle had their wedding they decided to ride out to the Honeymoon Tree for their honeymoon. They hitched five tin horses to a wooden wagon, made a calico parasol to keep the sun off, and bought a sack of fresh roasted peanuts for a nickel a sack, and started away.

As they drove out the little road to the southwest of the village, the Rag Doll said to the Broom Handle, "It is a sweet little road to ride on for a honeymoon. The smell of the golden thumb buckwheat flowers comes to my nose and the look of them comes to my eyes and I nearly want to cry it is so sweet to smell and so sweet to look at. Tell me. I see this road has a beginning where it begins. Can you tell me if it has an end where it ends?"

"Yes, sweetheart, I can tell you," answered the Broom Handle. "Long ago my father's mother told me about it.

"She told me this road runs to the Baby Shoe Country where the Baby Shoe Trees grow. There the fathers and mothers go together late in the year and pick the baby shoes off the trees. On trees not so big the baby shoes grow.

"Once my father's mother showed me a baby slipper blossom. It is a dark green flower with five baby toes

conscription of young men into the Swedish military system was one of the great issues of emigration. The life of the conscripts was harsh and pointless and marked by poor pay, bad food, and harsh discipline. A large growth in population made food scarce and job opportunities slim.

There were already about twenty Swedes living in Galesburg when the Bishop Hill group arrived in 1846 to settle nearby. Some of the Bishop Hill Swedes found life there unsatisfactory and moved to Galesburg in 1849. Their presence, along with the jobs available with the Burlington Railroad, encouraged others to join them throughout the 1850s. By 1860 they composed 12 per cent of the town's population. Galesburg continued to be a mecca for Swedes during the next fifty years. Their local concentration climbed to about one third of the town's population by World War I. Today it is estimated that a fifth of Galesburg's residents are of Swedish descent.

They have made enormous contributions to the growth and prosperity of the city. Galesburg has the distinction of being the cradle of the Swedish-American press. The first Swedish-American newspaper in the United States, "Hemlandet," was founded here by Reverend T.N. Hasselquist in 1854. It was published at Galesburg until the close of 1858 when its headquarters were moved to Chicago. Reverend Hasselquist led the Swedish community in the 1850s and 1860s. Through the pages of his newspaper he urged his compatriots to oppose slavery, support temperance, and give their votes to the Republican party. The Swedes of Galesburg furnished a proportionate number of recruits to the Union Army during the Civil War. Company C, 43rd Illinois Volunteer Infantry, was made up exclusively of Swedish-Americans from Galesburg and

vicinity

Many of the Swedes found good paying jobs with the two railroads and became skilled mechanics and foremen. Others worked for Brown's Corn Planter Works which had such a preference for Swedish craftsmen that to a large extent the factory was considered Swedish.

Manufacturing workers, brickyard workers, businessmen, grocers, firemen and tradesmen, Swedes worked at many trades and professions. They became city employees, aldermen, sheriff, and city treasurer.

The first Swedish Lutheran congregation was organized in 1850 by Pastor L.P. Esbjorn from Andover. By 1879 the membership was 1,497. There were also the second Swedish Lutheran church, the Swedish Methodists, and the Swedish Baptists. Many held services in Swedish.

In Carl Sandburg's autobiography, *Always the Young Strangers*, he writes of his adventures growing up in this Swedish-American community. It must have been comforting to August and Clara, his parents, to be surrounded by their fellow countrymen and to hear the familiar sounds of the Swedish language in shops and church when they were so far from their native land.

If you wish to do further reading on this subject, these books will be helpful:

Holmquist, *Pioneer Cross*
Hughes, *Social Relations in a Railroad Town*
Olson, *History of the Swedes in Illinois*

- Carol Nelson

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Carl Sandburg Evens the Score

(Carl Sandburg and Ernest Hemingway were two of Illinois' greatest native authors. In this article, which first appeared in *The Rockford Review*, Dr. Richard Sandburg contrasts some aspects of the two men's lives.)

Ernest Hemingway ended his life in 1961 at his Idaho home at the age of 61. Carl Sandburg passed away at his Flat Rock, North Carolina, home on July 22, 1967, at the age of 89.

Although it has been over thirty years since those venerable authors graced the writing scene, their admirers and families strive to keep memories alive with festivals in their former habitats.

Sandburg and Hemingway's lives paralleled in many ways. Sandburg's six-volume biography of Abraham Lincoln won him the Pulitzer Prize for history in 1941. His *Complete Poems* also brought the Pulitzer Prize in 1951.

Hemingway countered with numerous novels and short stories, most of which reached the silver screen. He was one of our most prolific novelists but Sandburg was more diversified with his many types of writings.

Hemingway's major novels would include: *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*, *The Old Man and the Sea*, *A Farewell to Arms*, *The Sun Also Rises*, *To Have and to Have Not*, *The Killers*, *Across the River and into the Trees*, and others.

Sandburg's only novel, *Remembrance Rock*, was slated to become a motion picture with Spencer Tracy and Katherine Hepburn in the leading roles. Carl was paid \$150,000 for movie rights but the film was never made. He gruffly commented, "Hell, there is enough in my book for six movies."

Sandburg also wrote several books for children with his *Rootabaga Stories*. He compiled a book of songs he had listened to and recalled in *The American Songbag*. His autobiography, *Always the Young Strangers*, vividly portrayed his life as a youth in Galesburg, Illinois, and some of his later years. He predicted America's racial crisis with *The Chicago Race Riots* in 1919.

Many people felt that Carl Sandburg erred in spending over a year in Hollywood in assisting the writing of *The Greatest Story Ever Told*, the life of Christ. They believed he could have spent the time working on his second autobiography. However, Sandburg was concerned about the welfare of his two daughters, Margaret and Janet, who were unable to support themselves, and wanted to provide security for them.

Sandburg and Hemingway both had attractive, interesting, and intelligent wives. Sandburg's only wife, Lilian, whom he called Paula, was a Phi Beta Kappa at the University of Chicago. She taught school in Princeton, Illinois, and was a Blue Ribbon winner in raising Toggenburg and Nubian goats at their homes. She also educated her daughter Margaret after her adolescent years, as she was unable to attend school due to nocturnal epilepsy.

Martha Gellhorn was Hemingway's third wife. She was one of the first women to serve as a war correspondent, when she met her husband during the Spanish Civil War. She also served in Vietnam, Nicaragua, the Middle East, the invasion of Panama, was present on D-Day during World War II, and the liberation of the Nazi concentration camp at Dachau at the end of the war.

Gellhorn wrote 13 novels and she was

married to Hemingway for five years. She resented being most famous as a Hemingway wife. She said she was a writer before she met him and was a writer for 45 years after. She resented being a footnote to someone else's life. She passed away at age 89 in March, 1998.

Hemingway and Sandburg were neighbors of sorts. Hemingway lived for many years at 339 N. Oak Park Avenue in Oak Park, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago, where he had been born. Sandburg had homes in Maywood and Elmhurst, a few miles away.

Hemingway spent considerable time at 1239 N. Dearborn Street in Chicago with his first wife, Hadlie Richardson. The building was owned by Mark Wyermuller, a dear friend, who also had an apartment there.

One of Sandburg's closest friends was Dr. Arthur Freese, who lived at the Park Dearborn Apartments at 1250 N. Dearborn Street. Carl frequently

made his home there while visiting in Chicago. This building was razed to help make room for the Sandburg Village complex on the Near North Side.

Both men wrote from the attics or in a secluded room in the top floor of their homes. The Hemingway Foundation is permitting another novelist, William Hazelgrove, to occupy the sacred cloister at Oak Park, where he is working on his third novel. He had to pry open the windows with a screwdriver because the windows had been painted shut. Hemingway's father, a doctor, was keen on embalming, and embalmed a piece of cake from his and his wife's wedding cake and hung it in the attic.

(On this somewhat lugubrious note, we end this installment of Dr. Richard Sandburg's article. In the next issue of *Inkling and Idlings* the way in which the score was evened will be explained.)

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