

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE ATHENAEUM SOCIETY**

Thursday, January 4, 1996

Following the invocation by Marvin Denison and dinner in the small room of the convention center, President Herndon called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Some 28 members were present, including Ben Fletcher who came in late. The usual round of excuses was offered by six members. The membership, flush with the hope and optimism of a new year, accepted the excuses without reservation. Minutes from the previous meeting were read and accepted.

The President then called for the stated program:

Wendell Rorie presented "Treman Garner Rorie: The War Years," a nostalgic and intensely personal remembrance of his uncle who died in World War II. To quote Wendell, "Records indicate that he was sent to England in August of 1943 in the massive buildup for the European campaign. He entered France with the field artillery of the invasion forces on D-Day on June 6, 1944. Paris fell rather quickly, but heavy fighting began in Holland in September of 1944, followed by the Battle of the Bulge in which both sides suffered massive losses, as the Allied Forces pushed against the west wall of Germany on their march to Berlin. It was during the bitter cold winter of 1944 that the photograph came to Woodlawn. Treman was riding a captured German motorcycle and rumor had it that Treman had stolen Hitler's motorcycle with a side car...." Treman died in Germany on March 2, 1945, as American forces captured Trier on the Western Front. "Details are sketchy but we do know that Pvt. Rorie was attached to a field artillery unit as a gunner, assigned to a six-man detail and that all were killed by enemy fire, with the exception of one soldier who lost his legs.... This silent spring gave us a dose of the illnesses and disappointments that give life its final flavor of death. Why did it have to happen to us, just when the War was about to be over? Victory was almost within our grasp. My mind raced back to happier times when I saw Treman shivering innocently near the crayfish holes on the West Fork of Ringgold Creek."

On the lighter side, George Byars presented "Money for Nothing: The Secret Life of a Sweepstakes Junky." Byars defined a sweepstakes as an advertising or promotional device by which items of value or prizes are awarded by chance to participating consumers with no purchase or entry fee required and with all participants having an equal chance of winning. He readily confessed to entering as many as 60 or 80 contests a month. Though he has never won a major prize, he has won a great many prizes of questionable value. This includes lots of baseball caps and T-shirts, a pair of giant inflatable plastic lips, watches,

wallpaper, rollerblades, cookbooks, a pinball machine, athletic bags, key chains, lapel pins, a bicycle, sports tickets, concert tickets, a Keebler Elf costume, sunglasses, Count Chocula studio chairs, cameras, ice chests, compact discs, stuffed animals, a pink remote controlled Barbie car, a television, a video game system, soccer balls, Nascar racing jackets, mugs, a Bart Simpson medallion, playing cards, clocks and many kinky prizes he refused to discuss. Byars presented prizes to those at the head table and to Brooks Major, an excellent practice which the officers hope will continue.

Following a break comments were heard from five members, as well as rebuttals by the authors. The Secretary then announced the February program: George W. Engler and Edwin Morton White. The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mark D. Lovely". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Mark Lovely
Secretary/Treasurer

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting
of the Athenaeum Society**

Thursday, February 1, 1996

Following the invocation by William Turner and dinner in the small room of the convention center, President Herndon called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Despite a wintry forecast, some 30 members and one guest were present, the best attendance in recent memory. The usual excuses were offered with the usual flair. They were accepted with the usual fanfare. Minutes from the previous meeting were read and approved.

The ^{president}~~presented~~ then called for the stated program:

Bill Engler went back in time 54 years to present "The Battle of the Coral Sea." The nations of the free world were at their lowest point of prestige and morale. The Germans had overrun most of Europe and were invading Russia. The Japanese had captured Singapore, Hong Kong and the Philippines. The Battle of the Coral Sea was the first great naval action between aircraft carriers; the first naval battle in which no ship on either side sighted the other. The Japanese won the battle of tonnage with the loss of the Lexington, but a strategic victory was won by the allies. The Battle of the Coral Sea meant the end of Japanese expansion southward in the Pacific.

In "Hollywood History," Edwin White attempted to show the resemblance, or lack of it, between actual historical events and the Hollywood depiction of those events. Specifically, he examined the story of Wyatt Earp in Tombstone, Arizona, and compared it to four movies about the same: Gunfight at the O.K. Corral, My Darling Clementine, Tombstone, and Wyatt Earp. Turns out that in actuality the shootout was not about right and wrong so much as about bad blood, wounded pride, and money. It also seems that the good guys were not so good, and the bad guys were largely unarmed. The entire battle took 31 seconds. Each side had its own newspaper, bars, law, judge and truth. White suggests the truth, as interpreted by Hollywood, can be just as valid.

Following a break, comments were heard from nine members, as well as rebuttals by the authors. The Secretary then announced the March program: Frank A. Yost and Ben S. Fletcher. The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mark Lovely
Secretary/Treasurer

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting
of the Athenaeum Society**

Thursday, March 7, 1996

Following the invocation by Duard Thurman and dinner in the small room of the convention center, President Herndon called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. Some 25 members claimed to be present. Seven of those offered alleged excuses for previous nonappearances. They were reluctantly accepted by an indulgent membership. Minutes from the previous meeting were read and approved.

The Committee on Paper Disposition reported that it had no report. President Herndon appointed a Nominating Committee consisting of Peter Macdonald, Wynn Radford and Bobby Freeman. Macdonald promised quick results.

Herndon then called for the stated program:

Calling on unequaled experience and perspective, Frank Yost recalled a series of boyhood memories, specifically comparing life in Hopkinsville to that in Louisville. Yost painted a vivid picture of life in the early 20th century, providing details about sights, sounds, foods and attitudes unavailable in any history book.

Ben Fletcher's inaugural effort, "U.S. Tobacco Company and Related Topics," explored the nature and history of one of Hopkinsville's best-known companies, one which employed Ben Fletcher's father for 40 years. U.S.T., a worldwide corporation with sales last year of 1.5 billion dollars first came to Hopkinsville in 1916. The company's main product is Copenhagen Snuff, first produced in 1822 and today, far and away, the best selling smokeless tobacco in the world. Fletcher says that U.S.T. is known for its good corporate citizenship and adds that Hopkinsville is fortunate to have the heart of the entire company right here in our hometown.

Following a break, comments were heard from 16 members, as well as rebuttals by the authors. The Secretary then announced the April program: Peter Macdonald and Lewis Spencer. The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mark Lovely
Secretary/Treasurer

Minutes of the Regular Meeting
of the Athenaeum Society

Thursday, April 4, 1996

Following the invocation by D. D. Cayce and dinner in the big room of the convention center, President Herndon called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. Some 24 members were present on the wintry evening, plus Dr. Bill Clark Thomas, a guest of Bill Rowlett. Five so-called excuses were offered for previous nonappearances. They were accepted by a magnanimous membership. Minutes from the previous meeting were read and accepted.

The nominating committee presented a slate of proposed officers for the 1996-97 year. They were Happy Higgins, President; Wynn Radford, Vice President; and Hal King, Secretary-Treasurer. The vote was scheduled for the May meeting.

After a short discussion it was determined that Ashley's Restaurant would be the site of the open meeting.

President Herndon then called for the stated program:

Peter Macdonald asked the question "Is Common Sense Dying, Dead, or Just Dormant?" Citing several examples, he bemoaned the frustrating trend toward rules and laws and away from human judgement. Details for everything are spelled out to the nth degree. We live in a world where people argue, not about right and wrong, but about whether something is done the right way. The Americans with Disabilities Act supposedly protects 43 million Americans. Yet most of the regulations' costs and conflict relate to wheelchair users who make up less than ten percent of the total. Billions are spent to make every facility in America wheelchair accessible, while children are dying of malnutrition and schoolchildren are finishing almost dead last in math proficiency in the world. Macdonald concluded that our hatred of government is caused not by its goals, but by its techniques.

In "A Western Romance, or Consequences of a Jefferson Davis Decision" Lewis Spencer presented the members with something unusual: a paper about ancestors who were not southern. Primary among the cast of characters was Will Burns, Spencer's maternal grandfather, who enlisted in the Union Army in 1864 at the age of 16. Burns left home in Illinois to go to Denver, returned to Chicago to earn a law degree, then returned west to Fort Sanders to serve as a guard against Indians attacking the Union Pacific. Burns was also a freighter, blacksmith, banker, county judge and states attorney who roamed much of the west before his death in 1906.

Following a break, comments were heard from nine members, as well as rebuttals by the authors. The secretary then announced the

May program: Wynn Radford and Jim Love. The meeting adjourned at about 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mark Lovely
Secretary/Treasurer

**Minutes of the Open Meeting
of the Athenaeum Society**

Thursday, May 2, 1996

Following the invocation by Brooks Major the open meeting of the Society commenced at Ashley's Restaurant. President Herndon's call for introductions revealed 75 members and guests in attendance.

Most regular Athenaeum business was suspended for the evening, however Happy Higgins, Wynn Radford and Hal King were elected to the offices of President, Vice President and Secretary-Treasurer, respectively. Also, the membership accepted well-worn excuses from five members.

After a brief history of the Society, presented by William Turner, President Herndon called for the stated program:

Using Thornton Wilder's play for inspiration, Wynn Radford presented "Our Town," a thoughtful and varied profile of Hopkinsville. Just what type of town is Hopkinsville? Radford responds that Hopkinsville may or may not be the greatest town on earth, but it is one which allows him to experience the past, live with his prior actions, show love toward his family and approach each day with an optimistic attitude. And he praises the individuals who make "our town" different from other communities.

In "The Rise of Country Music" Jim Love chronicled the tone and character of an art form which has come to dominate the radio spectrum in the late 20th century. Love advanced the Ray Mofield Theory, the Ben Payne Theory and the Jim Love Theory, among others, to try to explain the music's appeal. In the final analysis, he credits the music's appeal to basic human emotions and its ability to vicariously transport people to other places for its wide popularity. Besides, how could one not like songs with titles like "You're the Reason Our Kids Are Ugly," and "If I Said You Had a Beautiful Body, Would You Hold It Against Me?"

Following a break, six people commented on the program, including two guests. Rebuttals by the authors followed. The meeting adjourned at about 9:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mark S. Lovely
Secretary/Treasurer

Minutes of the Regular Meeting
of the
Athenaeum Society

—September 5, 1996—

The first meeting of the Athenaeum Society's 96th season convened on Thursday, September 5, 1996, at the Convention Center.

Twenty-nine (29) members were present. Eleven (11) members were absent.

Minutes from the May open meeting, as written by the former Secretary, Mark Lovely, were read and approved.

A member of long standing, Robert M. Fairleigh III, sent a letter of resignation citing health and time as a problem in attending meetings. Mr. Fairleigh had been a member of the Society since 1957 and ranked third (3rd) on the seniority list. Members voted to make Mr. Fairleigh an honorary member. The secretary was authorized to write him a letter expressing regret at his resignation, informing him of the honorary membership and wishing him well.

The membership now stands at 39.

The Secretary-Treasurer notes that all current bills have been met and the books are in good order. The Secretary-Treasurer also notes that thirty-three (33) members have paid their dues through the first semester of the meeting year. Four (4) of those members have paid through the entire meeting year. Six (6) members have dues outstanding.

Two papers were presented at the meeting. One by senior member **J. Brooks Major**, titled "The Golden Calf" was a quite serious paper on the Fugitive Poets and Vanderbilt University, the writings of William Faulkner, Southern Agrarians and other assorted writers concerning such subjects as a definition of progress in an industrial state, aesthetic and religious humanism, a salvational religion that recognizes the fallability of man and Mose's reaction when he came down from Mt. Sinai. Most members, by their remarks, seemed in awe of the paper if not by the presenter. Although George Boone is not scheduled to give a paper until November, his rebuttal was long enough to pass for a presentation. One member, in rebuttal, remarked that the paper was a departure from reality. He also said that about the second paper.

James Mossey presented his first paper entitled "Twenty-First Century Leadership." Mr. Mossey quoted several authors and mentioned several political and historic figures and events. The person of Jesus Christ was clearly the figure with the most relevance and credibility. The paper expressed the position that many Americans have discovered that they been taught "a child's history of their government." Many people now realize that, and have a nagging distrust in their leaders. The impressive paper summed up by suggesting that we must aspire to a new level of leadership to communicate with authenticity, deal with difficult issues, bridge differences with integrity and relate with love and respect. Among the rebuttals, Robert Sivley expressed disappointment at the serious nature of both papers.

The meeting adjourned sometime between 8:45 and 9:00 P.M.— or perhaps later.

Respectfully Submitted,

Hal King
Secretary-Treasurer

Minutes of the Regular Meeting
of the
Athenaeum Society
—October 3, 1996—

The second meeting of the Athenaeum Society's 96th season convened on Thursday, October 3, 1996, at the Convention Center.

Minutes from the September meeting were read and approved.

Excuses, such as they were, were presented and accepted.

There were no committee reports.

Twenty-one (21) members were present. Eighteen (18) members were absent for a 53.8% attendance. September attendance was 74%. Membership now stands at 39. We have an opening for a new member.

Papers were presented by Robert B. Sivley and Bobby H. Freeman.

Robert Sivley's paper was titled "Confessions of a Sherlock Holmes Addict". He expressed belief that the famed investigator would have been just another frustrated detective in the present day American system of justice—or lack thereof—since the system today seems more concerned with procedure and rights of the criminal than common sense justice itself. He cited examples of the use of superior intellect being determined as an unfair advantage in apprehension and prosecution of criminals. Sometimes speaking with tongue in both cheeks, Dr. Sivley gave us humor with a serious undercoating of the conflict and uncertainty that law officers, the courts and the public face today. Robert Sivley's presentation began at 7:17 and ended at 7:45.

Bobby H. Freeman's paper was titled, "Banking and Technology." He discussed the changing face of banking through the use of computers, automation and the growing lack of personal contact. Mr. Freeman's transaction began at 7:46 and ran out of money at 8:06.

Nine members participated in the rebuttal portion of the program. One member suggested that Dr. Sivley may have exaggerated certain parts of his paper.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Hal King
Secretary-Treasurer