



Mythopoeic Society

mythLORE

A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis,
Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature

Volume 11
Number 2

Article 11

Fall 10-15-1984

Editor's Opening

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Recommended Citation

GoodKnight, Glen H. (1984) "Editor's Opening," *Mythlore: A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature*: Vol. 11: No. 2, Article 11.

Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/mythlore/vol11/iss2/11>

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Editor's Opening

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Niggles Wish

One day, Niggle stood a little way off from his picture and considered it with unusual attention and detachment.... What he would have liked at that moment would have been to see himself walk in, and slap him on the back, and say (with obvious sincerity): "Absolutely magnificent! I see exactly what you are getting at. Do get on with it, and don't bother about anything else! We will arrange for a public pension, so that you need not."

J.R.R. Tolkien from "Leaf by Niggle"

This editor's wishes are at times akin to Niggle's in this circumstance. I too would like to hear it said "Mythlore is really great! We see exactly what you are getting at, and will arrange to underwrite it to the fullest extent, so that you worry not."

Niggle didn't get that wish. In the last issue a special plea was included, prompted by a large increase in printing costs. There was a response from several people, for which I am very grateful, but it was not enough to cover the increased costs for one issue. Not wishing to force a tear-stained plea on the readers, and having eliminated counterfeiting or bank robbery as fitting possibilities, I ask myself and you "What is a realistic solution?"

In Mythlore 38 I mentioned the question of the sale of back issues. With your subscription money Mythlore prints an overrun of 20 to 25% of the total copies printed. This it has historically done, both as a service to future readers who will want copies and for the income generated by these sales. But in 1982 the majority of the Council of Stewards, against my strong protest, made the income from these back issue sales de facto general Society income and no longer to be counted as Mythlore income. By and large I have been fulminating against this privately since then. My contention is that with income from back issues the recent subscription increases passed by the Council, against my advice, would not have been necessary. Of course the Society needs money to carry out its various activities. There are offices and departments that generate no income. But why can't the Society devise other sources of income to underwrite these, instead of easily and conveniently turning to the back issues as the primary source for operating expenses. Generating new sources is not easy, but greater initiative is needed. Difficulty in doing this does not in itself justify the easy way out. Ideally the Society should support the publications, not vice versa. Regardless of the intent, the effect is to stunt and penalize the financial stability of Mythlore. We are not a huge corporation that manipulates huge sums of money. Mythlore is the largest single aspect of the Society in the number of people it reaches and in its income and expenses. But being the largest, it would be a mistake to assume that makes it truly large, that it can well afford the loss of its back issues. In the context of the general world of publications and journals, Mythlore is small. By its nature it is a specialized journal for a special interested audience. A PMLA, a

Locus, or a People Magazine we are not. We do not attempt or expect to be such. But there is much love and commitment by so many to it: the writers, the artists, the readers, and the staff. We can strive to make it the best of what it can be, and, like it or not, in this world that does include finances as well.

On a relative basis both the Society as a whole and Mythlore are neither tiny or huge, but both are growing slowly, and both would grow much more if we could get the word out to the people who would be delighted to know "if they but knew." For the last two years Mythlore has done very little advertising. The money was theoretically allotted for this in the annual budgets, but the actual cash for this was not in the bank. The budgeting process done by the Stewards needs to carefully examine the actual sources of income before deciding how much each office and department may be allotted. Up to now there has not been a close correlation, with the result that actual funds have not always been available. Since the majority of both Society income and expenses are related to Mythlore, the journal has suffered the most. Are you detecting a slight hint of dissatisfaction here?

I have a financial plan to propose to the Council of Stewards at its budget meeting in February 1985 that would provide in an equitable and proportional way for both Society general expenses and Mythlore expenses. I did make this proposal at the 1984 budget meeting, but since the needed figures on the sale of back issues was not available, the proposal was tabled. The Orders Department, which has this information in its records, has promised the Stewards to make them available in time for the '85 budget meeting. The plan is this:

PROPOSAL FOR FINANCIAL BUDGETING

Be it resolved: In order to provide a clearer and smoother working financial structure of the Mythopoeic Society, the total income of the Society (not including the Mythopoeic Conference) for the preceding year shall be divided into two categories:

- A. Income from each current publication, including subscriptions or similar payments, advertisements, and sale of related back issues.
- B. Income to the Society not related to current publications, including specified back issues, merchandise, profit from the Mythopoeic Conference auction, and donations made generally to the Society.

The total expenditures of the Society (not including the Mythopoeic Conference) for the preceding year shall be divided into two categories:

- C. Expenses for each current publication, including printing, postage, supplies, operating expenses, and publicity.
- D. Expenses of the Society not directly related to current publications.

The sum of category B shall be subtracted from the sum of category D. The amount left, if any, shall be the sum assessed to the current publications for general support of the Society for the current calendar year. The amount assessed, if any, to each current publication shall be based on its percentage of income in relation to the sum of category A.

Be it resolved: The sale of back issues of

Mythellany and Mythril shall be recognized as income of Mythellany; the sale of back issues of *Mythlore* and *Tolkien Journal* (which merged with *Mythlore* in 1972) shall be recognized as income of *Mythlore*; and the sale of back issues of *Mythprint* shall be recognized as income of *Mythprint*.

Those who have survived the dry reading of the proposal may ask why I am sharing this with you. It is simply because people naturally assume that all is going well unless told otherwise. This is otherwise. Rather than agonize over this alone, I share this with you because if *Mythlore* belongs to a better, it belongs to you—its readers. If you have a thought, a refinement on the one here given, or any other ideas of support, I urge you to let me know as soon as possible before the Stewards' budget meeting of February 10th.

Turning now to three pleasant comments: past, present, and future.

In the recent past, at the World Science Fiction Convention, held in Anaheim, California, I had the pleasure of chairing a panel discussion entitled: "J.R.R. Tolkien: A Retrospective in Light of His Posthumously Published Works." The panel included Betty and Ian Ballantine, Diana and Ross Pavlac, Diana Paxson and Paul Nolan Hyde. Besides comments from the panel members there was lively audience participation. Many of the audience of around 200 felt that although they liked *The Lord of the Rings* as Tolkien's best work, a number felt they received greater meaning and

satisfaction from reading *The Silmarillion* and its appended stories. Following the panel discussion, I made a slide presentation of Tolkien artwork, in which many artists were represented.

Presently, I have the pleasure of welcoming Sarah Beach to the staff of *Mythlore* as Associate and Art Editor. You should be familiar with her artwork and column "Mythopoeisis" which has graced the pages of *Mythlore* for quite a number of issues. She moved from Austin, Texas to Los Angeles in the summer of 1984, and her unofficial help has been substantial and enthusiastic. The Society as a whole should be grateful that she has also recently assumed the position of Society Treasurer.

Regarding the future, I'd like to make a personal encouragement to each reader to do all he or she can to attend the 1985 Mythopoeic Conference, especially those living in the eastern half of the United States. More complete details are found on page 33. The excellent committee is working hard to present what I believe will be one of the very finest conferences in the Society's history. By all means, do not miss it. Make your plans early and register now. The annual conferences are, for me as for many others, a very special time. Old friends are reunited and newcomers are made quickly at ease in the flow of events.

Mythopoeic Core Reading List

Mythlore frequently publishes articles that presuppose the reader is already familiar with the works they discuss. This is natural, given the special nature of *Mythlore*. In order to assist some readers, the following is what might be considered a "core" mythopoeic reading list, containing the most well known and discussed works. Due to the many editions printed, only the title and original date of publication are given. Good reading!

J.R.R. Tolkien

The Hobbit (1937); "Leaf by Niggle" (1945); "On Fairy-Stories" (1945); *The Lord of the Rings*: Vol. I, *The Fellowship of the Ring* (1954); Vol. II, *The Two Towers* (1954); Vol. III, *The Return of the King* (1955); *The Silmarillion* (1977); *Unfinished Tales* (1980).

C.S. Lewis

Out of the Silent Planet (1938); *Perelandra* (1943); *That Hideous Strength* (1945); *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950); *Prince Caspian* (1951); *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (1952); *The Silver Chair* (1953); *The Horse and His Boy* (1954); *The Magician's Nephew* (1955); *The Last Battle* (1956); *Till We Have Faces* (1956).

Charles Williams

War in Heaven (1930); *Many Dimensions* (1931); *The Place of the Lion* (1931); *The Greater Trumps* (1932); *Shadows of Ecstasy* (1933); *Descent into Hell* (1937); *All Hallow's Eve* (1945); *Talesin through Logres* (1938); and *The Region of the Summer Stars* (1944) (printed together in 1954).



Mythopoeic Celtic Stationery by Patrick Wynne

This new stationery is now available for \$5 plus \$1 in handling. It features four designs, all found in *Mythlore* 35: The Celtic circles portraying themes from J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, and Charles Williams (found on page 3 of Issue 35). Each circle is at the top right of the page and is 3 5/8" in diameter, with a lined border around the page. The fourth design is of the four corners found on page 2 of this issue, but much larger in size. The set includes 4 sheets of each design, making 16 printed sheets, 12 blank second sheets, plus 16 envelopes. The paper is of a neutral but beautifully antique appearing parchment. This would make fine personal stationery for both men and women, as well as for gifts. Send your order to: Orders Department, 1008 N. Monterey St., Alhambra, CA 91801.