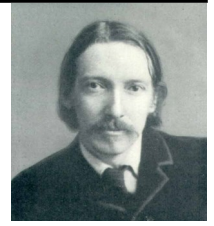




NEWSLETTER



In This Issue

President's Message	1
The Annual RLS Club Dinner	2
Board of Directors and New Members	2
Carmel Valley Rodeo Field Trip	3
A Relic from the Goat Ranch	3
A Treasure of Land and Sea	4
Martin's Reflection on RLS in Monterey	5
Professor Joseph Farrell Delights Club Members	6
History Fest	6
Unbirthday Celebration	7

Calendar of Events: 2019-2020

December 13 & 14, 2019 (Friday/Saturday) 5-9 pm - *Christmas in the Adobes*, downtown Monterey

February 16, 2020 (Sunday) 2-4 pm - *A Literary Salon* at the home of Maureen and Hugo Bianchini, 309 Mar Vista, Monterey. Discussion of the RLS short story: *Providence and the Guitar*. Bring a finger food to share.

March 22 (Sunday) 2-4 pm - *Getting to Know RLS* - at Park Lane Library, 200 Glenwood Circle, Monterey. Explore and share your discoveries about Stevenson's early years, 1850-1875, from birth to his graduation from University of Edinburgh.

May 16 (Saturday) 4-6 pm - *Fifth Annual Anniversary Tea* in the Stevenson House Garden to honor the marriage of RLS and Fanny.

August 29 (Saturday) 4-6 pm - *Annual Lecture and Fund-raiser* in support of MSHA at the Stevenson House. Speaker and topic to be announced.

October 10 (Saturday) 6-8:30 pm - *Annual RLS Club Dinner* and election of officers at the Hacienda Carmel.

November (date TBA) - *Unbirthday Party for RLS*, Monterey Public Library

December (dates TBA) - *Christmas in the Adobes*

President's Message

2019 brought us not only the 25th anniversary of our RLS Club of Monterey but also the 140th anniversary of RLS' coming here to find out if Fanny still loved him, enough to get a divorce and marry him. Befitting such a special year, we have shared interesting "adventures", some carefully planned and researched, and some totally unplanned but truly wonderful. It has been great to see so many new members attending the events and being inspired to learn more about "Our" RLS.

As a founding member, I have been on the board since the beginning and have served for the last several years as club president. It has been a great pleasure to be part of such a special group of people who all, without fail, pitch in and brainstorm, plan, research and execute the many activities we have "dreamed up" since 1994! At our recent Annual Meeting, I had the pleasure to hand over the presidency to **Ruth Krotzer**. She has been instrumental in helping our club survive when our membership dwindled. She has untiringly publicized our mission and has singlehandedly recruited many of our newest members. She will be an active and capable president, and she has a truly committed and capable board to back her up. So "SALUD" to an exciting next 25 years of adventures for the RLS Club of Monterey.

Monica Hudson



Ruth Anne Krotzer takes over RLS Club leadership from outgoing President, Monica Hudson

PLEASE -- Don't Forget to Pay your Dues

RLS Club dues are still only \$10 a year, paid in January or thereabouts. We very much appreciate your donations to cover expenses and keep the club going. Please mail your check made out to "RLS Club of Monterey" to Lindy Perez, Treasurer, P.O. Box 51504, Pacific Grove, CA, 93950.

**For questions or comments, contact Ruth Krotzer, P.O. Box 232, Marina, CA 93933
(831) 601-1894; rkrotzercolts@gmail.com**

Highlights of the Annual RLS Club Dinner at Hacienda Carmel, October 5



Keith Decker reading to the dinner guests
Note the great kilt!

*The dinner this year featured a lovely buffet
in the Casa Fiesta Room, which provided
ample room for seating at tables and for
walking around to meet and greet members.*



Chuck and Sheryl Bancroft helped host the dinner
once again and enjoyed the evening.

Officers Elected for RLS Club Board of Directors, 2020

Ruth Anne Krotzer, President
Elizabeth Anderson, Vice President
Monica Hudson, Recording Secretary
Edna Barker, Corresponding Secretary
Lindy Perez, Treasurer
Harish Joshi, MSHPA liaison and tech support
Bende Kelly, member at large
Keith Decker, member at large
Rosemary Smith, member at large
Donna Gibson, new board member approved at November
Board Meeting

Club support: **Patrick Gallagher**, Website
Bob Jaques, Newsletter



Friendly club members **Harold Krotzer** and **Keyte
Marui** share a moment after dinner

Welcome New Club Members

Fans of Robert Louis Stevenson keep finding and joining the RLS Club of Monterey. Our newest members are:
**Peggy Mauz, John Sanders, Vladmir Shepelev, Artem Khlevner, Denise Maudlin,
Katharina Harlow, Mary Jane Sligar and Audrey Hayward.**

Welcome! and please come to our events so we can meet you.

Carmel Valley Rodeo Roundup in April of 1879

What a great adventure we had attending the June RLS Club outing to Garland Park in the Carmel Valley. On a beautiful sunny Saturday morning, 12 of our RLS Club members gathered at the visitor center picnic tables to “re-live” the adventure Fanny described so vividly in her article published in *Lippincott’s Magazine of Popular Literature and Science* in January 1880.

Our board member **Lindy Perez** did an outstanding job of researching and cross-referencing the story. By giving all of us a part in the abbreviated reading of Fanny’s story, she made us “part and parcel” of the exciting adventure.

The ranch owner, Bradley Sargent, had extended this invitation: “The ladies will have to rough it, but it isn’t often that you’ll get a chance now-a-days to see a real old-fashioned Spanish rodeo, and I think it will be worth your while to come.” Lindy introduced and connected all the individuals who had been invited: Belle and her little brother Sam (later called Lloyd by the family); Joe Strong and his two sisters, Nolie and Lizzie; Antonio (actually Adulfo Sanchez) and Nellie, Fanny’s sister; and Fanny herself, as well as Bob, a local man who came along to help with the horses and generally assist the group of artists. There were little anecdotes such as that Joe wore slippers because, as reported in the local press, he had fallen off his horse and hurt his leg.

Leading our discussion, Lindy shared not only Fanny’s Roundup story, but also Nellie’s reminiscence and excerpts reported by the local newspaper. Then, she connected this adventure with the camping trip which RLS took later that year. RLS followed the same route into the wilderness of Carmel Valley which the artists had taken. He slept in the same barn where they spent the night before the roundup. However, RLS did not have trusty Bob at his side, and alone, he got himself hopelessly lost in the rugged mountains when he was overcome by illness. Lindy brought up the question whether it was RLS or Fanny who first commented on the disrepair of the old Carmel Mission and criticized the lack of badly needed preservation? Was it RLS’ observation and sentiment which she wove into her story?

Sitting there in the very country where the story took place was poignant. With the publishing of this newsletter, we have entered the roundup story on our website, <https://rlsclubmonterey.org/>. You can find it under Featured Articles, so now you can enjoy the adventure as well.

A Relic from the Goat Ranch

Recently, we received an email from a gentleman in Sedona, Arizona, who remembers having a picnic with his family at the old Wright ranch in the early 1950s. As boys do, he and his brother explored the empty cabin and discovered a crack at the top of the narrow staircase leading to the upstairs where Stevenson convalesced. Reaching between the brick chimney and the framing, he pulled out an empty bottle of *Warner’s Safe Liver and Kidney Cure*. The boys joked that maybe the ranchers had poured this down Stevenson to keep him alive.

After researching this curious treatment, our emailer learned that Warner’s product was marketed aggressively during the 1870s to 1880s. Having learned from our rlsclubmonterey.org website that the ranchers were educated men, he now wonders if his original hunch might have been valid after all: RLS may have lived to become a famous storyteller because of this nineteenth century tonic.

Congratulations to the Robert Louis Stevenson Museum in St. Helena for 50 years of service to the memory of RLS!

A Treasure of Land and Sea

On the last Saturday of August, we remembered *Robert Louis Stevenson's* arrival in Monterey 140 years ago with a multimedia presentation from **John Sanders**. The sala of the Stevenson House was filled with admirers of the author and fans of the era when Monterey became a destination for artists and travelers.

Sanders, esteemed local historian turned storyteller, wove the strands of events and personalities into a pictorial essay about Monterey, *Of Land and Sea*. By means of vignettes, quotations, music, paintings, photographs and artful video, he led us along his personal path of discovery.

The last quarter of the 19th and the early 20th Centuries were a time of "cultural symbiosis" when creative minds stimulated one another just as the natural beauty of the Monterey peninsula inspired works of lasting value. Robert Louis Stevenson, in particular, was captivated by the place. Like the painters, he had a keen eye for color and light and an ear for sounds both mysterious and lyrical. His walks in the woods and along the coast set free his sense of discovery where he would feel deeply .

The audience was asked to ponder whether *We* can find the same kind of beauty and magic today in Monterey, the buried treasure of our past which remains ever-present.



Time Tapestry, Monterey

by John Sanders

Like waxen threads of gold
Its history doth unfold
Stories to be told
Of glorious days of old.

Steinbeck to be sure
With words that will endure
But look and you will see
Stevenson by a tree.

Don't leave, for there's more
Within this ancient lore
Of writers who descend
To sing their earthen hymn.

Jeffers, Sterling, Stoddard too
Spun words for me and you
That in the light of Monterey
Invite us all to come and play.

Martin's Reflection on RLS in Monterey

While most of us have heard of Robert Louis Stevenson, author of *Treasure Island* and other famous stories, his relationship to Monterey is not so well known. His connection is both complicated and puzzling.

For starters, he was hardly here at all. He arrived August 31 and was gone before Christmas. He was here on a romantic "enterprise of madness." His sole purpose was to persuade the woman he knew in France - ten years older than he and already married to Sam Osbourne - to get a divorce and marry him. He traveled on the cheap 6000 miles from Scotland to Monterey. On his arrival, he was unknown, virtually penniless, covered with a skin disease, with long hair, shabby clothes, and an invalid.

No one, not even Mrs. Osbourne, knew he was coming. No one met him on his arrival in the sea of sand dunes that was the Monterey rail terminal. The first thing he did in Monterey was to visit the Bohemia Saloon and have a brandy to relax as he smoked a cigarette. As he later wrote, the only time he wasn't smoking a cigarette was when he was drinking or when he was kissing Mrs. Osbourne, who for reasons of her own divorced Mr. Osbourne and married RLS in 1880.

While here in Monterey during those four brief months, Stevenson was unknown in this town of 350 persons, but not friendless. The bartender at the Bohemia Saloon was only his first friend, quickly followed by others at Simoneau's restaurant where he regularly dined inexpensively. In his well-worn velvet coat, he had a most charming and lively spirit that radiated the room and made the evenings pleasant for all; so much so that the dinner group pitched in to pay the owner of the local newspaper two dollars a week to hire Stevenson as a correspondent. Other than writing, Stevenson spent his time walking along the seashore and into the forests and to the post office to see whether his father sent him an allowance. Although Carmel Mission was only a roofless ruin, he wrote of it as a landed treasure. He also wrote of the Hotel Del Monte, which was under construction, as a sadness that would attract only the vulgar monied class.

RLS looked upon each day as an adventure and almost killed himself on a camping trip in the nearby Santa Lucia Mountains. Tired and weak, he apparently slid off his horse and lay freezing in the San Clemente Creek for a few days. Were it not for providence in being discovered and nursed back to health by a bear hunter and goat herder, this author would never have been heard from. Instead, we have the respected Stevenson School, a California State Park, and historic adobe named after him. The local Stevenson House is esteemed as a monument to him and houses many priceless articles of furniture from his final days in Samoa. There is even an internationally known RLS Club in Monterey!

He has become as famous as if he were Thomas Jefferson of Monticello or George Washington of Mount Vernon. Such is the power of his charm and the gifts of his writing, even though he often wrote lying down in poor health. Pity that he died before his 45th birthday.

But while he was here he certainly got it right. As he wrote a friend in October 1879:

This is a lovely place which I am growing to love. The Pacific licks all other oceans out of hand; there is no place but the Pacific Coast to hear the eternal roaring surf. When I get to the top of the woods behind Monterey, I can hear the seas breaking all around over ten or twelve miles of coast from near Carmel on my left to Point Pinos in front and away to the right along the sands of Monterey to the mouth of the Salinas.....

Martin Rosen, RLS Club member

Professor Joseph Farrell Delights Club Members with Talk on RLS in Samoa

Speaking before RLS Club members and guests at Hacienda Carmel on September 9, Joseph Farrell, Professor Emeritus at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, Scotland, shared his knowledge and wit of Stevenson's final years in Samoa. He is the author of the widely acclaimed book *Robert Louis Stevenson in Samoa*, a copy of which he autographed for the library in the Stevenson House. While he discussed literary matters, he also favored the audience with insights into the man and the local people he lived with. For various reasons, he was genuinely beloved by his Samoan neighbors. He was not only respectful of Samoan culture and values; he was steadfast in his support of their fight for freedom and independence from colonial powers. These were the times of intense rivalry among German, British and yes, American colonial ambitions.

Prof. Farrell also livened up his talk with anecdotes about the building of the Stevenson's two-story house, named Vailima, in Apia. Two-story houses were a novelty and many local workers had never seen a staircase before. And they certainly were not going to trust one to travel between floors.

After his talk, both Prof. Farrell and his lovely wife Maureen were whisked away for dinner and to relax at the Carmel Valley Manor to experience a lovely sunset and reflect on similar moments – altogether too brief moments – spent here years ago by Robert Louis Stevenson.



History Fest in October – a Monterey tradition

**A Quest for Buried Treasure,
with cookies and fun activities
for children at the Stevenson
House**

Led by **Lisa Bradford**,
Pirate and Interpreter I,



Unbirthday Celebration Attracts Record Crowd to the Monterey Public Library

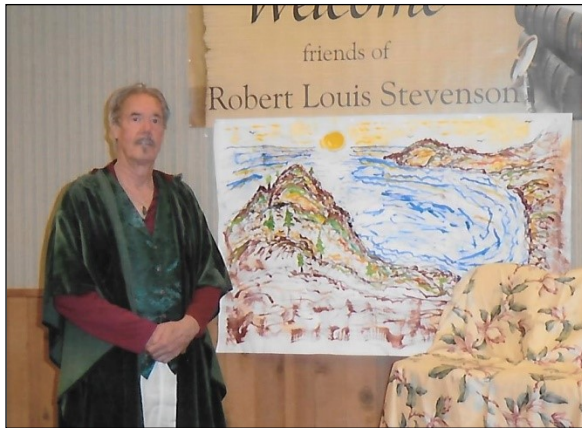
Why an Unbirthday?

Young Annie had been born on Christmas day and was “out of all justice denied the consolation and profit of a proper birthday.” So, Stevenson, with his extraordinary kindness and wit, gave his birthday to her. He drew up a document transferring all his “rights and privileges in the thirteenth day of November... to Annie H. Ide “to have, hold, exercise, and enjoy by the sporting of fine raiment, receipt of gifts, compliments, and copies of verse, according to the manner of our ancestors.”

How we Celebrate an Unbirthday

On the Saturday nearest November 13, the actual date of RLS’ birthday, (this year: November 9), almost 60 guests gathered in the Monterey Public Library Community Room and celebrated with chocolate cake and tea. But the best gift was shared by actor, playwright, and RLS Club board member **Keith Decker**.

Decker used his experience and scholarship to present an amalgam of Stevenson’s letters, journals, poetry, and other writings to portray Stevenson’s thoughts and words while in Monterey. Stevenson was in poor health and financial straits in 1879, and Decker’s production “Velvet Coat: The Ragged Luck of Robert Louis Stevenson” conveyed our author’s character and moods vividly. Guest lingered and savored the event with conversation as well as cake.



Keith Decker as RLS in his “Velvet Coat: The Ragged Luck of Robert



Decorative cakes provided by the RLS Club.



Librarian **Sean Briscoe** (center) offered a warm welcome to refreshment server **Edna Barker** and actor **Keith Decker**