

Minutes of  
**Athenaeum Society Meeting**  
Thursday, February 7, 2008

The Athenaeum Society met Thursday, February 7, 2008, at the Holiday Inn in Hopkinsville, with President Mark Schweizer presiding. Secretary Tom Westerfield was absent and former secretary Hal King went through the motions of acting secretary without the use of an official role call. According to Mr. King's count a certain number of members, between 27 and 32, were present. According to some members, a delightful repast was enjoyed.

Presenters for the evening were Peter C. Macdonald and Dr. Mitchell Kaye. It has been customary for the senior member to present the first paper; however, on this evening Dr. Kaye presented first.

Dr. Kaye began by greeting President Schweizer as "Serene Unctuousness" followed by his paper entitled "**An Analysis of Current Space Exploration Options**" at 7:15. Some options available in space exploration include mining the moon, nuclear fusion power, near-earth objects and a planetary defense system. The far-out options expired at 7:45.

Mr. Macdonald's presentation was titled, "**Heart of Evil**". Mr. Macdonald presented a history of violence that has prevailed in various regions of Africa for several centuries. He also related the experiences of explorer-author Joseph Conrad and his book titled "Heart of Darkness", a fictional account of the horror suffered in the exploration and slavery in the Congo regions of Africa.

Comments on the papers were made by nine members. Dr. Kaye presented his second paper of the evening in a reply. This paper was considerably lighter than his first, proving that the good doctor has an acute sense of humor. Mr. Macdonald offered the thought that he and Dr. Kaye had cooperated in answering an emotional plea to present "real" Athenaeum papers of tedious and informative content. Some members expressed doubt as to whether such a request was actually made.

The enjoyable meeting adjourned a few minutes before 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by  
Hal King, Acting Secretary.

# Minutes

## Athenaeum Society

The March 6, 2008 session of the Athenaeum Society convened at 6:30 P.M. at the Hopkinsville Holiday Inn. The invocation was given by Howard Willen .

Following dinner Vice-President John Freer called the meeting to order at 7:22 P.M.

Secretary Westerfield called the roll with 27 of 40 members acknowledging their presence.

Minutes of the February meeting and the financial report indicating \$2549.96 bank balance. Revenue included \$120.00 in member dues. Expenses of \$286.68 for the period include last months dinner and postage were read and approved.

Vice-President Freer called for absence excuses from the February meeting Absence excuses were sought by seven members. Approval of requested excuses were granted.

Membership committee chairman reported membership at 40

The papers were presented by J. Brooks Major, a member since 1961 and number 2 in seniority and D.D. Cayce, III, a member since 1991 and number 19 in seniority.

Dr Major's paper titled Cum Grano Salis (with a grain of salt) summarized the historical debate for on the veracity of historians writings. Critic perspectives judge historical text in a range from pure objective scientific reporting of events as they occurred to polemic propaganda. Dr. Major cited notable opinions from Trevelyan to Henry Ford. His own perspective suggested that writings depend on the subject matter and aim of the writer. Dr. Major's presentation concluded at 7:42 pm.

Mr.Cayce's paper Peter Francisco, Hero and Soldier of the American Revolution began in 1765 at City Point on the James River in eastern Virginia when a foreign ship abandoned on the dock a small boy. The youngster, in equally foreign tongue answer to questions, Pedro Francisco. Thus beginning the saga of life and exploits of a true war hero. Pedro(Peter) was taken into the home of Judge Anthony Winston of Buckingham County. Peter grew up learning the blacksmith trade. Peter had no formal education but grew to be one of the strongest physical specimens known. At 14 he was reported to be 6 feet 6 inches and 260 lbs. Also known to be able to subdue a rowdy horse with a single hand. Peter witnessed the "give me liberty or give me death" speech and was inspired to join the revolutionary army. Mr. Cayce described Peter's patriotism, bravery and strength as he described Peter's experiences in battle. His memory is perpetuated by the Society of Descendants of Peter Francisco. Mr. Cayce's presentation concluded at 8:04 pm.

The comment session generated comments from 7 members Rebuttals followed.

The presenters for the April 3, 2008 meeting were announced as William T. Turner & Robert E. Ison.

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas W. Westerfield  
Secretary/Treasurer

# Minutes

## Athenaeum Society

### April 3, 2008

The April meeting of the Athenaeum Society convened at 6:30 P.M. at the Hopkinsville Holiday Inn. Howard Willen gave the opening prayer.

Following dinner of Garden salad, green beans, green peas, brown beans and ham, corn, lasagna, fried chicken, cherry cobbler and rolls President Mark Schweizer called the meeting to order at 7:12 P.M.

Secretary Westerfield called the roll with 29 of 40 members acknowledging their presence. Member, presenter, William T. Turner introduced an "out-of-town" guest in the person of Chris Gilkey, of Beverly.

Minutes of the March meeting and the financial report indicating \$2297.28 bank balance and the prior months dinner expense were read and approved.

President Schweizer called for absence excuses from the March meeting. Members Adams, Love, Denison, King, Harper, Lynch, Nicolos, Kaye and Powell sought absence excuses. Approval of requested excuses were granted.

President Schweizer presented the Open Meeting Committee's recommendation that the Open Meeting be held at Oakland Manor with dinner expense being \$16.00 per plate. Secretary Westerfield indicated that reservation forms would be mailed early and must be returned by April 24<sup>th</sup>.

Nominating Committee Chairman Peter Macdonald reported on the tireless efforts of that committee in persuading three individuals to serve as president, vice-president and secretary-treasurer. The nominees, John Freer, Hollis White and Peter Nicolos were elected without opposition.

The papers were presented by William T. Turner, a member since 1964 and number 3 in seniority and Robert E. Ison, a member since 2000 and number 24 in seniority.

Mr. Turner's paper was titled A Place In Time. Aided with projected photographs of examples, Mr. Turner identified a number of the notable architectural structures in the community, both residential and otherwise. Describing those now gone and those remaining standing, he petitions the audience to be concerned about preserving those remaining models of character and quality. He denounced vigorously the decisions to raze Hopkinsville High School on Walnut Street and the First Baptist Church at 14<sup>th</sup> and Main. Citing testimony of renowned orchestra leader, who stated that the high school auditorium has the best acoustics of any place he had ever played.

Mr. Ison's paper, titled \_\_\_\_\_ also aided with sound effects, described the life and successes of Charles Shultz, know as Sparky by family, friends and close associates. Citing the Christian County connection, Ison revealed that Shultz spent time at Camp Campbell during his tour of duty in the country's military. Striking memory cords of many of the audience, Ison described the characterization of Snoopy, Lucy, Linus, Woodstock and Charlie Brown as elements of Schult's personal and family experiences. While most cartoonists of the era produced strips depicting adult situations, Schult's genius was revealed in this depiction of children's experiences.

The comment session revealed enthusiastic comments regarding both papers.

Rebuttals followed.

The presenters for the May 1<sup>st</sup> Open Meeting were announced as George W. Engler and J. Terry Fuqua.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas W. Westerfield  
Secretary/Treasurer

**Minutes**  
**Athenaeum Society**  
**May 1, 2008**

The May Open Session of the Athenaeum Society convened at 6:30 P.M. at the Oakland Manor.

Following an excellent dinner and dessert buffet, President Mark Schweizer called the meeting to order at 7:15 P.M.

President Schweizer welcomed the membership and guests. Further, he explained for guests the proceedings. He indicated that the secretary would call the roll but the usual minutes, treasurers report and business session would be omitted.

Secretary Westerfield called the roll requesting members to introduce their guests when responding. Thirty-one members responded to the roll call. Guests in attendance numbered 40.

Mr. Engler's paper was entitled 10 Benefits of Laughter. The paper purported the relief of tension, stress, anxiety, irritation, anger, grief and depression. The presenter proved his point regarding humor by interspersing a host of clever, thought provoking ideas. For example: four out of five people suffer from diarrhea...does that mean that one enjoys it?

Dr. Fuqua's paper entitled The Differences Between Men and Women. Dr. Fuqua continued the theme introduced by Mr. Engler by sharing a number of aphorisms making points regarding the perceived difference between men and women. On a more serious note he described the gender differences, physical differences, intellectual and behavioral differences. He concluded his presentation with classic phrase, "Viva la difference!"

The comment session revealed enthusiastic comments regarding both papers.

Rebuttals followed.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas W. Westerfield  
Secretary/Treasurer.

# MINUTES

## Athenaeum Society

4 September 2008

The September meeting of the Athenaeum Society convened at 6:30 PM at the Holiday Inn, Hopkinsville, Ky. Rev. Ron Buck gave the opening prayer

Following a typical hearty buffet dinner consisting of the usual fare, President John Freer called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Secretary Nicolos called the roll with 34 of 40 members acknowledging their presence.

Minutes of the May Open Meeting and the financial report indicating \$2072.75 bank balance were read and approved.

President Freer called for absence excuses from the May meeting. Members so identified offered varied and lame rationale and were regrettably excused.

Member William Rowlett moved that the Society replace the ancient lectern at the officers table. President Freer asked member Hal King to take the lead in investigating the style and cost of a replacement and to report back at the October meeting.

The evening's papers were presented by the Rev. Dr. Ron M. Buck, a member since 2007 and number 38 in seniority and John B. Rittenhouse a member since 2007 and number 39 in seniority.

Mr. Buck's paper, titled "The Beginning of Modern Historiography," presented analyses of the History of the Peloponnesian War.

The History of the Peloponnesian War is an account of the Peloponnesian War in Ancient Greece, fought between the Peloponnesian League (led by Sparta) and the Delian League (led by Athens). It was written by Thucydides, an Athenian general who served

in the war. It is widely considered a classic and regarded as one of the earliest scholarly works of history.

Mr. Buck's study of this work and its author led him to delve into the question of how much history as we know it today is an actual presentation of events as they occurred or as events the historian perceived or desired them to have occurred.

Having led us through the background of The History, and the methodology of historical writing, Mr. Buck concluded his presentation saying "of Thucydides, it appears rather than simply recording an objective, straight forward report of events, the historian of the Peloponnesian War had an agenda. By use of historical development, selection of material and events, redaction of sources, character development and creative license( particularly in regard to speeches), the writer leads us on a journey through the war as he viewed it, not as it actually happened".

"In the final analysis, isn't that the way all writers write?"

And I might add, that may also be true of the Secretary's minutes of the Athenaeum Society's Meetings.

Mr. Rittenhouse's paper was entitled "The History of Benham and Lynch". Two small communities in the far eastern region of Kentucky that came to prominence mining coal beginning in the early part of the last century and grew aggressively during the run up to World War 1.

The community of Benham grew to a population of more than 10,000 after the International Harvester Company built facilities for mining on a large scale. Lynch was built a few years later by the U.S. Coal and Coke, which later became U.S. Steel. Together with numerous other mining towns that sprung up in Harlan County, the population of the area increased to more than 30,000.

Benham and Lynch lay together, end to end, in a valley between mountains of 3 to 4,000 feet. These were self contained company towns, close knit communities, resembling extended families. Within the towns,



were situated the mine offices, company store, hospital, theater, clubhouse, school, church and bandstand. These facilities provided the school teachers, clergy, medical staff, consumer products, entertainment and recreation. Families worked, played, worshiped and went to school together. Quiet rows of neatly painted houses and manicured lawns obscured pay differences.

Sadly, the mines could not last forever, and beginning in the late 1950's through the early 60's, Benham and Lynch were sold to their residents by the owners, International Harvester and U.S. Steel. Then began a slow, but certain exodus of the population to seek employment opportunities elsewhere. Currently, the population of both as of July 2007 is but 538 and 828 respectfully.

Mr. Rittenhouse concluded his presentation saying "I am always glad when I go to the mountains to see that so much of it just as described and pictured in the books I have read, but I am always just as pleased to see that so much is not".

Following a short comfort break, comments were entertained, and were followed by rebuttals, both of which were enjoyed by all present.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter K. Nicolos  
Secretary/Treasurer

# MINUTES

## Athenaeum Society

2 October 2008

The October meeting of the Athenaeum Society convened at 6:30 PM at the Holiday Inn, Hopkinsville, Ky., and opened with prayer.

Following a typical hearty buffet dinner consisting of the usual fare, President John Freer called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Secretary Nicolos called the roll with <sup>31</sup>29 of 40 members acknowledging their presence.

Minutes of the September meeting and the financial report indicating \$3712.69 bank balance were read and approved.

President Freer called for absence excuses from the September meeting. Members so identified offered varied and lame rationale and were regrettably excused.

Member Hal King reported suitable speaker lecterns were available at a cost starting at \$700 and up, depending on how equipped. A motion was made to purchase an appropriate model that included a self contained power supply, microphone and speaker.

The evening's papers were presented by Mark G. Schweizer, a member since 1993 and number 20 in seniority, and Robert J. Cope, a member since 2000 and number 23 in seniority.

Mr. Schweizer's paper was titled, "It was a dark and stormy night". And indeed it was. The late cartoonist, Charles Schultz, and the very late poet, play-write, novelist, politician and statesman, Sir Edward George Earle Lytton Bulwer-Lytton, provided the ingredients for a literary thunderstorm of epic proportion that only the late professor of English, E.B. White, could have been tested to decipher. However, the annual Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest has given Mr. Schweizer the

appropriate platform to practice his craft and be recognized as a serious grammarian par exemplar. So be it.

Mr. Cope's paper was entitled "Blondes". And it included the Clairol species in addition to the natural ones. He observed that" in contemporary popular culture, it is often stereotyped that men find blond women more attractive than women with other hair colors." I would add that observation is attested by the number of attractive blond women seen at all hours on television's The Weather Channel and Fox News. Viva le Blonde Pole Dancer.

Following a short comfort break, comments were entertained, and were followed by rebuttals, both of which were enjoyed by all present.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter K. Nicolos  
Secretary/Treasurer

**MINUTES**  
**ATHENAEUM SOCIETY**  
**6 NOVEMBER 2008**

**The November meeting of the Athenaeum Society convened at 6:30 PM at the Holiday Inn, Hopkinsville, Ky., and opened with prayer by member Howard Willen.**

**Following a typical hearty buffet dinner consisting of the usual fare, President Freer called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.**

**Secretary Nicolos called the roll with 25 of 40 members acknowledging their presence.**

**Minutes of the October meeting and financial statement were read and approved.**

**President Freer called for absence excuses from the November meeting.**

**Members so identified offered various non-original lame reasons which were regrettably excused by a slim majority of the Society.**

**The evening's papers were presented by Hollis N. White, the third, a member since 1999 and number 22 in seniority, and Wendell A. Lynch, a member since 2001 and number 27 in priority.**

**Mr. White's paper was titled "Raise Taxes on Gasoline". In which it was posited that the result of raising taxes on gasoline would benefit the United States by reducing automobile use, which would reduce traffic congestion, which would reduce commuting time, which would reduce traffic related accidents and fatalities, which would reduce pollution and global warming, be environmentally friendly, and place us on the path of energy independence. And to offset the pain that we would feel at the pump, individual federal income taxes would be cut accordingly.**

**Playing on that last thought was Mr. Lynch's paper, appropriately titled "April Fools Day- Real or Hoax." In which the many theories of when, why, how, and who originated this annual farce was explored. And finally it was left to the listener to pick their favorite from among the numerous**

possibilities. However it was generally acknowledged by the members present that both papers showed a distinct collaborative effort to entertain.

Following a short comfort break, comments were entertained, followed by rebuttals, both of which were enjoyed by all remaining members.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter K. Nicolos

Secretary/Treasurer

## MINUTES

### ATHENAEUM SOCIETY

4 DECEMBER 2008

The December meeting of the Athenaeum Society convened at 6:30 PM at the Holiday Inn, Hopkinsville, Ky., and opened with prayer.

Following a typical hearty buffet dinner consisting of usual fare, President Freer called the meeting called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

Secretary Nicolos called the roll with 30 of 40 members acknowledging their presence.

Minutes of the November meeting and financial statement were read and approved.

President Freer called for absence excuses from the December meeting.

All members so identified offered various non-original lame reasons with exception of a unique instance in which a member who was enroute to the meeting was abducted and beamed upwards to an apparent alien spacecraft, held for an indeterminate period of time and subsequently released none the worse for the experience, however too late to make the meeting. Regrettably, the non-original excuses were also approved.

Mr. Westerfield's paper was titled "A Mission to Georgia". This was a first person experience to provide disaster relief to the citizens of the nation of Georgia, formally a subject of the former USSR. The mission was result of the Russian military invasion of Georgia in August of this year. This mission was sponsored by the Baptist Disaster Relief organization. The primary task of this agency was to provide a food program for 6,000 of the 30,000 permanent refugees as a result of the Russian invasion. The relief team prepared, cooked and served 200 gallons of borsht twice daily along with 600 loaves of fresh baked bread for each meal.

Mr. Powell's paper was titled "My Obsession with Great Structures". Beginning with the Biblical Tower of Babel, this presentation related the where, why, who, and how great man made structures came about through

out the world. During Mr. Powell's extensive foreign travel he has seen first hand a number of the structures he described and is looking forward to visiting a number that are in construction at this time which are to be larger, taller, or more spectacular.

Following a short comfort break, comments were entertained, followed by rebuttals, both of which were enjoyed by all remaining members.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter K. Nicolos

Secretary/Treasurer