

THE D.H. LAWRENCE SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA NEWSLETTER



Volume 34, Fall 2001

President's Report

by Jack Stewart

AS THE RAIN POURS DOWN IN NORTH VANCOUVER, I look back to the golden sunshine of Naples and the highly successful **Eighth International D. H. Lawrence Conference** held there June 12-16, 2001. Conference chair Simonetta de Filippis and executive director Nick Ceramella, assisted by a bevy of gracious young women, earned the praise of participants from 15 countries for a well organized series of presentations and events (including a trip to Ravallo), celebrating Lawrence's vital connection with Italy. (For a more detailed account see Carl Behm's forthcoming review of the conference in DHLR.) On behalf of the Society, I presented Harry T. Moore Awards to two distinguished Lawrence scholars — H. M. (Bill) Daleski of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, author of *The Forked Flame* (1965), one of the foundational studies of Lawrence, and John Worthen, holder of the Chair of D. H. Lawrence Studies at the University of Nottingham, author of the first volume of the Cambridge biography, *D. H. Lawrence: The Early Years, 1885-1912*, and editor of numerous volumes in the Cambridge edition.

We were saddened earlier this year by the loss of Mark Spilka, a great champion of the normative Lawrence, a long-time member of our society, and winner of the Harry T. Moore Award in 1988. He will be remembered for *The Love Ethic of D. H. Lawrence* (1955) — a groundbreaking study — in addition to more recent books and symposia, and for his sense of humor and warm collegiality as well as for his critical insights. The Lawrence Society has decided to recognize Mark's lifelong contribution by establishing a special lectureship in his memory.

At the closing ceremonies in Naples, Prof. Hiro Tateishi announced that the 9th International Lawrence Conference will be held in Kyoto, Japan, in early July 2003. Kyoto is the site of the ancient capital and is famous for its temples and artwork. Prof. Tateishi, who will be organizing the conference with Prof. Takeo Iida, urged all Lawrence scholars, particularly those in the Western world, to take advantage of this unique cultural opportunity. I would like to add my personal thanks to these colleagues and to Prof. Haruo Tetsunura, current President of the Japanese

Lawrence Society, for being so considerate of our wishes as to time and venue.

At a special meeting of the DHLSNA, held in Naples on June 12th, the society unanimously passed a resolution commending Virginia Hyde (President-Elect) and Tina Ferris for their persevering and productive work in preparing our Nomination of the Lawrence Ranch for listing with the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The aim is to ensure maintenance of the ranch, where Lawrence and Frieda lived for ten months in 1924 and 1925, as a site of cultural and historical interest. As well as registration forms and maps of the site, the draft document contains a Narrative Description of the Property and a Statement of its Significance. This highly readable and informative document of 62 pages (including a 10-page reference list) is the fruit of innumerable hours of fact-finding and research on the part of our dedicated duo. They make a convincing case and feedback from the NRHP has been encouraging so far: we have high hopes that the application will be successful. Virginia plans to present a progress report at the Business Meeting

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The MLA Annual Convention will take place in New Orleans on December 27-30, 2001.

On Thursday 27 December, 5:15-6:30 p.m., Elizabeth M. Fox (program chair) will present a panel on the topic, "DHL: The Sacred and Profane," featuring the following papers: (1) Joyce Piell

Wexler, "Sex Isn't Everything (but It Can Be Anything)"; (2) Douglas J. Barrett, "The Haunted Cosmos"; (3) Jorgette Lee Mauzerall, "DHL's *The Escaped Cock*: Where the Sacred Meets the Profane." Also at the panel, the first New Scholar Award of the DHLSNA will be presented to Charles M. Burack, for a trio of first-rate essays in *Mosaic*,

Style, and *Studies in the Novel*.

The Business Meeting will be on Saturday 29 December, 10:15-11:30 a.m., and the dinner—always a congenial event—will be that evening at 8 p.m. The restaurant (tba) and arrangements will be announced at the panel and meeting. ■

Lawrence on the Web *W W W*

A reminder: The DHLSNA website is at the following address:
<http://www.wsu.edu/~hydev/dhlsna.htm>

This new website includes a history of the Society, a list of officers and useful addresses, and other important information, in addition to a very attractive home page. It is without a doubt a valuable new resource for our organization.

Websites with Lawrence texts:

"The Horse Dealer's Daughter":

<http://www.geocities.com/andtherewaswater/Archive/TheHorseDealersDaughter.htm>

"New Heaven and Earth" (poetry)

<http://www.geocities.com/andtherewaswater/Archive/NewHeavenAndEarth.txt>

"Smile" (short story)

<http://www.geocities.com/andtherewaswater/Archive/Smile.htm>

"Sun" (short story)

<http://www.geocities.com/andtherewaswater/Sun.htm> ■

People in the News

Elizabeth Mathias delivered a paper at the Mediterranean Studies Association's annual meeting in Aix en Provence in May. The Title was "Cows, Convicts, and Islands: Departure and Inter-Species Imagery in D. H. Lawrence's Sardinia." She then went to Sardinia to meet with Giulio Angioni, who is to write the introduction to her forthcoming book *D. H. Lawrence in Sardinia: A Revisit 1921-2001*. With Sheila Taylor (author of *On the Trail of the Phoenix: An Adventure and a Meditation*, 1999), she visited Vence to look at Lawrence's old grave site in the local cemetery. The spot is now marked by a simple plaque on the wall, and the grave site itself is

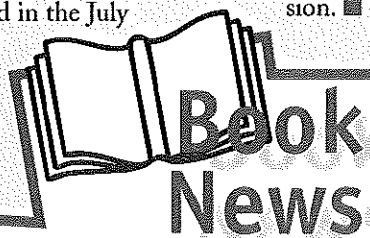
unfortunately in a very unkempt condition.



Gregory Tague's essay, "The Peculiar Morality of the Artist," has been published in the July issue of *Consciousness, Literature and the Arts*

(<http://www.aber.ac.uk/tfts/journal>).

The essay draws from Lawrence's ideas and discusses one of Lawrence's paintings in the context of Schopenhauer's notion of compassion. ■



GARY ADELMAN's book, *Reclaiming D. H. Lawrence: Contemporary Writers Speak Out*, is scheduled for publication by Bucknell University Press in June.

ALAN WILLIAMSON has a book entitled *Almost a Girl: Male Writers and Female Identification pub-*

lished in May by the University Press of Virginia. The longest chapter, "Lawrence and the 'Oedipal Riddle,'" treats Lawrence's mixed gender identification in the light of Jessica Benjamin's theories, with particular attention to *Sons and Lovers*, *Women in Love*, and *Fantasia of the Unconscious*. Part of the chapter was delivered as a paper at the Lawrence Society panel at the Chicago MLA in 1995. ■

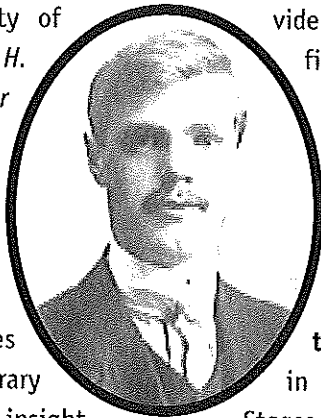
Kiowa Ranch Update

As Jack Stewart mentioned in his President's Report, a special meeting of the D. H. Lawrence Society of North America, held at the 8th International DHL Conference in Naples on June 12, members unanimously passed a resolution commending Tina Ferris and Virginia Hyde for "your excellent work in preparing our application to the National Register of Historic Places for listing of the Lawrence Ranch." Stewart wrote both of the preparers of the nomination, saying, "The D.H. Lawrence Society of North America appreciates your long and arduous work of analysis, charting, and description and the conciseness and verve of your documentation. Judging from the positive feedback you have received . . . we have high hopes that the application will be successful."

The nomination consists of 82 pages in its main file as well as National Register forms, Appendix illustrations (JPEG graphics on disk and CD-ROM), maps and floor plans, duplicates of 45 archive-ready enlarged photographs, bibliography about Lawrence and the Taos/Santa Fe art communities, and other features. The main narratives describe the property and buildings and discuss their cultural significance in terms of the life and works of D. H. and Frieda Lawrence and in terms of the literary, artistic, and musical products created at the ranch by others like Georgia O'Keeffe, Leonard Bernstein, W. H. Auden, Aldous Huxley, Stephen Spender, Tennessee Williams, and Robert Creeley. The nomination is now before a Historic Preservation Committee, instituted recently at the University of New Mexico, seeking university approval of the plan. ■

Lawrence in the Media

A new video related to the early life of Lawrence has been produced through a collaboration between the Boxtowe Borough Council and the D. H. Lawrence Society of Eastwood. Entitled *D. H. Lawrence: A Passion for Life*, it retraces Lawrence's footsteps through the streets of Eastwood and into the countryside around the town. It combines archival and contemporary material to provide an insight into the author's world as a child and a young man. In addition to including people and events that influenced his artistic development,



the video features an interview with the late Peggy Needham, who recalls him as a much beloved uncle and a generous literary figure. The video is available from the firm Active Images for £15, including postage, for a minimum of five copies. Address inquiries to enquiries@activeimage.demon.co.uk.

Virginia Hyde mentions a PBS presentation in August called *Changing Stages*, which was a history of modern drama in English. It cited Lawrence as the virtually lone example in the early twentieth century of an English-born playwright of great

President's Report

continued from front page

of the DHLNSA in New Orleans on December 29th and I would urge all members attending the MLA to come to that meeting and support this historic enterprise.

I also have to report that Virginia Hyde and David Barnes have set up a D.H. Lawrence Society website—www.wsu.edu/~hydev/dhlsna.htm—complete with Homepage, History, Bylaws, Sessions at MLA, Officers for 2000-2001, Recipients of the HTM Award, Presidents of DHLNSA, Addresses of Note, and information on the D.H. Lawrence Review and Études Lawrenciennes.

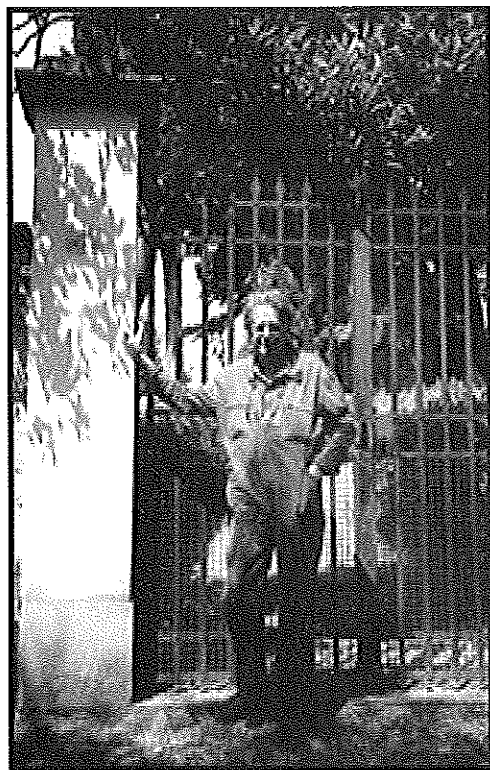
Finally, I would like to recommend two recent books that support and illuminate our scholarly and pedagogical activities. They are Takeo Iida, ed., *The Reception of D.H. Lawrence Around the World* (Fukuoka: Kyushu UP, 1999), which has chapters on the 14 main countries producing Lawrence studies today; and M. Elizabeth Sargent and Garry Watson, eds., *Approaches to Teaching the Works of D.H. Lawrence* (New York: MLA, 2001), which everyone introducing Lawrence's work to new generations of students will want to read. ■

gifts. The only other, among several Irish and a few Americans, was Harley Granville-Barker. Parts of *The Daughter in Law* were shown. The narrator posited that had Lawrence been Irish, his plays would have found stronger patronage. While Lawrence did not get a lot of time in this program, he was given a central position in the narrative. ■

The Villa Mirenda Today

by Michael Squires and Lynn K. Talbot

LAURENCE AND FRIEDA LOVED FLORENCE. They liked even better living outside the city in the hills that surround it like a fortress. Seven miles out, at the tip of a Tuscan knoll, they found, in May 1926, an old Tuscan house call the Villa Mirenda, where they lived until June 1928. There Lawrence wrote all three versions of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Now, 75 years later, we wondered if we could find the house, using just the directions that Lawrence sent to his friend, Reggie Turner, who came to lunch on 16 May 1926: "You take the ram to the Vingone terminus, and walk straight ahead on the high-road, past the pagoda house, up the hill to the two cypresses. There turn to the left and come straight again" (*Letters v 451*).



Alessandro Mirenda at the back gate of the Villa Mirenda

The first part was easy. At the train station in Florence, we boarded bus #27. At Vingone we alighted, saw a sign to San Paolo Mosciano pointing straight up, and began our walk. The narrow road was unforgiving, without even a shoulder, so that passing cars brushed by just inches from us. Ahead stood the pagoda house, now a pizzeria. There we turned left onto an even narrower road. Up the long slope we went, stopping finally at the top, where now only one tall cypress stood.

To our dismay the road split again. Spotting a house nearby, we decided to ask directions. An exquisitely dressed woman named Carla Perna pointed us to a distant knoll, then said, "Why don't I take you there!" Into her small Fiat we tumbled. On the way we approached a car with two occupants—a man about 70 and a younger woman. Pausing to pass, Carla introduced us. The man was none other than Alessandro Mirenda, the owner of the Mirenda and the nephew of Raul Mirenda, who in 1926 rented the upper



At the Naples Conference — Pictured, from left: Eleanor Green, Judith Ruderman, Jim Phelps, and Stephen Rowley

floor to the Lawrences for a mere £25 a year.

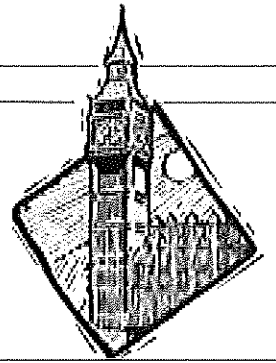
Upon returning, he said (though in Italian), he'd show us the house. Arriving at the back entrance, Carla introduced us to Alessandro's brother-in-law, Roberto Nanni, who—in excellent English—suggested we look around outside. Through big front gates we found a solid stone house, square and imposing, built hundreds of years ago, at one time used by the Medici family as a hunting lodge. The exterior walls were covered with cement. In the opposite direction, across graceful slopes of olive trees—silvery in the sun—reposed gentle hills, spiked with tall cypresses. The soft landscape looked as if it hadn't changed for hundreds of years.

On Signor Mirenda's return, we went inside for a glass of wine, then upstairs to see the Lawrences' rooms. What struck us were the 12-foot ceilings, the thick stone walls (to withstand earthquakes), the level brick floors, and the fine views once the shutters had been opened. Each room had one window. It

LAWRENCE *in England*

The Department of Manuscripts and special Collections of the library at the University of Nottingham has put out a handsome flier detailing the resources

in its collection of materials related to D. H. Lawrence. This collection, of course, benefited greatly from the bequest of the George Lazarus collection in 1998. ■

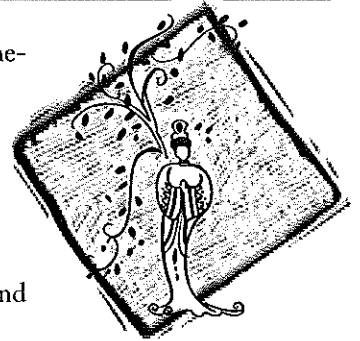


LAWRENCE *in Japan*

The Japanese Lawrence Society met at Kassui Women's College in June. Yasuko Usami, Osamu Haraguchi, and Uriko Noguchi read papers on the novels, while Takeo Iida, Chiseki Asahi, Ruriko Suzuki, and Kyoko Nishimura addressed issues in his poetry. Saburo Kuramochi, Fuhito Endo, Hiroshi Muto, and Nobuyoshi Ota then talked

on aspects of Lawrence and critical theory. A social gathering took place at the Nagasaki View Hotel.

The Society has also published its eleventh issue of *Japan D. H. Lawrence Studies* with articles by Hirozumi Ishihara, Kyoko Kondo, and Gaku Iwai, as well as a number of book reviews. ■



Villa Mirinda, continued

was easy to imagine Lawrence hanging his bold *Boccaccio's Story* on one of the square walls. While we stood admiring the proportions of the rooms, we learned that villa owners today are not allowed to alter any feature of their homes or land without permission, turning Florence and its environs into a giant museum.

What Lawrence loved most was the October grape harvest called *vendemmia*, when the peasants brought cartloads of grapes into the depths of the house. Before we left, Signor Mirinda took us to the basement. In the first room bottles of homemade beer and wine rested on shelves; in the second room squatted

three huge terra-cotta barrels of olive oil and two vats of wine; and in the third stood a fruit press and, against the far wall, a tall vat, like a cone whose base had been halved, into which the peasants had once climbed to tread the grapes, the purple juice running out of the base. Hanging from the ceiling were small wooden tables on which, set in a row upright, the peasants ate their mid-day meal of pasta. Through the double doors to the outside came a burst of Tuscan sunlight.

It was a fitting close to an afternoon's adventure. In Lawrence's words the Mirinda offered "soft, sunny days" in the "pretty, hilly part of Tuscany" (*Letters v* 559). The Mirinda sits there today, almost exactly as it stood 75 years ago. ■



Florence from the Villa Mirinda

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Membership is US\$10 a year with the option of a ten-year membership for US\$60. Make checks payable to the Society and forward to Louis Greiff, Membership Secretary/Treasurer, Division of English, Alfred University, Alfred, NY 14802.

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