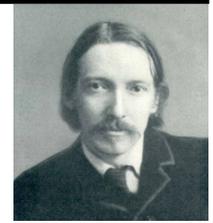


NEWSLETTER



<i>In This Issue:</i>	
Invitation to Tea Party	1
Losses and Gains	1
RLS is Back	2
Jules Simoneau, Subject of August Talk	2
A Day in Fanny's Indianapolis	3
A Note from Isobel Field	4
It's Not Too Late to Pay 2018 Dues	4
Sharing our RLS Treasures	5
Volunteer Training	5
Click and Browse	6
February Salon	6
RLS a Winner	6
How's Your Latin?	6

Calendar of Upcoming Events

- May 19, (Saturday), 4 pm**
Anniversary Tea in Stevenson Garden (see article, page 1)
- June 23 (Saturday), 10 am**
Guided tour at historic Point Pinos Lighthouse in Pacific Grove;
11:45 am – Group lunch at Point Pinos Grill, \$15/person
- August 4-5 (Saturday/Sunday)**
Scottish Festival at the Monterey Fairgrounds
- August 25 (Saturday), 4 pm**
Presentation by Claudine Chalmers: "Obstinate Dreamer: Jules Simoneau"
MSHPA fund-raiser at Stevenson House (see article, page 2)
- October 6 (Saturday), 5:30 pm**
Annual dinner at Hacienda Carmel; Election of officers and visit from RLS Club of Edinburgh
- November (date TBA)**
Unbirthday Party for RLS at Monterey Public Library
- December 7, 8 (Friday/Saturday) 5-9 pm**
The 35th Christmas in the Adobes

Invitation to a Tea Party in Celebration of Louis and Fanny's Wedding Day

Put on your party hat and join us in the Stevenson House Garden on May 19 for the wedding anniversary tea in honor of Mr. and Mrs. R. L. S.

There you will find tables set with the finest china and most delectable finger foods with the friendliest company of Stevenson admirers.

Your dining will be accompanied by delightful harp music with a Scottish theme.

The program will draw from Fanny's Diary during her years in Samoa, which belongs to the Stevenson House collection, and from writings and letters of RLS.

Date/Time/Place: Saturday, May 19, 4-6 pm, Stevenson House, 530 Houston St., Monterey Note that RSVP is required due to limited seating.

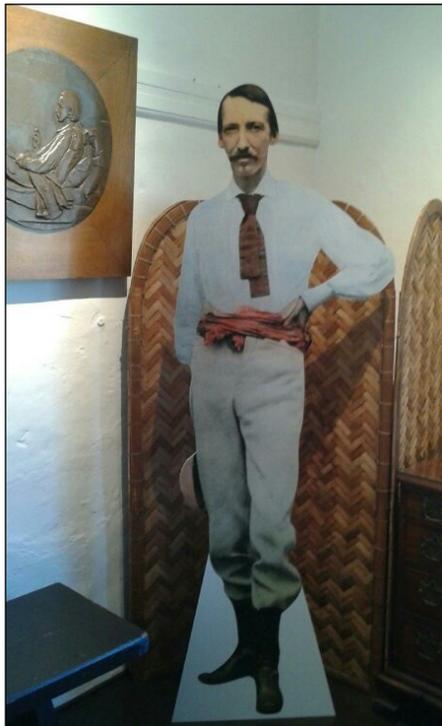
Kindly RSVP by May 15 to Ruth Krotzer at (831) 601-1894 or rkrotzercolts@gmail.com.



Losses and Gains

- ◇ We just received the sad news that Pauline Olow, one of the founders of the RLS Club, has passed away. Pauline was a friend to many of us and will be remembered for her dedication to State Parks and her kindness to all.
- ◇ We are saddened by the loss of two RLS Club members: Dana Trainor and Basil Weir. Their presence added so much to our events; they are already missed.
- ◇ A big heartfelt welcome to new members Rod Atkinson, Bob and Jean Barr, Harish Joshi, Nancy Otis, Roderick Repke, Suzanne Siegelman, Mike Sovereign, and Joe Weir

RLS IS BACK IN THE BUILDING



The life size figure of Robert Louis Stevenson has been replaced and stands proudly in the Hawaii - Samoa room in Stevenson House.

The previous figure had lost its color over the years, but thanks to the RLS Club of Monterey and FedEx in Monterey, he is once again a permanent resident.

Before going to Stevenson House, he dropped by The Park Lane to see resident and long-time club and board member Rosemary Smith.



Jules Simoneau, Friend of RLS, Subject of August Talk

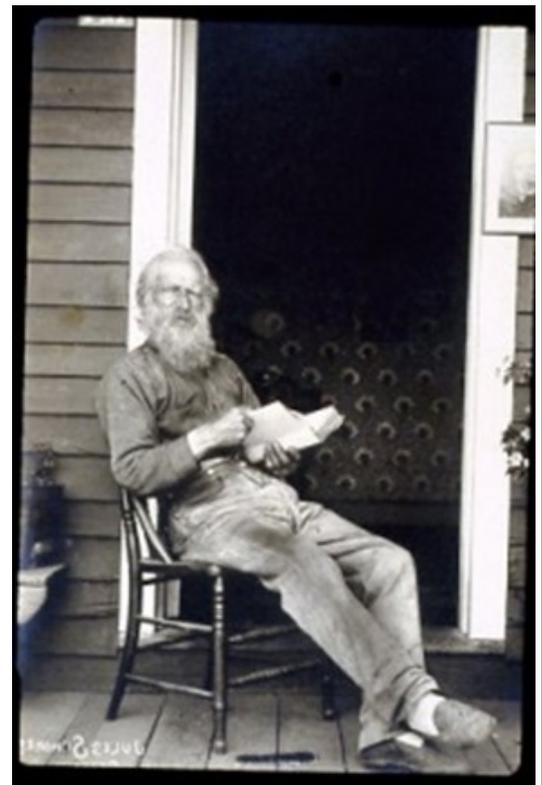
Most fans of Robert Louis Stevenson know about his brief stay in Monterey and friendship with Jules Simoneau.

A short walk from the Stevenson House was Simoneau's bohemian restaurant on the plaza, the favorite eating place for artists, writers, and a diversity of locals.

Simoneau, a 60 year old well-educated Frenchman, welcomed the penniless RLS to his table, shared his love of chess and philosophy with the young writer, and watched over him like a protective father. Years later, RLS showed his appreciation by sending his old friend autographed copies of the first editions of his books. Consequently, by the end of his life, Jules Simoneau was a celebrity in Monterey, although few residents then or now knew about his early life in France or where he had traveled.

On August 25, *Claudine Chalmers*, historian and writer, will share her research about this "man of mystery." *The Obstinate Dreamer: Jules Simoneau and California* will reveal Simoneau's life before coming to Monterey. Ms. Chalmers is a native of France and an expert on French immigration to early California.

This event is a fund-raiser for Monterey State Historic Park Association. Tickets will go on sale in early August.



A Day in Fanny's Indianapolis



How Fanny roamed! From Indianapolis to Indian Country, San Francisco to Samoa, Monterey to Montecito, Frances Matilda Van de Grift Osbourne Stevenson left her mark on society, on literature, on popular concepts of femininity and womanhood.

But how and where did this controversial rebel begin her life? My husband Steve and I spent an energizing day last October touring Fanny's Indianapolis: the city of her birth, christening, education, and marriage—the birthplace of her first child, Isobel Stewart Osbourne Strong Field--the city to which she sometimes retreated when life with philandering husband Samuel C. Osbourne became too hard to sustain.

It all started by chance: my happening onto *Historic Indianapolis*, a website known to locals as just *HI*, where I found two extensive articles on Fanny's life. Through Mike Perkins in the local history section of the Indianapolis Public Library, I tracked down the author, Sharon Butsch Freeland, a seventh-generation Hoosier and local historian, who agreed to be our tour guide on an all-day "Fanny slept here" excursion.

Joined by Stevenson/Fanny aficionado and retired school librarian, Christie Scofield, we began on a crisp Sunday morning at the site of Fanny's 1840 birth in the house built by her father Jacob Vandegrift on Monument Circle (Memorial Circle in her day) in the heart of downtown, next door to the first location of the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher's Second Presbyterian Church. We continued to nearby sites of her schools: Third Ward School and Marion County Seminary (elementary and secondary, respectively), plus three other houses built by lumber merchant Jacob after he arrived in this booming western town (less than 3,000 residents at the time of Fanny's birth, more than 45,000 when she left in 1864). It was in one of these that Fanny, age 17, married my great-great-uncle, handsome and charming Samuel C. Osbourne, age 20, personal secretary to the governor of Indiana, on Christmas Eve, 1857.

After passing the site of Fanny and Sam's first house, built and given to them by her parents as a wedding gift, we then traveled to present-day Second Presbyterian, where we met with church archivist Fred Kortepeter, who showed us photos of the church in its original building next to the Vandegrift home, as well as baptismal records and other artifacts from the pre-Civil war period.

Returning to the downtown area, we viewed the site of Fanny's baptism at the age of two, along with her mother Esther, by Reverend Beecher in the White River—a momentous mass event of some 3,000, joining together local Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists. Next stop, and a particularly meaningful one because it is likely one of the last Indiana area places Fanny visited, was the Vandegrift family farmhouse. Because Jacob Vandegrift's lumber yard burned in 1861, and after a stint as a railroad purchasing agent, he embarked on his third career - farming. He purchased a 180-acre farm between Clayton and Danville, in Hendricks County, about 25 miles west of Indianapolis. He and Esther lived there until he died in 1876. The brick farmhouse, built in the 1850s, still stands in good condition on Indiana Highway 39; we paused a long time in the driveway, admiring the structure of the house with its Greek Revival lines. Just imagine the animated conversations around the dinner table when Fanny returned to visit! Of Fanny's five siblings (Nellie, Cora, Jake, Elizabeth, and Josephine), only the latter remained in Indiana, the others leaving for more exotic settings. It was to this house that Fanny and her children (Isobel, Lloyd, and Hervey) retreated in the post-war period when she could no longer tolerate Sam's behavior and absences.

Today's Indianapolis is beautiful! From its historic districts such as Lockerbie Square, home of early author, James Whitcomb Riley, and the Butler-Tarkington area, home of Booth Tarkington and Kurt Vonnegut, to its beloved Monument Circle with its handsome Indiana State House, this mid-western city is a crucial reference point in the rich, convoluted life of Fanny Vandegrift Osbourne Stevenson!

Carolyn Wood Adamson

A Note from Isobel Field

A copy of the following note from Isobel Field, stepdaughter of RLS, was sent to our club recently by Mike Delahant, curator of the Stevenson Cottage at Saranac Lake, NY, along with other letters from family and friends. Sharing among Stevenson clubs is a wonderful tradition and much appreciated. These materials as well as Mike's articles printed in the *Adirondack Daily Enterprise* are available for reading at the Stevenson House.

To my fellow members of the Stevenson Society of America:

In a little note he left to be read after his death, Mr. Stevenson instructed my mother about the details connected with the book of his life and letters, advising her to have it published as soon as possible as his vogue would not last more than four or five years! That was written more than 30 years ago, and here we are celebrating his birthday!

He was modest about his achievements as this note shows, and yet few authors have received such adulation during their lifetime as RLS. The mail bags brought up to Vailima on steamer day were fairly bursting with letters. When they were poured out on the floor of the great hall, they formed veritable mountains. There were letters from admirers, letters from autograph hunters, grateful letters from people who his books had helped, letters from young authors humbly addressing him as "Master," letters from children, from sick people, from poor and rich --- letters from the four corners of the world, and nearly every famous author of the day was numbered among his correspondents.

His mother kept scrapbooks filled to over-flowing with his praises; if there were any adverse criticisms you may be sure she found no place for them, though on the title page of each she had written:

*"Speak well o' my love, speak ill o' my love
But aye come o'er his name."*

One day as I saw him glancing through one of these scrapbooks, I asked, "Is fame all it's cracked up to be, Louis? Does it give you any happiness?" and he answered with a smile, "Yes, when I see my mother's face."

For all these years, during his life time and since his death, his name has stood for honor, courage, romance and glorious achievement. The volume of praise increasing with the years has irritated a few envious spirits who have endeavored to show that RLS was not a good writer, that his brave spirit was a legend, that his morals and his manners were reprehensible – in fact that he was a person of no importance whatsoever.

But the Stevenson Society of America by its very existence proves that the fame of a great and good man still endures.

*Isobel Field
November 30, 1925*

It's Not Too Late to Pay 2018 Dues

Please write a check for \$10 payable to the RLS Club of Monterey and mail to:

Lindy Perez, Treasurer, P.O. Box 51504, Pacific Grove, CA 93950.

Thank you for your support!

Sharing our RLS Treasures



A fun idea was realized on March 24th when close to twenty RLS Club members gathered at the Library of The Park Lane to share their favorite RLS treasures and possessions. A real show-and-tell session allowed each member five minutes to explain their item and why it was special to them.

We were treated to miniature books by and about RLS, a copy of Lloyd's passport, and an edition of "Teller of Tales," Neil Wilkie's musical which was performed on the stage of Carmel's Outdoor Forest Theater in the 1990's. Interest in Lighthouses was represented in a piece on the building of Bell Rock and a copy of "The New Lighthouse on Dhu Heartach Rock" by RLS. "Bright Ring of Words" brought back memories of Club member Elizabeth Warfel and coauthor Alanna Knight who had been part of our Monterey RLS journey. A beautiful copy of "Pictures of the Mind, The Illustrated RLS" made its rounds and reminded many of the trip to Edinburgh in 1994. We got to touch a piece of "The Equator" as well as a piece of the goat ranch cabin which bore a physical remembrance of RLS' presence.

Last but not least, we shared extra copies of books with each other and had a fun and wonderful time talking about our favorite author.

Volunteer Training at the Stevenson House on March 24th

A lively group of 13 interested volunteers took part in a tour through the Stevenson House. As the group made its way, Monica Hudson used the many RLS artifacts in the collection to weave the story of RLS and Fanny into the walk.

Michael Green, the State Park interpreter, encouraged everyone not to be intimidated but to sign up for shifts on Saturdays from April to October when the house is open. The enthusiasm for the task ahead, especially by members of the RLS Club, was refreshing and we hope to see new volunteers team up and allow for more public access.

Click and Browse

Our website at rlsclubmonterey.org is a useful tool for presenting news of our activities and sharing our enthusiasm for RLS and his work. A recent addition to articles on the site is *Not a Special Day*, by Martin Rosen, one of our club members.

Every month we have more than 50 site visitors, the majority from the US and the UK, but also from other countries; for instance in February 2018, they were from Canada, France, Japan, India, Hungary, and Vietnam. Patrick Gallagher, who curates the site, recommends the Website Links page rlsclubmonterey.org/links/ for rewarding web browsing of resources for the study and enjoyment of Stevenson's works and life. For appreciations of Stevenson by famous authors see the *Critiques* page on the website.

February Salon

At a *Literary Salon* in February, several new club members joined with others in a lively discussion at the home of Maureen and Hugo Bianchini.

The selected work was *The Merry Men*, a vivid and suspenseful tale of shipwrecks, dangerous storms, and impressionable minds, set on an island off the coast of Scotland.

Participants later made merry by enjoying the Valentine-themed refreshments.



RLS a Winner!

The Monterey County Weekly recently published its annual "Best of Monterey" issue. The Editor's Pick for the Best Early Morning Musing was *The Old Pacific Capital* by Robert Louis Stevenson! Copies can be purchased at the Custom House store near the wharf.

How's Your Latin?

Do you know the meaning of the titles of Stevenson's essays: *Virginibus Puerisque* and *Pulvis et Umbra*? Our best guess is "Of Maidens and Youths" and "Dust and Shadows." Does anyone have a better translation?