What we are? and Whither we tend?’:
The Emerson Society at 20

WESLEY T. MOTT
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

In 1841, Emerson stated that the “main interest which any aspects of the Times can have for us, is...the light which they can shed on the wonderful questions. What we are? and Whither we tend?” (CW 1:182) The “main interest” of this paper is to assess What—as an Emerson Society—we are, and Whither—as a community of Emerson scholars—we tend. First, a backward glance at how the Emerson Society came to be and what we’ve accomplished in twenty years.

In the beginning—July 1988—several Emerson, and a couple of Alcott, editors (Joel Myerson, Harry Orth, Ron Bosco, Al von Frank, Dan Shealy, Doug Wilson, and I) converged on the Houghton Library for two or three weeks. After nine-hour days poring over manuscripts, in conversations over coffee and other beverages, it struck us that several societies were devoted to the study of American authors (notably Melville, Hawthorne, Poe, and Twain—indeed, the venerable Thoreau Society was founded in 1941); none, however, was devoted to the figure with whom these writers creatively engaged, and without whose example and encouragement, of course, Thoreau would never have come to anything. An unspoken ideological and professional identity crisis underlay these discussions, for here were editors inclined to textual, historical, and biographical scholarship, immersed in the archival remains of great writers, at a time when our more fashionable colleagues had announced the Death of the Author as a critical construct.

The stars for an Emerson Society continued to align the next June when the Cal State Symposium on American Literature met in San Diego to form an American Literature Association (ALA), described with refreshing simplicity as “a coalition of the societies devoted to the study of American authors.” Though my subsequent West Coast trips were three-day treks on Amtrak, I was then fog-bound at the Worcester airport. But Joel Myerson and others represented a prospective Emerson Society. And as we shall see, our destiny was to be closely linked with that of ALA.

First, to be a legal, functioning body, we needed a constitution and bylaws. The Emerson Society has achieved something of a reputation for order and efficiency, half a dozen newer author societies actually having consulted our founding documents. But let me come clean. I’m no lawyer, and in the fall of 1989 I corresponded with John Idol and Julian Mason of the Nathaniel Hawthorne Society and talked with my WPI colleague Kent Ljungquist of the Poe Studies Association—to all of whom we owe an enduring debt of gratitude—and I shamelessly adapted their constitutions and bylaws to our needs. Kent, who was then editing the Poe newsletter, also advised in creating our newsletter; also from WPI came design expertise from the publications office, a founding grant from the Research Development Council, and the first of an annual twenty-year printing subvention from WPI provosts.

I sent proposals to the MLA for a founding panel and for a small room in which to hold our organizing meeting at the December Convention in Washington—but was told tersely that MLA was bursting with special societies and that there was no room for us. The MLA program indeed was engorged with groups whose topics have made the Convention the annual butt of ridicule in the national media, calling to mind the comic strip in which Calvin tells Hobbes, “I used to hate writing assignments, but now I enjoy them. I realized that the purpose of writing is to inflate weak ideas, obscure poor reasoning, and inhibit clarity. With a little practice, writing can be an intimidating and impenetrable fog! Want to see my book report?” Hobbes reads the title: “‘The Dynamics of Interbeing and Monological Imperatives in Dick and Jane: A Study in Psychic Transrelational Gender Modes.’” Relishing the sound of his own words read aloud, Calvin declares, “Academia here I come!” So MLA had no room for THE essential U.S. cultural figure, the focus of what Larry Buell in 1984 had termed the “Emerson Industry.”

A handful of us decided to meet undercover anyway at MLA. Getting the word out required a PR campaign—

(Continued on page 13)
2010 EMMERSON SOCIETY PATRONS

Emerson Society members continue generously to join at various "patron" levels of membership. All donations above the $10 annual regular membership go to support special programs of the Society. Donations are tax-deductible. If you or anyone you know is interested in joining the Emerson Society, please contact Todd H. Richardson, Department of Literature and Languages, University of Texas of the Permian Basin, Odessa, TX 79762-0001.

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PROSPECTS.

The Barbara Lee Packer Fellowship

Plans are under way for the creation of an endowed fellowship in memory of our friend and colleague Barbara Lee Packer to be administered by the Emerson Society. A minimum endowment of $50,000 will allow us to provide an annual stipend of $2,000 to support a graduate student for one month at a research library in eastern Massachusetts. This project will be the subject of discussion at the Society’s meeting this May at the American Literature Association conference in Boston. Whether you plan to attend or not, you may direct questions and/or comments to Todd Frank at appi@roadrunner.com. Pledges in any amount will be gratefully received at the same address, but no money will be collected until after the conference when a determination will be made about the project’s feasibility. Early signs are encouraging. By indicating your support now, you will put us in a good position to become (as the best of our knowledge) the first American author to sponsor this kind of fellowship.

Emerson Society Panels

Below are the rosters for Emerson Society panels at the American Literature Association annual meeting (Boston, May 26-29, 2011) and the Thoreau Society Annual Gathering (Concord, Massachusetts, July 7-10, 2011). For information about these meetings, including locations, times, and registration forms, visit http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/english/al2/american_literature_annual_2011.html and http://www.thoreausociety.org/.

AMERICAN LITERATURE ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

Emerson and Creativity II: Imagining New Futures

"Silence and Speech, Things and Words: Grounding the Poet's Creativity," Elizabeth Addison, Western Carolina University

"Philosophy Better Than Philosophy," Shoji Goto, Rikkyo University, Tokyo

"Creating the Creator: Emerson's Epistemology of Form," David Greenbaum, University of the West of England

"A Certain Uniform Tune": Emerson's Anti-Romantic Theory of Creativity," Richard Hardick, Independent Scholar

Emerson and Creativity III: Raising New Futures

"The Teaching of the Soul: How Emersonian Creativity Transforms Literary Pedagogy," Carolyn Elliott, University of Pittsburgh (Winner of one of the Society’s 2011 Graduate Student Paper Awards)

"Emerson at the Altar: Beautiful Necessity in Art and Life," Jacob Rieger, Harvard University (Winner of one of the Society’s 2011 Graduate Student Paper Awards)

THOREAU SOCIETY ANNUAL GATHERING

Emerson's Nature Writing

Chair: Sean Meehan, Washington College

“The Supremacy and Artistic Being of Nature,” Nicholas Guardiani, Southern Illinois University Carbondale

“The Morning After the Deluge: Creative Instability in the Work of Ralph Waldo Emerson and J. M. W. Turner,” Dominique Zino, Indiana University Graduate Student


Emerson Sightings/Citations

It is perhaps inevitable that our intrepid Emerson sleuth, Clare rend Burley, has finally run the table and found every one of this issue’s sightings. Thank you, Clare! Two attributions to Emerson appear as chapter epigraphs in Sandy Berger’s Great Age Guide to the Internet (Indianapolis: QUE Publishing, 2009). Chapter 4, “Exciting Things to Do on the Internet,” begins with “Explore and explore. Be neither chided nor flat- tered out of your position of perpetual inquiry,” from “Literary Ethics” (1838). A rewriting of a line in “Fain” (1860), “As soon as there is life there is danger,” heads chapter 10, “Security in Cyberspace.”

The Old Farmer’s Almanac (at 219, older than Emerson) lends itself off on page 1 with “The years teach much which the days never know,” from “Experience” (1844). Emerson is invoked in Derrick Jackson’s column, “Get Out for a Walk” in the Boston Globe for January 8, 2011. In his 1847 essay on self-reliance Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote: “The civilized man has built a coach, but has lost the use of his feet.” One hundred and seventy years later, with the exception of the treadmill, we remain suckers for fitness contraptions that promise maximum health with minimal use of the feet. Clare rend points out that “Emerson would have had the last laugh at the irony of today’s appliances which don’t allow people into human rocking chairs, a most curious imagery given the decrepit cultural status of rocking chairs.”

Emersoniana

A New Image of Margaret Fuller: We have had but two images of Emerson’s close associate Margaret Fuller (1810-1850): an 1846 daguerreotype made in New York City by John Plumbe and an 1848 painting made in Rome by Thomas Hicks. Both are often reproduced. Now, however, we can add a third, nicely situated between the other two. In 1847, Joseph Mozzi made a marble bust of Fuller when she visited him in Florence. The bust is signed and dated “Florence / 1847.” It remained in the Mozzi family until about 1930, when it was acquired by a dealer in the United States. In 1958, the dealer donated the Mozzi bust to the National Portrait Gallery. The bust is now on long-term loan to the National Portrait Gallery.

Joseph Mozzi (1812-1870) was born in Vermont but moved to Italy in 1845. Fuller praised him in her New York Tribune dispatches and in her private letters, but his caustic assessment of Fuller’s husband, Giovanni Ossoli, led Hawthorne to denote him in his 1858 journal. No matter what Mozzi might have thought in the late 1850s, in 1847 he rendered a fascinating likeness of an accomplished woman. The Mozzi bust is published courtesy of Mr. George R. Rinhart and is provided by the National Portrait Gallery.

Robert N. Hudspeth
Claremont Graduate University

EMERSON SOCIETY PAPERS

The newsletter of the Ralph Waldo Emerson Society

Published at Ball State University

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Book Review Editor: Jennifer Gurley
Editorial Assistant: Megan C. Zimmermann
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MEMBERSHIP OFFICERS

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MEMBERSHIP NEWS

We are pleased to announce the following new members during the 2010-2011 society year:

Zosia Bajek, Missouri State University

Jason Bohn, University of Texas, Austin

Liz Cara, Indiana University, Bloomington

Richard Chadwick, University of Texas, El Paso

Lee Clark, University of Texas, El Paso

Sandra Donnelly, College of William and Mary

Sarah Douthit, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

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Curtis Roquette, Stetson University

Sara Segovia, University of North Texas

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Summer Student Members:

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Alexandra N. Nalbandian, University of Toledo

Kerry K. O’Brien, University of Alabama

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Lindsey A. Sohn, University of Missouri, Kansas City

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Joel Myers

...
Prospects  
(Continued from page 1)

Words and Deeds  


Fresh out of the hugely successful 2006 transatlanticism conference that the Hawthorne, Emerson, and Poe societies held in Oxford, several of us wanted to start planning another meeting abroad as soon as possible. The first emails in my “Florence 2012” folder date from July, 2007. They are from Phyllis Cole and Rosemary Fisk, two of the planners of the Oxford conference, in response to my “another international conference” email full of enthusiastic questions. The 2012 conference has thus been nurtured and eagerly anticipated for quite some time before the actual planning committee coalesced via the listserv Jason Courtmanche (University of Connecticut, Hawthorne Society) created February 2, 2010. The committee started with two representatives from each author society with the Hawthorne Society taking the lead role; Rosemary Fisk and Jason Courtmanche from the Hawthorne Society, Paul Lewis and Beth Sweeney from the Poe Society, and Todd Richardson and me from our own ranks. Dan Malachik has generously taken my place as of late 2010, when I had to step down to help with a family health crisis.

For those of you have not yet been involved in planning a conference, the details are many, and they always take longer to settle than you might anticipate. Via online discussions and a face-to-face meeting at the 2010 ALA meeting, we have chosen and reserved the conference site of La Pietra, a 15th century Florentine villa now owned by New York University; negotiated a contract for services with La Pietra; chosen a list of hotels and negotiated transportation to and from La Pietra with the help of La Pietra staff; settled on “Conversazioni in Italia: Emerson, Hawthorne, and Poe” as the conference title; and issued a call for papers that invites proposals for papers and panels that consider Emerson, Hawthorne, or Poe in terms of transatlantic literary culture in their era or that relate the authors to each other or their European contemporaries.

Planning is only part of a successful conference. The rest is the marvelous experience of sharing ideas and enthusiasm about Emerson, Poe, and Hawthorne with participants and presenters in such a beautiful place. Conversation is a particularly appropriate focus for a conference held in Florence, a city whose rich aesthetic drew so many nineteenth-century American writers, including Emerson and Hawthorne, into conversational gatherings, just as it draws us into what will surely also be a vibrant conversation and inspiring experience.

Please share the call for papers with your colleagues. The committee looks forward to reviewing proposals and to organizing the conference program. The deadline for submission is October 1, 2011.

— Sue Dunston
New Mexico Tech


The conference organizers are calling for proposals for papers and panels that discuss Emerson, Hawthorne, or Poe in terms of transatlantic literary culture in their era (for instance, questions of transatlantic travel, influence, slavery, the Civil War, marketing, reception, and copyright). We also welcome proposals for papers and panels that relate the three authors to each other or to their European contemporaries, as well as proposals focusing on any topic related to Emerson, Hawthorne, or Poe in these contexts.

Deadline for submission is October 1, 2011. Please submit proposals to hepflorence2012@gmail.com.

All conference participants must be members of at least one of the sponsoring author societies at the time of registration.

For more information about the conference, contact Jason Courtmanche at Jason.Courtmanche@nc.acom.edu.

Concern for Our Japanese Members

Emerson Society Papers

Hosted by the Villa La Pietra, New York University www.nyuu.edu/global/lapietra.


For more information about the conference, contact Jason Courtmanche at Jason.Courtmanche@nc.acom.edu.

Spring 2011

Conversazioni in Italia: Emerson, Hawthorne, and Poe

Florence, Italy, June 8-10, 2012

Sponsored by the Ralph Waldo Emerson Society, the Nathaniel Hawthorne Society, and the Poe Studies Association
In Their Own Words...

At some 200 members, the Emerson Society is small enough to be friendly but too large for everyone to know everyone else. Below you will meet our current advisory board members, officers, committee members, and the ESP team. — Ed.

Elizabeth Addison is a Past-President of the Society and serves on the Advisory Board. She has taught American and Asian literature at several universities since 1968. In addition to her work as an English professor at Duke, she has explored various aspects of Emerson’s use of Quakerism and related material. A former director of the Duke Union Program and former head of the English Department, she has participated in NEH seminars on Asian Studies and Emerson. Her essays have appeared in Studies in the American Renaissance, ESQ: A Journal of the American Renaissance, and The Oxford Handbook of Transcendentalism. Previously she served as source matter for Thoreau’s developing social and ecological conscience. Jessie’s most recent article, “A New Study of How Relations between New England and British writers were impacted by the Civil War.”

Peter Balaam serves on the Distinguished Achievement Award committee. He is Associate Professor of English at Carleton College in Northfield, Minn., where he teaches and writes on U.S. literature of the nineteenth century. Peter is the author of Heraclity’s Mathematics: Mapping, Compenetration, and Reality in Antebellum American Literature (Routledge, 2009).

Jessie Bray serves on the Special Awards Committee. She received her Ph.D. in 2010 from the University of South Carolina-Columbia and is currently a Post-Doctoral Fellow at East Tennessee State University. Her dissertation, “A More Perfect Indian Wisdom: Transcultural Exchange in the Writings of transcendentalist Henry Ward Beecher,” explores Beecher’s ethical trajectory, demonstrating how his unpublished natural history, Indian writings, and surveys served as source material for his inner-city high school students with leadership and academic potential. She is working on a book on Emerson’s poetry as a devotional thinker.

Len Gougoue, Ph.D., is a member of the Distinguished Achievement Award Committee. He is a Distinguished University Fellow and Professor of American Literature at the University of Scranton. A co-editor of The Wisdom, Antislavery, and Reform (1990, 2010), and Emerson & Era: The Making of a Cultural Hero (2007). He is also the co-editor of Emerson’s New Writings (1995, 2001). In 2008 Len received the Society’s Distinguished Achievement Award. His most recent book is Emerson’s Truth, Emerson’s Wisdom (2010). Currently, he’s working on a study of how relations between New England and British writers were impacted by the Civil War.

Jennifer Gurlay is the Book Review Editor for Emerson Society Papers. She is an Associate Professor of English at Le Moyne College in Syracuse, New York, where she specializes in American literature and philosophy before 1900 and has secondary research and teaching interests in classical philosophy, critical theory, and the literature of nineteenth-century American and Mexican California. Her recent work has appeared in American Literature (forthcoming, 2011), a special issue of Michelle Orangeus’s The Transcendental American: A Journal of the American Renaissance, and普和兼士思論: 異端者調及哲學思想（1996）. Emerson’s First Biographers and the Politics of Life-Writing in the Gilded Age (University Press of Florida, 2010) for which she received Emerson’s Wisdom (2010). Currently, he’s working on a book on Emerson’s poetry as a devotional thinker.

Bob Habich is editor of Emerson Society Papers and President-Elect of the Society. He served as Secretary-Treasurer from 2002 through 2009. A Professor of English at Ball State University, he teaches American literature, literary history, and American studies. Bob has written several books on Emerson and his circle, most recently Emerson and the Hermit: (2009). He has also published numerous articles on 19th-century American literature, 1865 (Facts on File, 2010) and Building Their Own Waldos: Emerson’s First Biographers and the Politics of Life-Writing in the Gilded Age (University Press of Florida, 2010). Currently he is working on a book on inner-city high school students with leadership and academic potential. She is working on a book on Emerson’s poetry as a devotional thinker.

Peggy Isaacson handles ESP’s design and production. 3.141597 Peggy’s initials (a little math humor). 1974? The year Peggy began working at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. Through on-the-job training, she became a graphic designer/copyeditor—the best of both worlds in her opinion. Peggy helps design print publications for various offices and departments across the university, and edits and proofreads raw copy, finished manuscripts, and page proofs for virtually all publications produced by the WPI Division of Marketing and Communications.

Daniel S. Malachuk serves on the Advisory Board and the Special Awards Committee and was a member of the Thoreau Society’s 2012 conference committee. He teaches literature and the humanities at Western Illinois University’s Quad Cities campus in Moline, Illinois; he lives across the Mississippi River in Bettendorf, Iowa, with his wife and their nine-year-old son. Dan is the author of Perfection, the State, and Victorian Liberalism (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006). He has co-authored a biographical dictionary on Ralph Waldo Emerson, forthcoming in 2011 from University Press of Kentucky. He is currently serving on the Thoreau Society’s Board of Directors.

A member of the Advisory Board, Saundra Morris is Professor of English at Bucknell University and co-editor with the late Joel Porte of the Norton Critical Edition Emerson’s Prose and Poetry and The Cambridge Companion to Emerson. Among her publications are essays on Emerson’s poetry and “Twentieth-Century American Poetry” in the 2010 WPI handbook of transcendentalism. At Bucknell she has won various teaching awards and administered the Social Justice Residential College. Beginning next year, Saundra will serve as a Mentor in the Poise Scholars Program at Bucknell, which recruits and educates underserved inner-city high school students with leadership and academic potential. She is working on a book on Emerson’s poetry as a devotional thinker.

Jennifer is currently completing a book on Ralph Waldo Emerson as a devotional thinker.

Bob Rossi compiles the annual bibliography for ESP. He teaches American literature at University of Oregon, where he is Professor of English and Director of Undergraduate Studies. Besides Emerson, Thoreau, and New England Transcendentalism, his research interests include literature in relation to the history of science, environmentalism, and place studies. Bill’s most recent work is Emerson and Thoreau: Friends of Figure (Indiana, 2010), a collection of essays by scholars of literature and philosophy, edited with John T. Ly Pipes.

Dieter Schuh is Professor Emeritus at Ruprecht-Karls-University of Heidelberg. After completing his studies of English and Russian at the University of Marburg, he spent three years as a postdoctoral research fellow in American studies at Yale University. Dieter has taught at the universities of Stuttgart and Wuppertal, and has held visiting professorships at the Oregon State University and the University of New Mexico. His publications include Amerikanischer Transzendentalismus: Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Margaret Fuller and the Transcendentalists, and some 15 articles on Emerson and Thoreau, specifically on the intellectual roots of Transcendentalism and its impact on 20th century developments in the arts and sciences.

Megan Zimmerman is the editorial assistant for Emerson Society Papers. She is currently a senior Creative Writing major at Ball State University. Her writing has been published in online and student-produced literary magazines, and she has been a fiction editor on Ball State’s national literary magazine, The Broken Plate. She hopes to work as a book editor in the near future. Megan loves all things Harry Potter and is a member of Ball State’s Quidditch team. In her free time, she can be found in her hometown of Ft. Wayne or in a theatre.

Myerson, Sandra co-edited The Oxford Handbook of transcendentalism (2010). With Noelle Baker, she is currently working on a digital edition of the minutes on the Florence 2012 conference committee. An Associate Professor of English at the University of Texas at Permian Basin, he teaches American literature, His work has appeared in the Oxford Handbook of Transcendentalism and in such journals as the New England Quarterly, Walt Whitman Quarterly Review, and Resources for American Literary Study. Currently Todd is at work on a book project on Emerson and the construction of celebrity in nineteenth-century reform communities.

Todd H. Richardson is Secretary/Treasurer of the Emerson Society and one of our liaison on the Florence 2012 conference committee. An Associate Professor of English at the University of Texas at Permian Basin, he teaches American literature, His work has appeared in the Oxford Handbook of Transcendentalism and in such journals as the New England Quarterly, Walt Whitman Quarterly Review, and Resources for American Literary Study. Currently Todd is at work on a book project on Emerson and the construction of celebrity in nineteenth-century reform communities.

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Beauch, Joel J. 
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Buell, Clarence. 
"Emerson, the Lyricist." 
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Gougeon, Len. 
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"The World's Eye, The World's Heart: Emerson and the Continuity of Children's Knowing." 
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Hill, Annie. 
"The World's Eye, The World's Heart: Emerson and the Continuity of Children's Knowing." 
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3 (Spring 1992): 4-5.

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"On a Line in "Boston."" 

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Burkholder, Robert E. 
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Cuyler, Mary Kapiec. 

Collison, Gary. 

Delano, Sterling F. 
Review of Len Gougeon, Virtue's Hour: Emerson, Antislavery, and Reform. 

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6 (Fall 1995): 5-6.

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Miscellaneous

1 (Fall 1990): 1-2.

2 (Fall 1991): 3-7.

3 (Fall 1992): 3-4. (Session I: "Recollecting Emerson". Session 2: "Theodore Parker and Transcendentalism: A Sesquicentennial Celebration.")

4 (Fall 1993): 3-4. ("Emerson and Pedagogy.")

5 (Fall 1994): 4-5. (Session I: "Emerson's Social Vision.")

6 (Fall 1995): 2-4. (Session I: "Emerson’s Later Work.")

7 (Fall 1996): 4-5. (Session I: "Emerson I.")

8 (Fall 1997): 2-4. (Session I: "Emerson and His Lectures.")

9 (Fall 1998): 4-5. (Session I: "Teaching the Anthologized Emerson.")

10 (Fall 1999): 4-5. (Session I: "Emerson and His Correspondence.")

"Concord, Massachusetts, ca. 1840. Image."

Dean, Bradley P.
"Emerson Concordance Now Online."
9 (Fall 1998): 6.

Downes, J.
"'Concord, Massachusetts, ca. 1840' above.
"Emerson and Carlyle at Stonehenge." Poem.
By Richard R. O’Keefe.
2 (Fall 1991): 7.

Emerson Condescension. See Bradley P. Dean above and Michael J. Preston below.

Emerson Society:
"Constitution" and "Bylaws."
1 (Fall 1990): 6-7.

"Emerson & Torriff."
2 (Fall 1991): 5. (Brief notice of the Emerson Society’s first annual panel at the July 1991 meeting of the Torriff Society. Includes photo of panelists: Marcia Moss, Harry Orth; Nancy Simmons; Joel Myerison; Wes Mott; Les Gougeon; Bob Sattelmeyer; Brad Dean.)

"Emerson and Concord: A Sense of Place."
3 (Fall 1992): 7. (Brief notice of the Emerson Society’s second annual panel at the July 1992 meeting of the Torriff Society. Includes photo of panelists: Wes Mott; Bob Burkholder; Joel Myerison; Dan Shealy; Bob Gross; Jayne Gordon.)

"Emerson and Women.
4 (Fall 1993): 3. (Brief notice of the Emerson Society’s third annual panel at the July 1993 meeting of the Torriff Society. Includes photo of panelists: Sarah Wider; Armanda Gilbert; Harry Orth; Ron Bosco.)

"Emerson and Woman."
6 (Spring 1995): 6. (Brief notice of the Emerson Society’s fourth annual panel at the July 1994 meeting of the Torriff Society. Includes photo of panelists: Wes Mott; Bob Burkholder; Joel Myerison; Dan Shealy; Bob Gross; Jayne Gordon.)

"Emerson and Biography.
7 (Fall 1996): 6. (Brief notice of the Emerson Society’s fifth annual panel at the July 1996 meeting of the Torriff Society. Includes photo of panelists: Ron Bosco, Bob Richardson, Dan Shealy.

"Two Summers in Concord. 1977-? Transcendentalism and Biography."
9 (Fall 1998): 4. (Brief notice of the Emerson Society’s sixth and seventh annual panels at the July 1997 and July 1998 meeting of The Torriff Society. Includes photo of panelists: 1997—Daniel Shealy; Phyllis Cole; Cynthia Borton; Bruce Ronca; 1998—Les Gougeon; Phyllis Cole; Joan Goodside; Sallee Eugenius.

"Emerson: Re-formed in Concord."

"Emerson Programs at the MLA [1991]." By Alfred G. Liton.
2 (Fall 1991): 7.

Financial. Brief notice of annual meeting of the Emerson Society includes statement of Society’s financial health.

"Founding Members."

"Before Founding Members."
1 (Fall 1990): 8.

"Minutes of the Inaugural Meeting."

"New Home for Emerson Society Archives: Thoreau Institute Dedicated."
By Wesley T. Mott.

"Tax Exempt Status Reaffirmed."

Letters to the Editor. From Stephen L. Lapypezoum from Ernestine Burke. 3 (Fall 1992) 8; from Richard Lee Friscio. 5 (Fall 1994) 2.

Linton, Alfred G.
"Ralph Waldo Emerson Society."

Litt, Guy. "Gannett’s Address at Emerson’s Ordination."
6 (Fall 1995); 1.

"Emerson Concordance Now Online."
6 (Fall 1995); 8.

"Emerson & Thoreau."
8 (Fall 1997): 1.

"Emerson & Slide."

"Constitution."
10 (Spring 1999): 8.

We are very grateful to Rick Delano for compiling this inventory of the first ten years of Emerson Society Papers.

For reasons of space, the brief entries in the regular “Prospects” section are not included in this listing. We are very grateful to Rick Delano for compiling this inventory of the first ten years of Emerson Society Papers. A second installation will appear in the fall 2011 issue. —Ed.
Rather, as comparable to Finitude, the mode of receptiveness that Peice associated with poetry, Emersonian inspiration allows us to see a "chain of being" as variously modeled evolutions of nature and poetic "genius" (87). Adapting from his important book, Emerson and Self-Culture, the essay undertakes to explore what Lyser calls the "soul of the emmeline" given "what we think of as the essential essence of his personal sociality itself" (104, 106). Voete’s otherwise compelling argument is weakened by an exclusive emphasis on language. Int Emersonian interpretations of figuration as a "linguistic (or epistemological)?

We might expect that inspiration is also what draws Emerson to a poet like Hafiz. Paul’s elegant and persuasive essay, which rounds off this special issue Emerson, sees the attraction as less in Hafiz’s "material" (119) than in his "power, hope, and grace" are grounded in "acceptance" (73). With this "resolutely post-Christian" as he moves towards a natural religion of linguistic alternative to "older metaphysics" (30), though Wolosky adds metaphorism to politics, where her analysis brings much-needed case, Kane delivers an eloquent plea for a more even-handed approach to Emerson’s poetry, which “ought not to be treated either as separate or irrelevant” (112). He deserves our thanks both for this article and the issue as a whole.

—Joseph Erubas

Emerson / Thoreau: Figures of Friendship.

Emerson & Thoreau: Figures of Friendship.


The Emerson Society at 20

The fourth and last section, “Giving Friendship For Life,” features word-of-mouth, published announcements, and flfers placed at strategic locations at the major conference hotels. I will never forget (nor will they) the humiliation my teenage children, Sarah and Nat, had to endure when—already at the age when they’d rather not be seen in public with their parents—Sarah and I required them to wear Christopher Tran’s “transparent eye-ball” sweatshirts—not only at the conference hotel but during their entire stay in Washington. In my experience, organizing an annual conference is a three-stage project: finding a location, arranging a small meeting in Joel Myerson’s suite, where we elected officers and Wilson editor; passed bylaws; established dues; charged the conference hotel but during their entire stay in “Washington.

...at the first annual ALA conference in San Diego the issue as a whole.

We like our Emerson pure. We like the philosophy without the religion, of our organizational meeting, upcoming events, and list of founding members.

Also in 1990—having been snubbed by MLA—we formally voted to join the ALA, and that May in San Diego we presented two sessions at the first annual ALA conference, which we have every year since. We were one of 32 societies—27 of them devoted to individual authors—comprising the original ALA. We held our first annual meeting at the MLA convention in Chicago in December 1990 (in two weeks our membership had ballooned from 27 to exactly 127!), but we’ve held every other annual meeting since then during the ALA conference.

Soon we also became a staple at the Thoreau Society Annual Gathering, which is, as Emerson wrote of the Chandos Street Convention, a sort of “omnium gathering” for all shades of Transcendentalists and other odd ducks. In 1991 we staged our first contribution to the Thoreau Society Jubilee, a panel on “Emerson / Thoreau,” at the Concord Museum. Not wanting to be embarrassed at our first appearance, we held that the title was a bit too esoteric— being an eloquent plea for a more even-handed approach to Emerson’s poetry, which “ought not to be treated either as separate or irrelevant” (112). He deserves our thanks both for this article and the issue as a whole.

—Paul Grimstad

Yale University
In 2004 our Board created a Special Projects Committee to reach out to community-based projects and deserving scholars, creative artists, and innovative teachers. The next year we presented our first Graduate Student Paper Award—a way both to recognize emerging talent and to enable gifted grad students to defray the cost of presenting a professional paper at ALA—and also to encourage the development of future colleagues in the Emerson vineyard. It has worked, for conspicuous among our honorees are Leslie Eckel, now a tenure-track faculty member and a member of our Board, and Jessie Bray, who serves on our Special Awards Committee.

This essay was originally presented, in somewhat different form, at the 2010 American Literature Association meeting. —Ed.
It was my great good fortune to have been Barbara Packer’s colleague for over thirty years. We quickly became friends after her arrival at UCLA from Yale, not only because of our admiration of Emerson and the Transcendentalists (I could never convince Barbara of the merits of William Dean Howells), but also because of our love of horses. In fact, it was only several months after our first meeting that I invited her to the stables where my partner and I kept our Arabians. Since I didn’t know how accomplished a rider she was, I mentioned several times during our drive to the farm how soft our horses’ mouths were. She listened, but said nothing, and once mounted a half-hour later, she proceeded very cautiously. She had been schooled in quarter horses as a girl in the San Joaquin Valley of Central California and was somewhat mystified and perhaps even a little apprehensive about the temperament of the Arabian. Unfortunately the horse we had given her quickly realized that his rider seemed unwilling to take charge, so he decided to have some fun. Barbara had no problem staying in the saddle during a series of small bucks and erratic leaps, but the color quickly disappeared from her face. My partner who was standing with me on the rail shouted out, “Take hold of the SOB.” Casting aside my warnings about not over using the bit, she took firm grasp of the reins and the animal gave a start and settled down immediately. He knew he had an equestrian master on his back.

Last October, when Barbara’s friends gathered to celebrate her distinguished career, I was amused to find that she had out on the table, along with other mementos, a photo taken that day of her on that horse, and there was no doubt from the picture who was in charge.

It may seem odd to begin this tribute with such a story. Ordinarily one would expect a review of her scholarly achievements, but to the members of the Emerson Society all that is already well known. No one who seriously studies the writings of Emerson and his fellow transcendentalists is ignorant of her distinguished record. When her first book, *Emerson’s Fall* (1982), appeared, it struck me as one of the finest interpretations of Emerson available, an assessment that was confirmed when a year later one of the external evaluators, a senior Emerson scholar of impeccable honesty who had been asked to review her work in connection with her promotion, declared that it was the best book on Emerson since O. W. Firkins’ classic 1915 study (a book both Barbara and I greatly admired). Nor did any of her subsequent work ever fail to come up to the high mark set by *Emerson’s Fall*.

Nor can those who know her writings, original in their scholarship and insights, expressed with precision and elegance, wonder at her success as a teacher in the classroom, whether it be the works of Chaucer, Milton, or the writers of the nineteenth century. She won the most distinguished teaching awards UCLA had to offer, but even more important, certainly to her, the devotion of several generations of students. As departmental chair for ten long years, I dutifully reviewed course evaluations every term. I still have preserved in my copy of one of her books a student’s comment written following one of Barbara’s classes: “Sensitive, intelligent, humorous, and tough, she is considerate and unyielding in her expectations of us as writers. I felt encouraged and grew as a writer in her class. She has given me access to the infinite creative space within my being. There are many professors at UCLA who teach by the precedent of their previous experiences. Prof. Packer is awake; she is in the here and now. Her enthusiasm for the subject and for the writing is infectious.”

Barbara’s passing on 16 December 2010 is a great loss for all of us, and it is still too early for the good memories to overshadow the grief her friends experience. But in time that will be taken care of. In the meanwhile I just want to recall the image of her strong and elegant in the saddle, fully in charge and radiant in her command.

—Thomas Wortham