

THE SHINING SCROLL
newsletter for the
L. M. Montgomery Literary Society
1996

founded in 1990 by
Carolyn Collins and Christina Eriksson

L. M. MONTGOMERY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
Virginia Mold



Virginia, Ann, Elizabeth

Following in the footsteps of 1994, 1996 was a banner year in the world of L.M. Montgomery. "L.M. Montgomery and Canadian Culture: An International Conference" was held June 27-30. The L.M. Montgomery Institute at the University of Prince Edward Island was host to over 100 participants.

The L.M. Montgomery Literary Society was well-represented. Two society members presented papers. On Friday, Mary Beth Cavert presented her paper, "To The Friends of Anne: L.M. Montgomery's Book Dedications, Friends With a Mutual Past." "To Remember and Be Remembered: A Brief Overview of L.M. Montgomery's Scrapbooks" was presented by Carolyn Collins on Sunday. In addition, there were other LMMLS members present: Ann Johnson, Elizabeth Cavert and Virginia Mold.

There were many Montgomery scholars and representatives present like Dr. Mary Rubio, Dr. Elizabeth Waterston, Dr. Francis Bolger, Jack and Linda Hutton (Bala Museum), Kate Macdonald-Butler, Dr. Gabriella Ahmansson and Dr. Elizabeth Epperly.

Conference attendees were not "in the depths of despair" for a moment! There were several entertaining activities to fill the time: a performance of Hank Stinson's promising new musical, "The Blue Castle," a reception and tour at Fanningbank (Government House, home of the Lt. Governor), a private viewing of "Through the Eyes of L.M. Montgomery," an exhibition at the Confederation Centre of Montgomery's photographs and a lobster supper at New Glasgow. The Conference was dedicated in memory of Rea Wilmshurst.

LITERARY SOCIETIES AT THE 1996 SYMPOSIUM
Carolyn Collins

Quite a few members of Montgomery Literary Societies were present at the conference this year. Five of our Minnesota group attended the sessions. There were also societies from Hamilton, Ontario, and Michigan represented. Although there was very little time for socializing and comparing notes (sessions began at 9 am and ran until 5 pm), members of the societies have become fast friends in the last few years and we keep in touch with each other through personal correspondence, e-mail, and newsletters. Perhaps at the next Symposium, there will be more time available for Society members to meet, exchange information and begin to form an even more cohesive group.

It is truly wonderful to know people all over Canada and the United States through our mutual interest — L.M. Montgomery. We learn so much from each other!

A JAPANESE WEDDING AT SILVER BUSH

Carolyn Collins

In the last few years, George and Maureen Campbell of the Anne of Green Gables Museum at Silver Bush, Prince Edward Island, have made the parlour in which L.M. Montgomery was married in 1911 available to couples wishing to re-create that wedding for themselves. Many couples from Japan have come to Silver Bush to be married (symbolically) there. Some of us from the Minnesota society were fortunate enough to witness one of those weddings while we were on the Island this summer.

The couple, a minister and wedding assistant arrived in a white limousine and the bride, splendidly gowned in a white, full-skirted dress and long veil, was whisked upstairs to await the ceremony. The groom and minister were ushered into the parlour and stood before the mantel. Soon, the bride came down the staircase and stepped across the hall into the parlour. Maureen and Ruth Hunter sang "The Voice that Breath'd O'er Eden", the same song sung at LMM's wedding. The door to the parlour was then closed (to assure a good quality videotaping with minimum background noise from the busy museum) and the brief ceremony was performed.

After the ceremony, the newlyweds stepped through the front door of Silver Bush and into an open horse-drawn carriage for a leisurely ride through the grounds and along the shore of the Lake of Shining Waters. George had thoughtfully provided covers for the carriage wheels and a lap robe to keep the bride's dress from being spattered by any bits of red soil along the lane (although the bride may have considered spatters of Anne's Island soil a desirable souvenir of her wedding!) The crowd that had gathered on the front lawn applauded the couple, took snapshots of them in the carriage and waved to them as they rode away.



George Campbell is quoted in Calvin Trillin's August 5 New Yorker article -- "Anne of Red Hair: What do the Japanese see in Anne of Green Gables?" -- on the subject of Japanese weddings at Silver Bush. In addition to re-created weddings, the Campbells also celebrated Montgomery's own wedding anniversary on July 5 when she was married 85 years ago.

1996-96 MEETINGS

Last year's Literary Society meetings began in November with a talk by Sandy Sinclair, owner of "Lupine Cottage," a gift shop in Silverdale, Washington. Sandy planned her trip to the Twin Cities around our meeting so that she could meet and talk with fellow fans of L.M. Montgomery. She told us about her shop, filled with Anne of Green Gables books and gifts, and the activities she plans for groups of girls interested in Anne -- afternoon teas, craft parties, etc. Sandy's friend, Anita Tollefson, who owns a bed-and-breakfast in Sauk Center, Minnesota, attended the meeting as well and told us about the "Anne of Green Gables" guest room she has put together for the inn.

Our December meeting featured a review by Beth Cavert of the newly-issued *Christmas With Anne*, Rea Wilmshurst's collection of Montgomery Christmas stories. Ginger tea and slices of fruit cake made from LMM's own recipe were served; Kathy Gastle of Norval, Ontario (LMM's home, 1926-35), sent the tea and cake to us from Crawford's, a wonderful bakery and gift shop in Norval, owned by Bob and Elaine Crawford. Elaine is Myrtle Webb's grand-daughter; Myrtle grew up at Green Gables and was a friend of LMM. The Crawfords own LMM's recipe book (which they are publishing this fall) and many other Montgomery artifacts, some of which are displayed at the annual Montgomery Christmas event in Norval. Members also had a chance to preview some of the projects that will be included in Carolyn and Christina's upcoming book (1997) *The Anne of Green Gables Christmas Treasury* -- evergreen and wild rose decorations, a Green Gables tea cozy, ribbon garlands and a Green Gables gingerbread house.

At our March meeting, Wisconsin member Carol Gaboury presented a report of her Elderhostel experience last summer at the University of Prince Edward Island. The subject, of course, was L.M. Montgomery. Carol also brought a portion of her vast collection of Montgomery materials.

At our final meeting of the year, Joan O'Brien reviewed an article on Montgomery from the American Scholar, "The Story of a Classic, Anne and After" by Joseph G. Brennan (Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, Barnard College, Columbia University). We also viewed Carol Gaboury's copy of the videotape, "The Road to Green Gables." This documentary on Montgomery's life and career was produced by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation about twenty years ago and it was a rare treat for us to be able to view it. Thanks, Carol! Incidentally, the CBC was on Prince Edward Island this summer filming a new documentary on LMM for Canadian Television to be aired about November 1. We hope to be able to show it at a future meeting.



Carol Gaboury

REA WILMSHURST (1941-1996)

Beth Cavert

Rea Wilmshurst was given a copy of Anne of Green Gables by her mother when she was 11. She started to read it but thought that Mrs. Lynde was boring. Her mother then opened the book to a later chapter, A Tempest in the School Teapot, and she read the book from there to the end and then started back at the beginning. After that, she read and re-read everything by L.M. Montgomery.

In 1977, Wilmshurst started to collect Montgomery's short stories by mining the collection of stories pasted in twelve of LMM's scrapbooks. She located about 400 of the 517 stories Montgomery listed in her records and has edited most of the 190 stories now in print. In 1983, she published a preliminary bibliography of Montgomery's short stories in Canadian Children's Literature Journal and in 1986, she co-authored Lucy Maud Montgomery: A Preliminary Bibliography. In 1989, she shared her "literary sleuthing," a project in which she identified and indexed the quotations and allusions in Montgomery's works and invited readers of CCL Journal to help her with the "not found" list.

In December 1995, the L.M. Montgomery Literary Society discussed Wilmshurst's book, Christmas With Anne. Wilmshurst was contacted by telephone before the meeting and provided some background information on her publications. Her publishers wanted another book with Anne in the title because it sells well. She was thinking about a Cooking With Anne project. However, her original plan for the next collection was to focus on the village, about neighbors, like the two women who live side by side, quarrel and reconcile. Another idea was to go farther afield - a possible title, Away From Home - Tales of Boarding School. In the past year, she had thought of eight new titles that began with "A," like Always the Romantic Tale.

Rea Wilmshurst died of ovarian cancer on March 22, 1996. In the few months before her death, she made arrangements with a colleague to continue her work and her dream of publishing all of Montgomery's stories. "This work has been a labour of love. Montgomery's stories never fail to amuse me, to enchant me, to make me weep. I have delighted to discover that they are as pleasurable to many of today's readers as they are to me."

Collected and edited by Rea Wilmshurst:

- 1988 Akin to Anne, Tales of Other Orphans
- 1989 Along the Shore, Tales by the Sea
- 1990 Among the Shadows, Tales From the Darker Side
- 1991 After Many Days, Tales of Time Passed
- 1993 Against the Odds, Tales of Achievement
- 1994 At the Altar, Matrimonial Tales
- 1995 Across the Miles, Tales of Correspondence
- 1995 Christmas With Anne and Other Holiday Tales

THIS YEAR'S MEETINGS

On October 12, Beth Cavert presented the paper she prepared for the 1996 L.M. Montgomery International Symposium, "To the Friends of Anne." The paper (and slides of family photographs) described some of the friends to whom Montgomery dedicated her books - Laura and Willy Pritchard, Alexina and Fred Wright, Alec and May MacNeill, Myrtle and Ernest Webb and Nora Lefurgey Campbell.

TO THE FRIENDS OF ANNE

(c) Mary Beth Cavert

I had a certain knack of picking friends which I took as a matter of course but can now see to have been a very vital endowment. - L. M. Montgomery, Scrapbook at Silver Bush

Like many students of Lucy Maud Montgomery's work, I have been impressed by the contrast between the overall tone of her personal journals and novels. I was particularly struck by the idea set forth in an essay in *Harvesting Thistles* (1994) that, unlike the friendships portrayed in her books, "Friendship for LMM was fraught with loss, misunderstandings and gaps that could not be bridged."

I decided to explore this idea - was friendship mostly an experience of disappointment and disillusionment for L.M. Montgomery? Were the friendships in her stories a record of the kinds of friends she desired, or, indeed, the echo of friendships that did exist in her life. And more than that, who were her friends and what were their stories?

The circle of friends I selected were the ones she identified on the first pages of her books in the dedications. When it came to cultivating friendship, Maud Montgomery was cautious. Her relationships within this group were formed early in her life, most by 1903 (age 29), before her first book was written and before she was famous. Her books were treasured creations and she honored treasured friends and relations with dedications during the course of her 32-year lifetime publishing career.

Through L.M. Montgomery's book dedications, a study of a small part of Canadian history can be extracted. The story of Maud's immediate family tree tracks the political and economic history of Canada and unfolds as quickly as **Hugh John Montgomery's** travels across a prairie landscape from job to job, riding a wave of national growing pains. Women school teachers, like **Harriet Gordon**, **Bertie McIntyre**, **Frederica Campbell** and **Nora Lefurgey**, moved from school to school, across provinces and across the continent. The roots of Montgomery's culture are represented by **George Boyd MacMillan** in the homeland of Scotland. The pioneers and their children, **Laura and Willy Pritchard**, **Alexina McGregor** and **Fred Wright**, settled down to begin new towns like Prince Albert. The time of the Great War was personalized by the soldiers **Goldie Lapp**, **Morley Shier** and **Bob Brooks**. The thoughts of writers, teachers and clergy are recorded in the letters of **Ephraim Weber** and the poetry of **Arthur John Lockhart**. The agrarian life of LMM's extended family, who were born on the farm (including **Lucky the cat**) and then stayed home on Prince Edward Island for three, four and five generations, are part of the story of her mother, **Clara Macneill** and other relatives: **Mary Lawson**, **Tillie McKenzie**, the **Campbell family**, **Alec and May MacNeill** and **Ernest and Myrtle Webb**. And of course, that history extends through today in the gathering of Montgomery's fans. Common to all of their stories is a culture of hospitality, durability and kindredness of spirit.

FRED WRIGHT

Beth Cavert

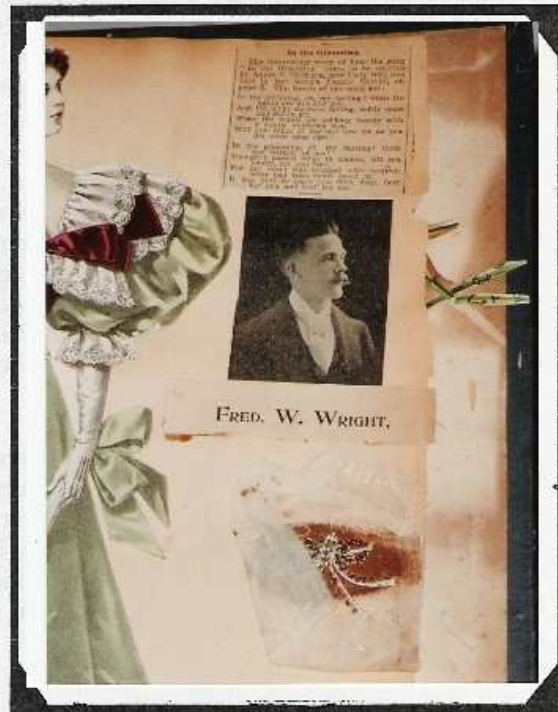
Readers familiar with Anne of Green Gables know that Fred Wright became engaged to Anne's best friend, Diana Barry, in the second book of the series, Anne of Avonlea (1909). Much later, the author, L.M. Montgomery, dedicated a book she was writing to Mr. and Mrs. Fred Wright

How did a man whom L.M. Montgomery met for the first time in 1930 appear in her fiction 20 years earlier? The answer is found in Prince Albert where LMM lived as a teen-age girl with her father for a year in 1890-91.

One of Maud's long-lasting friends from Prince Albert was Alexina McGregor. She had brilliant brown eyes and jet black hair. Alexina, age 20, and her three sisters (Kate, 22, Robena, 24, Nellie, 26) took 16 year-old Maud into their social circle. Alexina and Maud "tramped everywhere" around Prince Albert to sell tickets for the church concerts. Maud ate at the McGregor table at Bible Class picnics and Alexina came to the station to see Maud off when she boarded the train for Prince Edward Island. They corresponded for years after LMM returned home.

In October 1893, Fred W. Wright, from Ontario, moved to Prince Albert. Following in the footsteps of his father, Robert, of Medicine Hat, Alberta, Fred began a jewelry business. In 1897, he married Alexina and LMM put his picture in one of her scrapbooks (ten years later she borrowed his name for Diana Barry's fiance). Fred Wright was described as an "energetic and enterprising citizen." He built his own store in 1912. Fred, active in liberal politics, was on the city council for seven years, on the hospital board, in the Masons, Keewatin Club, Prince Albert Golf Club and Rotary Club. The Wrights were a highly respected and successful couple in Prince Albert.

Fred and Alexina had three children - their daughters Alexina and Emily both died at less than two years of age. Son, Fred R. Wright lost his hearing as a child and was educated at a special school in New York.



LMM visited Alexina and Fred in the fall of 1930 and had a wonderful time. Maud was impressed with their grand home and successful business. Fred took them for drives around town in their car. Alexina prepared delicious meals. LMM liked Fred tremendously and felt she had known him all her life. After she returned home, she wrote in her journal, "It is nice to realize that there are a few decent marriages in the world in spite of everything." Her book dedication in *A Tangled Web* (1931) reads "To my good friends, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Wright in memory of a certain week of laughter."

NEXT MEETING

The November 9 (Saturday) meeting will feature Carolyn's paper, "To Remember and Be Remembered -- A Brief Overview of the Scrapbooks of L.M. Montgomery." Carolyn gave this paper at the LMM International Symposium on PEI in June 1996. The meeting will be held at the **St Anthony Park Library meeting room at 1:30**. The library is located at the corner of Como and Carter Avenues in St. Anthony Park (St. Paul).

TO REMEMBER AND BE REMEMBERED

Carolyn Collins

L.M. Montgomery not only recorded her thoughts and the events of her daily life in her journals, she also kept an impressive array of scrapbooks (nineteen that we know of). In twelve of the scrapbooks, she pasted her stories, poems, and newspaper articles that were published, mostly before 1910. These are the scrapbooks that Rea Wilmshurst "discovered" at the birthplace in 1977 and from which she selected short stories for publication. John Ferns and Kevin McCabe selected poems from the poetry scrapbooks for their book, The Poetry of L. M. Montgomery. These scrapbooks are kept in the Confederation Centre archives in Charlottetown, PEI; a few are selected for display in the summer months at the LMM Birthplace house in New London.

In addition to these twelve scrapbooks, there are two "personal" scrapbooks in the PEI collection in which LMM kept all sorts of mementos from about 1893 - 1910 -- calling cards with little notations written on them, photographs, newspaper clippings, magazine pictures, playbills and programs from concerts, minutes and handwritten newsletters from the Cavendish Literary Society, even scraps of fur from her beloved cats, bits of fabric from favorite dresses, slivers of wood from her school desks, and pressed flowers from corsages.

Five more scrapbooks are in the archives at Guelph University in Ontario. Some of them contain personal items as well -- pressed flowers from LMM's wedding bouquet, her wedding invitation and newspaper announcements, honeymoon trip souvenirs, etc. Some of the scrapbooks contain reviews of her books, articles about the movies made from the "Anne" books, and magazine articles about LMM herself.

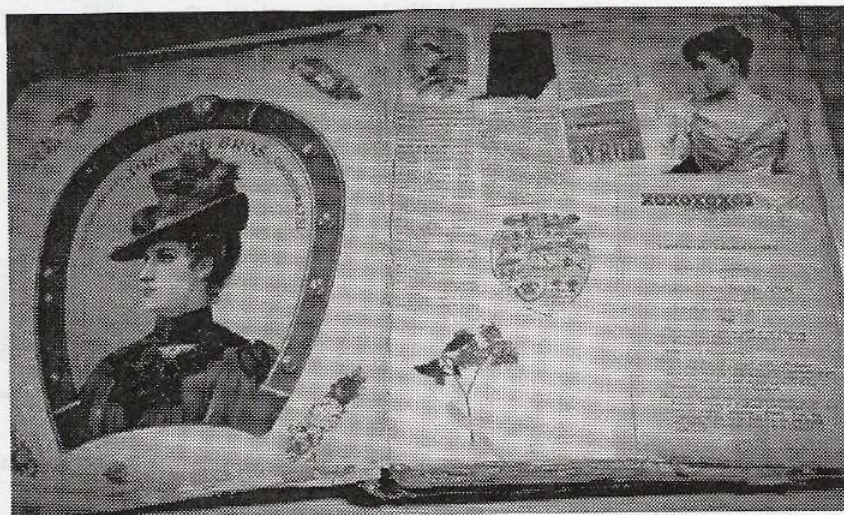
It is mostly the contents of the personal scrapbooks -- a rich and fascinating array of LMM memorabilia that has not yet been catalogued or examined thoroughly -- that are discussed in this paper with particular emphasis on the connections to LMM's journals and the implied connections to her writing. Photographs of many of the pages from the scrapbooks illustrate the paper.

(Dr. F.W. P. Bolger, Montgomery scholar and Island historian, is pictured here holding one of Montgomery's scrapbooks at the LMM Birthplace house in New London, PEI)



Scrapbook photos by Carolyn Collins,
courtesy LMM Birthplace

MONTGOMERY SCRAPBOOKS

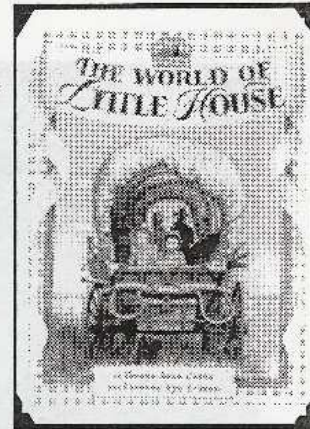


FUTURE PROGRAMS

Dates for spring meetings will be set after the holidays. One meeting will be a book swap and will give everyone an opportunity to show/swap/sell some of the books from their collections. If you have early edition Montgomery books (or other books by other authors -- Louisa May Alcott, Laura Ingalls Wilder, Gene Stratton Porter, Maud Hart Lovelace, Tasha Tudor) that you think members might enjoy, please bring them along.

NEW BOOKS

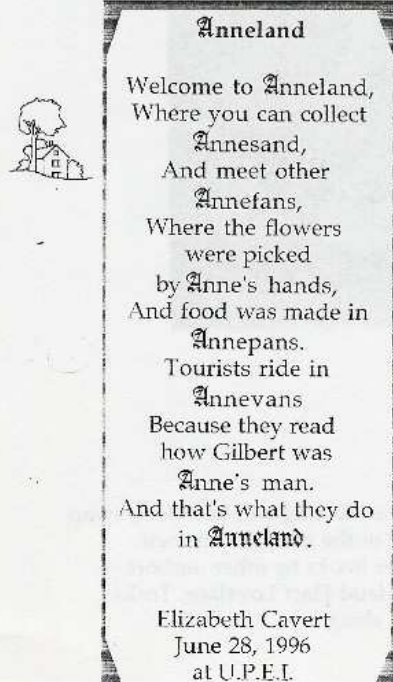
In a departure from their work on L.M. Montgomery, Carolyn and Christina have written two more "treasuries" that will be available this fall. The first, The World of Little House (HarperCollins, September), is based on the much-loved books by Laura Ingalls Wilder. Floor and site plans of all the "little houses" from the Big Woods to Rocky Ridge are illustrated in each chapter, along with recipes, crafts, and background information relating to the Little House books. It is beautifully illustrated by California artist Deborah Maze.



Also due this fall is The Little Women Treasury (Viking Penguin, November), based on Louisa May Alcott's classic Little Women, Little Men, and Jo's Boys. A floor and site plan of "Orchard House" is included, along with recipes (including Amy's Pickled Limes), crafts (Laurie's Birdhouse Post Office), garden projects, and historical and background information on the Alcott family, Concord, Massachusetts, "Orchard House" and more.

My Little House Craft Book and The Anne of Green Gables Christmas Treasury are scheduled to be published next year and several more books are in the works.

In the summer of 1992, Carolyn and Christina led The Anne of Green Gables Treasury Tour of L.M. Montgomery sites on Prince Edward Island. One of the tour members was Nancy Rootland of Highland, California. Nancy collected her impressions from that first trip, and following visits, into a new book called Anne's World, Maud's World: The Sacred Sites of L.M. Montgomery. It is published by Nimbus Publishing Limited, ISBN 1-55109-142-9.



FIRST CLASS

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