

Unitarian
Universalist
Retired
Ministers
Association

An association of retired Unitarian Universalist ministers, their spouses and surviving spouses of deceased Unitarian Universalist ministers.

AUGUST 1992

ELDERBERRIES

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1991 - 93

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HOW WAS CALGARY?

That question is asked of those of us who attended the General Assembly there. The facilities were excellent, comfortable and convenient. The city is impressive, mostly quite new. The Assembly business sessions were dull, and routine. We managed to endorse "diversity" and to add "spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which affirm the sacred circle of all existence and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of our Earth" as a proposed part of the Principles and Purposes (it must be ratified at the next General Assembly). It was also an expensive gathering, even when one has the advantage of favorable exchange rate of currency. Twenty ministers were recognized as completing full-time ministries. **Al Perry** represented the fifty-year honorees and spoke at the UUMA Worship Service. The UURMA luncheon was a happy and relaxed occasion attended by thirty-two, including six of the newly retired ministers.

Gordon B. McKeeman

MUNSON'S MUSINGS

Crowded off of Munson's Musings in the last issue of Elderberries was this submission from Peggy Munson. That omission is hereby rectified.

Ten Points on Why Older is Better
by Annie Gottlieb (McCall's)

1. You smarten up.
2. You toughen up.
3. You feel your power.
4. Your love deepens.
5. You become more yourself.
6. You become more altruistic.
7. You (may) become a grandparent.
8. Your world widens.
9. You are more motivated.
10. You come alive spiritually.

RANDOM NOTES

from the mailbag (unsigned-postmarked Rochester, NY)

Three UNDEBATABLE truths

1. I didn't create myself.
2. The universe is big.
3. Some day your BODY will die.

Ginnie Crane writes that she feels the name of the UURMA ought to reflect the nature of the membership, which includes ministers, and partners of ministers and surviving spouses of ministers.

Max Gaebler reports that he has been unable to find anyone willing to assume the chairpersonship of the Midwinter UURMA conference, which has been held the past few years at the UU in the Pines in Brooksville. Is a programless gathering (next column)



possible? Or is there a soul willing to invest self in providing the necessary leadership? Or shall we not have such a gathering this year? Communicate your ideas to Max, Keith Munson, or any member of the Executive Board.

IS THERE LIFE AFTER MINISTRY?

One of the questions which those about to retire ask themselves is, "Is there life after ministry?" The ministry does place one in an important position in relation to a particular community. Surrendering that position seems to some to be tantamount to surrendering all sense of worth and importance. Thus some, fear such a consequence, feel the necessity of continuing some form of ministry in order to maintain a sense of self-worth.

We've been talking with, listening to, and hearing from (or about) ministers who have made successful transitions from active ministry to various kinds of retirement styles. Here are a few of them.

Bob Senghas says he now has more time to practice playing the viola. He also serves on boards of organizations which provide various kinds of community service. And, he says, "I also have a sailboat."

Clif Hoffman is active as a member of the Athens (Georgia) Housing Authority.

Nancy Thatcher Reid is busy doing research and writing a history of the Town of Dennis, MA. Since Dennis was founded in 1639, she has both hands and head full. She's a tenth generation Cape Codder.

Grant Haskell helps to monitor the water quality in a chain of lakes near his Florida home.

Don and Aniko Harrington are still doing ministries, but in a different venue, Transylvania. In addition (as though anything additional were required) Aniko is completing work on a Ph.D. at the New School in New York. They plan to attend the UURMA gathering in Hudson and may be persuaded to tell us all a bit about the current situation in the Transylvanian section of Romania.

Doubtless other of our readers have discovered other ways to make the transition from full time ministries into another circumstance. We'd like to hear from others who have found ways to retire without surrendering the sense of doing important things or being of use. Perhaps what you have come upon will provide others with useful clues to their own discovery of life after ministry.

"THE MORE WE GET
TOGETHER...
TOGETHER...
TOGETHER."



MID-CONTINENT UURMA CONFERENCE

September 25 - 27, 1992
Astor Hotel, Milwaukee, WI

Program:

Friday, Sept. 25

5:00 pm. Social hour, wine, cheese in our private suite
6:20 pm. Dinner at First Unitarian Church (a short two blocks from Hotel) and round robin check-in.

Saturday, Sept. 26

8:00 am. Continental breakfast at the Church, followed by a full morning program including conversations with Frank Zeidler, last Socialist Mayor of Milwaukee.

Lunch with special guest from Milwaukee Museum of Art.

1:15 pm. a van will take us to the Museum to view its outstanding collection of German Expressionist paintings.

Late afternoon reserved for rest and/or sightseeing, shopping, etc.

5:00 pm. Social hour in our suite at the Astor.

6:30 pm. Dinner Cruise on the Harbor! Excellent food, good views, splendid company.

Added attraction! Milwaukee's Archbishop Weakland, recently featured in the New Yorker, will join us at some point in the weekend.

Sunday, Sept. 27

11:00 am. Church Service and closing light lunch.

Cost:

Registration fee, including hotel accommodations, meals, entrance fees, etc., \$120.00 per person. Subsidies are available for first-time attendees. Send registration fees to Gaebler, 1212 Dartmouth Rd., Madison, WI 53705.

NORTHEAST UURMA CONFERENCE

October 6,7,8, 1992
Oblate Retreat House, Hudson, NH

What's in the works?

"I hope that in the next ten years the UUA will..."
Comments from the UUA Presidential candidates (or their spokespersons); and from a report of a survey by UURMA President Munson; and your views on the subject (not more than two typed pages double spaced)

"I'd appreciate a little more religious tone..."

Brief times of worship at day's end and right after breakfast. "How about having odyssey presentations by both men and women." Gene and Helen Pickett will do a joint odyssey on Wednesday evening. "We need more free time." 3:00 to 5:00 pm. Wednesday afternoon will be scheduled free time. Beyond that, feel free to skip any program that does not interest you.

Also on the menu, Thomas Mikelson, minister at First Parish in Cambridge will conduct a Wednesday-after-lunch session on "Sexual Ethics in the UU ministry." David Pohl will speak on Thursday morning on matters ministerial. And Entertainment Special - unspecified (stay tuned!)

Planning Committee:

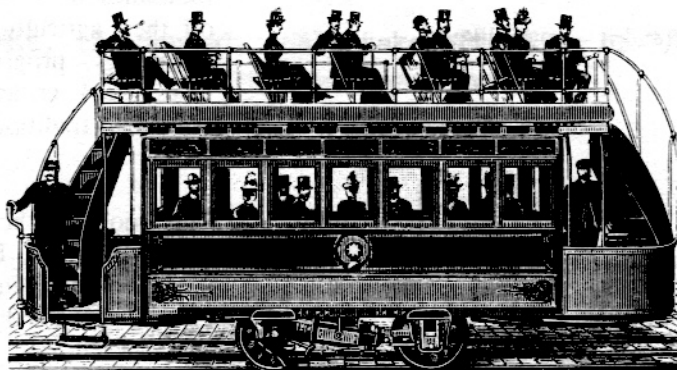
Bill Hammond, Grace Hammond-Lindquist, Arthur and Marion Jellis, Gladys Morrisey, Registrar
Cost: \$80 for two nights' lodging, and six excellent cafeteria meals.

Note:

Would a subsidy make it possible for you to attend? If you've never attended a UURMA conference, and a 50% discount on the registration fee would make it possible for you to attend, write to Gladys Morrisey, 247 Park Ave., Arlington, MA. She will contact you personally and confidentially

Additional information:

General: call Bill Hammond, 508/486-3988;
Registration, call Gladys Morrisey, 617/643-3918.



LOOKS AT BOOKS

There are Times, when we live through the unrest and despair of these days, a good book filled with sunshine and hope is the right tonic to lift the spirit. Such a book is "Thornyhold", written by Lady Mary Stewart, well known for her "Merlin Trilogy."

The story is told in the first person by the central character, Geillis Ramsey, best known as Gilly.

She is a lonely child spending her growing up years in adequate, but dull vicarages, in isolated small towns in England. Her parents are a saintly (too saintly) father and a dominating mother, neither of whom has any sense of the needs of the child. Her father, devoted to his parishioners, loved her, but had no time to practice parenthood and her mother dominated the home, the parish and all within her reach.

The one bright spot in Gilly's life was her mother's cousin, also named Geillis, who occasionally visited the vicarage. She was Gilly's godmother and alert to Gilly's unhappy position in the family. Gilly came to think of her as her fairy godmother as the two of them spent time together. Among the many things that Geillis opened Gilly's eyes to was the beauty of the world of nature.

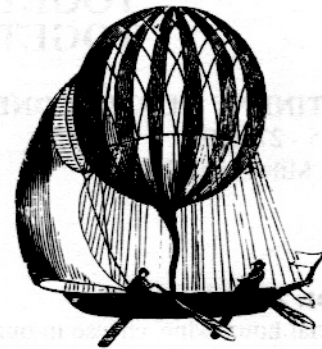
"Fairy godmother" proved to be quite appropriate! When Gilly became the right age Geillis furnished the needed funds to send Gilly off to school. Then after her mother was killed in a automobile accident, she became the hostess of the vicarage and her life became one of caring for her father. But he too died before long and Gilly was left without a home, without a family and no adequate training to earn a living.

But once again, Geillis, who had grown old and lost touch with Gilly came again, this time in the form of a letter from Geillis' solicitors. Gilly found herself an heiress, not so much of funds but as the owner of Geillis' hundred year old house and its surrounding acreage in the beautiful English countryside.

It didn't take Gilly long to pack her few belongings and take off for Thornyhold -- the name of her new/old possession. The rest of the book is a delight as we go with Gilly and follow her changed life from a confused, unhappy girl to an outgoing, almost adventuresome woman.

There's more, much, much more. Read it -- you'll like it.

-HOPE REAMON



OTHER SUGGESTION

Fom Alaska

It seems that most of Alaskan literature is made up of adventure, travel, unusual sports, biography, hardy animals and strange lifestyles. However, we now find an author who has made a change in that trend.

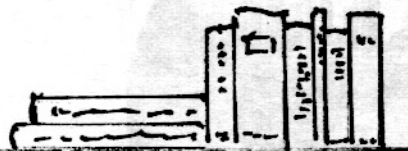
Author Nancy Lord of Homer, Alaska, has written a book of short stories, entirely fictitious, entitled, "Survival". The stories are set in Alaska, with well constructed plots and well defined characters, but not unlike people who have gone to Alaska for definite reasons in mind, or certain expectations. Her focus in each story is not overshadowed by the bigness of the mountains, or distances or hours of light and darkness. It's a good look at what goes on in our far distant state. "Survival" is sold by the Cuffe House Press in Minneapolis, MN for \$9.95, soft bound.

Of Special interest to New Englanders

Recently a book titled "Vanishing Vermont" has been written and illustrated with black and white photographs. The authors are Daniel Neary, Jr., Montpelier writer-photographer, and Peter Cooper, a former Vermont Associated Press correspondent, and now a free-lance writer.

The contents of the book point out how thousands of Vermonters have been driven off their agricultural lands by the forces of technology, progress and immigration. It takes a look, critical but poetic, at the loss of the proud tradition of Vermont as a farming state.

This book may be ordered from the Plateau Press, Box 760, R.D. #5, Montpelier, VT 05602. Cost (including tax, postage and Handling) is \$11.30.



We care about the Caring Network, too, and are aware that the listings included in the last issue of "Elderberries" contained some errors that we hasten (if several months can be considered haste) to correct for the record.

The Connecticut Valley is served by Harold and Shirley Hadley (not Shelley); Mountain/Desert is under the kindly eye of Leon C. Fay (not Leo C. Faye); Among the Northeast District shepherds is Donald Hinckley (with a c); Newly agreeing to accept responsibility in areas not previously covered are: Aron and Eve Gilmartin, 1759 Crescent Dr., Walnut Creek, CA 94598, Pacific Central District; Ray and Gretchen Manker, 4530 East Peppertree Lane, Paradise Valley, AZ 85253, Pacific Southwest District.

Openings still exist in Florida, Metro New York, Southwest and Ohio Valley areas. If you are interested in this kind of ministerial service, kindly contact Helen Dick for further information as to what is entailed. Her address is: 1 Walnut Way, Springfield, VT 05156-9142. Phone, 802/886-8271.

BRIEF TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Willam Gardner of the URMA reports income received of \$7058.38 and expenditures of \$7460.72. Balance in operating account is \$4281.99. Contributions keep us solvent. Last year 161 member contributions arrived. You can help.



THE

OF LIFE

Charles Styron - April 19, 1992
surviving - Wife, Claora Styron
55 Medford Leas
Medford, NJ 08055
a daughter and son

Peter Samson - May 19, 1992
surviving - Wife, Lois Samson
205 East Norman Way
Paramus, NJ 07652
a son and daughter

Richard Gibbs - May 21, 1992
surviving - Wife, Mildred Gibbs
7 Pine Street
Greenfield, MA 01301
a daughter

UNSOLICITED (AND UNPAID) ADVERTISING 1

From a recent letter: "A member of our congregation (Unitarian Universalist Society of Black Hawk County, Iowa) who was a UU minister at one time has informed the Search Committee that it is sometimes possible to hire a retired minister for a part time position.

"We have had a full time minister/s for many years but we have run into financial problems because of a mortgage situation and will not be able to hire a full time minister at this time."

I promised her I'd inform the retired ministers of this opportunity. She finds it hard to believe that there are any who do "this sort of thing." Her address is Mildred D. Pierce, 1710 Walnut St., Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613.

I saw my father's face
 in the mirror today -
 That private, grief-torn man
 filled with remorse and
 remembrance in his
 tiny room, torn by age
 and circumstance from
 passion, in his heart's
 sad lonely silence.

But also filled with honor and
 patient, uncomplaining
 love, the strong love
 that he shared, the
 patience of the
 mountain rock that
 marks his hillside grave.

And I was him, now am him
 and am not him
 in the unique corners
 of my own regrets as I
 share with you
 the love he gave me,
 uncomplainingly.

THE MIRROR

George C. Whitney
 (from Serape VII - Spring 1992)

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST RETIRED
 MINISTERS ASSOCIATION
 % GORDON B. MCKEEMAN
 24 LAKE FOREST DRIVE
 CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA 22901

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Notice of Proposals to Change the By-Laws of UURMA

The By-Laws of the UURMA may be amended by an affirmative vote of not less than six members of the Executive Board provided that all members of the organization have been notified of the proposed amendment at least sixty days prior to the time of the meeting at which the vote is taken and shall be invited to send their comments and suggestions to the Board which shall consider them before voting on the amendments. You are hereby notified of the proposed amendments which the Executive Board will consider at its January meeting. Names and addresses of the Executive Board members are on the first page of Elderberries.

Amendments proposed to Article V - Elections

To limit terms -

Insert after "shall serve for two years." the following: No officer or member of the Nominating Committee shall serve for more than two consecutive terms, except when filling an unexpired term, or if one's successor has not been qualified.

To provide rotation of Board service -

Insert in substitution for Article V - Elections the following: The officers and a Nominating Committee consisting of a chair and two other members shall be elected by a mail ballot of the members. Four of the Board members and one member of the Nominating Committee shall be elected in odd-numbered years; four Board members and two members of the Nominating Committee shall be elected in even-numbered years. The member of the Nominating Committee elected in the odd-numbered year shall serve as Chair. Electees shall assume office on July 1 following their election and shall serve for two years. If, however, their successors have not been elected by the end of their terms, they shall continue in office until their successors are qualified. No officer or member of the Nominating Committee shall serve for more than two consecutive terms, except when filling an unexpired term, or if one's successor has not been qualified. All members shall be eligible to vote by mail ballots in an election conducted by the Nominating Committee. During the month of February preceding the election the Nominating Committee shall poll the membership for suggestions of nominees. From these and their own suggestions the Committee shall make its nominations and conduct an election by mail during the month of May and shall certify to the Secretary the results of the election. No nominee shall be listed on the ballot without his or her consent. The Nominating Committee is authorized to establish such procedures as are necessary to carry out these provisions.

This amendment, if adopted, shall take effect as of 7/1/93.