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Editorial

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Editorial

Theodore James Sherman

WELCOME to the new *Mythlore: A Journal of J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, Charles Williams and Mythopoeic Literature*. Longtime subscribers to *Mythlore* will notice many changes in this issue. These changes include not only a new format, size, and subtitle, but a new editor and editorial philosophy for the journal as well.

As Mythopoeic Society members know, in late Spring 1999 the Council of Stewards announced that Glen GoodKnight, the Founder of our Society and the previous Editor of *Mythlore*, was stepping down from his position as Editor. The Council asked for nominations and recommendations for a new Editor. Longtime Mythopoeic Society member Mary Stolzenbach suggested I apply; I was honored when the Council recommended me and even more so when you, the Society membership, elected me as the new Editor of *Mythlore*.

Now, some will wonder why I wanted this position. I received my BA in English from Covenant College (Lookout Mountain, TN), my MA in English from the University of Central Florida (Orlando), and my PhD from the University of Southern Mississippi (Hattiesburg). I have been a professor of English at Middle Tennessee State University since 1993, and a member of The Mythopoeic Society since 1991. I first read *The Chronicles of Narnia* and *The Lord of the Rings* in the mid-1970s. Reading those works transformed my life: wanting to be like Lewis and Tolkien (though not coming even close), I became a professor of Medieval and Renaissance literature. In addition to regularly teaching fantasy literature courses—focusing on George MacDonald, J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, Charles Williams, Madeleine L'Engle, Susan Cooper, Stephen Lawhead, Philip Pullman, R. E. Klein, and J. K. Rowling—I also teach courses in Anglo-Saxon, *Beowulf*, sixteenth-century English literature, and the history of the English language—and I direct Inklings-related theses and dissertations. Thus, were it not for Lewis and Tolkien initially, and later MacDonald and Williams, I would not be who I am and where I am today. Therefore, I approach this calling of editing *Mythlore* with a profound sense of responsibility to the Inklings and to you, the readers, and a dedication to apply the same kind of meticulous care to the editing of *Mythlore* as they did to the creation of their literary masterpieces.

My goals for *Mythlore* are to improve its style and content, to publish it on a quarterly schedule, to increase the number of individual and institutional

subscriptions, to encourage submissions from new scholars and Inklings lovers, to improve the scholarly reputation of *Mythlore*—and to achieve all these goals while maintaining the support and interest of you, the readers of *Mythlore*. To fulfill these goals, I will do all I can to promote *Mythlore* and to make it the preeminent journal of Inklings and mythopoeic literature studies; but to attain these goals, I need your help.

I have begun working toward these goals by adjusting the format and content of *Mythlore*, which will no longer include artworks, except on a rare basis. This decision is prompted by the necessity to allow more page space to articles, book reviews, original poetry, and letters. The new, smaller size is more typical of academic journals in the humanities.

For *Mythlore* to be published on a quarterly schedule, I must receive submissions. These submissions will be anonymously reviewed by at least two readers who will recommend whether the essays should be published or need further revision. For a journal to be of high quality and enjoy a scholarly reputation, it must be peer-reviewed. The successful anonymous review proves to the community of readers at large that the ideas and arguments one espouses are significant, that the conclusions one arrives at are sound, and that the analysis or interpretation is unique.

To increase *Mythlore* subscriptions, I ask you to share your copy with friends and colleagues and mention it in conversation and on internet discussion lists. If your local library does not subscribe to *Mythlore*, speak to the periodicals librarians and ask them to do so. Tell people about The Mythopoeic Society website (www.mythsoc.org), how to become a member, and how to subscribe to *Mythlore*. Encourage your fellow mythopoeic literature enthusiasts to submit essays, book reviews, original poetry, and letters to *Mythlore*.

If you will work with me to achieve the goals I have outlined above, then I believe that *Mythlore: A Journal of J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, Charles Williams and Mythopoeic Literature* soon will be the finest and most respected scholarly journal devoted to the Inklings and other mythopoeic writers. I look forward to working on *Mythlore* for many years, as I hope you look forward to reading it.

Finally, I want to thank Glen GoodKnight for his years of service to the Society as Editor of *Mythlore*; Danny Ghourley for his assistance in proofreading submissions; Eleanor Farrell for her assistance with typesetting matters; and Mary Stolzenbach for suggesting I apply for this position and for her advice and assistance. But most of all, I thank my wife Karen and my children Kathryn, Nathaniel, and Naomi for bearing with me throughout all the hours and days I have spent preparing this issue of *Mythlore* for publication.