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Editorial Opening

Glen GoodKnight

Sarah Beach

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Editorial Opening

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It is gratifying that the response to the recent computer typesetting transition is very positive. You will see some improvements in this issue, and more forthcoming.

Members or Subscribers?

Do you see yourself as only a subscriber to *Mythlore* or indeed a member of the Society that produces it? The enclosed questionnaire implicitly raises this question. Some may not see the importance of this, but your answer could have a significant influence on the future course of the Society. Let me explain my own concern. My continuing commitment to The Mythopoeic Society has not always been fully understood in some. Above all I am committed to the underlying idea that the Society be a medium of exchange and sharing for those who have responded with both intellectual insight and affectionate enthusiasm to the writings of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis and Charles Williams. They mean a great deal to me, and I have wanted exchange with others who feel the same. To make this sharing possible I founded the Society, which has been the vehicle, or vessel, for this exchange. My deepest concern has been not with the vessel itself, but what it contains and seeks to fulfill – its vision or animating spirit. If this be lost, then the vessel would mean much less. All organizations do undergo change; they must both to fulfill themselves and adapt to changing conditions. I have sponsored many changes myself over the years, but nearly always with an eye as to how these changes will enable the basic purpose to be better carried out. I want to see the Society continue for many generations as the very special and unique meeting place of exchange it has been, and was intended to be since its beginning, more than twenty-one years ago.

What I have wanted for the Society, I have also wanted for *Mythlore*, within its nature and capacities as a written medium. Question 9 on the enclosed questionnaire asks how do you feel if *Mythlore* no longer included Society membership (which it has done for over thirteen years). Did you know that only about fourteen percent of the current Society membership does not subscribe to *Mythlore*, and if its subscription no longer included membership, the Society would lose fifty-five percent of its current members? Is this desirable to you? This is indeed ironic, since the Council of Stewards has been discussing ways to increase the number of members and their participation. I have said previously that there is a wide spectrum in Society members. Within this spectrum there has been a desire in some to down play or even eliminate the central emphasis on Tolkien, Lewis and Williams and see the Society evolve into a general fantasy organization. What then of its unique qualities? If *Mythlore* subscribers, most of whom are because of their interest in the three authors, were now disenfranchised of their (continued on page 63)

In This Issue

In this issue we are pleased to bring you the Guest of Honor presentations from the 19th Mythopoeic Conference, held last summer on the Clark Kerr Campus, part of the University of California, in Berkeley. The Author Guest of Honor was Ursula K. Le Guin and the Scholar Guest of Honor was Brian Attebery.

The themes for that Conference was "legends for a New Land: Fantasy in America" and it would seem that Ursula K. Le Guin was a natural choice as Author Guest. The daughter of anthropologist A.L. Kroeber and author Theodora Kroeber, she has, in the pursuit of her own career, carved more than a niche in the booklists of fantasy. You will find in her presentation a moving description of the emotional forces present in the author when she came to write *Always Coming Home*.

Brian Attebery proved a delightful Guest of Honor in his own right. He is an Associate Professor of English at Idaho State University, in Pocatello, Idaho. He also directs the American Studies Program, and had the fortune as a Fulbright lecturer to take this subject abroad to the University of Uppsala in Sweden.

The article on "The Hobbit as part of *The Red Book of Westmarch*" comes from Kristin Thompson. She is an honorary Fellow at the University of Wisconsin-Madison where her field is film history and analysis. She has published books on film and is currently at work on a book on P.G. Wodehouse's Jeeves series.

A second Tolkien article, "Tolkien and Christian Concepts of Evil: Apocalypse and Privation" is from John L. Treloar, a member of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits, to those not familiar with Catholic orders). He currently teaches at Marquette University in the Philosophy Department, where his specialties are Late Medieval and Renaissance Philosophy, Philosophy and Literature, and Ethics.

Gwyneth Hood gives us an article on the myth of Cupid and Psyche and how C.S. Lewis handles it in *Till We Have Faces*. She grew up in Vermont; and studied at Wellesley, where she won a literary prize for a historical novel she had written as an Honor's Project. Since earning her doctorate in Comparative Literature in 1984, she has taught in West Virginia and Pennsylvania.

The front cover is from the redoubtable Patrick Wynne. The Elvish is from *The Fellowship of the Ring*. For more detailed information about the back cover be sure to read Paul Nolan Hyde's column "Quenti Lambardillon."

—Sarah Beach

Members or Subscribers? continued from page 3
voting rights, then their voice would be cut out of decisions (inadvertently or otherwise) that could possibly alter the original intention of this Society. As you must decide what you want to be – member or subscriber, I feel moved to share my own concern. It would be good to know your thoughts on whether the Society should be membership or publications oriented, and why. It would also be helpful to know, if the Society is to be member oriented, why or why not you think *Mythlore* should or should not continue to include Society membership. Finally, what benefits do you think Society membership should include?

I want the Society to be primarily a membership, rather than merely a subscriber, organization, because you are fellow sharers, a community of participants in the love of that which we study, discuss, and enjoy — *not* mere consumers of a publication. This is despite the fact that publications are our primary – but certainly not sole – activity, both in time expended and finances involved. With our membership spread all over the United States and many other countries, publications are the basic and only effective way open to communication. It seems that the majority of the Society's leadership (of which I am one of ten) is strongly in favor of reorganizing the Society as more member-oriented in a number of ways. While I support most of these ideas, it is possible we could be hurriedly rushing in a direction opposite of what the majority of you

the members may want. I drafted this Questionnaire – approved with revisions by the Council – and urged the others to wait for your response before enacting any proposals. Even if the majority of you the members prefer to see the Society as more publication oriented, the leadership might still go ahead and make various changes according to its good intentions, unless the response to the questionnaire was clear. Where would some of these changes, especially Question 9, leave the feelings of those who prefer to subscribe to *Mythlore* alone – then having no right to vote on possibly important issues that could affect the underlying nature and purpose of what the Society has stood for. This Questionnaire is, in effect, a vote by you on the future character of the Society. What ever your thoughts, *now* is the time to express them. Let *your* ideas and feelings be known.

— Glen GoodKnight

Read any good new books lately?

The Mythopoeic Fantasy Award and Scholarship Award Committees Chairperson would like to invite members to think about nominations for the 1988 Awards – and to volunteer to serve on the selection committees. Eligibility requirements for nomination of books for the Fantasy Award and the Scholarship Award and for serving on either Selection Committee are the same: you must be a member of the Society (your subscription to *Mythlore* includes membership); no more than five books can be nominated; to serve on either committee you must state your willingness to read or reread all finalists. You may nominate books for both awards, and may serve on both committees.

Criteria for book nomination: for the Fantasy Award, a fantasy work published during 1988 that best exemplifies "the spirit of the Inklings." A work reissued in paperback during 1988 that was published earlier may be nominated whether or not it has previously been nominated, as long as it did not make a previous finalists' list. At the nomination level, and at the finalist level, a majority of "no award" votes (if the committee members feel none of the choices should receive the award) will require we make no award for the year. The Scholarship Award is given for a book on Tolkien, Lewis, and/or Williams that makes a significant contribution to Inklings scholarship. Books published during 1986 to 1988 are eligible for the award; book may be renominated.

The deadline is **February 20, 1989** for nominations for both Awards and for volunteering to serve on either or both of the committees. Write to: Christine Lowentrout, 1017 Seal Way, Seal Beach, CA 90740. Please state your willingness to read all the finalists, and whether or not you are willing to have your name and address included on a list to be distributed only among members of your committee for purposes of intercommunication. There will be a preliminary vote due May 1, and the final vote is due July 15. The Awards will be announced at the 20th Mythopoeic Conference in Vancouver. Let your voice be heard!

Mythlore Art Portfolio

Over the years *Mythlore* has published a large amount of highly praised fantasy artwork. Few people are inclined to cut up their issues of *Mythlore* in order to frame these pieces for their walls. Therefore, *Mythlore* has begun a series of portfolios reproducing various pieces on quality paper suitable for framing. A limited number of portfolios are now being offered containing copies signed and numbered by the artists.

Signed portfolios are \$25.00

Unsigned portfolios are \$15.00

Included in the first portfolio are the following pieces:

"Meditation of Mordred"

(Williams) by Sarah Beach (from *Mythlore* 39)

"Trothplight at Cerin Amroth"

(Tolkien) by Paula DiSante (from *Mythlore* 45)

"The Mistress of the Silver Moon"

(MacDonald) by Nancy-Lou Patterson
(from *Mythlore* 21)

"Till We Have Faces"

(Lewis) by Patrick Wynne (from *Mythlore* 39)

Each Portfolio comes in a folder with Patrick Wynne's "Triskelion" (from *Mythlore* 35) printed on the cover. The artwork is reproduced on 9" x 12" sheets, and are suitable for framing. Please specify whether you want a signed or unsigned portfolio. Send your order to: *Mythlore* Orders Dept., 1009 N. Monterey St., Alhambra, CA 91801.