

Vachel Lindsay

ASSOCIATION

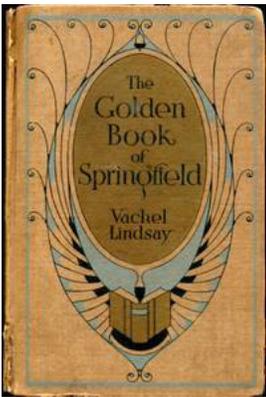
Springfield, Illinois  Established 1946

P.O. BOX 9356, SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62791-9356 | E-MAIL: VACHELLINDSAY@GMAIL.COM

Issue 1

1
Winter 2018

ANNUAL MEETING SPEAKER KICKS OFF CELEBRATION OF LINDSAY'S GOLDEN YEAR



Vachel Lindsay's life and work were celebrated at the annual meeting that was held on Friday, November 10, 2017, at the Inn at 835 in Springfield, Illinois. Association members were able to celebrate Lindsay's birthday in style in a beautiful setting with delicious food complete with a special cake in honor of the troubadour poet.

Elaine Spencer of Monroe Street Press gave an insightful short lecture considering *The Golden*

Book of Springfield in comparison to other utopian/dystopian work of Lindsay's era. This new year is very special as it is the year in which *The Golden Book of Springfield* is set. Spencer's discussion brought to light several areas that made Lindsay's work distinctive yet also fitting with the contemporary cultural associations of Lindsay's lifetime. Among many other selections, Spencer's press specializes in publishing quality reprints of utopian/dystopian works from the Victorian and Edwardian Eras. For more information about the Monroe Street Press, visit their website at: www.monroestpress.com.

During her discussion, Spencer gave an overview of utopian socialist movements in 19th-century America which provided some historical context and insight into potential influences on Lindsay. Spencer highlighted Lindsay's emphasis on the spirit of community in his seminal work. She noted how Lindsay's work stressed community building over any political or social movements. This differentiated Lindsay from many of his contemporaries who often focused on advancements in technology mixed with a political narrative. In

addition, Spencer drew attention to Lindsay's future vision of Springfield as having an ongoing "World's Fair" type of atmosphere, inviting people to experience the best of any new advancements without imposing these advances upon them.

Other key features of Lindsay's work that Elaine Spencer spoke of included embracing both urban and rural environments. Specifically, Lindsay's vision included a bigger footprint for future Springfield extending to the surrounding small towns outside of the city. This inclusivity aspect also advocated embracing those of different cultures and religious traditions.

In all, Spencer provided great information to consider while continuing a celebration and exploration of Lindsay's work. As we embark upon a new year, Lindsay's Golden Year in particular, let us consider ways to build community, create more inclusive environments, and honor the creative spirit.



Vachel Lindsay Association

Issue 1

2

Winter 2018

2018 POETS IN THE PARLOR: A FOCUS ON LOCAL VOICES

All readings will be from 2-4 p.m. at the Vachel Lindsay Home State Historic Site and will begin with an open mic

Warm up with witty, wonderful, whimsical words as the parlor glows with a great line-up of writers this season. In 2018, our Poets in the Parlor events will include an open mic for the first hour of the event, so bring your work if you would like to share with the audience. The Lindsay Home will open its doors at 1:45 p.m. on days when Poets in the Parlor events are scheduled.



Tim Hunt

Join us for our first Poets in the Parlor reading of 2018 on Sunday, January 21st with Tim Hunt.

Tim Hunt is the author of three collections: *Poem's Poems & Other Poems* (2016), *The Tao of Twang* (2014), and *Fault Lines* (2009). Chapbooks include *Redneck Yoga*, *White Levis*, and

Thirteen Ways of Talking to a Blackbird. He is the winner of the Chester H. Jones National Poetry Prize and has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize three times. Educated at Cornell University, he has taught American literature at various schools, including Washington State University, Deep Springs College, and most recently Illinois State University where he was University Professor of English. His academic publications include *The Textuality of Soulwork: Jack Kerouac's Search for Spontaneous Prose* (University of Michigan Press), *Kerouac's Crooked Road: Development of a Fiction* (California University Press), and the five-volume edition *The Collected Poetry of Robinson Jeffers* (Stanford University Press). Originally from the hill country of Northern California (a land of played out quicksilver mines), he now floats in a central Illinois sea of corn, where it seems that Normal is literally a place.

On February 18th, Meagan Cass will read from her first full-length collection, *ActivAmerica*, which won the Katherine Anne Porter Prize in Short Fiction and was released in November 2017 by UNT Press. She is author of the chapbook *Range of Motion* (Magic Helicopter



Meagan Cass

Press, 2014) and her stories have appeared in *Hayden's Ferry Review*, *The Pinch*, *DIAGRAM*, *PANK*, *SmokeLong Quarterly*, *Joyland*, and *Puerto del Sol*, among other places. An Assistant Professor of English at the University of Illinois Springfield, she is co-curator of the Shelterbelt Reading Series and an editor for Shelterbelt books, a literary press focused on mentorship and community building. She also serves as assistant editor for Sundress Publications. She holds an MFA in Fiction from Sarah Lawrence College and a Ph.D. in English from the University of Louisiana Lafayette. She lives in St. Louis, MO.

On Sunday, March 25th Amy Sayre Baptista will be reading in the parlor. Amy Sayre Baptista's writing has appeared in *The Best Small Fictions* (2017), *Ninth Letter*, *The Butter*, *Alaska Quarterly Review*, and other journals. Her flash fiction chapbook is forthcoming from Black Lawrence Press, September 2018. She was a SAFTA fellow (2015), a CantoMundo Poetry fellow (2013), and a scholarship recipient to the Disquiet Literary Festival in Lisbon, Portugal (2011). She performs with Kale Soup for the Soul, a Portuguese-American artist's collective, and Poetry While You Wait (Chicago). She is a co-founder of Plates&Poetry, a community arts program focused on food and writing. She has an MFA in Fiction from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and teaches Humanities at Western Governors University. She lives in Illinois.



Amy Sayre Baptista

Again, make sure to bring your work to read as part of our open mic at the beginning of each Poets in the Parlor event throughout 2018. Check our Facebook page for updates regarding Poets in the Parlor or email VachelLindsay@gmail.com for more information.

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Vachel Lindsay Association

MARCH TOWN HALL MEETING TO FEATURE SPRINGFIELD'S LITERARY HISTORY AND FUTURE

On Wednesday, March 28th at 6 p.m., the Lindsay Home will be the site of a gathering of great literary minds. The Vachel Lindsay Association will be hosting the second in a year-long town hall series being put on by the Illinois Bicentennial Committee.

The event, titled "Literary Springfield Now and Then," will feature prominent local poet and author, Jackie Jackson. Jackson is well-known for her *Round Barn* series. She will be joined by an emerging writer who will discuss the current state of the writing community in Springfield.

Following discussion from the two featured speakers, the event will be opened to the audience for further input. This is your chance to voice your thoughts regarding Springfield's literary history and future. How do you think we can best preserve our literary history, including the contributions of Lindsay? Where is the literary community heading in the coming years? What can we do to bolster support for both established and emerging voices in our town?

We hope you will spend some time mulling over these questions and then join us at the Lindsay Home on March 28th. Please follow our Facebook page for updates on this event or email us at VachelLindsay@gmail.com

PRESIDENT'S NOTE

Are you ready to celebrate Vachel's Golden Year with us? The Association is planning a wide variety of events throughout the year starting with a busy spring. In addition to events at the Home, we are hopeful that new eyes will view Lindsay's great works via upcoming exhibits of his material as part of the Peoria Riverfront Museum's Illinois bicentennial exhibition (on exhibit Feb. 3-June 3, 2018) and at the University of Illinois Springfield library (exhibit dates TBA). We will continue our monthly Poets in the Parlor series to keep the creative spirit alive at the Home and are thrilled to have added a recurring feature to each monthly event: an open mic reading to showcase the vast local talent Springfield has to offer.

Thank you for your continued support of the Vachel Lindsay Association. If you have not yet renewed your membership for 2018, I sincerely hope you will consider doing so today--and perhaps inviting a friend to join as well! Lindsay's *Golden Book* speaks to the importance of community spirit and support, and your support is what enables the Association to keep doing the work that it has to advocate for the importance of Lindsay's literary and artistic contributions.

Here's to Vachel's Golden Year!

LINDSAY HOME HOURS

MOST SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS:
NOON-4PM

ALSO OPEN BY APPOINTMENT
CALL (217) 782-6776
TO SCHEDULE A TOUR

Vachel Lindsay Association

P.O. Box 9356
Springfield, IL 62791-9356

2018 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

www.vachellindsay.org



BE GOLDEN! RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

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Level of Support:

_____ \$25 Individual

_____ \$50 Patron

_____ \$250 Benefactor

_____ \$35 Family

_____ \$100 Sustaining

_____ \$2,500 Lifetime

Checks should be made payable to the Vachel Lindsay Association, and should be mailed to:

P.O. Box 9356, Springfield, Illinois 62791-9356.

If you have questions about your membership status or to receive a printable copy of this form, please email VachelLindsay@gmail.com.

Vachel Lindsay Association

Issue 1

4

Winter 2018

SCHEDULED EVENTS

The following is a list of events scheduled at the Vachel Lindsay Home State Historic Site, located at 603 S. 5th Street in Springfield, Illinois. Poets in the Parlor readings will begin with an open mic to showcase local talent.

JANUARY 21 2 P.M.
Poets in the Parlor welcomes poet and scholar Tim Hunt

FEBRUARY 18 2 P.M.
Meagan Cass reads from her new book *ActivAmerica* as part of the Poets in the Parlor Series

MARCH 25 2 P.M.
Poets in the Parlor welcomes poet Amy Sayre Baptista

MARCH 28 6 P.M.
"Literary Springfield Now and Then" presentation as part of the Illinois Bicentennial Town Hall Meeting series

MARCH
Vachel Lindsay Illustration Contest will once again resume. Keep an eye on our website and Facebook page for more information