

**NATIONAL ATTENTION:
LOCAL CONNECTION**

La Crosse's contributions to the Arts and Entertainment in America

Compiled by

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Compiler's Notes

First--I owe thanks to many people from the past and in the present. All of those people of local importance who recorded their reminiscences for later generations (Egid Hackner and Howard Mumford Jones, for example) and such local historians as David O. Coate, early and long-time professor of English at UW-La Crosse, current teacher and writer, David Marcou, professor of Speech, Charles Haas, and retired librarian, Ed Hill. Most of all, I owe thanks to the great local reporters of the past and present whose original stories and columns I gleaned along the way. And finally I thank the crew at the Main Library Archives for their outstanding help in the research I undertook there.

Second—this compilation is hardly complete. What follows comes close to covering the many people associated with La Crosse who have gone on to national and international careers in the Arts and Entertainment. But it says very little about other native sons and daughters who have earned national reputations in such fields as medicine (Dr. Adolf Gundersen and Dr. Norman Shealy, among others), in sports (George Poage, Olympic bronze medalist, and D. Wayne Lukas, outstanding horse trainer among others), in politics (Timothy Burns, Lt. Governor of Wisconsin in the 1850s, and Cadwallader C. Washburn, Civil War General and later Governor of Wisconsin), in business (from Gottlieb Heileman and Mons Anderson to the Trane family and CEO Don C. Weber of Logistics Health, Inc.).

And even then we have not covered all the possibilities. I leave all of that to the next person who develops such interests and, I hope, records them for posterity.

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Early Poets of La Crosse

Our city's earliest poets were unusual because not only were they all women, but they also were mother-daughter combinations. Helen Mannville and her daughter, Marion Mannville Pope, and Elizabeth Letitia Tucker and her daughter, Blanche Isabelle Tucker. And the daughters themselves improved upon their mothers' talents.

Helen Adelia Wood was born in New Berlin, New York, in 1839. When she was quite young, her family moved to Ohio. After she married H. H. Mannville, the couple moved to La Crosse. Her husband was part owner of Gordon & Manville, a wholesale liquor store near the corner of Front and State Streets. Their first, and only child, Marion, was born in La Crosse in 1858, while they lived at 909 South 3rd Street. Later they moved to 214 South 8th Street.

Over the years Helen Mannville, using the *nom de plume*, Nellie Mann, published several poems, called fugitives or waifs, primarily in newspapers. When there seemed to be enough of these "waifs," the writer would collect them into a volume of verse. Nellie Mann's collection, "Heart Echoes," consisted of 128 of these poems and was published in New York in 1875.

The volume was dedicated to her husband and "to Marion, the one child of our love." She lived most of her life in La Crosse. At the time of her death there were at least a thousand of her poems still in manuscript. She died in 1912 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, while living with her daughter, Marion.

Marion Mannville grew up in La Crosse, and in imitation of her mother wrote poetry even as a child. She continued her pursuit of a writing career, publishing a volume of poems dedicated to her mother, "Over The Divide," in 1887 (now available in paperback and digital form). In 1891 she married Charles Pope, an American businessman with interests in South America. Her mother moved with them to Santiago, Chile.

She continued her writing after marriage. Century magazine published two of her non-fiction pieces, "Where the Teakwood Grows," about Burmah (sic.), in October, 1894, and "A Day in Tophet," in August, 1896. And in the latter year

she published a novel, A Judicial Error. Then on one of her trips to Europe she came up with the idea of writing a comic novel called Up the Matterhorn in a Boat, a rather startling title until one finds out the boat was a gondola attached to a hot air balloon which came down over the Alps.

In 1911 they settled in Buenos Aires, where a few months later her mother died. Sometime later she wrote her final piece, a play called "Between Two Gods," which was published as a book in 1917. Marion Mannville Pope died in Buenos Aires in 1930.

Her legacy, however, took an unusual twist. These lines by Mrs. Pope:

The trail is lost, the path is hid, and
Winds that blow from out the ages
Sweep me on to that chill borderland
Where Time's spent sands engulf lost
Peoples and lost trails

inspired the sculptor, James Earle Fraser (creator of the buffalo head nickel design) to create a sculpture piece now known throughout the world as, "The End of the Trail." It was done in plaster for an exposition in San Francisco in 1915, then later cast in bronze, and in 1968 moved to the National Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

In 1851 at the age of 21 Elizabeth Letitia Roosevelt married William Henry Tucker in Sandusky, Ohio. Both before and after her marriage, Mrs. Tucker wrote and published poetry. Her pen name was "Corrine," and some of her poems appeared in La Crosse newspapers. But it is not known whether she ever collected them into a volume for publication.

Her husband, a graduate of Union College, Schenectady, New York, was pursuing a law career at time of their marriage. By 1855 he was practicing as a lawyer in La Crosse. He was soon elected to the state senate and served from 1856-60. When the Civil War began, he was named a captain in the 19th Wisconsin Volunteers. A year later he resigned his commission apparently because of ill health.

The Tuckers lived in a house on 5th Street, between King and Jay Streets. That was where their second child, Blanche, who was born in 1853, spent her

childhood. The first child, a boy, was born in Sandusky, and the third child, a girl, was born in La Crosse. They lived in La Crosse approximately from 1854 to 1865, when they moved to Chicago. Tucker died there the following year. Three years later, his widow published the collection, Hawthorne Dale, an olio of writings including the dedication of a Masonic temple in Sparta.

The family survived the great fire of 1871, and daughter Blanche began the study of voice with a Professor Balantha. After a year of serious study she wrote to Gov. Cadwallader C. Washburn, an old friend of her father, for financial help in her career. He diplomatically declined, and she found some fellow artists in Chicago to give a benefit concert for her, and in May, 1873, she was on her way to France for further study. On most of her early travels in Europe her mother accompanied her.

In Paris she ingratiated herself into the American ambassador's house; after all, he was Elihu Washburne, a brother of the governor. And he "loaned" her some money to buy necessities—and charged it to his brother. Later she went to Italy where she studied voice for two years.

By 1876 she had so impressed a London stage manager, he hired her to sing in the opera, "La Traviata," the first American to sing Italian opera in Covent Garden in London. Her stage name was Mme. Rosavilla (Roosevelt, in pseudo-Italian), and she took the lead role of Violetta. The same year, in London, she married an Italian nobleman, August Machetta, the Marquis d'Alligri, whose estate was in Verona, Italy.

Not long after, she was contacted by Arthur Sullivan, who had heard her sing in an opera in Italy. He wanted her for a lead part in his and Louis Gilbert's new extravaganza, "The Pirates of Penzance." Because they were trying to protect copyrights in the U.S., they decided to premier in New York City on New Year's Eve, 1879, and Blanche Roosevelt Tucker became the first "Mabel," the daughter of the Major-General.

The Machettas lived mostly in Paris, but also traveled within Europe and to the United States on occasion. On one of these trips she visited with an old friend, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, who wrote an opera with her in mind called

“The Masque of Pandora,” and she performed in the title role in Boston in 1881, just prior to the poet’s death. She was obviously charming, endearing herself to many, especially in Paris, where she was given the sobriquet, “La belle Americain,” by French writer, Victor Hugo.

During the 1880s she moved away from singing to writing. She wrote loose biographies of Longfellow, Gustave Dore, Giuseppe Verdi, and Victorien Sardou, a French playwright, whose “Tosca” was made into the opera by Puccini. She also wrote a life study of “Elizabeth of Roumania.” For the Dore biography she received the Cross of the Legion of Honor, the first American woman thus honored.

She also wrote at least four novels: “Marked in Haste” and “Stage Struck, or She Would be an Opera Singer,” “The Copper Queen,” and “Hazel Fane.” In the 1890s she became a close friend of French short story master, Guy de Maupassant. The friendship became intimate when she accompanied him to London, and later to his home in Etretat, Normandy, and she was one of the few friends of de Maupassant who attended his funeral in 1893.

In Monte Carlo in 1897 she was involved in a carriage accident that killed the driver and seriously injured her. She never recovered and she died the following year at age 44. She was buried in Brompton Cemetary just outside London. A life-size marble statue of Pandora, her favorite role, stands over her grave.

The inscription reads in part: “Born in Wisconsin, U. S., 2nd October, 1858.” Ironically, both items are incorrect—such is fame! Her mother, Elizabeth L. Tucker, died in New York City in 1891, but a stone marking her grave lies in La Crosse’s Oak Grove Cemetery.

Marcus “Brick” Pomeroy (1833-1896) and George W. Peck (1840-1916)

Both Marcus Mills Pomeroy and George Wilbur Peck were born in New York State. Both became newspapermen and editors. Both practiced their trade for a time in La Crosse. Both were humorists. And between the two of them they published over 35 books in their lifetimes.

Marcus “Brick” Pomeroy was born in Elmira, New York, in 1833. He arrived in Wisconsin in 1857. In 1860 he came to La Crosse and started the La Crosse Democrat. He became a spokesman for the Copperheads, a political group that opposed the Civil War, and he gained national notoriety when he suggested during Lincoln’s re-election campaign that someone should “pierce his (Lincoln’s) heart with dagger point for the public good.”

When Lincoln was assassinated, Pomeroy barely survived the rioting in downtown La Crosse. He then lived on 8th between Pine and Badger, but the crowd did not try to attack him there. Ironically, his extreme views increased the circulation numbers of his daily and weekly democratic newspapers. They became so profitable that he looked to expand to New York City. And that’s where George W. Peck came in.

Peck was born in 1840 in Henderson, New York. While still an infant, he was brought with his parents to Jefferson County, Wisconsin. After their move into Whitewater, he learned the printer’s trade at the local newspaper, The Register. He later joined a partnership to run the Jefferson County Republican.

Then the Civil War came along, and Peck served in the 4th Wisconsin Cavalry. Mustered out in 1866 he went to Ripon to run the Representative paper. There he created the character, Terence McGrant, “a brevet Irish cousin of President Ulisses S. Grant,” making fun of the spoils system of the Republican administration. The series of letters of McGrant to his wife, written in broad Irish dialect, was published in 1871.

Pomeroy, at the La Crosse Democrat, saw the first letter of the satirical series, and talked Peck into coming to La Crosse. Soon after, Pomeroy took Peck to New York to run the Democrat there, both the daily and the weekly, and Peck

continued on the New York paper for three years. When it finally folded, Peck came back to La Crosse—he claimed he walked all the way back.

Pomeroy soon ceased publication of his La Crosse Democrat, and Peck and another man bought him out, changing the name to the Daily Liberal Democrat. At that time he lived in a house at 136 South Eighth, and he was appointed by the mayor in 1874 to serve as the Chief of Police. That same year Peck decided to set up his own paper, calling it The Sun.

But after four years in La Crosse, he decided to move the “Sun” to the larger city of Milwaukee and change the name to Peck’s Sun. Like most editors of the time, Peck inserted news items in the left-over spaces, but his were generally humorous: “In the gizzard of a chicken killed at Ripon, was found 15 pins, a piece of corset steel, a piece of hoopskirt, 10 hooks and eyes, a brass garter fastening, and the heel of a gaiter. The name of the lady is unknown.”

Or, “An exchange says it is not the frost that makes the smacking noise at the front gate these nights. No, it is the sudden thawing.” Or “Cholera morbus can be prevented by vaccination, the same as smallpox. Take a good sized cucumber, sharpen it at the point, lay bare the stomach, and pierce it until the seeds begin to flow from the cucumber, then poultice the wound on the inside, with a glass of brandy, to which has been added a little peppermint. This is worth trying.”

It was these twists of humor that made reading Peck’s Sun diverting, and by 1880 it probably had the greatest circulation of any paper in the state. He called it the “Funniest Paper in America. What vaccination is to smallpox, Peck’s Sun is to the blues.” He published collections of these in “Peck’s Fun” in 1879 and in “Peck’s Sunshine” in 1882.

And for the “Sun” he created “Hennery,” the perennial bad boy. Besides getting into the usual scrapes of a self-styled rascal, Hennery’s object of devilry is his Pa. He either tells on his Pa’s actual indiscretions, or he arranges elaborate practical jokes to entrap his Pa. In Chicago overnight with his Pa, who is out carousing, he switches room numbers, and is awakened by the ruckus his Pa gets into next door where a spinster and her dog are staying. Just before his

parents leave for church he slips pieces of limburger cheese in their pockets. The resultant chaos destroys the service that day.

The reader learns of all of these shenanigans as Hennery tells the groceryman about them, at the same time in complete innocence, helping himself to treats—berries, crackers, candy or an orange. The grocer is indulgent, but waits for the outcome of each story to hear Hennery's punishment for that prank, such as: "Pa talked to me with a bed slat," or, "Pa fanned the dust out of my pants."

The series of books beginning with "Peck's Bad Boy and His Pa" in 1883, stretched to over ten, ending with "Peck's Bad Boy in the Airship" in 1908. Though they have their place in the humorous literature of the time, his best book turned out to be his account of his Civil War service, where having never ridden a horse, he was placed in the cavalry.

In the 1880s a number of memoirs appeared about the War written by various members of the officer corps on both sides that put the best light on their contributions, some coming close to claiming that their actions and decisions had won the war. Since Peck went into the army as a private and came out as a lieutenant, he felt he was qualified to tell a story, too, which, of course, had to be outrageous and hilarious.

It was through his ineptitude, he claimed, that he had so confused the enemy that he had won the war! The book was titled "How George W. Peck Put Down the Rebellion," and it was published in 1887. With its popularity and that of his Bad Boy series Peck was a shoo-in for the office of mayor of Milwaukee in 1890. But before he even finished his term, the Democrats put him up for governor, and he was elected—and re-elected, serving two terms.

In 1895 he tried again and one of his competitors was an old friend, "Doc" Powell for the Populist Party. But both were beaten by the Republican, William H. Upham. He did try for the governorship once again in 1904, but he lost to Robert La Follette. Retiring from politics, he lived out the rest of his life in Milwaukee and died there in 1916.

After leaving La Crosse in 1872, Marcus Pomeroy located in Chicago, again editor of The Democrat. By then he had published eight books, a political biography of Benjamin F. Butler, a couple political tracts, and a few books of humor, but he never achieved any real popularity with them.

He returned to La Crosse for another try as editor in 1879, again with a democratic paper, The La Crosse Daily Democrat, but it lasted only a few months. He relocated to Colorado, established a newspaper, The Denver Great West, and remained there for about five years, but lost a good deal in mining and especially in a failed attempt to dig a tunnel short-cut for the railroad. He moved back to New York City with his paper, but he had lost his cachet with the democrats, and it was no longer a success. He was nearly poverty-stricken when he died in his Brooklyn residence in 1896.

Frank “Doc” Powell (1847-1906)

Though Frank Powell’s name—or his Indian name, “White Beaver”—was listed as the author of nearly forty “dime novels” toward the end of the 19th Century, he probably did not write any of them. Nor did his “blood brother,” Buffalo Bill Cody, who also was listed as the author of many. But that doesn’t mean Powell didn’t live an unusual life.

David Franklin Powell was born in 1847. Following him came brother George in 1848, and brother William in 1849. That much of his early life is certain, but not much else. Frank claimed a Kentucky birth; his brothers off and on claimed a New York state birth. Their father was a frontier doctor (maybe) who died when Frank was eight.

They were raised by their mother, Fannie Tompkins, who was a mixed blood Seneca woman with intimate knowledge of herbal and natural remedies. But when her husband died, Fannie raised her young boys in her home area, not far from Ithaca, New York. A few years later Frank turned up as an assistant in a drugstore in Omaha, Nebraska Territory.

Apparently imbibing a working knowledge of natural remedies from his mother along the way, Frank decided on a career in medicine. Following the Civil War he spent two years “studying” pharmacy in Chicago. He returned to Omaha in 1868 to again work as a druggist. By then, or soon after, his brothers and mother had settled a couple counties west of Omaha in Lone Tree (Central City today), Nebraska.

He secured help and entry to Louisville Medical College from his state representative, and attended school there from 1871 to 1873, working as a janitor throughout. He graduated with honors and even gave the valedictorian address. He immediately contracted with the U.S. Army as an Acting Assistant Surgeon. “Doc” Powell was assigned to the post at Fort McPherson, next to the town of North Platte.

Part of his duties was to accompany patrols in Indian country, which accounts for another name for him, "Surgeon Scout." Sometimes he wrote descriptions of particular patrols for the "Omaha Daily Herald." One of these, his second to be published, was a well-written, detailed description of the aftermath of a massacre of Pawnees by Sioux.

Since North Platte was the home of Buffalo Bill Cody, it was inevitable that they would meet. And they did early on, probably on patrol or at their Masonic Lodge meeting. Later in the summer Powell joined Buffalo Bill and Texas Jack in a buffalo hunt, and from that point on they were bosom buddies, or, as Buffalo Bill often said, "Blood brothers." And like Cody, Powell was skilled in weaponry and was a sharp-shooter.

Then Powell was transferred to Camp Stambaugh, Wyoming Territory. He was not happy for several reasons. The camp was on the frontier; his brothers and mother were a long ways away; his marriage (little is known about it) was in trouble, and most of all he had not been considered for promotion to 2nd Lieutenant, even though he had petitioned for it.

Fed up with it all, he resigned his position and returned to Louisville for further study and to assist in the anatomy lab at the school. He still wanted to be a medical officer, however, and he soon was able to take the exam--and he failed. So in the spring of 1875 he signed up again as an Acting Assistant Surgeon, and he was sent to Camp Robinson in the far northwest corner of Nebraska.

He was soon transferred back to Camp Stambaugh to relieve his old boss for a few weeks. But his old boss returned unexpectedly early, found a number of empty liquor bottles, and exercised his authority to black-ball a man he seemed not to like in the first place. In December of 1875 Powell was relieved of duty and black-listed. That kept him from ever being an officer—it also kept him from dying in the Battle of Little Big Horn which was only six months away.

And then he disappears from sight—until he marries Alberta "Bertie" Brockway in May, 1877, in Lanesboro, Minnesota. "Doc" Powell began his medical practice there, opened a drug store, and started a sanitarium in the

Phoenix Hotel. His mother died in 1879, and soon after brother George arrived as a veterinarian, and brother William took over the drug store.

During the next two or three years Doc Powell befriended the Winnebago, particularly, it is thought, Chief Winneshiek. He was soon known as the “Medicine Chief to the Winnebago,” and he did act in that capacity. He was even recognized as a representative of area tribes when he was consulted by the state of Minnesota about newly discovered Indian mounds.

Somewhere along the way he let his hair grow long and attained the name, “White Beaver.” He claimed his mother’s clan was the beaver and his pale skin provided the “white.” Then in August, 1881, Cody showed up, and Powell accompanied him as they visited the Winnebagos of the area, signing up males and females to participate in his new show, called “Buffalo Bill’s Combination,” which was primarily a production of the play, “The Prairie Waif,” starring Cody and involving 24 members, including Powell.

They rehearsed the play in Powell’s living room in Lanesboro. Then the show, which included sharp-shooting and rope tricks, went on the road to various cities, including Omaha and Chicago, before returning to La Crosse for a special performance. Powell took the occasion to move his enterprise to La Crosse. He set up a “medical institute,” practiced as a doctor, and began to sell his nostrums, the two most widely known, “Kickapoo Indian Sagwa” and “White Beaver’s Cough Cream.”

He advertised extensively and, at times, wrote news stories about himself that local newspapers printed. In January, 1883, for example, for the La Crosse News he seems to have written the report of a shooting contest between himself and a “granger” from Minnesota who scoffed at Powell’s shooting abilities and said he could out-gun him. The “granger” put his slugs in a circle made on a board by outlining a quarter. To best him, Powell placed the quarter edgewise in the board—and shot it up with perfect accuracy.

In La Crosse he spent a good deal of time defending himself against the medical community and promulgating through his advertising his expertise and nostrums. And he did practice medicine, tending toward homeopathy—natural

remedies—but he also did many surgeries. He lived at 500 Cass Street, and his office was located at 200 Main Street, today called “Powell Place,” in his honor, and the water fountain at 2nd and Main that he donated to the city was restored and placed in the City Hall lobby.

But since “White Beaver’s” background had been so adventure-filled (helped along by his own stories), his exploits were aggrandized in the dime novels of the time, often alongside his partner, Buffalo Bill. The actual writer of the stories, Prentiss Ingraham, showed “carelessness with fact,” according to one critic, but Ingraham knew his audience—the novels sold well.

The titles are intriguing: “White Beaver, the Indian Medicine Chief: the Romantic and Adventurous Life of Dr. Frank Powell, etc.,” “The Wizard Brothers, or, White Beaver’s Red Trail,” which also featured Powell’s brothers, “Night Hawk” George and “Bronco Bill” William; “Buffalo Bill’s Sharpshooters, or, the Surgeon Scout to the Rescue”; “Buffalo Bill’s Swoop,” a Buffalo Bill and Surgeon Frank Powell Adventure.

Powell, always ready to take advantage of his notoreity, decided to run for mayor of La Crosse in 1885—and won easily. And at least once during his two years in office, he gathered a party of hunters: W. F. Cody; former mayor, David Law; alderman, Josephus Emery; Yank Adams, “Sporting News” editor out of Chicago; and others. They were, of course, willing to show their skills with firearms to the crowd. “It was the finest shooting ever witnessed in La Crosse, and highly pleasing to all present,” the local newspaper reported.

He continued to work with Cody, joining his now “Wild West” show whenever he felt he could. He went with Buffalo Bill and the show to England in 1887 for Queen Victoria’s diamond jubilee celebration, where they wowed the crowds that came out to see them, and he was at “Buffalo Bill’s Wild West” on the Midway Plaisance at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893.

For the campaign of 1886 Powell was put forward as the Populist candidate for governor of Wisconsin. As a third party candidate he was soundly defeated, but four years later he was re-elected mayor of La Crosse. This time, however,

it did not go as well. There were some bitter fights with the city council, and at the end of the term in 1897 he dropped out of politics altogether.

He and Cody entered into several business ventures, one of the earliest involving Indian Hill in La Crosse, and including an elaborate enterprise in Mexico and mining and lumber interests in Wyoming. During the Spanish-American War, he formed the 7th Wisconsin Infantry, was made a major, and when the war ended, a colonel.

In 1906 on the train from Los Angeles to Texas, Frank Powell had a heart attack and died. He was 58. His body was taken off at El Paso and later cremated. In a final indignity, the escort of men taking his ashes on horseback up Heart Mountain overlooking Cody, Wyoming (according to Powell's instructions), had imbibed a bit too much and did not notice the ashes leaking out of the container. When they did realize it, they retraced their route and gathered up what they could and buried at least that much in the spot designated.

Egid Hackner (1856-1952)

Unless La Crosse residents are of a certain age, they probably have never heard of the Hackner Altar Company. And fewer still know of the unusual set of circumstances that brought its founder, Egid Hackner, to La Crosse in the first place.

Egid Hackner was the youngest son in the family, born in the village of Forscheim, Bavaria, December 27, 1856. His parents, John and Crescentia, had 15 children, but only six, all sons, lived to adulthood. His parents ran a farm and a hostelry, and he was early raised to hard work helping out in both.

His family was quite religious, and when he was 8 or 9 the altars in their village church were being renovated, and he was fascinated by the process. He spent his extra time watching the work, and he claimed that that was where his interest in church building came from.

In those days of frequent warfare young men were always liable to the draft. Two of his brothers served in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. When his oldest brother, Joseph, married, the farm, according to custom, was given to him. The rest of the family then moved to another farm a few miles away.

There Egid excelled in school, but his next oldest brother, Willibald, was the student and reader of the family, and he went on to further school and to the seminary in Eichstadt. A couple years before completing his studies he was recruited by Rev. Michael Heiss, a graduate of the same school, who was being consecrated the first bishop of La Crosse, to come to Wisconsin to finish his seminary preparation at St. Francis Seminary in Milwaukee.

In the meantime Egid finished his own Gymnasium years and entered an apprenticeship with a master of church art in the nearby larger town of Freistadt. At the end of his training, from 1871 to 1874, he decided to travel throughout Germany, working (he already was a master wood-carver) and studying church art in some of the outstanding cathedrals and churches. In his "Reminiscences" he noted, "These travels occupied the four years, 1874-78."

In the latter year he found employment working for an altar builder (again primarily as a wood-carver), and at the same time enrolled at the Munich School of Art. Already experienced in wood-carving and cabinet work, here he learned stone-carving and statuary. Between work and studies his days were more than full.

At the end of two years—and through the influence his brother, Willabald, now a priest, he decided to emigrate to America. On reaching La Crosse, he headed for St. Joseph's Cathedral and very soon after met his brother, who took him to his parish, St. Mary's Ridge, a few miles east of Cashton, where he stayed for several weeks.

He soon found a place to stay in La Crosse and a place to begin his work. His first job was to fashion a carved wooden altar for his brother's church where it has survived to this day. After settling in, he contacted his fiancée, Juliana Kracklauer in Chicago, and they were married at St. Joseph's Cathedral by Egid's brother, May 10, 1881.

Another early contract was to furnish the interior of the James Vincent house. Since Vincent was a lumber baron, he had access to various exotic woods that he wanted Hackner to use for scroll work and moldings. These included maple, cherry, black walnut, yellow birch, ash, oak, redwood, red maple, and red cedar. The house, which still stands at 1024 Cass Street, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1988.

Hackner's second shop was at Winnebago and 11th Streets. It wasn't above him, he wrote, to push a wheelbarrow filled with scrap wood from nearby mills along the streets to his shop in the morning. But when the Franciscan Sisters needed more room for their hospital, he sold that location to them, and moved to a new site at 13th and Ferry Streets, where he also built their home still standing at 1235 Ferry Street. During these years immigration was high, and new parishes were opening up so that his business thrived.

Several immigrants, in fact, came to work for Hackner. One of the most remarkable was Albin Polasek who was born in Moravia (present-day Czech Republic). After an apprenticeship in Vienna in wood-carving, he came to

America in 1901. He joined the E. Hackner Co. as soon as he arrived in La Crosse, and worked as a wood-carver there for four years, and he started a gymnastic Sokol in town.

At the end of that time he began formal art training at the Pennsylvania Academy in Philadelphia. One of his seminal sculptures, "Man Chiseling his own Destiny," was completed while he was a student there. In 1910 he won the *Prix de Rome* award which afforded him three years further study at the American Academy in Rome. On his return to the U.S., he set up a studio in New York City.

In 1916 he was named the head of the Sculpture Department at the Art Institute of Chicago. In Chicago he sculpted "Spirit of Music," a commemorative piece in honor of Chicago conductor, Theodore Thomas, which stands in Grant Park in the Loop, and, later, a statue of Thomas Masaryk (deceased president of Czechoslovakia), "The Tomas Masaryk Memorial," which stands along the Midway Plaisance in South Chicago. Perhaps his most famous sculpture is "Mother Crying Over the World," which he did in 1941 as a political statement. Polasek later retired to Winter Park, Florida, where he died in 1965.

Up until 1910 nearly all the work at Hackner's altar factory was done by hand. The work included altars, railings, stairs, pulpits, and pews, work that required many workers and great skill. By the end of those early years Hackner incorporated, becoming E. Hackner Company and built a new factory at 2nd and Division Streets. Here they used motor-driven machines and other innovations that improved working conditions, and he now employed from 50 to 75 workers.

During the Chicago World's Fair of 1893, Hackner made three trips of over a week long to see and understand the innovations that might be of use to his work. He repeated this for the St. Louis Fair in 1904 as well. Marble work became a central part of his expansion which continued until World War II when he could no longer get Italian marble.

Certainly the most remarkable and accessible work of his is the Maria Angelorum Chapel at the Franciscan Mother House here in La Crosse. The construction of its six altars took two and a half years and were installed in 1907.

They consist of fine Italian marbles, including carrara, enhanced with onyx, mother of pearl, and precious gems, as well as with Venetian mosaic work.

Prior to that E. Hackner Co. put in the three main altars in Holy Trinity Church in Milwaukee. Though the church is now called Our Lady of Guadalupe, the altars remain undisturbed. They are hand-carved and were installed in 1890. From that project came at least four more contracts for church altars in Milwaukee, and Holy Name church in Sheboygan—nearly all Bavarian catholic parishes.

In 1900 Hackner submitted plans to the Chicago archdiocese for the altar for St. Michael's Parish in what is today called Old Town. His plan was accepted. The main altar and five side altars were fashioned at the company shop in La Crosse, combining silver, gold, and onyx in the design. The project took two years, then each piece, separately packed, was shipped to Chicago where they were painstakingly reassembled over a period of 14 work days—with an eight foot tall statue of St. Michael at the apex.

In 1908 E. Hackner Co. created the 52 foot high reredos (altar back panels) for the St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church (now Oratory) in south St. Louis. Other projects included St. Benedict's, Chicago, the main altar and baldachin; the Church of the Incarnation, Minneapolis, the main altar; St. Joseph's Convent, Milwaukee, altar and canopy; Pieta altar and canopy for St. Mark's church in Cincinnati, Ohio; and altar at St. Agnes Church, Buffalo, New York (now a Buddhist temple.)

The Hackners had eight children. The oldest, Willabald, became a priest, the second, a daughter, became a Franciscan, Sister Marietta, who was the head of the Art Department at Viterbo for many years. The remaining children worked at and eventually took over E. Hackner Co. A grandson, Robert Hackner, Jr. was part of the Hackner, Schroeder, Rolansky, and Associates architectural firm.

Hackner's wife, Julianna, died in 1932. Hackner himself remained robust to the end. Even in his 90s he walked several miles daily. He died in 1952 at the age of 95. Hackner Altar Co. remained in business under his sons until 1963. A bust of Egid Hackner, done in marble, stood for many years on a pedestal in the balcony of Maria Angelorum Chapel, but it was finally given to Hackner family

heirs. And the statue of St. Michael halfway up the west side of the chapel exterior, still visible from the street, was carved by Albin Polasek.

Sandor Leopold Landeau (1864-1924)

A cloak of mystery and a series of enigmatic moves, marked the life of one of La Crosse's most distinguished artists. Samuel Leopold Landau was born in Hungary (maybe) in 1864 (or was it 1860?). He grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio, where his father had a small business. But somewhere along the way he changed his name to Sandor Leopold Landeau and, as far as his family was concerned, vanished into thin air.

His story was that he had left the family home in Ohio when he was 15 (or maybe 19) and relocated to La Crosse, a bustling lumber and mill town, to take art lessons--even though the Cincinnati Art scene he left behind was a vibrant one. How he could have learned about an art teacher here who would have made the move worthwhile is puzzling. There was a crayon and water color artist/teacher, Guy F. Monroe, on Main Street, but only after 1885.

By his account he would have arrived in our fair city by 1879 or 1880. The first city directory showing his name was that for 1889, which leaves several years unaccounted for. The directory suggests that he came here at the earliest in 1887. He is listed as having a studio in the MacMillan Building, Room 304, where he offered classes and pursued his career of painting, referring to himself as "professor." It also indicates that he roomed there as well.

There was little doubt that he was talented and at ease both with water colors and oils, but he had yet to make his mark as a professional. He incurred debts over those early years, sometimes offering a painting or two to make them good. And he sold some paintings to local supporters, including to some of the young men of his acquaintance.

After a trip to the Southwest in 1889, Landeau returned with a number of paintings, one of them, "A Halt in the Mesa," hangs in the magazine section of the Main Library. It was purchased by local residents and given anonymously to the library in 1890. And he had other commissions: In a January, 1892, article in the La Crosse Republican and Leader a reporter noted that the drop curtain

“completed by Professor S. L. Landeau of this city,” complemented the stage at the Park Theater, making it “a little gem.” Landeau also did a painting for the Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago—though it is uncertain whether it was ever shown there.

That same year he found a benefactor to help support his further training in Paris—Mrs. Louise Wood Withee of La Crosse. Mrs. Withee was the widow of Niran Withee, who was a lumberman in Clark County and who had interests in mills in La Crosse. Two of her sons, Charles and Haskell helped support Landeau as did local attorney, John E. McConnell, and local doctor, Edward Evans, all contemporaries of Landeau..

Several letters extant from Landeau to McConnell trace his trip to Paris in the late fall of 1893. During his first year there he sent back a number of paintings for McConnell to offer for sale (apparently at O. J. Oyen’s at 509 Main St.) to help satisfy Landeau’s creditors. But the bad economic times had the effect of poor or no sales. And Landeau was forced to let his debts ride as well as watch every sou he spent in Paris.

Landeau trained at Academie Julian in Paris, and had high hopes of gaining some recognition by having a painting accepted by the yearly Salon. In the meantime he had visits from Helmus Thompson, then the Withee brothers, then Dr. Bradfield, and finally Dr. Evans and Dr. Adolph Gundersen (in Europe to study the latest surgical practices), all from La Crosse. It was apparently during the latter visit in 1896 that Landeau painted the full-length portrait of “Dr. Edward Evans” that, along with an earlier painting, “Misty Morning on the Mississippi,” is in the Smithsonian Archives of American Art.

At last for the 1896 Salon, Landeau’s painting, “The Remorse of Judas,” was accepted. He had achieved his goal, and he apparently felt his training was about finished. He had paintings accepted for the Salon in the two subsequent years as well. He returned to the States—perhaps to La Crosse—then went to New York City, where in December, 1899, he married Marie Louise Whitney, whom he had met on a painting excursion to Palestine the year before, and they soon left for Paris.

In the meantime Landeau's family, who had never given up on him, made some connections and learned he was not, as they had feared, dead, but living under an altered name. But apparently no contact was made even then. Paris became the Landeaus' home base, though New York City served as a backup for the years from 1900 to 1915.

During that time he was involved in a number of exhibitions both here and abroad. His outstanding works were: "The Village Story-Teller" at the Art Institute of Chicago; "Samson," 1900; "Annunciation to the Shepherds," which won the Wannamaker Prize that same year; "Lecture Intime" at Chicago again in 1906; "A Prayer for the Lost at Sea" at the Paris Salon, 1907, for which he won a gold medal; and "La Parure" at the same salon.

A daughter, Marie Louise, was born to them in Paris in June, 1909. During the winter of 1912-13, the Landeaus moved to Rome. Mrs. Landeau wanted her daughter to experience the personal teaching of Maria Montessori who was operating her new *casa dei bambini* school there. Mrs. Landeau and daughter returned to Paris in the spring, but there is no indication that the painter did. There were hints that the marriage was in trouble.

At the Academie Julian from 1893-95, one of Landeau's best friends was the Minnesota born painter, Alexis Jean Fournier. They remained friends over the years as they strove for recognition. Along the way Fournier joined Elbert Hubbard's Roycroft Community in western New York. Fournier urged Landeau to join the community, and Landeau, who apparently was separated from his wife and who was concerned about the war front being so near Paris in 1915, decided to visit Roycroft.

Roycroft was a reformist community, strongly supportive of the arts and crafts movement. Elbert Hubbard started the group in East Aurora, a small town outside of Buffalo, New York, in 1895. Because of its devotion to excellence in the arts and crafts, it gained a national reputation, bringing its membership up to almost 500 at one point. It was a haven for artists of every kind to develop at their own pace, a hive of artistic activity.

Landeau joined the community in 1915, only a month before the founder and his wife were lost in the sinking of the Lusitania. For the next several years Landeau continued painting there, participating in several showings a year, including at least three entries along the way at the Art Institute of Chicago. As far as is known, he did not return to La Crosse, though he seems to have kept his studio in the MacMillan building until 1922.

Debts seemed to hound him in the final years as they had all his life. He was still trying to sell some of his paintings following the end of World War I just to try to make ends meet. He died in East Aurora in 1924—"in comparative poverty and isolation."

His paintings rarely appear at auction, and many seem untraceable, some, of course, in private hands, but equally unavailable even at large museums. Besides the one painting in La Crosse mentioned earlier, there are perhaps a score or more held by local people, originally sold or exchanged for debt to benefactors. In the July 20, 1952, La Crosse Tribune, Susan McCabe traced several of these to their local owners, and the paintings, some of local scenes, some of Parisian scenes, have been kept in the families of his benefactors..

Ford Sterling (1883-1939), and Minnie Dupree (1873-1947)

George F. Stich is hardly a household name—even in his hometown of La Crosse. But the Keystone Kops are recognizable from the era of the silent films. Stich wasn't just a "Kop," however, he was the head of the zany bunch.

George F. Stich, Sr., his dad, moved to La Crosse with his family in 1883—just in time for his son to be born here in November. Stich, Sr., was setting up the city's first telephone exchange for the Wisconsin Telephone Company. He later served on the City Council as alderman for the 2nd Ward.

La Crosse was apparently too tame for "junior," and when the circus came to town, he decided to join it. If he was looking for adventure, he found it. He was 12 years old when he ran off with the John Robinson "Big Top," one of the largest circuses at the time, and became a clown (he claimed he also worked as a trapeze artist). He soon developed his own persona for a solo act as "Keno, the Boy Clown"—good preparation for his later slapstick comedy.

That led him to vaudeville and the theater. After acting with several stock companies (he claimed he performed on Mississippi River showboats), he landed on Broadway in a hit show called "Sidewalk Chatter." Somehow he got into the fledgling movie industry and acted in a couple films of the Biograph Studios. Mack Sennet then signed him up for his Keystone Studios, and he was off to Hollywood—where, of course, he had to change his name—to Ford Sterling.

Sennet got the idea for his bungling police force from one of his actors and produced nine films in the series from 1912 to 17. Except for the first one, Ford Sterling played the police captain, Chief Teeheezel. With the tremendous popularity of the Keystone Kops, their inept, fulminating chief became probably the most recognizable face in film. According to Harold Lloyd, he was "the funniest man in movies."

But he wasn't just the Chief. In a 1913 film, "Muddled in Mud," he was one of the suitors for the girl's hand—the sinister one, as it turned out. But there is plenty of pie throwing and prat-falling, and the whole thing ends up in a lake bed

(Sterling had opened the sluice gate and drained the lake) which now is a mud hole. So by the end everybody is gloriously covered in mud!

In Hollywood Ford Sterling rubbed shoulders with some of the rising stars of comedy. Fatty Arbuckle was one of his “Kops,” and Charlie Chaplin was, too, in a single film just recently discovered. Sterling later told the story of lending his extra large shoes to Chaplin for a skit—and the floppy shoes became a Chaplin trademark.

Sterling easily made the transition to the “talkies,” and went on to appear in over 250 films during the years 1911 to 1936 (remember, the early “silents” were often quite short.) His last film was “Framing Father,” a full length feature. In 1914 he married actress Teddy Sampson who appeared in 41 silent films. They remained married until his death.

He slipped into poverty and ill health and died, nearly penniless, of a heart attack in 1939. His ashes were laid in an unmarked crypt in Hollywood Forever cemetery.

But today along Hollywood Boulevard one of the embedded stars bears his acting name: Ford Sterling. A fellow we know as George F. Stich—from La Crosse.

Minnie Dupree

Minnie Dupree, actress, always gave her birthplace as La Crosse, yet there seems no evidence in the records about her birth. When she was in La Crosse in 1908, acting in a traveling Broadway production, she was written up specially in the Tribune, yet no mention was made of a La Crosse tie.

Nevertheless, she and her mother, Eleonora Graham Dupree, claimed that Minnie had been born here January 19, 1873—that’s pretty precise. The next thing heard of her or her mother was in 1887 when Minnie performed for the first time on stage in San Francisco, California, in “The Unknown.” Then she took

the part of “Susan McGreery” in “Held by the Enemy,” by William Gillette, and made her Broadway debut in that role in 1888.

Sometime in the early ‘90s she and her mother moved to Mount Vernon, just outside New York to foster her career. Her mother, Eleonora, died there in 1894, aged 51. In 1896 Minnie’s engagement was announced, describing her as “a handsome blonde, and the possessor of a magnificent head of curly hair.” For some unknown reason, the marriage never took place, and she remained single her entire life.

Minnie had minor roles in several shows, such as “Two Little Vagrants,” in 1896, and “Midge” in “The Cowboy and the Lady,” in 1899. But she soon progressed to star billing, as “Clara Hunter” in “The Climbers,” by playwright, Clyde Fitch, 1901. Her greatest early success was as “Helen Stanton” in “The Music Master,” directed by David Belasco, which played on Broadway for two full years, 1904-06, for 627 performances.

“The Road to Yesterday” opened at the Herald Square Theater the last day of 1906, and after 216 performances, it was taken on the road with Minnie playing the lead, “Elsbeth Tyrell.” The touring group reached La Crosse to perform at the La Crosse Theatre in March, 1908, where the local audience got to watch “that charming young actress, Miss Minnie Dupree, in the leading role,” according to the Tribune. A later column was even more complimentary: “No cold, celestial thing—this star—but the daintiest and cleverest little actress who ever graced a La Crosse stage.”

She went on to star in several plays on Broadway, then appeared on the London stage for a few seasons. During World War I she studied nursing and volunteered her services during the subsequent flu epidemic. In 1922 she played the long-suffering “Matilda” in “The Old Soak.” Then she appeared in a silent film, “Two Masters,” which seems to be lost, and in an early “talkie” from 1929, called “Night Club” with Fanny Brice and others.

Late in the Depression she helped with the Stage Relief Fund—government support for unemployed actors and actresses. In 1938 she made another movie, playing Miss Ellen Fortune in “Young in Heart,” along with Janet Gaynor and

Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. One critic, at least, thought her performance worthy of an Oscar: “with all due respect to the names in the cast, the picture is stolen by Minnie Dupree.”

In 1941 she got her biggest break back in New York, replacing the lead actress and playing “Martha Brewster” in the play, “Arsenic and Old Lace.” The play ran for 1444 performances. She followed her career to the end. Her last play, “Land’s End,” closed on Broadway in March, 1947. She died on May 23, 1947. She, her mother, and a brother, Frank, are buried in St. Paul’s cemetery (a National Historic site) at Mount Vernon, New York.

Percy Dwight Bentley (1885-1968)

Percy Dwight Bentley was born in La Crosse in 1885, the son of banker, E. E. Bentley, who lived at 950 Cass Street. He graduated from Central High School in 1903. He went on to further studies at Wesleyan University in Delaware, Ohio, just north of Columbus, though he did not graduate. He then took courses at the Armour Institute (now the Illinois Institute of Technology) in Chicago.

Though he did not finish his course work, he became intimately acquainted with the style being put forth by architects Louis Sullivan and his protégé, Frank Lloyd Wright. For some of his coursework Bentley spent time at the nearby Art Institute of Chicago, and often visited the architects who had offices in the Loop. The style, of course, was the “Prairie Style.”

Bentley returned to La Crosse without completing his studies and became an apprentice in the office of Wells E. Bennett, a local architect. He soon found his own commissions and formed his own company in 1910, with Otto A. Merman as his draftsman and eventual partner. Their first houses in the new “Chicago” style were the Edward Bartl house at 17th and Cass Streets and the J. C. Hogan house at 1634 Main Street. Both were completed in 1910-11.

It wasn't long before Bentley seemed to become the architect of choice. The list of his homes built in La Crosse is extensive: the Henry Salzer house, 1634 King Street, 1912; the C. J. Felber house, 1408 King Street, 1913; the Gus Sexauer house, 1421 State Street, 1914; the Emil T. Mueller house, 128 South 14th Street, 1915-16 (still an outstanding example); the Daniel McMillan house, 1222 Cass Street, 1915; and perhaps the Frank Sisson house, 1511 Main Street, 1914..

The Salzer house particularly is a showpiece of his Prairie Style—with strong horizontal lines, low, hipped roofs, over-hanging eaves, rows of windows tucked in under projecting eaves, and Prairie School urns in front. The original color scheme was a dark cream with brown trim and moss-green shingles. It was featured in the recent book, “Wisconsin's Own 20 Remarkable Homes.”

Other impressive examples of his work are the mirror-image, matching houses, the Chase and Wohluter bungalows, at 221-23 11th Street which date from 1913. They are outstanding examples of the airy, horizontal Prairie style, and they were named to the National Register of Historic Places in 1983. In fact the houses he designed alone and with Merman make up a good number of the buildings in "The Cass and King Street Residential Historic District," created by the Historic Places designation in 1997.

He also designed the business building at 510 Main Street for the interior decorating firm headed by Olin Oyen. Oyen filled contracts with area theater owners to furnish their theaters, and Bentley wisely worked with Oyen in the design of the new store. It ended up presenting a perfectly balanced facade, the lower level, since altered, used for the business, the upper for apartments.

Beyond La Crosse he designed the Richland Center City Hall, 1911; the Alois Fix house in Tomah, 1912; the Citizens State Bank in Trempealeau, 1912; the Guy Wakefield house in West Salem, 1913; the M. L. Fugina house, Fountain City, 1916; the Gundersen summer cottage (with a Norwegian flavor) on Barron Island, 1918; a house in Prairie du Chien, 1919; the Fred Pratt house, 1919, in Richland Center; and the O. E. Davis house, Viroqua, 1923.

Bentley expanded his territory, working both in La Crosse and in the Twin Cities. One reason, perhaps minor, was that he was an accomplished piano player, and was sometimes featured with the St. Paul Orchestra. While in La Crosse he played the organ at the Methodist Church, and sometimes at the Congregational. He never married, but he was a popular guest at dinner parties, sometimes playing the piano for hours at a sitting.

In St. Paul he partnered off and on with architect Charles Hausler. During those years he designed the West End State Bank, 1914, of St. Paul; several homes, including the Frank and Rosa Seifert house, 1914; the Albert Wunderlich home, 1915; the Frank B. Thompson house in Falcon Heights, 1915; the A. W. Millunchick house, 1923, in St. Paul; the Stickney house, Grand Traverse, Mich., 1929.

Most stunning of all was the Mounds Park Pavilion in St. Paul in 1916. The covering of the pavilion is a perfect example of the Prairie Style low hipped roof of natural wood overwhelming the space below.

Bentley continued to do work in the Upper Midwest until the death of his La Crosse partner, Otto Merman, in 1935. The following year he moved to Hood River, Oregon, staying there for about three years. One of the houses he designed there was the Robert and Mabel Loomis house, 1938, which was added to the National Register of Historic places in 1990.

He then moved on to Eugene, Oregon. There he shifted to designing public and commercial buildings and churches. He laid out the city baseball complex, called the Civic Stadium, in 1938, working with the WPA. After the war he designed the Veterans Memorial Building in the city. It was not done in the Prairie School style. Its open porch running along the entire front of the building suggests instead a modeling similar to Washington's Mount Vernon home.

In 1947 he designed the First Christian Church in nearby Springfield to replace the old one destroyed by fire. This, too, owes little to the Prairie Style. And for the houses he designed in the area he seemed now to prefer the American Colonial style.

In 1956 he designed the expansion from two floors to four of the Center Court building in Eugene, doubling the square footage of the building originally constructed in 1928. He then designed the Professional Building in Eugene, again barely reflective of the Prairie Style—a one story, motel-like complex. One of his last commissions before retirement was the Village Green Motor Hotel in nearby Cottage Grove in 1960.

Percy Dwight Bentley died in 1968 in Eugene, Oregon. He was 83.

Guy (1887-1952) and Eloda (1890-1964) Beach

Neither Guy nor Eloda Beach were natives of La Crosse, but once they visited, they liked what they saw so much that they decided to make La Crosse the headquarters of their thriving theatrical company and settle down—sort of.

The Beaches managed one of the many acting troupes traveling around the Upper Midwest back in the Twenties, and, though they sometimes played in their adopted city, they were on the road a lot. They were used to it—that was the way the two met in the first place--both working for the Lillie Lyons Stock Company. They eventually fell in love, and married in 1913 in Peoria, Illinois.

Guy was born in 1887 in Keithburg, Illinois, a little town along the Mississippi River just west of Peoria. Guy Beach grew up in that backwater community. As a young man he went into acting, probably beginning in vaudeville, then on the road. He entered the armed forces during World War I, and his young wife acted in the Gifford-Young Company. That's when she made her first visit to La Crosse.

Following the war they became partners in the Beach-Jones Stock Company and were featured in the play, "The Brat," in the old La Crosse Theater on Fifth Street. Eloda was a favorite from the beginning, diminutive (an even 5 feet in height) and sassy, she was known affectionately as "The Little Redhead." The Beaches bought out their partner and changed the name to the Guy and Eloda Stock Company. After that first season, they usually played at the old Majestic Theater on Main Street.

Their itinerary began in the fall in Muskegon, Michigan, moved to La Crosse at Christmas time, then on to Fargo, North Dakota—and in later years also to Rochester, Minnesota. Since they spent a lot of time in La Crosse between engagements, they soon contracted to build the Spanish Revival house that still stands at 205 North Losey. Eloda maintained that La Crosse was her first "real home."

Another member of their company, Jack Martin, decided to settle here as well. In a program for December, 1929, in a play called "This Thing Called Love," Guy and Eloda play the lovers, while Jack Martin is listed as "Normie De Witt." That was presented at the Majestic Theatre. In 1932 Martin hooked up with the local radio station, WKBT. After several successful years in radio Martin went on to WKBT television as "Bozo the Clown."

The Beaches were popular in the community and they tried to take an active role in local affairs. Eloda always performed at the Elks Christmas party for children, and they sponsored a baseball team here in 1926—with "the Little Redhead" throwing out the first pitch. In 1931 they headlined a benefit dance held at the Avalon Ballroom to raise money to buy uniforms for the newly organized City Concert Band.

During the Roaring Twenties the Beaches were local celebrities. Eloda tooted around town in a cream-colored Cadillac with her initials in gold on the door. And when she stepped out of the car she flashed rhinestone slippers for the on-lookers. Guy was a good-looking, personable fellow, and their house on Losey was the scene of "lively parties."

But it did not last. A formal divorce took place in December, 1931. Eloda claimed "cruel and inhumane" treatment from Guy, and she added, "he was addicted to drinking." Custody of the child they had adopted in 1924 was granted to Eloda. She sold the house and its furnishings and moved away from her "beloved" La Crosse.

Eloda eventually settled in Rochester, Minnesota, and married a state senator. Following his death, she acted in productions in Rochester, and married again, though the marriage was of short duration. Her health deteriorated, and she was forced to retire, and she moved to Albuquerque to live with her daughter. She died there in 1964.

In the meantime Guy Beach went back to Peoria to become a radio announcer. Then in 1939 he formed a new company, The Guy L. Beach Stock Company, and a notice appeared in April 4th's La Crosse Tribune announcing first rehearsals in La Crosse. "He was glad to be back," he said. A notice also

appeared in the Racquet: “New Plays, New Faces, New Vaudeville,” opening Sunday April 9.

A few years later, in 1945, he surfaced in Hollywood as a character actor. He appeared in more than 30 films over the next 10 years, though for most his name did not appear in the screen credits. But in one film his name did appear in the opening credits—and he owed it to a young man who had admired him all those years ago in La Crosse. Nicholas Ray, the director, recognized him on the lot at RKO and hired him to be the plumber in Ray’s famous early *film noir*, They Live by Night. And the plumber’s name in the film? Guy L. Beach!

Guy continued his bit parts in Hollywood, appearing in his last film, again uncredited, as Fred, the coffinmaker, in the movie, High Noon, released in 1952. Guy Beach died later that year in Los Angeles.

Howard Mumford Jones (1892-1980)

“Another turn of the wheel of fortune at the beginning of the new century sent the Jones family of three from Milwaukee to La Crosse, then as now a tidy midwestern city on the left bank of the Mississippi River halfway between Minneapolis and Dubuque.”

That’s the way Howard Mumford Jones, Harvard professor and Pulitzer Prize winner, began his story of his La Crosse years in his autobiography, published in 1979. He was born in Saginaw, Michigan, in 1892. He arrived in La Crosse in 1901.

They found a house at 1632 Ferry Street, and they hoped finally to settle down. The father, Frank A. Jones, had been a travelling salesman, then an insurance company agent, and finally owner of a pool hall and cigar stand. But their new home was not a place of happiness for long. Barely four years later Frank Jones died. He was 42.

Left with little besides the house, his widow took training in the Marinello scalp treatment method and made a living for her son and herself as a beautician to several of the richer families in the city. To help out, young Howard mowed lawns, sold the Saturday Evening Post (at 5 cents a copy), and delivered the La Crosse Leader-Press (10 cents a week).

At the west end of their block lived the lawyer and judge, J. E. Higbee. The next house east was the home of Joseph Walton Losey, Jr., and the birthplace of Joseph Losey, who became a famous movie director. Then two doors down was a strange house, forbidding-looking, and inhabited by a Confederate widow and her daughter. Jones later used his imagined story about their blighted lives in a short story called “Mrs. Drainger’s Veil,” published in “Smart Set” magazine in 1918.

He found himself within easy walking distance to the almost new Hogan School, and he attended both the old Central High School and the new, the move being made in 1908. He graduated in 1910, and immediately enrolled in the

almost new Normal School. There he pursued courses in the liberal arts, went out for debate and orchestra, and became the cheerleader for home football games.

Jones particularly benefitted from the help of David O. Coate, head of the English Department, who encouraged him in his writing and who arranged for Jones's first publication, a book of poetry titled "A Little Book of Local Verse," in 1915.

He attended Normal School for the usual (at that time) two years. He served as editor of the school newspaper, "The Racquet," and he won the local, regional, and state oratorical contests. His topic title was, "Spirit of the Progressive Movement." He went on to the interstate oratorical contest and won 3rd place.

In the summers he worked as a typist for Woodward and Lees, a local law firm that handled legal matters for the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad. Then through his mother's contact with the Eastons, who were close friends of Hamlin Garland, he got a job as typist for the famous West Salem author. For several weeks during the summer of 1912 he took the train to and from the Garland homestead in West Salem.

He went on to the University of Wisconsin and received his bachelor's degree in 1914. He continued his work at the University of Chicago, teaching as a graduate student and receiving his master's degree in 1916. It was during this time that he wrote the "Masque of Marsh and River," which was staged in the natural amphitheater of Myrick Park in the summer of 1915—a production which involved hundreds of local people and was pronounced "a great success."

While at UW he joined the little theater group called the Wisconsin Dramatic Society, whose Wisconsin Players staged plays—usually in Milwaukee—under the direction of Laura Case Sherry. For them he wrote the play, "Shadows," originally printed in their magazine, "Play Book," and then in the collection, "Wisconsin Plays, Second Series," in 1917. The following year he published another book of poetry, "Gargoyles."

He began his teaching career in 1916 at the University of Texas—Austin, interrupted it with a two year stint at the University of Montana at Missoula, then returned to the University of Texas. In 1924 he went back for further graduate work at the University of Chicago and worked as well at Jane Addams' Hull House. From 1925 to 1930 he taught at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. One of his first major studies, "America and French Culture 1750-1848," was published in 1927 while he was at Chapel Hill.

He then took a teaching position at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. In 1932 he was awarded a Guggenheim fellowship, during which he was free to do research at the Huntington Library in California and to travel in Europe. He returned to Michigan for two more years of teaching, and then he got the appointment he had been hoping for—from Harvard University in Cambridge. His mother, Josephine, who had worked as a house mother at La Crosse Normal during the years her son was working on his degrees, relocated to Cambridge after he went to Harvard. She died there sometime during the Second World War.

His specialty at Harvard became American cultural history. Not only was he outstanding in the classroom, but also in presenting his material to the public in print. He became a regular book reviewer for the "Saturday Review." In 1945 he was given a leave of absence to develop a study course that was given to German POWs to teach them English and American democracy.

In 1954 he gave the dedicatory address, "Books and the Independent Mind," at the opening of the new wing of the UW Library on the Madison campus. His first book-length studies were "American Humanism: Its Meaning for World Survival," 1957, and "Reflections on Learning," 1958.

Then came his impressive trilogy on American cultural history. The first, from the beginnings of European contact up to just before the revolution was called "O Strange New World." This was followed by two more volumes, "The Age of Energy," 1971, and "Revolution and Romanticism," 1974, which completed his study of American culture from its beginnings to the First World War.

All of these were written after his “retirement” from teaching in 1962. “O Strange New World” was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for general non-fiction for 1965. In all he published over 30 books in his lifetime. His last book was his autobiography, published by the University of Wisconsin Press in 1979. The early chapters should be of special interest to La Crosse readers.

Howard Mumford Jones died in May, 1980, at the age of 88.

Rudolf Kvelve (1892-1977)

Though Rudolf Kvelve was a long-time resident of La Crosse, he is remembered—if at all—as a teacher of music and of the violin and cello, but not as a composer. And he is probably better known in the Scandinavian countries than in this country.

He was born Rudolf Anderson in 1892 in the largely Norwegian village of Spring Grove, Minnesota, not far from La Crosse. His mother's brother was Rasmus B. Anderson, who started the Scandinavian Studies Department at UW-Madison and later served as our ambassador to Denmark during the Cleveland administration.

When Rudolf reached his adult years he changed his name to his grandfather's surname, Kvelve. He didn't begin study of the violin until he was 14, but his natural proficiency marked him for further development. At 17 he began Saturday visits to La Crosse to study violin with Professor Harry Ross at the La Crosse School of Music at 325 Main Street.

Upon graduating from high school, he headed for MacPhail School of Music in downtown Minneapolis, at that time a school primarily for violinists. During his time there Kvelve not only completed his studies for a B.S. degree, studying composition and harmony as well as violin, but also became a member of the MacPhail School Quartet and Chamber Music Guild.

He entered the armed forces during World War I, and after his discharge he settled in La Crosse as a teacher of music, especially of strings. His studio was located in the old Postal Telegraph building in downtown La Crosse. Somewhere along the way he was for a short time on the faculty at his alma mater, and later he studied under professors of music in both Chicago and New York.

Kvelve began composing in his teen-age years. His first published composition, titled "Morning Serenade," appeared in 1926. In 1929 he was featured in "The Musician" magazine with the printing of his piano piece, "Icy

Crags.” The same year a sketch of him appeared in “The Violinist” magazine with his violin composition, “Mammy’s Lullaby.”

In the next few years he published several compositions both for violin and piano and cello: “Song of the Red Winged Blackbird,” “The Cold Spring Rain,” “The Tick-Tock Lullaby,” “Poeme d’amour,” and “The Quartet,” the latter premiered before the student body at the La Crosse Normal school in January, 1933.

A 1939 article in the La Crosse Tribune noted that Kvelve had been written up in Who’s Who in Music, an honor not shared by anyone else in the region. By that time he had published over 50 compositions of his own, transcribed many more for piano and/or violin (such as Debussy’s “Reverie” and Victor Herbert’s “Serenade”), as well as put together a piano instruction book that had national exposure.

Kvelve was a member of the La Crosse Men’s Sketch Club, and he sometimes used some of his charcoal sketches to illustrate his publications, as he did with a methods book for violin instruction.

Leigh Elder, La Crosse Symphony director from 1941 to 1956, became a close friend to Kvelve, and they often played together in quartets in the area—Elder was a cellist--and the relationship certainly helped Kvelve in some of his compositions. Elder’s favorite work was “Sea Nocturne,” for violin, cello, and piano, written about 1937, which Kvelve dedicated to him.

It was the La Crosse Symphony that premiered Kvelve’s “Elegy” in a concert in 1939. And he also had the privilege of hearing them do his more ambitious work, “A Norse Romance,” in 1948. The following year he gave the orchestra a new work based on his research on, and contact with, the Winnebagos in the area.

Transcribing songs given him by George LaMere, a member of the La Crosse Sketch Club, and Howard Redwing Windlowe, Kvelve arranged them “like a string of pearls” in what he titled a “Winnebago Suite” for strings and woodwinds. The parts were: Welcome Song, Ceremonial Song, Flute Serenade, Swan Dance, Lover’s Lament, Winona’s Love Song, and a Courtship Dance.

Since many of his other pieces are connected to Norwegian songs, memories, and subjects, such as, “Norland Caprice: Snow Flurries,” “Norwegian Lullaby,” “Little Ekorn (squirrel): a Norwegian Melody,” or “A Norse Romance,” they have turned up in collections written in Scandinavian languages, thus accounting for his sometimes being better known in northern Europe than in America.

But he loved Americana as well. Before the Second World War he had written “Tales of Sleepy Hollow,” his musical response to Washington Irving’s short story. He set it out in two parts: “The Haunted Glen” and “The Headless Horseman.” He also wrote a rousing “Boy Scouts March” published in 1941. And a few of his songs were used on radio, especially out of Chicago stations.

Rudolf Kvelve died at the Veterans’ Administration Hospital in St. Cloud, Minnesota, Jan. 10, 1979. He was buried with military honors in Trinity Cemetery at Spring Grove, Minnesota.

Arthur Kreutz (1906-1991)

It's quite a jump from growing up in La Crosse to being awarded a scholarship to study in the capital of Italy. But, early in a lifetime devoted to music--playing, writing, and teaching--Arthur Kreutz did just that, winning the *Prix de Rome* in 1940. Unfortunately there was a war on, and he had to substitute New York City for the American Academy in Rome.

Arthur Kreutz was born in La Crosse, July 25, 1906. He was just the latest offspring of the musical Kreutzes. His father, Rudolph, had his own commercial orchestra, the Kreutz Orchestra from 1904-09. His father also played violin for the St. Paul, Minnesota, symphony, and was either a member of, or director for various La Crosse musical groups in the 1930s, at the same time running a music shop on Pearl Street.

There were six boys in the Kreutz family, all of whom played musical instruments, gathering together in one of their homes to rehearse the Saturday before their Sunday concerts. From 1914-16 three of Arthur's uncles played in the La Crosse Philharmonic Society: Emil, clarinet; Joseph, flute; George, violin; and Arthur's father, violin. They continued playing in subsequent civic bands and orchestras in La Crosse.

When the La Crosse Municipal Band was organized in 1931 two of the Kreutzes were members. The Guy Beach Touring Company ran a benefit at the Avalon that fall to pay for new uniforms for the band, and later had the band play at the Majestic theater before their theater productions.

Arthur grew up in the house at 1007 South 6th Street, just off Jackson Street. He began his study of the violin at age 7 taking lessons from his father. Young Arthur attended Hamilton Grade School, then Central High School, from which he graduated in 1923.

Kreutz went on to the University of Wisconsin in Madison, earning a B.S. degree in chemical engineering. During his years at UW he appeared as a violin soloist with the Madison Federal Symphony. He also went on two European

tours with a jazz group. And for a short time he played with the Paul Whiteman orchestra.

In 1932 he received a scholarship to study violin with Henry Gadeyne, a teacher at the Royal Conservatory at Ghent in Belgium, receiving a diploma from the conservatory in the teaching of violin. Back in Madison he taught in the public school system and returned to UW to study violin and composition, earning a B.A. degree in 1938.

He went on to teach at Georgia State University. During his tenure there he won the *Prix de Rome* prize for his composition, "Music for Symphony Orchestra." Shortly after receiving it, he was guest conductor of his work at a special concert of the Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra in Milwaukee. For his *Prix de Rome* scholarship he studied the teaching of music and composition at Columbia University in New York, earning his master's degree in 1940.

In 1942 he was asked by Martha Graham to compose a ballet for her modern dance troupe. The result was the patriotic "Land Be Bright," which premiered in Chicago and then moved to New York City. The following year Kreutz received a Guggenheim fellowship, freeing him to work in music composition.

His next major work was the "Paul Bunyan Suite," which played in Chicago in 1944. Later, his three pieces, "Paul Bunyan Suite," "Music for Symphony Orchestra," and "Dixieland Concerto," were all played by the New York Philharmonic under his guest direction. By that time he was teaching at the University of Texas and acting as director of the school's opera productions.

In 1951 he joined the music faculty at the University of Mississippi at Oxford. With his wife, Zoe Lund Schiller, a playwright and novelist, he collaborated on at least three operas with her libretto and his music. One was called "Acres of Sky," which opened at Columbia University theater in 1952. The second, called "University Grays," concerning a company of Southern soldiers during the Civil War made up almost entirely of students from "Ole Miss," was presented in 1954. The third, "Sourdough Mountain," was an opera in one act staged in 1959.

In 1971 Kreutz helped organize the Tupelo Symphony and acted as its first director. He was also conductor of the Ole Miss Symphony for many years. He

retired from the University in 1972 but remained living in Oxford. He died there in 1991.

But that was not the end of the Kreutz legacy. Robert E. Kreutz, born in La Crosse in 1922, carried on the tradition. A 1940 graduate of Aquinas, he went on to study music at the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago and at the University of California, Los Angeles.

In the wake of Vatican II he specialized in liturgical music and hymns. His best known hymn is "Gift of Finest Wheat," which was first performed at the International Eucharistic Congress in 1976. Besides writing liturgical music, he has also specialized in music for the marimba.

He was choir director at St. Bernadette Catholic Church in Lakewood, Colorado, for more than 30 years. He died in 1996.

Walter Ristow (1908-2006)

It was an unlikely role for a fellow from La Crosse, but after Pearl Harbor, Walter Ristow spent a good deal of time in secret meetings with Intelligence officers, covering his covert activity by showing up at lunchtime at his usual office area.

Ristow was a geographer who developed into a specialist on maps and map-making, and his knowledge and sources helped the U.S. Air Force find targets and plot bombing runs in the Pacific war.

Walter W. Ristow was born in La Crosse, in 1908. His father was a streetcar conductor, and young Walter was one of seven children. They lived at 1247 La Crosse Street in Goosetown. When he reached fifth grade he and his brothers balked at attending the German-language, Evangelical Lutheran School, and they switched to Washington Elementary at 16th and Vine. He went on to Central High School and graduated in January, 1925.

After two years of work at the Standard Oil Company here in La Crosse as office boy, he had saved up enough, he thought, to start on his career. He headed for Madison. La Crosse was no place for him, he remembered, "with all that competition" from his brothers and sisters. His brother, Harold, later became La Crosse Postmaster, and his brother, Fred, La Crosse Tribune controller. But in the summers he returned and worked at Maple Grove Country Club.

He graduated from UW-Madison in 1931 with a degree in Geography. There were few jobs available during the Depression so he taught at Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio, while pursuing his master's degree, then at a school in Washington State. He received his Ph.D. from Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1937. He was immediately hired as head of the map division of the New York Public Library.

And by then he was already writing and publishing articles about his specialty of cartography. His first article was titled "The Influence of Geography Upon the History of Bohemia," published in the Philadelphia Geographical Society Bulletin

in April, 1933. Another, printed in 1936, was titled, "The Industrial Geography of Seneca Falls, N. Y."

In 1942 he supervised an exhibition of maps, "The Western Hemisphere," at the New York Public Library, which displayed maps of the World and of America, dating from 1492 to 1942, and he served as editor of the 1942 book, New World Horizons: Geography for the Air Age. He was already working for Army Intelligence at the time, a valuable resource as the war in the Pacific heated up.

In his autobiography (available in the Main Library Archives) he goes into some detail of his work for the War Department's Military Intelligence. Their work was done in the Rockefeller Center, and there was a special arrangement for Ristow to continue at the library in order to conceal his work for the military. In 1956 he published the book, Aviation Cartography, a study of aeronautical charts which drew on his expertise as a map analyst during the war.

After the war the army had thousands of maps on its hands and needed repositories for them. Libraries were the answer, and the Library of Congress the largest of repositories. In 1946 Ristow was appointed as assistant chief of the Geography and Map Division at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. He was eventually in charge of the largest collection of maps in the world--more than 5 million. In 1968 he was named chief of the division.

He was at the forefront of the growing interest in the field of cartography. His work was seminal, and he trained other librarians in this country and abroad, giving talks and workshops, and talking libraries into adding the specialty. In the late '60s he published the definitive book on the subject, The Emergence of Maps in Libraries. In 1972 he compiled a collection of maps and the papers written about them, titled A La Carte: Selected Papers on Maps and Atlases.

In 1977 he organized a Library of Congress exhibit, "Maps for an Emerging Nation: Commercial Cartography in 19th Century America," and followed it up with a book on the subject. One of the topics dealt with maps of thousands of American cities created by the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company as a basis for determining insurance rates, a perfect example of one of many commercial uses for maps.

By then he was considered the foremost authority on cartography. To Ristow maps told stories, recorded history, gave meaning to our lives, and he believed that maps should be in the hands of common people. “Geography is about the human intersection with the land,” he once wrote, “a map makes a very definite statement.”

In those years maps were provided free by gas stations throughout the country, and back in 1964 he had published a pamphlet, “A Half-Century of Oil Company Road Maps.” He was dismayed when the petroleum companies decided to stop the practice. After all he had used those maps himself to travel cross-country to every one of the lower 48.

Though Ristow collaborated with two colleagues on the 1979 book, The Map Librarian in the Modern World, the collection of essays ended up being dedicated to Ristow in honor of his great work in the field. He was seen by many as the man responsible for the renewed national interest in map study and map collecting and preservation by libraries.

During his tenure at the Library of Congress he oversaw the development of Machine-readable Cataloging (MARC) for cartographic objects. By the time of his retirement he had received several awards from the Library of Congress, the Special Libraries, and the Association of American Geographers, among others.

Probably his most important book was a facsimile of Christopher Colles’ A Survey of the Roads of the United States of America in 1789, accompanied by his invaluable scholarly commentary, published in 1960. Another important book was Nautical Charts on Vellum in the Library of Congress which made inaccessible sea maps drawn on leather now easy to see and understand.

Following his retirement in 1978 the Library of Congress set up the Walter W. Ristow Endowment Fund for the advancement of understanding of the Geography and Map Collections of the library. And the Washington (D.C.) Map Society set up the annual Ristow Prize for the outstanding submission on the history of cartography.

During his active life Ristow published well over 250 articles in books, magazines, and journals, as well as over 20 book length works. In 1985 he

returned with his wife to La Crosse, bringing with him 278 articles, pamphlets, and books he had written. These he presented to the Main Library Archives. Perhaps the largest collection of his works in the country, they are his legacy to his hometown, La Crosse.

His wife, Helen Doerr, died in 1987. Walter Ristow died at his Maryland home in Mitchellville in 2006 at the age of 97.

Joseph Losey (1909-1984)

Though Joseph Walton Losey was a name of some prominence in La Crosse, the family had suffered a decline in fortune by the time of Joseph Walton Losey, III's birth, January 14, 1909.

It was his grandfather, Joseph Walton Losey, a local lawyer, who had made his mark in the city. His name persists in Losey Boulevard and in the Memorial Archway to Oak Grove Cemetery bearing his name, commemorating his activities to preserve and beautify both the city and the cemetery.

His son, Joseph W. Losey, II, was tutored at home, attended a prep school in New York state, and then went on to Princeton college for two years. He intended to become a lawyer, but he was called home when his father unexpectedly died in 1901. Back in La Crosse, he took a job with the Burlington Railroad as a claims agent.

At the time of Joseph W. Losey, III's birth, the family lived at 1612 Ferry Street, next door to his grandfather Higbee's house. Though his father's sister, Mrs. Mary Easton, lived in a sumptuous house (1327 Cass St.), the young Joseph, grew up in a rather middle class environment. He did, however, attend a private elementary school as did his sister, Mary.

Things were not always easy for him. He suffered all his life from an asthmatic condition. He was house-bound with scarlet fever as a teen-ager. He went to Central High School, completing his four years of work in three years with private tutoring and summer school. At Central he was active in debate, and, as a member of the Falstaff Club, acted in several plays.

He graduated in 1925. Then with the help of a bequest from his deceased god-father, he was able to attend Dartmouth College, where he worked washing dishes for his meals and in the library for spending money. There he became active in the drama club, acting in several plays, and working backstage on others.

After a couple years he switched his major from pre-med to liberal arts. During his junior year he was picked to direct his own play, and, while setting up the stage for the production, he was injured when part of the set collapsed. He fractured two vertebra and was confined for two or three months in bed. But he was ambulatory enough to attend his graduation in 1929.

Following graduation he was accepted at Harvard for graduate work in English literature, earning a masters degree in 1930. It was there that he became immersed in the drama, meeting and working with playwrights and actors and directors of some importance, many with ties to New York City.

After a year at Harvard he did go on to New York to pursue a career in the theater. It was the height of the Depression, and work of any kind was scarce. He was able to do free-lance writing, reviewing dramas and books for newspapers and magazines. Then he learned of an opening for an extra in Grand Hotel—it gave him pin money at least.

But he also got a break--the assistant director was fired, and Losey got the job. In what today would be called “net-working” he continued to make contacts in the New York theater scene. And he took up an interest in jazz, going to Harlem clubs and speakeasies to indulge it, an interest that shows up in several of his later films.

He had spent part of the summer of 1928 in Paris and liked its vibrancy. So in 1931 he jumped at a chance to go to Europe again, and after a time in Paris and Germany, he got to London. Through an old friend he got a job as the stage manager for Charles Laughton and his wife, Elsa Lancaster, in a play Laughton had written, Payment Deferred. They later took it to New York, but it did not do well there.

After various other experiences in drama in New York City, Losey snared a job as a director of the off-Broadway play, Little ol' Boy. It opened April, 1933, and the playbill read “staged by Joseph Losey.” It lasted only a couple weeks, but its star, Burgess Meredith, gained acclaim. Losey then directed and produced a play by Sinclair Lewis, Jayhawker, but at that point Losey thought he was getting nowhere in his career.

Disillusioned, he went to Europe again in late 1934, met with drama people especially in the Soviet Union where he met the famous film director, Sergei Eisenstein (of Potemkin fame). Losey was impressed by the creativeness of the theater in Moscow, but not by the life of the ordinary Soviet citizen, though he considered staying in Russia.

He returned to New York and joined the Theatre Union, a collective of actors, many with communist ties. There he worked with John Houseman (of Paper Chase fame), Orson Welles, Elia Kazan, and the other fellow from La Crosse, Nick Ray. Though he kept active in theater, especially in social commentary, there was little money in it in the mid-'30s.

Then in 1936 things improved. He was hired to direct the WPA's Federal Theater "Living Newspaper" projects, intended to employ many unemployed actors and theater people. One of those he hired for the second year's production, "Injunction Denied," was Nicholas Ray. In between he directed "Who Fights This Battle Now," a play about the Spanish Civil War. It was presented in a hotel ballroom, and Losey claimed it was the first theater-in-the-round staged in New York City.

Up through 1942 he remained active in theater as well as directing educational radio programs for the Rockefeller Foundation and commercial radio programs for the major networks, as well as dabbling in TV production. Some of his work caught the attention of Louis B. Mayer of MGM who hired him and sent him to Hollywood. After barely a month there, Losey, who had tried to enlist earlier, was suddenly drafted. After a grueling 16 weeks of training, he was transferred to the Signal Corps to help make films for the army.

Ten months later he was discharged because of recurring problems with his asthma, and he returned to Hollywood. After some waiting, he made a short film, then directed Charles Laughton in a play in Los Angeles called "Galileo," with the help of the author, Bertolt Brecht. It was a couple of years before he got to direct his first feature length film—for RKO Studios, not MGM.

It was called "The Boy With Green Hair." But production was suspended when the producer was subpoenaed by the House Un-American Activities

Committee which had just begun hearings in Washington to investigate communist infiltration in Hollywood. Though Losey had actually joined the Communist Party, he didn't think he would be involved.

Soon the go-ahead came for the film, and things went well for Losey and for its young star, Dean Stockwell. The anti-war film was released in November, 1948, and turned out to be a middling success. In the next two and a half years Losey directed four more films: "The Lawless," "The Prowler," "M," and "The Big Night," all somewhat loosely categorized as Film Noir. Of "The Lawless," Losey said the main character was a combination of his two grandfathers--"the kind of person you find in every small town—absolutely incorruptible and capable of sacrificing what he has for what he believes."

He finished "M," a re-make of the 1931 Fritz Lang film, and was nearly finished with "The Big Night," when HUAC prepared for new hearings in Hollywood. The "Black List" (names of those who refused to testify), which had been short to begin with, had grown, and was growing. Losey was certain that he would be subpoenaed in the new round of questioning and end up black-listed. So he suddenly pulled up stakes and headed for Europe.

He had been invited to do a film in Rome. Ironically at the time he was being black-listed in the U.S., he found himself working out the problems of filming with production crews made up of communists and fascists. The film was called "Stranger on the Prowl." When it was released in the U.S, the son of the producer was listed as the director. Losey had become a non-person.

Later he went to meet his son, and on coming back they were refused entry at the Italian border. He headed for Paris, staying with friends for a couple weeks, then went on to London. There he was a pariah. He had to report to immigration every week, receiving no more than a 30 day permit each time. His name could not be used in film, and the work he did find, writing and directing, was poorly paid. And there were always problems with his passport.

At age 44 he was at the nadir of his career. But he had an influential friend, also black-listed, Carl Foreman, a Hollywood screenwriter (he had done "High Noon"), who found a story and a studio for him. And Losey, who had watched a

film the British actor, Dirk Bogarde, had done, insisted that that was the actor he wanted. Bogarde, who was ambitious to do more than comedy, agreed. "The Sleeping Tiger" became a success for both men, though the director's name on the film credits was Victor Hanbury.

His next full-length film, "A Finger of Guilt," was credited to "Joseph Walton," his own name without the Losey. Finally in 1956 with the film, "Time Without Pity," he used his own name for the first time in five years. That began his comeback. Four films--three murder mysteries and a crime story--followed, and a fifth, "These Are the Damned," was science-fiction. All of them under his own name.

Then came "Eve." The Hakim brothers, producers, hired Losey to do a film in Italy. They arranged for his free passage there, and Losey looked forward to working outside the confines of British studios. He was able to get French actress, Jeanne Moreau, for the lead. He thought the film would be a *tour de force*.

It was a *tour de force* of setting and camera work and a *tour de force* for Moreau. But for Losey there were problems throughout: from the Hakims, from in-fighting of production crews, and finally from the editing of the final print. At more than 2 ½ hours it was too long. After several cuttings by several people, three truncated versions were distributed—and none of them proved successful.

It was a great disappointment for Losey. And for a time he was inactive. Then he hooked up again with Dirk Bogarde and the British dramatist, Harold Pinter. They labored over a script that became the film, "The Servant," now considered one of Losey's best. Bogarde starred in Losey's next film: "King and Country," as well as in "Modesty Blaise."

Then with Pinter as screen writer Losey did "Accident" in 1967 and "The Go-Between" in 1971. Many consider the three films with Pinter as Losey's best, perceptive, sensitive, and disturbing. Some critics think that Losey's take on the corruption caused by class consciousness in England exerted influence on the entire British film industry.

There were other films: "Boom," which starred Richard Burton and Elizabeth

Taylor; "Secret Ceremony," with Mia Farrow; Chekov's "A Doll's House" with Jane Fonda; "Mr. Klein," and "La Tuite," movies in French, and "Streaming," his final film. In all Losey directed over 35 feature-length films in his long career. In 1975 he taught a course in film and film directing at his alma mater, Dartmouth College. In 1983 he was honored with an honorary doctorate from the University of Wisconsin, and he visited his old hometown for the last time.

Joseph Walton Losey died in London in 1984 and lies interred at Wimbledon. He was 75. He had lived in England his last thirty-three years. Like his life, his movie career lies divided by the Atlantic, but his reputation as a director rests both on those films he made in Hollywood and on those he made in Europe. And the memorial built for his grandfather still stands in La Crosse to remind us of his greatness.

Alonzo Hauser (1909-1988)

It's hard to classify Alonzo Hauser. His artistic work ran the gamut in the plastic arts—from plaster to wood to marble to bronze to glass and from figure to bas-relief to panels to plaques, in addition to sketching, painting, and murals. Yet his output was prodigious, perhaps some 600 carved objects, and examples of his work are scattered throughout the Upper Midwest.

He was born in La Crosse in 1909. His father, a local dentist, died when his son was only nine. His mother taught elocution privately and sometimes directed plays at La Crosse Normal. Alonzo graduated from Central High School in 1926, then went a year to the Normal College. The next two years he attended Layton School of Art in Milwaukee where he developed an interest in sculpturing. He then transferred to the University of Wisconsin to concentrate on art and art history.

At the age of 21 he moved to New York City and became a full-time apprentice at the Greenwich Village Stone Shop, perfecting his skill in stone carving. Through a private scholarship he was able to spend nine months in France, and later, in 1932, to study in New York with William Zorach at the Art Student's League. Zorach was a well-known sculptor who had exhibited at the famous Armory Show in 1913 and who had been influenced by the Cubists.

Hauser began to exhibit in group shows in the New York area, and he married Nancy McKnight, a student of modern dance instructor, Hanya Holm. In 1936 he showed two of his works at the Minnesota State Fair: "Primitive Figure," which won a first, and "Invictus," which won a second, though he maintained his residence in New York. A year later, on the basis of a one-man show there (he was only 27), he was called to Washington, D.C. to design/execute sculptures for the Resettlement Administration. Hauser became one of many artists working for the Roosevelt administration during the Depression.

Only months later they sent him to Greendale, Wisconsin, a village being created just south of Milwaukee. It was to be a "green" urban area, with a variety

of housing, inhabitants, and land use. Parks and beautification were of prime concern. For one of his first projects, Hauser executed a carving of four life-size figures as a monumental base to the flagpole standing in the Greendale city center. He also carved several bas-relief slabs for the enhancement of the new school.

It seemed to be the spur needed for his career. He soon after settled in Milwaukee, living there from 1940 to 1944, teaching at Layton School of Art, working as a designer at two ceramics companies, and pursuing his free-lance work. In his first year there he received a medal from the Art Institute of Milwaukee for his figure of Martha Graham, legendary modern dancer/choreographer. He had a one-man show at the Layton Art Gallery in 1941 where he showed his sculpture of Gypsy Rose Lee.

In mid-1944 Hauser moved to Minnesota, and Alonzo taught sculpture and drawing at Carleton College in Northfield. He exhibited at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, winning a cash award for a wood figure, "Emergence." The following year he started the Art Department at Macalester College in St. Paul. He remained there as chairman for the next four years.

During that time he participated in several shows, one of them an extensive one-man show at the Walker Art Center (the Walker purchased his mahogany figure, "Intolerance," for its permanent collection). He entered another mahogany figure, "Frustration," in a Midwest travelling exhibit, both in St. Paul and Milwaukee. In 1948 he completed two large oak figures, "The Virgin" and "Mother Cabrini," commissioned for St. Francis Cabrini Church in Minneapolis.

The following year he resigned from Macalester and joined a highly experimental touring carnival show, called "What Are Your Dreams?," conceived by Gypsy Rose Lee and her husband, artist Julio de Diego. It was supposed to be a surrealistic adventure with Hauser acting as the "barker." After that curious interlude he returned to the Twin Cities to continue his experimentation in various mediums.

He exhibited several wood carvings at Hamline University, showing his skill with a variety of woods: mahogany, oak, cherry, and black walnut. At the State

Fair he again won a second prize for a portrait in oak called "Suzana." He executed a commission for a 16 foot Christ figure in limestone for the St. Paul Evangelical and Reformed Church (United Church of Christ today), which dominates the façade of the church on Summit Avenue. About the same time he did several limestone panels for Trinity Lutheran Church here in La Crosse.

Then came his fountain sculpture, "The Promise of Youth." He was commissioned by the architect, Brooks Cavin, for the reflecting pool of the Veteran's Service Building on the grounds in front of the Minnesota state capitol. Hauser conceived of a nude woman (nick-named "Millie") emerging from the opening petals of a water lily, signifying hope in the future. The design met with controversy almost immediately, and the kinetics of its operation continually presented problems, aggravated by vandalism. It was removed eventually, then finally restored and remounted in 2000, the moving petals frozen partially open.

In the mid-fifties he completed a nine foot statue of the Virgin for the Presentation of the Virgin parish in St. Paul. He was taken on as a visiting instructor and lecturer at the University of Minnesota School of Architecture in 1956, and he remained on the faculty until 1969. During that time he continued his free-lance work--a seven foot diameter granite rendition of the Minnesota state seal for the Department of Employment Security in Minneapolis; several panels in limestone for a school as well as for a church in the Twin Cities.

In 1960 he mounted a remarkable show at the St. Paul Gallery of Art that he called "Principally Portraits." Thirty-eight of the 44 sculptures were portrait heads, and Minnesota writer, Frederick Manfred (whose portrait was included) wrote captions for the display. The heads included "Millie," of course, and Gypsy Rose Lee, Nancy Hauser, Buckminster Fuller, Gov. Phillip La Follette (of Wisconsin), several heads identified only by first names, and even the "Danish Bog Man," uncovered in 1950.

In 1964 he was commissioned to do an eight foot bronze fountain figure, called "The Source," for Rice Park in downtown St. Paul. Soon after he held a one-man exhibition at the Kilbride-Bradley Gallery in Minneapolis. Not only did he display bronze figurines made with the "lost wax" technique, but also acrylic

paintings and silverpoint drawings (used by Da Vinci and Durer) in addition to portrait heads.

Throughout the '60s he continued to participate in art shows, sometimes one-man, sometimes two, sometimes group. He added a bronze foundry to his complex in Eagan, then soon after moved to a new studio complex in nearby Prescott, Wisconsin. At the same time he added the "Left Bank Gallery," offering his own work and that of a handful of other artists.

To find and add Inuit art to his gallery, he traveled to the Hudson Bay area in 1970 and to the Canadian Arctic a year or two after. Following his divorce in 1974, he pulled up stakes in Minnesota and moved to Mesilla Park, New Mexico. Immersing himself in the Southwest, he did sculptures of American Indians and watercolors of the Las Cruces area. He held what turned out to be his last one-man show in 1978 at the Osborne Gallery in St. Paul. Its title, "The New Lonnie Hauser, Watercolorist," indicated new directions in his artistic career.

With his health declining, his family moved him back to the Twin Cities, and soon after to a nursing home in Minneapolis. He died there November 29, 1988. Fittingly, Macalester College sponsored a one-man show of Hauser's career in 1998, titled "Alonzo Hauser Revisited: Five Decades of Art.," a detailed summation of a remarkable career.

And it must be added, a remarkable family. His wife, Nancy, started the Nancy Hauser Dance Studio in 1961, trained her own daughter, Heidi Jasmin, who in 1987 took over the enterprise. The Hauser sons, Michael and Tony, are accomplished Flamenco guitarists headquartered in the Twin Cities, who have appeared in La Crosse over the years.

Nicholas Ray (1911-1979)

Raymond Nicholas Kienzle was born in 1911 in Galesville. He was just 8 when his father moved the family back to La Crosse. His father was a stone and brick work contractor, and they found a house near the corner of Vine St. and West Ave, 226 West Ave. N.

There were lots of relatives around their neighborhood who could watch out for young Kienzle, and he had three older sisters as well. But as they grew up and married, he was left alone with his parents. There was tension in the house, especially confrontations between father and son.

The elder Kienzle had a reputation as a drinker and a womanizer, and some nights he never showed up at home at all. Perhaps in retaliation—or imitation—young Ray as an adolescent began smoking and drinking and playing hooky from school. And his father did not spare the rod when he found out about it.

Then one night in 1927 the family situation changed dramatically. Young Ray was sent out to find his missing father—and found him in a bad way in a local hotel room. Ray dragged him home and nursed him through the night. The doctor was called in the next day, but his father suffered a heart attack and died.

Following that, Ray seemed more rebellious than ever, and he soon got into difficulties not only in school (“I got kicked out of school 17 times,” he once said) but with local police. His sister Ruth, who had married and moved to Chicago, arranged for him to live with her. Though the set-up worked pretty well, Ray came back for long stretches and attended Central High when he was here.

He went out for debate and even took lessons in elocution from Winona Hauser, mother of one his buddies, Alonzo Hauser (who later became a noted sculptor). He also was active in the Falstaff Club, the drama club at school. And he became a huge fan of local actor and impresario, Guy Beach, spending lots of time at the old Majestic theater when the Beaches Stock Company was in town. He apparently appeared as an extra in some of their productions. And in his senior year at Central, WKBH (today it's WIZM) sponsored a contest for the best radio emcee—and Kienzle won, a good indication of one of his many talents..

He graduated from Central in 1929, then attended La Crosse Normal where he continued his interest in drama, joining the Buskins Club, and taking on challenging roles in plays as well as helping out in production and advertising. With classmate Kay Snodgrass (daughter of the college president) he co-authored a musical comedy revue, "February Flurries," that Kay and he starred in. It was directed by D. O. Coate, longtime English faculty member, with help from Winona Hauser, Ray's former elocution teacher.

During the second semester he heard Thornton Wilder speak (he had just won the Pulitzer for The Bridge of San Luis Rey) and afterward made a point of introducing himself. When an old classmate urged Kienzle to come down to the University of Chicago (where Wilder taught), he was tempted but instead returned, not for the fall semester, but the spring. By now he was a big man on campus: actor, front man, director of plays, and features editor and columnist for the Racquet, the school newspaper.

In the fall of 1931 he did enter the University of Chicago. He didn't qualify for one of Wilder's upper level classes, but he joined the dramatic club, and immediately began acting. Wilder remembered him and gave him the main role in his new one-act play, "The Journey to Trenton and Camden."

In his short time in Chicago Kienzle learned a great deal about theater and directing—from Wilder during rehearsals and from his drama professor, Frank O'Hara, in class and at shows and plays in the Loop. That single semester at the University of Chicago served him well and gave his life direction.

On his return to La Crosse in January, 1932, he and a number of his old friends from college days formed the La Crosse Theater Group. Helen Dyson, who had taught speech to Kienzle at the college, joined their group. And one of the first plays he directed was "The Journey to Trenton and Camden," having gotten permission from Wilder himself.

He later starred in and directed their first full length production of Noel Coward's Hay Fever, favorably reviewed by the Tribune and Leader Press. In December they did George Bernard Shaw's "Candide." Professor Dyson played the lead role opposite Kienzle.

1933 was his year of indecision. That was when he started to call himself Nicholas Ray. He wanted to join Frank Lloyd Wright's new Taliesin Fellowship at Spring Green but did not have the money. He went to New York City to test the waters, staying a few weeks in the apartment of his old friend, Alonzo Hauser. Though he loved New York, he found no work or interest to keep him there.

He returned to the Mid-West and finally in the fall received a letter from Wright accepting him at Taliesin. He was ecstatic over the chance to mingle and live with the fellowship. He worked hard, and he was soon immersed in the artistic and intellectual life he found there. Wright, too, was impressed with the young man and made him director of the Taliesin playhouse.

Besides live programs of various kinds and skits and one act plays he oversaw, the playhouse was used for showing a variety of foreign films by renowned directors. It was an entirely new experience to him, and he applied himself to the study of the various directors and theories of film.

Things were going very well for Ray. But in April, 1934, he and Wright had a severe falling out (the cause of which remains obscure), and Wright dismissed his young apprentice. It was a bitter blow to Ray. He came back to La Crosse, then went on to New York, and finally, with a friend, to Mexico where he spent several weeks wandering about the country. By January he was back in New York.

He immediately joined a commune—nearly as structured as that of Taliesin—called the “Theatre of Action.” All were actors and dancers, young people trying to make it in the city, and young people for whom the Depression seemed the fault of a failing democracy. Many espoused radical views; some were members of the communist party.

It was here that he came to know and admire Elia Kazan, also a member. They worked together on a number of plays, and Kazan instructed Ray in the Stanislavski “method” acting, lessons he would later make good use of. Ray’s roles in the various plays they produced were usually minor parts, but the others in the group looked up to him as someone with direction.

Then the “Theatre of Action” came apart—for various reasons—and Ray applied for unemployment relief as did his long-time girlfriend, Jean Evans. In April, 1936, they married. Soon they both applied for work under the WPA’s Federal Theatre Project. Then in its second year of the “Living Newspapers” productions, the administration appointed Joseph Losey (the other fellow from La Crosse) to conduct it.

Still in charge the following year, Losey, who knew that Ray was out of work, hired him to be his backstage manager for the new drama called “Injunction Granted.” That meant Ray would be in charge of the logistics for over 100 people. Then the censors showed up, and Losey resigned. Ray did not—he had a more pragmatic streak in him. The play ran for three months in the city.

With that success he found a job with the WPA in the “Recreation Division,” specializing in folklore studies. Washington, D.C., became his home base, and he traveled a good deal, recording songs, ditties, tall tales, and even short plays. Because of these contacts the Ray home in Arlington became a stop-over for various artists, such as Lead Belly, Woody Guthrie, and a young Pete Seeger.

The Rays soon had a son they named Tony. But Ray’s life style was leading him to drinking too much, too often. And their relationship was in trouble. They moved back to New York in 1940. Ray had a physical for the draft and was pronounced unfit for duty. Ray was named to direct a radio series called “Back Where I Come From,” that had been conceived by Ray and his friend, musicologist Alan Lomax.

But it was only a couple months later that Jean filed for divorce. Then the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor—and Ray’s life changed again. John Houseman, a Hollywood producer (yes, the law professor in “Paper Chase” 32 years later) who had worked with Orson Welles on Citizen Kane, was summoned from Hollywood to Washington. He was offered the job of organizing the Overseas Radio Bureau, which eventually became the Voice of America.

He knew Ray casually, had seen the promise, and immediately hired him. Ray was soon doing more than just the music, and Houseman let him expand his responsibilities. But something else reared its head. Ray was vetted by the OSS

(now the CIA), then by the FBI, and his on-again, off-again interest in communism surfaced. And not only his boss, John Houseman, but he too was denied a passport to go to London for the VOM.

Houseman returned to Hollywood, and Ray, for the first time, began to look more carefully at a film career. His old friend, Elia Kazan, was also in Hollywood, and Ray decided he should be too. As soon as he got there, he made contact with Kazan, who was directing A Tree Grows in Brooklyn, and Kazan put him on the payroll as his assistant. When Kazan finished the film in August, 1944, Ray stayed on finding short term jobs.

Then he got a huge break. Houseman, who was under contract to RKO Studios, gave Ray the novel, Thieves Like Us by Edward Anderson, to adapt for the screen. Ray worked hard on it, and when Houseman saw the script, he decided that this was a film for Ray to do. It was to be his directorial debut. Then disaster—RKO Studios was sold. Everything was on hold.

And Ray soon learned that the script of his film had been rejected by the Hollywood censors. Houseman found a writer to work with Ray to work out the problems. In the meantime Ray found the young Farley Granger to play the key male role and a girl Farley knew, Cathy O'Donnell who had debuted in The Best Years of Our Lives, for the female lead. Ray had free rein for the rest of the cast, and that's when he spotted his old idol from La Crosse days, Guy Beach, on the studio lot. He hired him on the spot to play the plumber, a minor role, in the picture.

As a director Ray was intense, demanding, instructive, cerebral, and hard-working. He had a rapport that varied with each actor, and he was personable with everyone—cast and crew. He was innovative—he was the first director to use a helicopter for some of the film work, and he always carried a view-finder to check out the various shots and angles he thought would work best. He met the studio deadline, and just barely went over budget. It was a stellar start to his new career.

But there was a new threat on the horizon. The House Un-American Activities Committee in Congress began focusing on communist influence in the motion

picture industry. There were hearings, pleas to the 5th amendment, counter moves, compromises, sell-outs—and finally ten men, the “Hollywood Ten,” were indicted, served short prison terms, and were black-listed.

None of this touched Ray, and he soon was given the assignment of directing a new film, “A Woman’s Secret.” Everything about the new film, however, was mediocre: the original novel, the script, some of the cast (though he got Guy Beach again)—but one thing was not, the lead female in the film, Gloria Grahame. It didn’t take long before a torrid love affair was on, and Hedda Hopper even got it into her gossip column.

Through all of this Ray was living the high life—drinking and gambling and losing large sums. When Gloria’s divorce was finalized, they immediately married—in Las Vegas. There was a great deal of talk about the affair, especially after the early birth of a son he named Tim. Then Ray’s studio came under the control of Howard Hughes. Drastic changes in personnel and managing style followed. After some delay Ray was told to pursue his previous project, directing “A Woman’s Secret.” But Hughes thought Ray’s first film “downbeat” and limited, and he shelved it.

A new offer soon came along. Humphrey Bogart started his own studio, called Santana. He wanted to star in a film based on Willard Motley’s best seller, Knock on Any Door. For director he picked Nicholas Ray. The story presented more problems: it would certainly be called “downbeat” and the main star also owned the studio Ray worked for. Ray survived all of that, and the film, when it was released, became his first film to be seen by the public.

His next film was Born to be Bad with Joan Fontaine in the lead role. Ray worked hard to get Robert Ryan as the male lead. When Ryan came on the set, the rapport between the two men was immediate, just as it had been with Bogart. But Ray and Fontaine never hit off. From the studio problems he would go home to marital problems, and Ray started drinking again.

In the meantime his first film, now called They Live by Night, was shown to the critics in London. At first they were luke-warm; then they began to praise its cinematography (always a Ray asset). And the French considered it high on the

list of true “film noir” productions. Howard Hughes apparently learned of this, and he finally decided to release it to American audiences.

Still with Bogart, Ray took on another film, In a Lonely Place. At nearly the last minute Ray cast his wife in the female lead. But shortly after completing the film, Ray found things going from bad to worse in his marriage. Coming home unexpectedly during the day, he discovered his teen-age son, Tony, in bed with his wife. After a rather violent scene, he moved out, making sure his son was sent back to New York. Not long after that Ray and Gloria agreed to a divorce.

To add to his woes, his job as director turned into salvaging several films that had been botched, stymied, or not finished at all. Then the HUAC began another round of meetings in Hollywood, and Ray met with them in secret—the new way for the committee to operate. There is no record of the meeting. But Ray was not indicted—Howard Hughes, a noted anti-communist, stood behind him, and he had just gone into filming Flying Leathernecks, a good patriotic combat picture starring John Wayne and Robert Ryan.

The Lusty Men, another impressive film, followed. Robert Mitchum starred, and again Ray and he hit it off. One of the comments of later critics was that Ray could get a great performance out of any actor or actress. Then came Ray’s first Western, Johnny Guitar. It was a ground-breaker because Ray changed the rules. He had two women, Joan Crawford and Mercedes McCambridge, fight to the death in the final gun duel. At first the critics panned the film, but it soon caught on and became a box-office smash.

All of his first films—eleven in all—made him a seasoned director—a director who made money and who was now in demand. The early films were important in their own right, but they also prepared Ray for his presumed masterpiece—Rebel Without a Cause.

Looking for a new subject for his next film, Ray said, “I want to do a film I love. I want to do a film about kids growing up, the young kids next door, middle class kids. Their problems.” But knowing some of the bleak atmospheres and depressive scenes of some of his earlier works, it was clear this would be no light-hearted, romantic treatment.

The original idea was Ray's, the original rough outline was Ray's, and a great deal of re-writing was Ray's. The story involves a "trinity" of teen-agers: Jim Stark, the girl, Judy, and Plato, all of them with serious problems. There were, as usual, difficulties with the writers, and it took a while to find one compatible with Ray. And the final script kept evolving.

Kazan, who had just finished East of Eden, was full of praise for his new actor, James Dean, when he talked to Ray. Ray met the star casually, became friends with him, studied him, and finally asked him to take the lead role. Ray began looking at girls to take the "Judy" role, and after many auditions, he chose 16 year old Natalie Wood, who had, she admitted, a "crush" on James Dean—she had seen East of Eden more than 30 times. But for the final key character, Plato, Ray was stymied. There were plenty of juveniles hanging around the studio vieing for lesser parts, but none of them seemed right. Then Ray spotted a kid in the crowd that looked just like the Plato he had imagined. It turned out to be a 15 year old, former child actor, Sal Mineo.

Each of the characters qualified as a juvenile delinquent, in trouble with the law, in trouble in school, but it was Plato who was the most troubled. The three actors fed off each other in the filming. The tension between them and their parents, or in Plato's case, his nanny, became palpable—even explosive. There was an edge to nearly every scene, and Ray gave them the freedom to fill out their characters.

The film was almost a life study of Nicholas Ray. His parents had failed him, he always thought—or at least his dad. And Ray had become a rebel. Now he, too, was failing his own sons. The story he was directing was revealing the frustrations and the failings of his own life. But maybe forcing audiences to see how parents make mistakes and kids make mistakes would somehow balance the record book of his own life.

By the time the film was finished it was clear that James Dean had become a surrogate son to him. Ray left for Paris, then went on to London. There he met a number of critics who saw him as a real innovator of film, and he began considering moving his enterprise to Europe, perhaps working with a film

company there. Then he got a long distance call from Los Angeles—September 30, 1955.

James Dean had been crushed to death at the wheel of his Porsche. Ray was thunder-struck. Warner Brothers held to their original schedule. Rebel Without a Cause opened in New York City October 26. But Ray never seemed to recover. He was drinking and gambling—running up debts--and perhaps using drugs. He went on to do three more films that were not very successful, and his drinking and erratic behavior was showing. His reputation as a director was suffering.

Then he finally got his chance to do a film outside of America, a World War II action film set in Libya. But with Bitter Victory everything began to go wrong. There were constant fights with his producer. Ray's practice of controlling the script with his own film changes was constantly over-ruled. But the worst was his taking up with a heroin addict lover, called simply Manon. He picked her up in Paris, and it wasn't long before he was using drugs too.

By the time the film was completed, the Schulberg brothers, Hollywood producers, wanted Ray as director for a couple of their films. They had been hearing nasty gossip about him, but when they finally saw Ray in person, they were astonished. He had aged badly, his thoughts were out of focus, and he doted on his new girlfriend. But they thought he would work out. When they went to shoot the film, "Wind Across the Everglades," on location in Florida, Ray insisted Manon come along—not a good sign..

Things did not go well. There were many arguments, many misunderstandings, and several of the actors were of the opinion that their director was losing it entirely. Then one night Manon sneaked out, found a car, and drove it straight into the compound where Ray slept. He had left only a few minutes before, otherwise he would have been killed. Manon was banned from the set. Then shortly after Ray blew up at what he thought was insubordination of his crew, and the Schulbergs fired him.

MGM Studios still had one film for Ray to direct, but when they learned of the blow-up in Florida, they had second thoughts. But at a studio conference Ray re-

assured the management, and the script for “Party Girl” was given to him. Coincidentally when he was casting the film, he gave a minor role to one of the La Crosse judges who had given him the radio award so many years before, Rusty Lane. And another minor role to actress, Betty Utey, who, shortly after the filming, became Ray’s third wife.

Since Ray was no longer the darling of Hollywood, he relocated in Italy, settling in with his new wife in a villa near Rome. He fell in with Samuel Bronston, a producer of great ambition and seemingly endless funds. Their collaboration was not immediate, but finally they came together with a grandiose plan—to do the life of Christ in a grand epic (*a la* Cecil B DeMille) to be called “King of Kings.” They eventually contracted Tab Hunter for the role, but critics were skeptical about the “Super Spectacle.” But when the film was finally released, it captured a huge audience. It turned out to be another success.

The next extravaganza was to be called “55 Days at Peking,” about the violence of the Boxer Rebellion toward foreigners in China in 1900. Bronston again seemed to have unlimited financial backing, and an elaborate set of Peking and the imperial palace was built on the plains of Spain. And they were able to get Charleton Heston for the main role. Besides the usual problems, the weather was dry and hot, and working through the scenes grueling. But the toll it finally took was unexpected—Ray himself collapsed on the set, and was replaced. No one knows if he was really sick or if that was a cover-up to his being fired or what. But again he was unable to complete his movie.

He did need a rest, and he moved his family (they now had two daughters) back to Rome. But Ray’s breakdown had stretched their marriage too far, and about six months later they divorced. Ray returned to Madrid where he had worked so long, and he started his own restaurant and cocktail lounge, called Nikki’s. And he was the affable host—as if he were playing Rick in “Casablanca.” But Nikki’s lost money and eventually folded.

Now on his own, Ray wandered about studios, met with writers, and made expensive phone calls looking for a project. But he had lost his cachet, he was drinking, and, at times, doing drugs. Eventually he retreated to an island just off

the coast of Denmark. He became reclusive, though fans of his movies kept showing up to meet him. He was in debt more than ever, he was still indulging, and he began to beg for funds from old friends. At the same time, helped by his son, Tim, he began recording his life, his autobiography.

There was one more chimera for him to chase back in the United States—a film that would make use of footage he and others began taking of the Viet Nam protests and the riots following the Martin Luther King assassination. Since the script would be of a trial—footage from the “Chicago Seven” trial would be used too. Ultimately nothing came of it, except that he met Susan Schwartz, one of the protesters, who would become his companion for the rest of his life.

Then out of the blue Ray was offered a two year contract as a visiting professor in upstate New York at Harpur College. His classes were unorthodox, and he soon had students running cameras, role-playing, ad-libbing parts, and improvising. Their project as a class—to make a feature-length film. The tentative title was “We Can’t Go Home Again.” The class became almost a commune of devotees with a little too much freedom in the eyes of the administration. But Ray survived more than a year of intense involvement. When he left the college for California, some of his students followed.

In Los Angeles he moved in with Betty Utey, his third wife, and his daughters that he had rarely seen. But she saw the deterioration in Ray, both physical and mental, and it was more than she could handle or subject her daughters to. And Ray was on his own once again, trying to scrounge up enough money to feed his habits and to keep himself alive. He went to New York, his old stamping grounds, and he and his faithful Susan moved into a house.

His name was still known, and he did a few lectures at colleges, universities, and film festivals, and these kept him in at least pocket change. He also taught occasional classes in method acting at Strasberg Institute in New York. But soon after his return he fell down stairs, and ended up in Roosevelt Hospital—and this time stayed for two months in the de-tox unit. After he got out, he seemed to stick to his AA regimen. He felt better; he acted better; he almost became the personable, reasonable fellow he had been.

But still ailing, he went back to the hospital for new tests that showed he had cancer of the lungs. The doctor gave him about two years to live. Despite the doom hanging over his head, Ray went back to his life blood, not as a director, but as an actor. He played the craggy-looking “General” in the movie of rebellion called “Hair.”

Wim Wenders, a German film-maker, interested Ray in a movie in which Ray would play himself, a film about him—his final film. Ray was all for it, and they began filming as Ray was beginning to show the effects of the disease. It was obvious that Ray knew this would be his final testament. Later after his old friend, Elia Kazan saw the film, he said, “He was prolonging his life where he’d most lived his life—on film.”

And the film, called “Lightning Over Water,” ended with Nicholas Ray’s death, June 16, 1979. He was 68. According to his instructions he was buried in Oak Grove Cemetery in La Crosse, section 53, lot 248, next to his parents. His grave is numbered; there is no inscription. Perhaps a line from “Johnny Guitar” that he loved to quote, “I’m a stranger here myself,” would be appropriate.

John Toland (1912-2004)

In his absorbing account of the final year of World War I, In No Man's Land, John Toland piques our curiosity about his La Crosse years in recalling the effect of the “false Armistice” of November 8, 1918. His father took his brother and him downtown to celebrate:

“Free soda pop was passed out at Begun’s Drug Store and at the newspaper office a straw effigy of Kaiser Bill was hung out a window and set afire. It was a sight that Toland’s six-year-old son, who had spent much of the past year collecting peach pits for gas masks, could never forget.”

Now in his autobiography, Captured by History, which he completed just before his death in 2004, we have an open window into his years growing up in La Crosse. And it is filled with memories of interest not only to the general public but especially to La Crosse residents.

John Toland was born in La Crosse, June 29th, 1912, in their house at 300 West Avenue North (no longer standing). His grandfather, Frank Toland, who lived at 1402 King Street, had established a business university in La Crosse in 1892. In 1906 he and his son Ralph traveled to Sioux Falls, South Dakota, to set up a similar school there. And while they were making arrangements, Ralph met Helen Snow. It was not love at first sight, but it did end in their marriage in 1909 in Sioux Falls.

They settled in La Crosse. Their first child, a girl, was named Virginia. Then came John Willard Toland. They soon moved to an upstairs rental at 136 South Eighth Street (the house was later moved to the North Side). His fondest memory from the year 1917 was meeting the sons of the most famous man in La Crosse—“Doc” Powell—and hearing stories about the man who had known Calamity Jane and “Buffalo Bill” Cody.

And the next year came the false Armistice that he remembered so well. When he was old enough, John entered the Campus School at the not-very-old Normal School in La Crosse.

But his father, Ralph, was more interested in a music career—he was a piano player and a singer—than in teaching bookkeeping at the business school. So at the end of the War he moved his family to a farm near New Canaan, Connecticut, the site of an artist colony. Ralph then commuted to nearby New York City to take voice lessons and tried to sell pianos in nearby Westport.

John and his sister had free rein on the farm, though they had certain chores they had to complete. After a couple years there they moved into town, and his father continued to try to sell pianos. And John met a playwright, Peter Emerson Browne, who had actually written a play that had run on Broadway. The net result was that John decided to become a writer.

Even though he was almost finished with high school, he knew he needed better preparation in order to benefit from college, and college was needed to become a great writer. He had heard of Exeter Academy in New Hampshire where he was sure to get that preparation. But that needed money—which they did not have. He graduated from high school in February, 1930, got a steady job at a tire store and started saving up.

In September he was at Exeter, making friends, enjoying every minute, but still worrying about expenses. A few months later his father showed up at school with wads of cash in his pocket. He hadn't robbed a bank (which was in style in those days) he had become a sales rep for the Pyroil Company—of La Crosse! It was owned by an old friend of Ralph's, W. V. Kidder.

Ralph had been named supervisor of the New England division and had several reps working for him. And when summer came, John, too, worked for his dad to make enough money to get back to Exeter for a second year. To put it another way, it was the La Crosse Pyroil Company that put John Toland through Exeter Academy, and prepared him for the calling that eventually earned him a Pulitzer Prize!

The next stop was Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts, September, 1932. To supplement his savings, he waited tables in the Commons dining room. In the summer months he travelled to the West Coast. The first time he hitch-hiked cross-country, stopping in La Crosse for the first time since

childhood. He stayed with his uncle, Leigh, who was director of the Business College, then went on to Los Angeles and spent two weeks with his mother's older sister. The second time he hitch-hiked part way, then rode the rails as a bindle-stiff, that is, a hobo, not all that unusual during the Depression years.

Back in school for his last two years he supplemented his income by joining with a college friend to run a bookstore in town. And all the time he was writing, trying to make it as a playwright. After graduation he headed for Yale where George Pierce Baker had made a name for himself teaching drama. But Baker had retired the year before, and Toland, dissatisfied with the replacement, completed only one year.

In the fall of that year, 1937, his father left the family, returning to his brother's home in La Crosse. And on John's third cross-country trek, in 1939, he stopped in La Crosse again. He was surprised at how his father had physically shrunk, but this time they had good camaraderie, something that had been missing during all their years before. That was their last get-together. His father died the following February.

He spent, in all, four summers on the road—hitching rides by car and by train, working in harvest fields, scraping by, hungry at times—and he thought it was all worth it. He knew first-hand what America was like. But back home at his mother's in New York, the play he had banked on to get him notoriety was rejected.

Then war broke out. In March, 1942, John enlisted in the army, and after basic training, he entered Officer Training School. In September he was commissioned a 2nd lieutenant and was sent to Florida with the special services division, which meant he was to work in troop entertainment. After doing two stage revues, he was sent to Biloxi to do the same there.

Next followed assignment to Lexington, Virginia, then on to New York City where he worked closely with the USO, and remained until his discharge in 1946. He was now married with one child and another on the way. He and his wife, Dorothy, eventually found a place to stay, and for a while he worked again with the special services division in New York and his wife set up a dance studio.

But his career as a writer remained at a standstill. during the post-war years. By the time he was 42 he had written 25 plays which had not been produced, six novels which had not been published, and scads of short stories, only one of which had ever been accepted.

That one was a science-fiction piece, but it brought him in contact with someone who advised him to start writing factual accounts. Then his agent got him a contract for a book on dirigibles. Ships in the Sky was the result of all this, and it relied on his many interviews of witnesses of the events, including the explosion of the Hindenburg dirigible in 1937. Through all of this he and his wife went through a divorce, and he was on his own once more.

But he had found his calling—to write books on history—even though he had never taken a history course in college. His next project was intended to be on the Depression, but when he began interviewing people in Washington, D.C., the Army wanted him to do the Battle of the Bulge—and they would give him unstinted cooperation.

They flew him to Germany and he was soon at work in what was now his standard practice of interviewing actual participants, presenting their interpretations, using their words. To gain authenticity he slept in a foxhole and spent another night in a basement where some GIs had taken refuge during that terrible December of 1944. The result, Battle: The Story of the Bulge, was published to acclaim in 1959.

Then came the chance to do a book on the Pacific campaign. Again he got the cooperation of the Army, and he began interviewing people in Hawaii as soon as he got there. This time he interviewed as many combatants on both sides as he could, flying to Guam, the Philippines, Hong Kong, and several places in between. As with the “Bulge” book, he tried to reconcile the various accounts, and, in doing so, laid bare some discrepancies in the more formal histories of certain battles.

It also meant that when he got to Japan to interview for the Japanese viewpoint, he needed a good interpreter. And there he met Toshiko Matsumura who agreed to act as his interpreter. From their days and evenings together

interviewing Japanese witnesses, they went on to date, and very soon to marriage. When he had enough material, he flew back to the States, with Toshiko as his wife. The book itself ended up covering only the first six months of the war in the Pacific. It was serialized in Look magazine first, then published in 1961 as But Not in Shame.

Oddly enough, in spite of its success, Toland put it all aside in order to do a book on John Dillinger he had earlier considered. He followed his usual method of interviewing as many people as possible, and, of course that led him on Dillinger's trail to northern Wisconsin, and he did make a brief stop in his hometown, La Crosse.

Dillinger Days came out in 1963. His next book was The Flying Tigers, about the airmen during World War II who flew over the Himalayas to help keep the supply lines open to the Chinese who were resisting the encroachments of the Japanese.

By then he knew he wanted to continue his research concerning World War II. Since he had investigated the first six months of the War in the Pacific, he thought he would look into the last hundred days of the war in Europe. He and Toshiko flew to Europe, and over the next several months they visited "sixteen countries in Europe including five behind the Iron Curtain, interviewing more than 400 people on both sides, some of them five or six times."

In his later autobiography, the four chapters concerning these months of interviewing are every bit as engrossing as the book that resulted from it—The Last Hundred Days. It came out in 1966. The secret of his success in conducting his interviews—and he was an expert at it—was that he accepted their viewpoints, their side of the story, and insisted he wanted the facts, not opinions.

His next project was to look at the war in the Pacific in a completely objective way, interviewing participants from both sides, from the highest ranking commanders to the lowest ranking soldiers and sailors and to civilian survivors. Not only was his wife, Toshiko, helpful—as interpreter and contact person—but her family, particularly her father, helped Toland in making contact with key players in Japan.

The research took over two years. Again Look magazine serialized the book. The Rising Sun came out in 1970, and it was a best seller. One critic called it “a noble book.” Toland made the circuit of TV and radio interviews, and the next spring the Pulitzer Prize in non-fiction was awarded to him—and when his wife, Toshiko, called from Tokyo to tell him he had won it, he said, “We won it.”

That summer he returned to La Crosse. The Wisconsin Historical Society was meeting here and they presented their yearly award to Toland. The title of his talk to them was “The Research Adventures of a War Historian.” His cousins could not miss the opportunity to drive him around to the old haunts of his childhood and to have a grand reunion.

What next? Why, take on the man at the center of the evil of Nazism—Adolf Hitler. But this time he wanted to interview Germans directly, so he took a crash course in German. Then he flew to Hamburg and began contacting those who knew Hitler, and interviewing them for details. He talked to an enormous number of people, taping their responses or taking notes. And then he returned to America to look over all of his material in order to “find out what I knew by writing it all down.”

The book, called simply, Adolf Hitler, was published in 1976. Though it was a huge book, it became an immediate success. “The New York Times Book Review” said, “it must be ranked as one of the most complete pictures of Hitler we have yet read.”

A few months later he flew to London to publicize the British edition of his book. But he also began work on his next book, “No Man’s Land: The Last Year of the Great War,” that is WWI. For this he wanted to focus on the common soldiers and their stories, not on the officer corps. And he immediately began to interview some of the British survivors. It was published in 1980.

In the meantime he had set out to investigate in his usual way the attack on Pearl Harbor. He knew the subject was still controversial, but he felt that the contact with the various actors from that event and the presentation of their testimony would be seen as objective and trustworthy.

When the book, Infamy, came out in 1982, it stirred up once more the question of whether FDR had allowed Pearl Harbor to happen to get the United States into the war, and whether the two commanders on the spot were culpable of dereliction of duty. The whole subject was as controversial in 1982 as it had been during the war. One of Toland's friends told him he had just ruined his writing career.

And the criticism came. Stung by some of the attacks, he decided he needed to immerse himself in his new project—writing a fictionalized version of The Rising Sun. He called it The Gods of War, and it was published in 1984. After reading the reviews, he decided that he was not a novelist. But he continued to work on the sequel and eventually finished it for publication as, simply, Occupation. That same summer of 1985 he participated in a “peace cruise” down the Mississippi on the *Delta Queen*, and when they stopped in La Crosse, he gave a talk at our local library.

Since his earlier histories, particularly about World War II, had been well received, he decided to use the same approach with the Korean War. In Mortal Combat was the result, and this time there was little controversy. He concentrated a great deal on the average American fighting men, and those who actually served were appreciative of his work.

He considered writing a book about the Vietnam War, but there were several things that discouraged him—his age, his vitality, the complexity of the war, the high feelings on both sides in this country as well as internationally. Instead he worked on his autobiography and finally ended it with this telling observation: “In my books I have made war the enemy, not its participants.”

John Toland died of pneumonia in Danbury, Connecticut, in January, 2004. He was 91.

James Cameron (1914-2006)

A Time of Terror, the name James Cameron gave to his account of his near-death experience, shows on its cover two black men hanging from a tree limb, with another rope hanging empty between them, signifying the one meant for him.

The photo of the lynchings in 1930 became infamous because of the cruelty and the triumph displayed on the faces of the white mob. It inspired the song by Lewis Allen, "Strange Fruit," later popularized by Billie Holiday, and the story itself was carefully documented in a 2006 book by historian, Cynthia Carr.

But 16 years before that infamous night, James Cameron, the intended third victim, was born in a house at 418 Mill Street (now Copeland Avenue) on the north side of La Crosse. It was 1914, and his father worked as a barber for Zach Moss in a shop at the corner of Mill and St. Andrew Streets.

Before he was a year old, James had serious intestinal problems, and the same doctor who delivered him, Dr. John J. Callahan, performed the surgery. The boy's appendix was also infected, and Dr. Callahan removed it during the larger operation.

There were other health problems for James as he grew through childhood, but he soon thrived. When he was about 5 his family moved to Indiana, his mother's home area. Then after a series of further moves, they ended up in Alabama, where his father had grown up.

His father found a job barbering, but he started drinking heavily. At the same time James started his education in Birmingham. But things went from bad to worse at home, and his mother filed for divorce. They stayed in Alabama a while longer, then James's mother packed up her now three children and moved back to Indiana and eventually to her mother's place in Marion, Indiana.

James continued his schooling, but in addition he worked as a bootblack downtown. It was then he became aware of the Ku Klux Klan in Marion and what

they stood for. And he learned that many of the white businessmen whose shoes he shined were members.

By age 16, he was often on his own, and that was when the defining event of his life occurred. He had gone with two friends to a strip of backroad called “Lovers’ Lane.” One of his friends flashed a handgun, and proposed that they rob a white couple they found parked out there.

Though James was scared at the sight of the gun, he at first cooperated in the plan. Then realizing this was all wrong, he fled. As he ran toward town, he heard shots fired—and he knew something terrible had just occurred. He ran all the way home and went right to bed. A couple hours later cars roared up to the house, and police officers invaded the house. They took James into custody.

He couldn’t answer the questions put to him because he didn’t know what had happened. Eventually he told his part in the event, learned that his friends had accused him of shooting the man and learned for the first time of the woman’s accusation of rape.

At that point the city and county officers who had jammed into the room assaulted James. Then they forced him to sign a confession that he later learned implicated his friends in the incident—and he was hauled off to the county jail.

The next morning a crowd began to form outside the jail. During the day the word went out that the gunshot victim had died. By evening there was a mob of white people surrounding the jail. The sheriff half-heartedly tried to get them to disperse.

The mayor conveniently disappeared, and the crowd grew more menacing by the minute. Some of the bigger men began taking turns at sledge-hammering the brickwork around the main door, and after some time the bricks gave way, and the men jerked the door out of the wall.

Leaders of the mob easily procured the keys to the cells and stormed in to grab the first of the accused, Thomas Shipp. They began beating him as they dragged him out of the jail, and by the time they had strung him up to the bars of a cell, he was already dead.

Cameron saw it all and heard it all. He was terrified. Then the mob returned for the next accused, Abram Smith. Amidst the shouts and calls for blood, the mob beat him to death, and put the rope around his neck and hoisted him into a tree nearby. Then they moved Shipp's body to hang from the same tree.

Cameron knew he was next. In his great fear he prayed with all his might. Perhaps he could escape—but that was impossible. Then in the confusion the mob couldn't pick him out of the crowd of prisoners. There was some delay for the terror-stricken Cameron—then one of the other prisoners pointed him out!

As they man-handled him out of the jail and across the open space toward the tree, he was pummeled, hit with bricks, kicked, and spat upon. Finally at the tree they put the heavy noose roughly over his head, and jerked it around his neck.

In his terror he cried out to the Lord for mercy and forgiveness. And at that moment, according to Cameron, a loud, insistent, but sweet voice sounded from above: "Take this boy back. He had nothing to do with any raping or killing."

And the crowd ceased its shouting and name-calling. Everything became quiet. The rope was removed from around his neck. People tried to help him stand and then walk. And they took him back to the jailhouse and turned him over to the sheriff! He had been spared.

After some time the sheriff hustled him off to the jail in Anderson in the next county. Later he was moved to the state reformatory. After all the traumatic experiences he had undergone, Cameron began to feel two different, conflicting changes in himself. He felt a deep appreciation for the natural world and he felt a growing hatred of white people.

After he was returned to the jail in Anderson for trial, there were rumors that the lynch mob would come over from Marion to finish its work. But the sheriff held his ground. Then he made a deal with Cameron: if he would promise to stay around the jail, he would let him have free rein during daylight hours.

Of course Cameron agreed and gave his word. And that was the beginning of his recognition that many of the people who had helped him and befriended him were white.

His trial began eleven months after the lynching and was held in the courthouse in Anderson. The jury was all white. His defense team, two experienced black lawyers, were able to undermine most of the adverse testimony of the trial. And the woman recanted her accusation of rape. Finally the jurors were sent out to deliberate. In less than three hours they returned the verdict.

Cameron was found guilty as accessory to manslaughter. The judge sentenced him to serve not less than two, nor more than 21 years in the state reformatory. Cameron's life was spared; he had been convicted of the least of the charges. It seemed to be a victory. But there was a long road ahead.

At the reformatory he was assigned to the sewing unit. It was difficult to learn the skill and to meet the quotas, but he usually managed. If not, he was punished, but he generally avoided marks against him. And when he came up the first time for parole, he thought he might be released. But he was put off—and put off—and put off—through five hearings.

By the time he was released on parole, he had served four years at the reformatory, and with the year he served while awaiting trial, he had been in jail nearly all of his teen-age years. And when he was released it was on a five year probation arrangement. Now at 21 he vowed to turn his life into “something beautiful, worthwhile, and God-like.”

He was released to the custody of his aunt who lived in Detroit. And that was where his book ended. But it was not the end of his story. He became active in the NAACP, married, and began a family. Then because of death threats he moved his family to Milwaukee.

There he began an air conditioning and refrigeration business. He remained committed to his work for equality and harmony of the races, becoming active in the Civil Rights Movement. In 1979 he and his wife visited the Holocaust Museum in Israel, and he was deeply moved.

His dream became creating a similar museum in America for African-Americans. It took him nine years and \$5000 of his own money before he realized his dream. “America's Black Holocaust Museum” was first located on

the second floor of Milwaukee's Black Muslim headquarters even though there was little room for the photos and books he had collected to highlight our nation's history of racial oppression.

But a few years later he was able to move to larger quarters at 2233 N. Fourth Street. He gained sponsors, and the old gym was remodeled, and the museum began to attract attention as the only memorial dedicated to the victims of the enslavement of Africans in the United States. At its height it drew 25000 visitors a year.

Originally he had hoped to build the museum in Marion where his night of terror had taken place, but though he had returned to Indiana over the years he recognized that it would not be well received there.

In 1993 Governor of Indiana, Evan Bayh, granted Cameron a pardon. In 2005 Congress apologized for not enacting anti-lynching laws earlier. Recognition of his part in all of this came from UW-Milwaukee with an honorary doctorate degree, awarded a few months before his death in 2006. He had become a symbol of reconciliation.

The museum closed its doors in 2008 because of lack of funds, but with a grant from the Wisconsin Humanities Council, it continues on a virtual web site. And last year Patrick Sims, UW-Madison Theater professor, wrote a play, "Ten Perfect," based on Cameron's story.

Donald Kemske “Mr. Wizard” (1917-2007)

Not many city residents would recognize the name, Donald Kemske, nor even, perhaps, Don Herbert, but they would certainly have heard of Mr. Wizard. Of course, all of these names refer to the same person, whose hometown was La Crosse.

Donald Jeffrey Herbert Kemske was born in Waconia, Minnesota (a few miles west of Minneapolis), July 10, 1917. He attended the early years of elementary school in Minneapolis. Then his family moved to La Crosse while he was still a youngster. They lived at 1131 State Street. He attended Hamilton School and Lincoln Junior High School.

Then he went on to Old Central, graduating in 1935. The Booster, the yearbook, noted that he was voted the “most ambitious” in his class. He was early interested in acting and belonged to the Harlequin Club at Central. On graduating he enrolled at La Crosse State Teachers College, and though he kept up his interest in acting (he participated in nine college productions), he majored in general science and English, intending to teach. At the same time he organized the “Pioneer Players” here, and they presented plays at the CIO hall at 5th and Market, and in the summer he acted in summer stock.

In his last year of college he married a fellow classmate, Maraleita Dutton. He graduated with a bachelor of science degree in 1940, went to New York, and found some work in both radio and theater, though to keep body and soul together he worked as a floor manager at Macy’s. Then the draft came up for him, and he decided to enlist.

In the Army Air Force he was sent to pilot school, and ended up flying a B-24 “Liberator” on 30 missions over Europe (the system then in place gave him the equivalent of the 56 points needed for rotation). It was on his last mission that in lead position, his plane took a hit in the mid-section, destroying the radio room and cutting the rudder control cables. “Crew Miraculously Escapes Unhurt in Blast,” the local headline read, April 8, 1945.

When his tour ended, he located in Chicago, started writing plays, and working in radio and theater--wondering about his future in drama. He had parts in radio series dramas, "Capt. Midnight," "Jack Armstrong," and "Tom Mix," and he sold scripts to radio shows "Dr. Christian," "Curtain Time," and "First Nighter." One of his jobs was acting in and co-sponsoring a children's documentary series, "It's Your Life," on radio.

Those experiences and the growth of television gave him the idea of doing a show for children, using common household items to perform easy experiments that they could duplicate at home. It was all "everyday magic," he said. "I just restrict myself to fun that has scientific content.". Many Baby Boomers will recall the poster in the background with "FCMBB" written on it, which Mr. Wizard explained stood for "Fruit, Cereal, Milk, Bread and Butter," that is, a healthy breakfast.

The show was called "Watch Mr. Wizard," and it began March 3, 1951, on a Chicago TV station affiliated with NBC. The voice-over intro was memorable: "Watch Mr. Wizard. That's what all the kids in the neighborhood call him because he shows them the magic and mystery of science in everyday living."

The series was very successful. In 1953 he won the Peabody Award for his work and three Thomas Alva Edison National Mass Media awards, and two nominations for Emmy awards. He also appeared on General Electric Theater, where he commented on ways to live better "electrically," at the same time that Ronald Reagan served as the spokesman for GE.

In 1955 "Watch Mr. Wizard" moved to New York. After 547 live episodes, the show finally ended in 1965. Mr. Wizard science clubs had formed throughout North America. By the end there were 5,000 clubs scattered across the United States. A poll showed that, despite expectations, a majority of the viewers were adults.

A format similar to his first series was used for several more programs in 1971-72, called simply, "Mr. Wizard." He formed his own company, Prism Productions, to develop other informative science programs, these were primarily aimed at adults. One series was aimed specifically at teachers and later was

released as films for them or for their classrooms. He moved to California and married Norma Kasell.

Later for ABC he did 30 second spots (50 in all), called "Close Up," which started with extreme close-up shots of common objects that became less exotic as the camera moved back from them. In 1978 he received a grant from the National Science Foundation for a series of 80-90 second spots (52 shows in all) aired as public service programs under his own name.

In the 1980s on the cable channel Nickelodeon, he produced another series called "Mr. Wizard's World." Shown three times a week until 1990, then in re-runs until 2000, it became the longest running show on the channel. For the Baby Boomers, he became if not an icon, then certainly a trusted mentor. He was a guest on "The Tonight Show" with Johnny Carson at least four times, and when David Letterman began his late night show in 1982, one of his first guests was "Mr. Wizard."

In 1993 the children's science show, "Beakman's World," honored Herbert by naming its two penguin puppets "Don" and "Herb." The following year Herbert came up with a new series, "Teacher to Teacher with Mr. Wizard," aimed at individual science teachers, especially in the elementary schools. The series was sponsored by the National Science Foundation and shown on Nickelodeon.

And through this all he put together book after book of experiments or technical explanations of science, using direct and simple language. There were about 10 "Mr. Wizard's" books, ranging from "Experiments for Young Scientists" to "Supermarket Science." Along the way he did at least four books of beginning science with "Mr. Wizard," focusing on water, heat, light, and flying.

His father died in La Crosse in 1961, but Herbert was unable to get to the funeral because of a blizzard. In 1968 he was able to return to La Crosse to give the commencement address at La Crosse State University. He came back again in 1981 for his mother's funeral. His final return was in 1984 when he was named a "distinguished alumnus" at UW-La Crosse.

Don Herbert was treated for cancer in 2007. He died of multiple myeloma at his home in Bell Canyon, California, June 12, 2007, one month short of his 90th

birthday. His legacy includes not only the several books he authored but all of his TV science programs available on DVD or on the inter-net.

Bill Nye, the Science Guy, added this to Don Kemske's obituary: "Herbert's techniques and performances helped create the United States' first generation of home-grown rocket scientists just in time to respond to Sputnik (the USSR's 1st satellite). He sent us to the moon. He changed the world."

Robert Moevs (1920-2007)

If Robert Moevs was ever late for class at Old Central, he had little excuse since he lived just across the street. For all of his high school career his sister and he and his parents lived at 1602 Cass Street. The brick house is still there on the corner.

Robert Moevs (rhymes with waves) was born in La Crosse in 1920. He was an early and talented piano student. He gave his first piano recital at age 8 on the front stage of the auditorium of Main Hall at the UW-La Crosse campus. In high school he played for many school affairs, and in 1936 he gave an ambitious recital in the city, though in the Tribune write-up at the time he was called an “art student.”

He graduated from Central in 1938. He received a scholarship from Harvard where he studied music theory under renowned teacher Walter Piston. He graduated in 1942. At that point the country was at war, and he enlisted in the Army Air Corps. After training he was given his wings and sent to the European Theater where he worked in intelligence.

In 1947 he married a Rumanian Princess, Alexandra Ileana Caradja. At the time he was an officer in the Control Commission in Rumania. He may have helped her escape to the West a few months later when King Michael of Rumania abdicated power to the Communists. As far as is known, neither Moevs nor his wife ever talked about the circumstances.

When his discharge came due later in 1947, he decided to remain in Paris to study at the Conservatory of Music with famed teacher, Mlle. Nadia Boulanger, both in Paris and Fontainebleau. During his three years under her tutelage, he had a piano sonata accepted for publication and he wrote the ballet, “Endymion.” When he came back to America in 1951 there was a problem with his wife’s passport, and she had to remain in Salzburg, Austria, temporarily.

Back at Harvard he obtained his Master’s degree in 1952. It was while he was there that he composed the symphony, “14 Variations for Orchestra,” that

Leonard Bernstein premiered on “Symphony of the Air” in 1956. He then won the *Prix de Rome* and returned to Europe, spending the next three years at the American Academy in Rome. From 1955 to 1963 he taught at Harvard. This was interrupted by a Guggenheim award, and he was composer-in-residence in Rome, 1960-61. In 1968 he took a professorship at Rutgers in New Jersey.

Critics point out that Moevs came of age when Bartok, Stravinsky, and Schoenberg were dominating music composition. His early teachers taught him the intricacies of modern music. Later he made clear that he was very influenced by Pierre Boulez. And Moevs came up with his own descriptive term, “systematic chromaticism” for his syntheses of these various styles. In 1956 he was given the American Academy of Arts and Letters award for music

His opus, “Three Symphonic Pieces,” premiered by the Cleveland Orchestra in 1958. One critic called it “bold and startling.” That was followed by “*Itaque ut*,” an *a cappella* “episode” performed by the Boston Symphony and the Harvard Glee Club. His most ambitious work up to that time, “Concerto Grosso for Piano, Percussion, and Orchestra,” was first written in Rome in 1960, and recast by him into its final form in 1968.

Then came “A Brief Mass,” (for chorus, organ, vibraphone, guitar, and double bass,) and “Paths and Ways” (for saxophone and dancer), 1971. “Phoenix,” for solo piano, 1972; “The Aulas Player” (for Soprano, 2 choruses, and 2 organs), 1975; “Crystals,” for solo flute, 1979. The list of compositions with their musical combinations reveals Moevs’ complete mastery of instruments and his blendings of sounds.

Then in an unusual move Moevs turned to his Midwestern background to write “Main-Travelled Roads: Symphonic Piece #4.” As a student at Central High School, he had probably read the book by Hamlin Garland, whose hometown was nearby West Salem. He may have attended Garland’s lecture back in the 30s at the Normal School as well. He completed the piece in 1973, and the Milwaukee Symphony under Kenneth Schermerhorn presented it at Viterbo Fine Arts Center in February, 1974.

In 1978 he won the prestigious Stockhausen International Prize for Composition, awarded for his “Concerto Grosso.” The “Group for Contemporary Music” in New York featured his “Una Collona Musicale” in 1978—appropriately with a piece by Aaron Copland (who also trained under Mlle. Boulanger). The volume of his versatility never abated: “Prometheus,” (music for a small orchestra, I), 1983; “Symphonic Piece #5,” 1984; “Saraband for Harpsichord,” 1986; “Pandora,” (music for small orchestra, II), 1986; “Dark Litany,” wind ensemble, 1987.

Through all of this he continued to teach, and the testimonies from his many students concerning his ability to reach them, to enlighten them, and to lead them to places they had never imagined is impressive. During his last few years at Rutgers, his students noted that his musical composition work was falling off, but he continued with his usual devotion to his teaching.

After his retirement in 1991 he continued to live near Rutgers and to write-- even with a little bit of whimsy when he put together a piece “for 5 percussionists” that he titled “Conum-drum,” 1995. And among several later songs, he composed a song about a little girl who cheated death, “The Ballad of Angel Lynn,” for four voices, in 1997.

He died at his home in Hillsborough, New Jersey, in 2007, aged 87. He was subsequently buried in Oak Grove Cemetary in La Crosse.

Elmer Petersen (b. 1928)

It's true that Elmer Petersen has lived in Onalaska and Galesville since he came to the Coulee region in 1978. But because sculptures he has done in and for the city, the time he has spent here erecting them, and the many months he worked both in the basement of Gundersen Clinic and at Viterbo University, he must be considered at least an honorary resident.

His most famous sculpture isn't located here at all. It's in Jamestown, North Dakota. It was his first commission, and it was—is--huge—26 feet high. Made up of steel beams, wire mesh, stucco, and cement, it weighs 60 tons. The city claims it as the "World's Largest Buffalo," features a rendition of the buffalo on its web site, and calls itself "Buffalo City." All, apparently, because of Petersen's giant "taxidermy."

It was a great start for a Wisconsin boy. Petersen was born in Racine in 1928. He graduated from William Horlick High School there in 1946. He attended Dana College in Blair, Nebraska. Prolonging his education with work and serving in the Korean War, he graduated with a major in psychology and a minor in art in 1954.

Using the G.I. Bill he went on to further study at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, earning an art major in one year, followed by a master of science in applied art. It was there, he said, that he was introduced to the welding torch. He moved to Davenport, Iowa, where he taught in junior high school for a year. Then he was offered a contract to teach at Jamestown College in North Dakota. At the end of two years, he decided to take a break—and at that point the offer came to do the statue of the buffalo.

For the academic year 1959-60 he attended Luther Seminary in St. Paul, something he had thought about for some time. There he joined an eight voice male choir, and he was able to tour northern Europe with them. At the end of the year he went back to UW-Madison to earn the newly created Master in Fine Arts degree in the Visual Arts. It was there he heard his major advisor refer to his buffalo as "Good Taxidermy."

A year teaching at Bemidji State in Minnesota was followed by two years at his alma mater, Dana College, and then at Texas Lutheran College at Seguin, Texas. During these years he was doing “found objects” sculpture, re-inventing or enhancing everyday objects in our world. He stepped up his pace of entering shows and competing with other artists, especially in Texas.

In 1967 he decided to go free-lance to see how he could do, surviving on grants, awards, and commissions. He set up a studio in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, and soon after married Carole Mortvedt. In 1969 he took a teaching job at Wittenburg University in Springfield, Ohio. After three years there he returned to Texas Lutheran College as the chair of the Art Department, and remained there for six more years.

During this time he did a 13 foot high Cor-Ten statue of Martin Luther for the college, and a “Bicentennial Monument” for Jamestown. Then, once more, he wanted to try going on his own. And that’s when he came to the La Crosse area. His first public showing was at the First National Bank. One of the pieces, “War Monument” illustrated his focus at the time. It was made “partially from wrecked automobile fenders and riding lawnmower covers.” Another piece, “Leisure Society Plant,” used scythes as stems and a coffee cup for a blossom.

But one of his first commissions here was a statue. The newly completed Heileman Brewery headquarters building needed a new King Gambrinus (the King of Beer). Made of Cor-Ten steel, the larger than life-size welded figure was completed in 1980 and mounted on its fountain pedestal. Cor-Ten rusts to a warm brown, and the resultant patina protects the surface almost indefinitely.

Then, appropriate for La Crosse, Petersen came up with the idea of creating a sculpture of life-size Indians locked in the intense competition of a game of la crosse. He interested the city, especially Mayor Pat Zielke in the plan, and it was approved. Since its completion in 1981, the sculpture, again in Cor-Ten steel, stands on the walkway between the Radisson and the former Heileman headquarters—just across the street from Doc Powell’s former medical institute in the old Pamperin building. A large replica adorns the welcome sign on the north side of La Crosse as well.

For the Church of the Good Shepherd he created an 18 foot relief sculpture of Christ made from steel and faux slate that fronts the church on La Crosse's south side. The following year he completed a life-size "Family" for the Gunderson Clinic. He worked on that sculpture in a large basement storeroom in the clinic building. It was cast in bronze in Austin, Texas. He also sculpted a whimsical piece, "Young Boy," of a boy reaching for a butterfly, which stands inside the entrance to the Hospital.

In 1986 he proposed a large sculpture of an eagle for Riverside Park. With the approval of the city, he began raising money for the idea, and with grants and other help (especially from D. B. Reinhart), he was able to finance the project. The eagle, made out of Cor-Ten and stainless steel, with its high pedestal (also by Petersen) was mounted in its commanding position in 1981. A similar eagle with the same 20 foot wingspread is mounted over the entrance to the Veterans Memorial Monument at the UW-La Crosse stadium.

He taught a special course in art through the Outreach program at UW-L and another at the Pump House. He was artist-in-residence at Viterbo University from 1993-95. For his studio he used a structure provided by Swanson Construction which was working on the campus at the time. After his tenure he gave Viterbo a large bronze statue, "Earth Mother," to stand in its library. Another statue, "Girl with a Bird," stands outside the new Nursing Building on campus.

Along the way he has done several bronze busts of people. He did one of C. C. Washburn, La Crosse resident, Civil War general, and former governor of Wisconsin, and one of La Crosse pioneer, Gideon Hixon, which stands outside the Hixon House near City Hall. Another was of local businessman and philanthropist, D. B. Reinhart, which is located at Viterbo. He also did John and Nettie Mooney, Lutheran Hospital benefactors, their likenesses located in the lobby of the clinic.

And in 2003 former Milwaukee mayor, John Norquist, contacted Petersen to do a bust of ambassador/diplomat/statesman, George F. Kennan, of Milwaukee. Petersen has created smaller bronze busts of Frank Lloyd Wright and Pablo

Picasso as well as a bust of his wife, who died of cancer in 2001, and one of himself.

Since his arrival in the community, he has been supportive of art in public places, attested to by his many sculptures in the city. But he has done a great deal more. He chaired the “Downtown Sculpture Project” committee. For the “City Vision—2000,” he started a program to enlist local artists to submit sculpture ideas. Then he helped them find funding or sponsors to carry them out.

In 1999 he was awarded the Community Arts Development Grant of the Wisconsin Assembly of Local Arts Agencies. The intent was “to create sculptures that would enhance downtown La Crosse.” The Pump House Regional Arts heron project in downtown La Crosse was a reflection of this growing awareness of public art in the city. Local artists were invited to decorate the herons to depict local themes. The herons stood in various locations in the city for the summer and beyond.

For his now-hometown of Galesville he produced “The Visionary,” a bronze statue of Rev. David O. Van Slyke, the minister who believed that the area matched the description of the Garden of Eden and, inadvertently, suggested the area name of “God’s Country.” The statue stands in the village park. Petersen is currently working on a life-size statue of George Gale, founder of the former Gale College, the Main Hall of which still stands on the west edge of Galesville.

Frank Italiano (1915-2006)/ Hugo Jan Huss (1934-2006)

It took an Italian-American, Frank Italiano, and a Romanian transplant, Hugo Jan Huss, to provide the unique combination for the growth of an on-again, off-again symphony orchestra in La Crosse into a quality, enduring organization.

The difficulties in the years since the La Crosse Symphony Orchestra first organized in 1898 are detailed in *A History of the Development of the La Crosse Symphony Orchestra*, written by retired UW-La Crosse professor, Charles Haas. The orchestra went through six different start-ups, according to Haas, until the 7th incarnation in 1947, which became permanent.

Its history involved a number of fine musicians—members of the musical Kreutz family, Ralph Toland, Leigh Elder—and composers—Edgar Roemheld, Rudolf Kvelve--as well as community supporters, such as Leigh Toland, Rev. Oscar Cramer, John B. Coleman. But it could never seem to get traction until after World War II.

That was under Elder's directorship, and when Frank Italiano came to La Crosse in 1951, Elder was still the symphony conductor. Italiano taught music at Logan High School, Lincoln Jr. High, and, later, at Luther High School in Onalaska, and he very soon concluded that it was the youth of a community that gave life to a tradition of music.

Italiano was born in Redgranite, Wisconsin, in 1915, but grew up in Waukesha and graduated from Carroll College in 1938. When the war broke out in 1941, he enlisted in the navy and served as director of the Pacific 7th Fleet Flagship Band. At the end of the war, his ship was docked in Shanghai, and he was invited to conduct the city's symphony orchestra as well as its Pops Orchestra.

That determined Italiano to make music his career. After coming here he continued to work on his music background, attending UW-Madison, the Cincinnati Conservatory, and Tanglewood. In 1960 he organized the Coulee Region Festival of music and the Symphony School of America. And later he was the founder of the La Crosse Youth Symphony.

He was trying to build a strong base for the future of the symphony. And when he was named guest conductor for the La Crosse Symphony in 1967, and full conductor in 1968, he had a number of young musicians to draw on. And he immersed himself in all aspects of the symphony—fund-raising, ticket sales, recruiting, music library acquisitions, and publicity.

Almost immediately Italiano worked with the school district to form the Youth Symphony, and, with the help of an anonymous donor, to put it in motion. Instruction in the instruments was done by local professionals, and the numbers of graduates provided several players for the La Crosse Symphony and contributed greatly to the quality of its musical productions.

Using the summer camp idea, Italiano later founded the Symphony School of America here in La Crosse for talented young musicians. He extended the idea to the Dodgeville area, where it was called Symphony of the Hills, and to Shell Lake, where it was called the Northland Symphony.

In 1972 he retired from his position as conductor of the La Crosse Symphony to look after his growing business, Pleasoning, a condiment firm he had founded in 1951. But he continued very active on the music scene with the youth symphony programs.

One of the guest conductors he had brought in for the Symphony School of America, Hugo Jan Huss, eventually took over the job of conductor of the La Crosse Symphony Orchestra. Huss officially assumed the position in 1982.

Hugo Jan Huss (originally spelled Husz) was born in 1934 in Timisoara in western Romania. He grew up during World War II when the Germans were in control. He began his study of the violin at the age of five. After attending the Timisoara Conservatory of Music, he went on to the Bucharest Conservatory of Music for further study.

Shortly before Huss went to the conservatory, Constantin Silvestri, a Romanian composer and conductor, started the music conductor program. Huss studied under him for three years, and was a prized student. “A rare flower,” according to Silvestri.

These were years during which the Soviet Union consolidated its control over Romania and the Iron Curtain descended over eastern Europe. When Silvestri fled the country, he left all of his musical possessions to Huss.

Following his graduation from the conservatory, in 1956, Huss was awarded the George Enescu Scholarship Stipendium in Bucharest. After two years of study in Bucharest he received the degree of Diplomat of the Arts with the specialty of orchestra conductor.

He conducted his debut concert in 1958 at the Romanian Atheneum in Bucharest in 1958. Soon after he accepted the position of conductor and music director of the Symphony Orchestra of Arad, near his birthplace. In 1968 he was awarded the “Cultured Merits Medal” by then-president of Romania, Nicolai Ceausescu.

He then transferred to conduct the Targu-Mures Symphony, a city in central Romania. In 1968 he was granted permission by the Romanian communist government to attend a music festival in Paris. And he never returned. He relocated in Munich and immediately applied for immigration to the United States. During the two years’ wait that followed he was the principal guest conductor of the Gunthe Symphony in Munich.

Finally allowed to emigrate, he found himself in Chicago where he discovered an old acquaintance from Arad, Mirella Regis. “Romance blossomed,” and they married in August, 1970. They had one daughter, Nicole, born in 1974. Huss went back to school, receiving an MBA from Roosevelt University in Chicago, with supplementary courses in computer science.

A music career was still uppermost in his mind, and he found a job in Guadalajara, Mexico, as principal conductor and music director from 1979-81. Among the highlights of his tenure there was presenting a TV performance of Tosca with lead tenor, Placido Domingo.

He returned to the States with stops along the way in Houston and Chicago. It was during that time that he won first place in the National Adult Symphony Orchestra Conducting Competition in La Crosse—which eventually led to the

offer of the job of conductor of the La Crosse Symphony Orchestra. He relocated here with his family in 1982.

Here he divided his time between the symphony and his work as a data-processing manager. But he was active and involved in the music scene in the city. He served as music director until 1993, and the symphony made great strides in the quality of its performances and in the involvement of the community.

Except for Leigh Elder, Huss served the longest of the symphony directors. In 1999 he was named "Conductor Emeritus" by the Symphony Board.

During his tenure, he guest-conducted at various venues around the world. But he was most pleased to open the Constantin Silvestri International Festival (named for his former teacher) in Targu-Mures, Romania, and twice over the years returned to guest-conduct the Arad Symphony Orchestra, the last for a performance of "Carmina Burana."

Following retirement from his computer service work, he was diagnosed with cancer in 2005, and he died of the disease the following February. According to his wishes, he was buried in the Arad Cemetery in his native Romania. A music scholarship in his name is awarded a graduating senior from Central High School, La Crosse.

John Judson (b. 1930)

It is difficult to gauge the impact of certain individuals. But it is clear that the La Crosse years of Professor John Judson were of great significance: on his creative writing students, on his fellow poets, especially in the Midwest, on his audiences, both readers and listeners.

John Judson was born in Stratford, Connecticut, in 1930. When he was 15 his parents moved to Maine where he completed high school. He played semi-pro baseball for a time, then enlisted in the Air Force serving from 1951-55 stateside and in Korea and Japan. On his return he considered a baseball career but instead opted to go to Colby College in Waterville, Maine.

He later taught high school in both Maine and Iowa, and in 1959 he married Joanne Akers of Tipton, Iowa. Then he spent a year at the University of Maine before entering the famous Writers' Workshop at the University of Iowa, in 1963, and graduated with a Master's in Fine Arts in Creative Writing.

He joined the English Department at UW-La Crosse in the fall of 1965. He brought with him two important interests besides teaching: publishing other poets and writing his own poetry. In 1963 he and close poet friends, John Stevens Wade and John J. Iorio, founded the little review called Northeast in Waterville, Maine. They called it "A New International Literary Annual."

At that time, the '50s and '60s, poets found little chance for publication--national magazines featured almost no poetry, and commercial presses avoided books of poems, which had miniscule sales. The same problem held true for short stories though not as seriously. Small presses, usually located in the editor's home, seemed to be the answer.

After coming to UW-L Judson continued publication of Northeast, eventually on his own. And it was in the basement of his home at 1310 Shorewood Drive on the South Side of La Crosse that he printed his biannual literary magazine as well as his small (both in size and number printed) press collections of poems and, sometimes, short stories.

Over the years Northeast has appeared over 50 times with a subscription list of faithful readers from around the world. It was a non-profit enterprise--really the reverse of that since Judson more than once had to supplement the magazine's balance sheet with his own money and his family often helped him in the printing, collating, assembling, and distribution.

Judson's literary review, Northeast, was named one of the top five little magazines in the country by the Authors' League of America for two years running, 1974 and 1975. That meant that subscriptions to the magazine were given to various entities world-wide. That fulfilled the promise of "international" attached to the first issue back in 1963.

And who did he publish? Mary Oliver, a Pulitzer Prize winner of 1984, appeared in an early issue; Simon Perchik, called "the most published unknown poet in America"; Greg Kuzma, whose poems have been read by Garrison Keillor on the "Writers' Almanac" on PBS; and Warren Carrier, author of over a dozen books of poetry, novels, and textbooks (and former chancellor at UW-Platteville).

Just as a century ago poets would publish their "waifs" in newspapers and magazines and then collect them in a single volume of poetry, poets of the '60s published their "fugitive poems" in literary reviews and magazines, then collected them into single soft-bound volumes generally called "chapbooks."

Under the imprint, Juniper Press, Judson published nearly a hundred chapbooks over the years in several groupings: Juniper books; Northeast Specials; Haiku-Short poems, and the William N. Judson series. And in collaboration with UW-L's Murphy Library, he published Voyages to the Inland Seas, generally featuring three writers, which reached to 8 volumes.

His own poetry has appeared in many little magazines, and he has published over 14 chapbooks himself, including a radio drama and a novel. One of his first, Within Seasons, was printed by his old college and dedicated to his four children. It was named the outstanding book of poetry for the year by the Council for Wisconsin Writers (CWW) in 1968.

The following year, 1969, Sauk City writer, August Derleth, included several of Judson's poems in his anthology, New Poetry Out of Wisconsin, including the

poem, “January Poem for Henry Thoreau,” which had just won the Hart Crane Memorial award.

Finding Words in Winter, 1973, reflects his musings on the La Crosse area, such as “spring comes to hedgehog bluff,” in which he re-creates the climb to the top of the bluff near his home, “above low birds and suburbs.” Or, through a car window across the river: “Outside the Mississippi bluffs slip by, their high springs frozen huge and round, tinted a Mediterranean blue. . . .”

But in 1972 his son, William, died tragically in a ski accident on a mountain back in Maine. From that loss came the requiem volume, Ash is the Candle’s Wick, which won the University of Kentucky’s Midwest Book Award for one of the 20 best books produced in 1973. Another volume followed in 1976, Routes from the Onion’s Dark, which won the CWW’s poetry award again.

Very close to the time of his son’s death, Judson’s father had also died, and in a later book, A Purple Tale, 1978, Judson revisited that difficult time. In the poem, “Father and Son,” he imagined that they had formed the parentheses of his existence, then--just like that--their marks had been erased fore and aft, leaving him adrift and bereft.

A couple years later he finally told in free verse a wonderful story from his baseball years in the chapbook, Three Years Before the Braves Left Boston. In that and in some of the poems of the later volume, North of Athens, the Maine characters tell their stories in the “Down East” dialect, stories Judson must have heard during the many summers that he took his family to their “camp” in Maine. For that he won the Earplay award from National Public Radio.

But after coming to La Crosse his primary focus was to publish other writers, especially Upper Midwest writers. And there were some good ones. Robert Schuler, creative writing teacher at UW-Stout, had three books published by Juniper Press. He was several times nominated for the prestigious Pushcart Prize, given to the best of small press poetry each year.

The late Mary Shumway, who taught English at UW-Stevens Point, appeared in Northeast several times, and Judson published her book, Practicing Vivaldi, in 1981. Dave Etter, a favorite with Judson because of his realistic portraits of his

hometown of Alliance, Illinois, had his Bright Mississippi published. And the late James Hazard, creative writing teacher at UW-Milwaukee, whose book, Fire in Whiting, Indiana, published by Judson in 1983, won the CWW poetry award.

Felix Pollak, an Austrian Jew, who fled to America in 1940 and became archivist at UW-Madison, was a poet with a sense of humor—and irony. His final book, Subject to Change, by Juniper Press, which dealt with his loss of sight, won the CWW award for 1978. Roberta Sebenthall, who years earlier had published several mysteries under the pen-name, Paul Kruger, put together a collection of poems from her final days before dying of lung cancer. Judson published her Anatomy of December, which was given honorable mention by CWW posthumously.

John Judson retired from teaching in 1991. He continued writing and publishing his own poetry as well as continuing his small press work. In 2000 the Council for Wisconsin Writers awarded him its highest honor, the Christopher Latham Sholes award for his long service to and support of writing.

He retired from his printing work shortly after that. He and his wife moved to the Twin Cities to be near their children. He has yet to collect his best poems in a definitive collection.

Kati Casida (b. 1931)

Just as with Rudolf Kvelve, Kati Casida's artistry is strongly influenced by her Norwegian heritage. But in her case it is in the field of sculpture, not music.

She was born Kati Monson in rural Viroqua, Wisconsin, and spent her early years there, living for a time in the log cabin her immigrant great grandfather had built. She early took to drawing, and encouraged by her parents, she continued to pursue that line of art.

When she was a teenager, her family moved to the house at 1501 8th Street South in La Crosse. She attended Central High School, graduating in 1949. She immediately went on to UW-Madison, where she pursued a degree in Art Education. During the 1954-55 school year she taught the arts in the Beaver Dam School System. The following year she taught the arts at Upsala College in East Orange, New Jersey.

Along the way she spent a summer in study at the University of Oslo in Norway, courtesy of a scholarship sponsored by the La Crosse AAUW. That began her personal connection with the land of her heritage. Another summer she took classes at Columbia University in New York. Then spent summers in independent study in several countries in northern Europe and one summer in Central America.

She returned to Madison for two more teaching stints—in the public schools and the vocational schools—in 1960-61. In 1964 she and her husband, John Casida, moved to Berkeley, California. He filled a professorship at the University of California—Berkeley in entomology-toxicology.

And she was able to take classes in various art media, broadening her repertoire. Her first solo exhibitions were prints, shown in Stockholm, Sweden, Ely, England, and finally in California. Two of her prints, "Gold Twist" and "Yellow Ribbon," were purchased for collections in California and Oregon.

It wasn't until 1974 that she began to work in metal, her signature art form. She made small models from paper or strips of aluminum, cutting and folding,

exploring how form relates to space. These “maquettes” (models) she developed into larger pieces, generally commissioned for public sites.

“All those lessons learned in dance (at UW), print-making, and painting came into play with each sculpture,” she said. There are ribbons and flares and coils and movement through space. The titles of some of her works—“Orange Peel” and “Heart Throb” and “Flame”—indicate the use she makes of these sinuous forms.

The metal pieces are fabricated, then painted—and she prefers the brightest of colors, “like the sunshine touching it,” as she says. Then she and the fabricator put the sculpture together with bolts and nuts and transport the finished product to the public site.

The entire process is explained by Casida in a YouTube presentation from 2009, accessible on the inter-net. The program was put together as background to one of her contemporary pieces, called “Embrace,” made for the city of Orinda, California. For such works of metal she needed the help of experts both to cut and shape her original idea (as represented by the maquette) and to paint it with durable, metallic color.

Along the way she was a visiting artist on the island of Hydra, Greece. And a few years later she was appointed Artist-in-Residence at the Edvard Munch Studio in Ekely, Norway, a wonderful compliment to her work in sculpture and to her interest in her heritage. Throughout she has maintained her membership in the Wisconsin Sognefjordlaget and in the Sons of Norway of La Crosse.

She has returned to Norway several times, particularly for the Midsummer’s Eve all night celebration, called Jonsok. So when she received the commission for a public display of her work in Norway, she fashioned a convoluted piece of metallic fire—signifying the bon-fires of the celebration—rising above the metal rolls that symbolize the connections of those of Norwegian heritage.

It was painted a shimmering yellow-gold. She titled it “Jonsok,” and saw it installed at the head of the fjord her ancestors came from, Sognefjorden, near Skjolden. It was made a permanent installation in 2011. “The seasons, wind,

snow, and rushing waterfalls of Norway,” she said, “the land of my great grandparents, are reflected in my work.”

She has her own studio in the San Francisco Bay area, where she has several sculptures in public places, such as Cesar Chavez Park in Berkeley, the Santa Clara Civic Center, and the Oakland City Center, all in the Bay area. In 1993 she founded Nordic 5 Arts, an organization for artists of Nordic heritage.

Unfortunately only two of her sculptures are located in the Coulee area. One stands in the City Park in Viroqua, the other is installed at the Vernon County Medical Office building in her hometown.

Nancy Arganbright (b. 1936) /Dallas Weekley (b. 1933)

It seemed an unusual setting for the classic four hand pianists, Weekley and Arganbright, but it was Captain Kangaroo who got the early benefit of their abiding interest in making music education of young people a prime focus of their adult careers.

They appeared on several Captain Kangaroo shows, playing and talking about music. In the meantime they debuted nationally as a four hand piano team at Carnegie Hall in 1963. A concert tour in Europe followed, and the year after that they joined the music department at UW-La Crosse to teach piano students.

“We meant to stay one year,” Nancy Arganbright said in an interview just before their retirement, “but we kept staying, and staying and staying.” They kept teaching at UW-L until 1993. “The people of La Crosse have been good to us.” And Arganbright and Weekley have been good for La Crosse, over the years giving several recitals for the public.

Dallas Weekley was born in Georgia in 1933; Nancy Arganbright, in Indiana in 1936. They met as students at Indiana University School of Music in Bloomington, where they were both solo pianists. They married in 1957—and it was serendipity that set them on a path to a concert career in addition to a teaching one.

One of their wedding gifts, from Arganbright’s high school piano teacher, was a grand piano. When they came down the morning after the wedding, there was that lone piano available for only one to practice. Undaunted, they looked through a stack of music for a book of duets. They found one. “It (the book) began with Mozart,” Arganbright said in a recent interview, “and we were hooked (on four hand piano).”

Both accomplished pianists, they discovered they enjoyed playing four hand piano, and they found teachers to help them in their development. Thus began their life-time study of four hand piano pieces and arrangements. They set out to

popularize four hand piano playing and music, a generally neglected and unique form, and they took on an ever-expanding concert schedule.

The subject was hardly new to Weekley because Franz Schubert, the subject of his doctoral dissertation, had written more of them than anyone else.

Eventually Weekley was able to go with his wife to Vienna to look at original sources. During his research he discovered a long-lost manuscript of an 1818 original Schubert composition. It had been published in 1835, but in an altered form.

Four hand piano music dates back to the 17th Century. One of its first composers was Franz Joseph Haydn and, soon after, Mozart. During the Romantic Age in Europe the style became very popular. The composers of such pieces were really a “who’s who” of romantic music—Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms, Chopin.

Two pianists performing simultaneously on the same piano is called four hand piano, or a duet—as opposed to two pianos, played by separate pianists at the same time, which is called a piano duo. Four hand playing takes precision not only of sound, rhythm, and nuance but of actual physical movements to insure that all four hands can play freely at the same time.

Their unique style became an integral part of their performance. They perform from memory, they stress control of the right, or sustaining, pedal, by the primo player (on the right), and they play only pieces originally composed for four hand piano.

Their proximity to one another during performances has given them such experience in the smooth interacting of their hands and arms that they speak of a choreography of movement or of the logistics of the physical interplay during performances

A favorite for Arganbright and Weekley is Schubert’s “Fantasia in F minor,” and their grace and demeanor throughout is remarkable—they play with great aplomb. According to some music critics, interest in four hand piano today owes its resurgence directly to Arganbright and Weekley

During their careers they have played in many venues: internationally in Europe: in England, Ireland, Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, and Russia; in Asia: in Korea, China, and Taiwan. Here in the United States in places ranging from Kennedy Center in Washington, D. C., to school auditoriums in the Midwest and South.

They continued their concert tours even after coming to La Crosse, thanks, to careful planning and, they gratefully admit, an accomodating administration. On average they performed 50 concerts annually. In addition to their discovery of the Schubert piece, Weekley and Arganbright have resurrected numerous neglected four hand piano works and annotated them for publication, expanding the repertoire immensely.

Their focus has always been on teaching. In addition to their concert tours they have conducted numerous workshops for piano and music teachers. Duet playing, they think, is an excellent device to teach and improve solo piano playing, and they have conducted master classes at music conferences throughout the United States.

Beginning in 1980 they started publishing the results of their research and experience. Their most popular book is "The Piano Duet: A Learning Guide," published in 1996. Prior to that they published "Schubert's Music for Piano Four-Hands," based on Weekley's dissertation. Since 1980 they have contributed more than 50 volumes to the piano four hand canon.

They also have an unusual collection of manuscripts, augmented by photocopies of others, and several first editions. The history of the treatment of original manuscripts was, at times, rather checkered. Some showed a different pen and hand crossing out one thing or adding another. The Weekleys are intrigued by these and do their own sleuthing to determine what the composer intended.

Even in the printing they were ground-breaking. They required that the notations for both pianists be printed like orchestral scores, that is, the whole spreading across both pages. With the usual duet printing of that time the

secundo (left hand) would be on the left page and the primo (right hand) on the right—but they wanted them together on the open pages.

In 1982 they started an annual Four-Hand Fest at UW-L for a week of interaction each summer with players and fans, including recitals and master teaching sessions. The Fest went with them when they moved to Louisville in 1993.

When they announced their retirement from teaching at UW-La Crosse, the chancellor at the time, Judith Kuipers, named them “Treasures of the University,” and asked them to return annually to teach master classes in piano, and they have returned several times to UW-L.

They re-located first to Louisville, then to Florida, where they now live. They still are active both in teaching and workshops, though they officially retired from professional involvement in 2001. Earlier in their careers they made several tape recordings, and in recent years they have made several CDs.

Charles Dierkop (b. 1936)

Charles Dierkop's stock as an actor went up when he landed the role of one of the cops helping Angie Dickinson take care of crime in LA on the TV series, "Police Woman." The series began in 1974, and he played undercover cop, Pete Royster.

Charles Dierkop was born in La Crosse September 11, 1936. He attended Holy Trinity Grade School, and continued his education through his junior year at Aquinas High School. Through these later years he lived with his aunt and uncle, the William Perviskys, at 1550 Denton.

Apparently he was a handful in school and out. "I was always rebellious," he said during an interview for the Tribune in 1977. His local hangouts, he said, were "Pool halls or wherever the smoke was the thickest." And in 1953 he dropped out of school and enlisted in the Marines. During his tour of duty he served in Korea for two years.

When he got out, he went to live with his parents, the E. E. Chapins, in Levittown, Pennsylvania. Interested then in an acting career, he enrolled at the Bessie V. Hicks School of Drama in Philadelphia. He was soon acting in summer stock theater and, eventually, in full-time acting. He had the lead role in a production of "Picnic" in Philadelphia and played Falstaff in "Henry IV: Part II."

His career began with appearances on the TV series, "Naked City." His film career began in 1961 when he appeared in "The Hustler." It probably wasn't much of a part, but he got to rub shoulders with Paul Newman, Jackie Gleason, and Piper Laurie. And the film was a smash, winning nine Academy Award nominations and two Oscars.

That was followed by "The Pawnbroker," where he got to work with Rod Steiger. He then studied "method acting" at the Lee Strasberg School of Drama. In his next film in 1967, he was a mobster, Salvanti, in "The St. Valentine's Day Massacre," that time working with Jason Robards (who played Capone), and finally seeing his own name in the credits.

He continued his study of acting through all this and even began to teach acting classes himself in North Hollywood. At the same time he was appearing in episodes on various TV series programs: “Adam 12,” “Ironside,” “Daniel Boone,” and “Death Valley Days.” And he was earning a reputation as a solid character actor.

In a 1968 Tribune article columnist Marguerite Lienlokken summed up his career to that time—“He lost all the fights, whether he appeared in a dusty Western, under water or in interplanetary company.”

But Dierkop was optimistic. “Some day,” he said, “I’ll wear the white hat and win a few.”

Back in Hollywood he had minor roles, though credited, in two more films before he got the role in “Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid” in 1969. There he worked with Paul Newman again, as well as with Robert Redford, and under director, George Roy Hill. That film won four Academy Awards.

Dierkop played “Flat Nose” Curry, an authentic historical character, and Dierkop’s flat nose was authentic too. He said he had broken it five times—the first time in 7th grade back at Holy Trinity. It became his signature mark, making him easily recognizable in several more appearances in TV series, such as “Bonanza” and “Alias Smith and Jones,” and as Morla in “Star Trek.”

He also made the very odd movie, “Pound,” in which he was the airedale among 18 dogs waiting for adoption—or execution--directed by Robert Downey, Sr. Because of Downey’s particular approach the film was immediately rated “R” for foul language and pretty well dropped from sight.

But when the trio of Newman, Redford, and Hill came together again for “The Sting,” Dierkop came along, playing the bodyguard to Robert Shaw’s character. His indelible scene found him sitting behind con man, Paul Newman, as Newman hunkers over his cards, performs a deft switch, and wins an enormous sum from Shaw in poker. That film, too, was a blockbuster, winning 7 Academy Awards for 1973.

He continued his TV appearances, and the following year landed the part in the TV series, “Police Woman.” The pilot for the series, “Police Story: The

Gamble,” aired in March, 1974, with star Angie Dickinson teaming up with Dierkop as Pete Royster and Ed Bernard as Joe Styles, working out of the Los Angeles vice squad.

The pilot was successful, but the name of the series was changed to “Police Woman.” Shortly after he started the series, he returned to La Crosse for a visit. At that time he said that his roles were beginning to shift from being one-dimensional--the “Baddies” he had been playing--to more human, three-dimensional characters.

He thought viewers would get to see another side of him. And they did—largely because he had become such a fine character actor. His “Gonzo” style of acting in “Police Woman” gave him a chance to show a wide range of ability, and re-enforced his reputation—and recognition, with his chevron mustache and his newsboy cap pushed jauntily off-kilter.

On his visit to La Crosse in 1975, he had the police lock him up in the county jail, maybe to get a feel for life behind bars, maybe for a little publicity along the way. When he came back again in 1984 for his 1954 Aquinas class reunion, they locked him up again, this time for real. He was arrested for disorderly conduct and spent the night in jail before he could pay the fine of \$67.50 for his release.

Back in Hollywood he made several more movies, including a couple budget horror flicks, including “Silent Night, Deadly Night,” where he is a killer Santa Claus, a couple more crime movies, in one of which he was not a cop or a “baddie”—just a “businessman.” He appeared in more TV series, such as “Fantasy Island,” “The Fall Guy,” “Simon and Simon,” and “MacGyver.”

He acted in the segment called, “The Card Game,” in the “Beyond Belief: Fact or Fiction” TV series in April, 1998. He even made a cameo appearance in R.E.M.’s music video, “Man on the Moon,” in 1999. And he played in a comic spoof, “Superguy: Behind the Cape,” as well as in another crime movie, “Murder on the Yellow Brick Road.”

In all Dierkop has appeared to date in more than 35 films. If he had had lead roles in some of them his name would lie between Leonardo DiCaprio and

Marlene Dietrich in the movie and video guides. Should he be there? With the 55 TV series programs he appeared in, adding up to more than 80 different episodes, plus the 92 programs he did for “Police Woman,” it’s clear his name belongs there.

He is, without doubt, the “Iron Man” of Hollywood film and TV—like Cal Ripken, Jr., of baseball.

“A hard-working actor who richly deserves cult-figure status,” wrote one critic, “Charlie Dierkop has finessed his mashed-in countenance (his nose) and salty performing style into a 30 year career.” A fitting commentary—but make that read “a 50 year career.”

John Solie (b. 1937)

It's an incredible story: Young man from small city in the Midwest, hired to help out in a Hollywood studio art department, ends up doing portraits of Katherine Hepburn, Julie Andrews, Mary Tyler Moore, Michael Douglas, and Elvis. And soon his work is seen by millions!

But that's the story of John Solie. Born in La Crosse in 1937, graduated from Aquinas High School in 1955, a couple years at State University at La Crosse, a move to California, further study at the Los Angeles Art Center, and voila! Well--not quite! He started out as a free-lance artist. A friend talked him into applying for a job at Columbia Pictures, and he couldn't turn down their offer.

From Columbia he went on to New World Pictures, doing posters for their low-budget movies, such as, "Star Crash," "Tidal Wave," "Elvira's Movie Macabre," and some of the Shaft movies, the illustrations often lurid and melodramatic. Sometimes the deadline for the poster preceded the filming of the movie, and his illustrations seemed to have little to do with the story. Solie admitted as much concerning the 1973 movie, "Savage."

In an article in the La Crosse Tribune in 1984 he told the story of doing a poster involving a rendition of Michael Douglas for the movie "Romancing the Stone." The movie executives didn't like the picture of Douglas, so Solie worked on changing it to their tastes. Then Douglas saw the new—and the old—and preferred the old version—and that was it. Solie had captured the image.

Of course all of the above is not the whole story because it glosses over the key ingredient—his exceptional talent in capturing the "dead-on likenesses" of his subjects. And he didn't stay at that level long. He was soon doing mainstream movies, and in all he has painted over 200 movie posters. Soon he was doing cover illustrations for popular magazines and portraits of the stars themselves.

He did a painting of Kathryn Hepburn for the cover of The Saturday Evening Post and another of Julie Andrews for the same magazine. Eight of his paintings have been featured on the covers of TV Guide. And he has done cover

illustrations for other magazines, such as People Magazine, Golf Magazine, and Reader's Digest. He has also done record jackets such as Caddyshack, Smokey and the Bandit, and Caravan.

It's easy to identify Solie's work because of his unique signature. He nearly always puts his name, then draws a bird in flight, a dove, unusual because he sketches it with one line, in and out and around. He learned the logo from his grandfather, Paul Kaulfuss, who used to fascinate his grandchildren with the feat. And John adopted and copyrighted it for his own.

He has done a number of paintings for book jackets, too. For Louis Armstrong: Jazz Ambassador by Ruby Wilson, he did the cover and inside illustrations. And he has done covers for nearly 200 book covers, books such as Delta Star by Joseph Wambaugh; Family by Herbert Gold; Joshua's People by Alan Caillon; Deseret by Eric Alter; Hanover Heritage by Lynn Furstenberg-Forbes.

The last three are of interest because at least one of the persons illustrated in each is a member of the Ed Sullivan family. Sullivan, who for years ran Sullivan's Supper Club near Trempealeau, grew up with Solie, and they continued their friendship over the years. Solie gave him several original paintings he had done, and Ed featured them on the walls of his restaurant, alongside two other Solie paintings, one of Ed and his wife, Sally, and another of their three daughters.

When Solie returned for a visit to La Crosse in July, 1984, one of the first places he headed for was Sullivan's where his paintings were always on exhibit. For him the Coulee region is home, and at one point he considered moving back, but after staying six months, long enough to experience the extremes of our seasons, he decided against it. He now lives in Tucson, Arizona, where his paintings are on exhibit at a local gallery.

But he is more than an illustrator; he is also a portraitist of reputation. He has painted a number of Hollywood stars, of course, Sean Connery, Debra Winger, Bill Cosby, James Garner, Carol Burnett, Ron Howard, and many more. He has

also done portraits of past celebrities, such as Jackie Gleason, John Belushi, Elvis Presley, Michael Jackson, and others.

Perhaps his most famous painting has become that of the shuttle crew of "Challenger." He was commissioned to cover aspects of the launch in 1988, and working from photographs of each astronaut, put together a montage of the seven who died on board the shuttle. It appeared first in Reader's Digest, then was picked up by the media and has been reproduced numerous times since. From that came his portrait of Christa McAuliffe, the first teacher in space.

Solie also has done sculpture. His most famous is a bronze bust of Walter Cronkite which stands in the lobby of the CBS headquarters in New York. He has done a bust of Richard Scobie, the commander of the ill-fated Challenger, and a full-length version of Macbeth, and a Mr. Bojangles.

His work is on permanent display at the Pentagon Art Gallery (two paintings of the Apollo Space Mission), the Kennedy Space Center and the Johnson Space Centers (Solie was a member of the NASA Art Team), the Cowboy Hall of Fame (Medora, North Dakota), and the Celebrity Wax Museum (Shingiku, Japan).

Most recently Solie has begun doing Western art, many renderings of individual Indians, and portraits of Buffalo Bill and Big Ned Kaulfuss, both in Western leather outfits. And he has a self-portrait on his web site.

For a Reader's Digest, article on Lt. Edwin Price Ramsey in 1992, Solie did a painting of the last war-time cavalry charge in United States history. It occurred during World War II as the Philippines fell to the onslaught of the Japanese. Lt. Ramsey escaped to fight again leading Filipino guerillas. When Col. Ramsey's book about the incident came out, it was evident that there were inaccuracies in the painting. So the U.S. Cavalry Association asked Solie to do another in consultation with Ramsey.

Solie's interests have been turning to Western art, and his work has been featured in galleries in Scottsdale and Tucson, Arizona. In January, 2013, he was the featured artist at the Annual "Empire 100" Western Art Show and Sale to be held in Tucson. The write-up honoring him states: "The body of work that

John Solie has created in a career spanning over 40 years is beyond impressive."

Not bad for a lad from La Crosse.

Thea Bowman, FSPA (1937-1990)

In what turned out to be an all too short life, Sister Thea Bowman, FSPA, had an extraordinary effect on those who knew her personally, on those who knew her only through her speeches and writings, and on those who benefited from her drive to set up various multi-cultural programs and scholarships for minorities.

At several Catholic colleges there are now financial aids for Black students or for other minority students, inspired by her and often named for her. Across the country, buildings, including schools and chapels and social centers and day care centers have also been named for her. All of this and more from a woman whose spirit and enthusiasm out-paced her body.

Bertha Bowman was born in Yazoo City, “Gateway to the Mississippi Delta,” in December, 1937, but she grew up in Canton, Mississippi. Her grandfather was a slave; her father, a physician; her mother, a teacher. She was raised Methodist, but she was so impressed with the Franciscan sisters, FSPAs from La Crosse, that with her parents’ permission, she became a Catholic at age 9.

She attended Holy Child Jesus School in Canton, run by the Sisters. She continued in her admiration of her teachers, and at age 15 she decided to become a nun herself. She came to La Crosse to finish her high school education at St. Rose, the motherhouse. But her stay was interrupted by tuberculosis, and she spent many months of 1955 in a sanitarium in Stevens Point.

She formally entered on her novitiate in 1956, taking the name, Thea, “of God,” which also honored her father, Theon. On graduating from high school she went right on with her education at Viterbo. She taught 5th and 6th graders at Blessed Sacrament School in La Crosse during the years of her schooling.

In 1961 she returned to Canton to teach in the catholic high school. Because she was black (the only black sister in her order), her return required a gentlemen’s agreement between the governor of the state and the bishop of Jackson, Mississippi—even for her teaching in a private school.

She graduated from Viterbo in 1965 with a degree in English, speech and drama. She continued her studies, and received a master's in 1969 and, in 1972, a doctorate from Catholic University in Washington, D.C. Her dissertation focused on American writer and fellow Mississippian, William Faulkner. During that summer she visited Oxford University in England and was able to travel in Europe.

On her return she joined the faculty at her alma mater, Viterbo College, in the English Department. She was a dynamo there. Not only did she teach the usual assigned courses, she created two new courses--Black American Literature and Native American Literature—and she became chair of her department.

She also organized and directed a student group, the Hallelujah Singers, combining concerts—open to the public and participatory--with her positive Christian message of hope emphasized through music. She was good with children or with adults, entertaining them all through music and dance and story and drama, bringing people together, encouraging cross-cultural collaboration for the benefit of all.

These were the years of the Civil Rights movement, and she brought Black oral tradition and gospel music into her presentations. Her message was clear: all people are gifted, all people are beautiful, and all people are God's creatures. Her enthusiasm and charisma began to make her reputation, and soon she was speaking and singing at conferences and meetings around the country, often in flowing African dress and always wearing the silver medal of the FSPA.

In 1979 she returned to her native Mississippi to help take care of her aging parents. No problem with the governor this time, and the bishop talked her into serving as a consultant for the diocese for intercultural awareness. It was a perfect fit. She soon joined the faculty at Xavier University, a black catholic school in New Orleans, where she brought African-American students together and founded the Institute of Black Catholic Studies.

She became a spokesperson for Black Catholics, urging the church to bring Black culture into Catholic ritual. She began to conduct workshops with clergy emphasizing such melding, and she put her work and experience into a book,

Families: Black and Catholic, Catholic and Black, which the U. S. Catholic Conference published in 1985.

Because of her work on William Faulkner, she attended the Faulkner Conference every year at the University of Mississippi at Oxford, Faulkner's hometown. Titled "Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha County" (the jaw-breaking name of Faulkner's fictional world), it runs for a week each summer. There she was an unusual voice among the mostly white audience, interpreting Faulkner's depictions of Blacks and their relationships to Whites as only she could.

And she entertained them--with her singing and dancing and drama—reading and/or acting out passages by various black characters in Faulkner's novels. At one conference she sang—and she did have a voice--and danced and directed a black children's choir. At another she acted in a dramatic scene from Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*, playing the black character, Dilsey. And at another she read in dialect the dialogue of black characters in Faulkner's *Requiem for a Nun*.

By 1984 she was achieving a national voice in Black culture and for Black culture when she suddenly faced dramatic challenges in her personal life. Her parents both died that year, and before the year was out, she herself was diagnosed with cancer. The medical therapy that followed was very draining, but she barely slowed down.

She soon was off to Nairobi, Kenya, to the 43rd International Eucharistic Conference. On her return she was awarded the Harriet Tubman award by the National Black Sisters Conference. The following year she received the Pope John XXIII award from her alma mater, Viterbo College. Such encouragement kept her going. And she was a speaker throughout the South and in Canada, and in the Caribbean.

In 1987 she was interviewed by Mike Wallace on "60 Minutes." And they became good friends. "I don't remember when I've been more moved, more enchanted, by a person whom I've profiled," he later said, "her openness, her compassion, her intelligence, her optimism, her humor captured me."

Shortly after came the publication of *Lead Me, Guide Me*, the African-American Hymnal. Sister Thea had been a major advisor for the project,

choosing many of the songs, and writing an erudite introduction to the book, tracing the sources and development of African-American song, which she characterized as “spirit-filled” and “life-giving.”

During her last years she published several articles, including “Let me Live Til I Die,” which appeared in Reader’s Digest. And she made several videos, the first in 1986, “Black history and culture in the Works of William Faulkner,” another, “Almost Home: Living with Suffering and Dying” for the Redemptorist Press, and “Are You Walkin’ With Me,” among others, as well as two CDs of spirituals, “Round the Glory Manger” and “Songs of My People.”

In 1988 in the Rose Garden at the White House she was given the American Cancer Society’s “Courage Award” by President Reagan. And the following January she was in Milwaukee for the celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birthday. She urged the choirs she would direct to sing from the heart, and when they sang, she joined in. And her joy in celebration ignited the audience, she gave her speech amid enthusiastic interruptions, and they ended by singing, “We Shall Overcome.”

Barely back home in Canton, Mississippi, Sister Thea began running a fever. Tests revealed that her cancer had returned. She started using a wheelchair, but she wasn’t done yet. She was invited to address the American bishops. There she began by singing the spiritual, “I Feel Like a Motherless Child,” to make her point that the church should make all people feel welcome. And by the end she had the bishops standing, joining arms, and singing with her, “We Shall Overcome.”

A few months later, in March, 1990, her voice fell silent. She was buried beside her parents in the cemetery in Memphis, Tennessee. After her death her Franciscan colleague, Sr. Celestine Cephress, collected Sr. Thea’s writing and speeches in the book, *Sister Thea Bowman, Shooting Star*—a perfect title..

Bill Miller (b. 1955)

He studied art at Layton School of Art and Design in Milwaukee before transferring to the UW-La Crosse Art Department. Expressing himself through his art is still important to him, but his greatest success has been in expressing himself through his music.

And a key ingredient of his music comes from his heritage. Bill Miller belongs to the Mohican tribe of the Brothertown Indian Nation, and he was raised on the Stockbridge-Munsee Indian Reservation in northern Wisconsin near Shawano. And that experience and that heritage informs much of what he does as a musician.

It wasn't always that way. Born in 1955, he was the oldest of 9 children. He said that he got his first guitar when he was 12. With only an AM radio to listen to, he chose as his early music idols Rock 'n' Roll stars, and his developing style, using an electric guitar, reflected that.

After he transferred to UW-La Crosse, he began to play professionally. He shuffled through a number of bands in the area, who changed their name or their members often—"Skyscraper," "Morning Star," among others. Then around 1977 he switched to acoustic guitar, and he began to shift his music and his life.

He started playing bluegrass with the band, "Wet Behind the Ears," and he started composing his own songs. Soon he began to experiment with a traditional cedar wood flute he had acquired. Then he and Dan Sebranek formed the group, "Native Sons," often playing in the La Crosse area, the Freighthouse and the Pump House, among other venues.

Exposure was what was needed, and they were fortunate to be asked to do the opening for a John Prine concert at Viterbo in 1980. Miller got a big break when he sought out Michael Murphy (of "Wildfire" fame) following an appearance in Winona.

Three years later, in 1985, Murphey had Miller as a special guest on his cable TV program, "Nashville Now," with Miller playing some of his original songs.

Following that they went on the road with Murphey. In the meantime Miller recorded the album, “Bill Miller and Native Sons,” and soon after another titled, “Old Dreams and New Hopes.”

But Nashville was where the music was, and he soon returned. He went on tour with several musicians—Eddie Vedder, the BoDeans, Richie Havens, and Arlo Guthrie. And he wrote songs with Nancy Griffith, Peter Rowan, and Kim Carnes.

Though he enjoyed being on tour, he missed his family—wife, Renee, and two children, Shayna and Garrett—and he missed La Crosse, which had pretty much become his hometown. Then in 1993 he came out with the album, “The Red Road.” And he got another break. The album attracted the attention of Tori Ames, a popular pianist and singer of folk rock. She took him on her tour show, “Under the Pink,” in 1994, using him as the opener to her concert.

And he remained busy putting albums together along the way, almost one a year: “Art of Survival,” 1990; “Loon Mountain and Moon,” 1991 (which featured his mastery of the cedar wood flute); “Reservation Road,” 1992; “The Red Road”, (which included the song, “Tumbleweed,”); and “Raven in the Snow,” 1995.

A year later he collaborated with Native American musician, Robert Mirabal in the album “Native Suite: Chants, Dances, and Remembered Earth.” The new album featured many Native American musical elements, including flute and drum and voices from a Mohican Pow-wow.

But it was with “Ghost Dance,” 1999 that he finally made his mark. The album won an unprecedented five Nammys (Native American Music Awards) in 2000. Two years later he came out with one of his most popular albums, “Spirit Rain.” He followed that with “Healing Waters.”

And, finally, in 2005 Miller won a Grammy for the Best Native American Music Album, “Cedar Dream Songs.” Predominately instrumental, the album was recorded in La Crosse at Actual Sound Studios operated by Mike von Muchow, who also played bass, and included percussionist, Terry Nirva, and Joshua Yudkin on keyboard.

The award was a highlight of his career, and the following year he shared another Grammy with other artists for the album, "Sacred Ground: A Tribute to Mother Earth." The recognition kept coming--in 2007 he received a Nammy for his lifetime achievement. Since then he has come out with several new albums. And, finally, with a collection of songs stretching over his career, called "Spirit Songs: The Best of Bill Miller."

In the meantime Amy Mills, director of the La Crosse Symphony urged him to come up with something authentic for a combined performance of Native American music and the symphony. Miller and his friend, Joshua Yudkin, and composer, Kristin Wilkinson, worked on something ambitious, something symphonic, and they came up with a "symphony of hope" they titled, "The Last Stand" (referring to the Battle of Little Bighorn), which included flute and voice as well as drumming and chanting provided by Native American groups, the Battle Point Singers and the Eagle Wing Theater group.

It premiered in April, 2008, and was received with great enthusiasm by symphony goers. Through help from the U.S. Embassy and from an exchange program he and Mills were able to go to Israel to present the symphony. Amy Mills guest-conducted the Israel Kibbutz Orchestra and Miller soloed on the flute, at six different locations there. It turned out to be a remarkable accomplishment and a remarkable tour.

It wasn't long before Miller came out with a new album, "Spirit Wind North," and he again won a Grammy for the Best Native American Music Album in 2010. He has followed this with "Spirit Wind East" and "Spirit Wind West," and intends to complete the series with "Spirit Wind South." His latest CD is titled "Chronicles of Hope."

For several of his albums he did the artwork for the cover. He was able to display his great facility with color when he painted one of the several herons the Pump House scattered around La Crosse as a fund-raising venture. He has also done some sculpturing.

His Mohican name is Fush-Ya Heay Aka, which means "Bird Song." There could be no more appropriate name to describe Bill Miller than that.

Amy Mills

Amy Mills came to the La Crosse Symphony Orchestra as conductor in 1995 and stayed at its helm for 14 years. They were prime years for her to demonstrate her abilities and to bring the local symphony to its highest development.

Amy Mills was a native Wisconsinite, growing to adulthood in Hales Corners, a suburb of Milwaukee. In high school she had a chance to guest conduct the band, and the experience was so exhilarating that she decided to pursue a musical career.

She received her bachelor's and master's degrees from Northwestern University. She went on to Catholic University of America where she received her doctorate in symphony directing. She served in the U.S. Air Force for 10 years, from 1981 to 1991. She noted that at the time it was the only place women could compete for conducting positions.

It was in 1990, when she was a captain, that she was named the conductor of the Air Force Symphony, the first woman and the youngest person ever to fill the position. She also served as the first woman director of the "Singing Sergeants," a 27 member group of professional musicians who give concerts around the country.

After reverting to reserve status, Mills and her husband settled in the Washington, D. C., area, and she soon formed "The National Women's Symphony" as a place to feature compositions by women composers. She was music director of the group for several years.

As an outstanding alumnus of Northwestern, she was chosen to give the School of Music's Commencement address in 1995. That same year she was hired as director of the La Crosse Symphony Orchestra.

During her 14 years in La Crosse she worked hard not only at improving the orchestra but at improving its reception by a well-informed audience. The La Crosse Tribune called her "a fireball of excitement and enthusiasm."

And some of the remarkable things she brought to La Crosse were multi-cultural. As one outstanding example, she conducted the orchestra for the premier of Grammy-award-winning, Bill Miller, and Joshua Yudkins' symphony, "The Last Stand," referring to the Battle of Little Bighorn, and written with the hope of reconciliation.

Mills conducted the symphony with Miller providing the flute and voice elements, and several Native Americans providing the drumming. It was presented in April, 2008, and was received with great enthusiasm by symphony goers

She expanded the symphony's offerings to the public and greatly increased the number of subscribers. She added an outdoor "Pops" concert, a concert opera production, a pre-concert show on Wisconsin Public Radio, and made and had released a recording of selections by the La Crosse Symphony.

And she loved every minute of it. "To have had the opportunity to work with an orchestra like this," she noted at the time of her leaving, "in a community like this that supports us so much and that loves us so much, I have nothing but joy and gratitude," she said.

Over the years she has guest-conducted in various international venues: in Russia, in Poland, in Israel, in Brazil, and in Mexico. In addition she has guest-conducted in symphony orchestras in various cities in this country.

Her next challenge is to transform the National Women's Symphony into the "Symphonia Internationale" in the Washington, D. C., area, concentrating on presenting multicultural music from around the world: "To build the bridges of harmony between all cultures," as she said in an interview with the La Crosse Tribune.

Her life is obviously dedicated to music, but not just to conducting. She is also a pianist and a clarinetist. But now she wants to spend more of her time as a composer. While still in La Crosse, she conducted the symphony in several performances of her composition, "Centennial Fanfare," which has become a "Pops" favorite.

In 2010 she premiered her work, “Ha Shamayim,” conducting the symphony orchestra of Aguascalientes, Mexico to great acclaim. The title of the piece comes from the Hebrew for “the heavens,” and during the presentation photos taken by the Hubble Space Telescope are shown in the background, forming the framework of the work.

Her composition, “Christmas Angels and Bells,” was premiered by the Tacoma Symphony Orchestra in 2012. The “Red Dragonfly,” a trombone sonata she wrote for Megumi Kanda, trombonist for the Milwaukee Symphony, was performed at the international Trombone Festival in 2013. She has also written, “Journey One, Concerto for Trumpet and String Orchestra” for the lead trumpeter for the Milwaukee Symphony, which will be premiered in 2014.

She is presently at work on a composition commissioned by the Emanuel Church of Christ for their up-coming centennial.

Scott Thorson (b. 1959)

He first captured national headlines in 1982 when he sued popular entertainer, Liberace, for \$113 million. Then he wrote a book about their long relationship, titled *Behind the Candelabra*. And finally HBO network came out with a movie under the same name, based on the book.

Scott Thorson was born in La Crosse in January, 1959, the last of four children. His mother had serious emotional problems, and she would sometimes leave the kids alone for days. One of those times the children begged food from their landlady. She gave them food, but she also called the authorities.

Their mother was hospitalized, and they were taken into the welfare system. Scott ended up first at St. Michael's Home in south La Crosse, then later at the La Crosse Home for Children. When his mother was better, she decided to take her family to California for a new start.

But she hadn't changed. She was soon hospitalized after their move, and Scott found himself in the welfare system again, this time in the Los Angeles area. That began a series of moves through foster homes—some caring, some not. He claimed that he went through 17 foster homes along the way.

When he was about 14 he was taken in by a couple who ran a ranch in Marin County. It was idyllic for Scott—he loved working with animals, and he thought this would be his last stop before he was on his own. But then the proprietor got cancer and had to sell the ranch, and Scott was out again. This time he talked the welfare worker into letting him move in with his half brother, Wayne Johansen, who lived in San Francisco.

There he became aware of his sexual preferences, realizing he was gay. He decided that San Francisco was not a good environment for him, and he moved on to one more foster home, then decided to go on his own. He was just 16. He returned to the Los Angeles area and found a job with a veterinarian, working primarily with dogs. Scott loved it. He thought he had found his life's work.

Through his gay contacts, he met a choreographer-dancer, who befriended him and offered to take him to Las Vegas to catch a few shows. Scott was more than impressed when he saw they were driving there in a sporty Mercedes 450 SL. They took in a couple shows, then on the third night, his friend took him to Liberace's show. From the moment he saw the performance Thorsen was spellbound.

Afterwards they went backstage to meet the performer. Scott was impressed but uneasy about the way Liberace looked him over. At the end Liberace invited them to brunch the next day—at three p.m! Scott was of two minds about going, but he finally agreed. Several weeks later Scott was invited to join Liberace's entourage, hired as a personal companion, secretary, chauffeur, and, according to Scott, lover.

He became a part of Liberace's life. He lived in Liberace's extravagant mansions filled with objets d'art and kitsch—and it was all his to enjoy. He was given expensive gifts—mink coats, jewelry, and a Camaro, later a Rolls. Scott was overwhelmed. He had never been cared about or loved—and here was this great entertainer taking him in.

Scott soon found out that Liberace's hobby was to spend money and shop for hours on end. Liberace owned several cars, and 17 pianos in his various homes at that time. His particular mantra was: "Too much of a good thing was wonderful!"

Liberace was a spendthrift in all things. He soon urged Scott to purchase a house in Vegas, which he did. And then Liberace spent money to furnish it, more money than the original price of the house. Though his costumes cost in the thousands of dollars, they were used only a few times before they were put aside. And at the height of their relationship, Scott said, they had 26 dogs living with them. For a fellow who had nothing, it was quite a change in life style for Scott.

And it wasn't long before he became part of the show. For the Las Vegas appearances, he would drive Liberace's mirrored Rolls-Royce on stage, step out—in rhinestone-studded uniform, of course--and open the door for his boss to

make his appearance in outrageously elaborate fur coats, one with a 16 foot train. It's one of the memorable scenes in the movie, and it can be seen in the original on YouTube.

Scott accompanied Liberace to all his shows and social events, meeting well-known stars along the way—Debbie Reynolds, Lena Horne, Charo, Shirley McLaine, Loretta Lynn, Tony Orlando—and for a while Michael Jackson was a special friend. And when he went on tour to Europe with Liberace he even shook hands with the Queen of England. It was pretty heady stuff!

At one point Liberace told his associates, "The most important person in my life is Scott. His job is to make me smile, to keep me happy." And that's pretty much what Scott did. But the life had its difficulties. Scott's time was dominated by his boss, who never wanted to be alone. But Scott was a young, active fellow, and he found it hard to live as isolated as Liberace wanted.

But he admired Liberace, and seemed to have a real attachment to him. He proved this when, just after Liberace's own face-lift in 1979, he agreed to Liberace's request that he undergo plastic surgery to shape his face to resemble Liberace's own. That required a chin implant, a nose modification, and enhanced cheekbones. "I did everything I possibly could to please this man," Thorson later said.

Liberace was pleased with the result, and felt elated when someone, because of the resemblance, thought Scott might be his son. And the two of them talked over the idea that Liberace might adopt Scott to give him legal status. They discussed the idea with Liberace's lawyer, and, though Scott thought it had been agreed to, nothing finally came of it.

And in 1982 it all changed. Liberace hired a private agency to forcibly remove Thorson from his penthouse in Los Angeles supposedly because of Scott's drug abuse and alcoholism. Thorson's response was that his drug addiction came from his boss's insistence that he stay slim by following a regimen that included prescription cocaine and that Liberace had thrown him aside for other lovers and reneged on a promise that he would take care of Thorson for the rest of his life.

Since all of his possessions were in Liberace's hands, Thorson decided to take legal action, suing Liberace for \$113 million, in a case referred to by the press as "palimony." Tabloid newspapers had a field day with all of this, and it wasn't long before Scott's claims were impugned. It was a long and bitter battle. They finally settled out of court—for \$75,000—when Scott learned Liberace was dying.

During Liberace's last days, in January, 1987, there was a reconciliation, but Thorson was not included in Liberace's will. The following year Thorson with the help of Alex Thorliefsson, published the story of his life with the entertainer, titled "Behind the Candelabra." Though it provided details of Liberace's gay life, it was not a character assassination—but the tabloids jumped on the revelations it contained.

Along the way Thorson had the chin implant removed. In the meantime Thorson had been "taken in" by Eddie Nash, purportedly a drug dealer who had been supplying Thorson for some time. That eventually entangled Thorson in a trial concerning the "Wonderland Murders" in Los Angeles in 1988 and his testimony, he claimed, put his life in jeopardy.

Thorson later told the story that he had been placed in the witness protection plan after he testified, and had changed his name to Jess Marlow and his location to Florida. There he started using drugs again, and in 1991 in a room at a motel in Jacksonville he was shot three times (he claims five), during a drug deal gone bad, and he barely survived.

Then a strange quirk of fate. A woman in Maine who had read his book was moved not only to pray for him but to provide for him. Georgianna Morrill got in contact with him through an evangelical friend, and offered him shelter. He took her up on it. It was a strange arrangement, but it lasted for 12 years—12 years for Thorson to keep out of trouble.

It ended when he left for Palm Springs back in California. There he got into trouble with the law for stealing groceries and for drug possession. But again a friend, Tony Pelicone, took him in. "Nobody was there to pick him up. So I did, thinking he'd stay for a few days," Pelicone said. "That turned into 10 years." It

was Pelicone's step-father, Oliver Mading, who made the successful push to make a film of the book.

Thorson got nearly \$100,000 for the film rights—then spent it over the next two months on cars and jewelry. After that he headed for Las Vegas. And it wasn't long before his name appeared in the newspapers again—charged with burglary and ID theft. He was in jail when the HBO network premiered the movie based on his book.

At age 53 he had been through it all. He was now penniless, and he claimed he had terminal cancer. In July, 2013, the judge sentenced Thorson to eight to 20 years, then suspended the sentence and ordered Thorson to outpatient treatment.