



The ROCKY RIDGE REVIEW

Summer 2004

Laura Ingalls Wilder - Rose Wilder Lane Home Association, Mansfield, Missouri 65704

CHARETTE HELD TO BRAINSTORM FOR THE FUTURE OF THE WILDER SITE

The Laura Ingalls Wilder Home Association was host of a Charette in April, which brought together a team of museum and humanities experts from around the region and from as far away as Massachusetts to assess the site and the site experience and offer suggestions for present and future enhancements. The Charette was sponsored by the Missouri Humanities Council in cooperation with the Missouri Arts Council. Michael Bouman, Executive Director of the Missouri Humanities Council, opened the two-day event with analysis of assets, opportunities, challenges and liabilities at the Wilder Home. Many of the strong assets of the Wilder homes and museum were cited, and opportunities were suggested.

Among the challenges suggested for the Wilder site's development are a phased master plan, issues of identity and purpose, ways to enhance the historic homes as "living" residences, and preservation suggestions.

Association president Jean Coday was pleased with the two-day Charette, which "brought us together with experts working in the museum field."

"The Charette team was complimentary of the current operation," Mrs. Coday observed. "As we respond to their suggestions, there will be benefits to us for years to come."

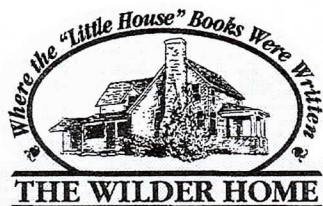
The Wilder Home's participation in the Charette was made possible thanks to the idea of Carol Grimes, who has been engaged by the Association as a grant writer. Carol was instrumental in the application



The distinguished guest list of Charette consultants included (left to right) Philip Cotton, Jr., Architect, St. Louis, MO, Ted Jackson (observer) Director, Honey Shuck, the Champ Clark House, Bowling Green, MO, Carol Grimes, Springfield, MO, Alisha Cole, Curator and Living History Specialist at the Bruce R. Watkins Cultural Heritage Center in Kansas City, MO, David O. Watkins, Director of Media Services, Cornell University (retired), Ithaca, NY, Carey Tisdal, Consultant in Museum Evaluation with Selinda Research, St. Louis, MO, Michael Bouman, Executive Director, Missouri Humanities Council, Jan Turnquist, Executive Director, Orchard House - The Home of the Alcotts, Concord, MA, Brian Phillips, Program Director, Poplar Heights Farm, Butler, MO, St. Louis, MO, Terrie Young, Development Director, Missouri Humanities Council, St. Louis, MO, John Dalzell, Executive Director of the Campbell House Museum, St. Louis, MO, with Jean Coday, Director and President, LIWHA and Vicki Box, long-time friend and supporter of the Association, both of Mansfield.

process and continued to provide assistance in the planning and evaluation of the event. In her final report she mentioned, "I believe that an important re-

sult of the Charette helped to develop a widening circle of supporters including scholars, the Missouri Humanities Council and museum professionals.



NEWS FROM THE HOME & MUSEUM

WILDER NEWS

The Laura Ingalls Wilder Home Association has received a bequest from the estate of Doris Velen in the amount of \$8,000. Ms. Velen was an award-winning Kansas educator, whose interest in the Little House books and the Wilder Home dates back to the 1960s. The gift will be earmarked for the planned-for museum of the future...

New Association board member is Tim Hancock from Mountain Grove, MO. Welcome, Tim...

Walnut Grove, Minnesota's Wilder museum is exhibiting artifacts on loan from the Wilder Home collection this summer...

Association employee Becky Zorsch manned an information booth for the Association and answered questions about the Wilder Home at the National Council for History Education held in St. Louis in April...

Recently the Governor signed HB 826 designating a portion of Highway A as the "Laura Ingalls Wilder Memorial Highway." The ribbon cutting and dedication ceremony will be held at 10:30 a.m. during Mansfield's 31st annual Laura Ingalls Wilder Festival on Saturday, September 18, at the town square. The festival, which opens September 15, will be celebrating the 110th anniversary of the Wilder family's move to the area....

Also in Mansfield the Ozark Mountain Players will present an outdoor pageant based on the life of Laura and her family. "Laura's Memories" will be presented on August 27-28, September 3-4, September 10-11 and September 17-18 this year...

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Check pattern on front page streamer is duplicated from flyleaves of original Harper & Brothers editions of the Wilder books and favored by Laura

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PETER AND ELIZA INGALLS DESCENDANTS VISIT ROCKY RIDGE

From the Little House books and other historical books about the Ingalls family it is evident that Laura's branch was particularly close to the family of Peter and Eliza Quiner Ingalls. Because of a marriage between brothers and sisters of the Quiner and Ingalls clans, the resulting children were "double cousins" and strong look-alikes.

The strong family feeling was evident when great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren of Peter and Eliza made a group visit to the Wilder home and museum on June 25, 2004. The trip was planned by siblings David Ingalls, Fran Ingalls Richesin and John Ingalls. Their father, Herbert, called their attention to Laura and Rose's writings as they appeared in periodicals and in book form. The family continues to take pride in their connection.

Serving as educators is common in this family, with David, Fran and John all in the profession at one time or another. David completed 40 years in the field the day after his visit to Rocky Ridge. His daughter Laura Ingalls carries on that tradition. Fran remarked that she read all the Little House books to her students. At the completion of the series she said there were "cheer and tears" both. Children applauded the wonderful books, but were also sad to see them end.

The current Ingalls family has placed Peter and Eliza's family Bible on loan to the museum at Rocky Ridge. It was surely in use when nine year old Laura Ingalls and her family spent a summer with their welcoming relatives after the devastating grasshopper plague in Walnut Grove, Minnesota.



Members of this branch of the Ingalls family have often visited Rocky Ridge Farm, never in such unified numbers. They related interesting details of their ancestors during the visit.

HELEN BOYLSTON: A MEMBER OF THE HOUSEHOLD

For five years, the Wilder family hosted and housed Helen Boylston on their Rocky Ridge Farm. A New Englander, Helen was a highly trained nurse and served as such in World War I. In the aftermath of the war, both Rose Wilder Lane and Helen were in Europe, at which time they met. Helen was a breezy, fun-loving friend, as eager to see the world as Rose was. When Rose returned to Rocky Ridge farm in 1925-1926, Helen followed her as an extended houseguest.



Helen Boylston as she looked while living with Almanzo, Laura, and Rose.

Laura and Almanzo welcomed Helen and she became "one of the family." She enjoyed life in the Ozarks, particularly horseback riding. She accompanied the family on long and short trips during her time with the Wilders. From 1926-1928 Helen and Rose lived in Albania, and they both returned to the farm again. At that time, Rose encouraged her friend to begin a writing career. One of her early magazine stories was about the pets of Rocky Ridge.

The Depression ended this happy interlude, when Helen was forced to return to the east and resume her nursing career. This led to the writing of her Sue Barton series, said to be the first "career" novels ever published for girls. She lived in Connecticut until her death in 1984.

Helen remained in contact with the Wilders, and made additional short visits to the family. She was, indeed, a "member of the family" on Rocky Ridge Farm.

Here is an autobiographical sketch Helen Boylston wrote. Between the lines, today's reader still catches the wit and humor that enlivened the house on Rocky Ridge.

I was born in Portsmouth, New Hampshire in 1895, and I had, I believe, an exceptionally happy childhood, for though I was an only child, my parents had good sense and I was neither overindulged nor over-disciplined. Also since there were no cars, there were no restrictions on playing hopscotch, or tag in the middle of the street, bicycles were safe, and in winter one could get a free ride anywhere on the runner of a passing sleigh a delight now lost to children.

I was educated in the Portsmouth public schools and did neither exceptionally badly nor well. My adolescence was as lively, unrestrained and innocent as my childhood had been. At eighteen I entered the Massachusetts General Hospital nursing school in Boston, where I spent three strenuous, happy, and somewhat startled years. Two days after graduation I enlisted in the Harvard medical unit for duty overseas with the British Expeditionary Force, in the First World War—from which I emerged in 1919 as tired and confused as everybody else. On the strength of this I joined the American Red Cross and had about a year and a half of reconstruction work in Europe. We worked hard, we saw a great deal of Europe, we had adventures, and were frequently caught in minor wars and revolutions—but it is my opinion that we did very little general good, and I was glad to return home to the Massachusetts General Hospital, where I taught nose and throat anesthesia for about two years.

It was at the end of this period that a writer friend of mine read my war diary and insisted on sending it to the Atlantic Monthly, in which it was published serially—and I discovered, to my surprise, that I was going to be able to earn my living writing.

I have done so ever since, and in the meantime lived two more years in the Balkans—Albania—seven years in Missouri, one in Arizona and California, and the last fifteen in peaceful subsidence in Westport, Connecticut. Fourteen of these last years were spent in quarrelsome slavery to the dour whims and obstinacies of my Scotch terrier, George, and since his death I have taken to cats. They are far less bossy.

Besides war diary, I have published eighteen (I think) short stories, and nine career books for girls—the "Sue Barton" series, and the "Carol Page" series. I live alone and like it, and would infinitely rather write for children than adults. I like children. very much. and have two godchildren, aged four and six, who live next door and spend much of their time here. These and my camera are my only hobbies, unless one wants to count Jane Austen's novels.

WILDER NEWS, cont.

A newly filmed mini-series based on the books of Laura Ingalls Wilder has been filmed and will be shown on ABC-TV next season. The original producer of the pilot film of LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE, Ed Friendly, has brought this new program to fruition...

Those supporters who wish to purchase a \$500 level membership in the Association may do so on the installment plan, by paying \$100 for five consecutive years...

At the June meeting of the Association board of directors, it was decided to proceed with plans to create walking trails to link the Rocky Ridge farmhouse with the Rock House location. Phillip Bennett performed an exhaustive study of the topography and likely whereabouts of the old linking trail between the houses early this spring. Thank you, Mr. Bennett, for your expertise...

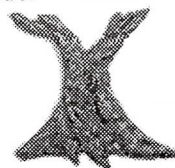
The familiar brown carpeting in the Wilder Home has become badly worn and torn in recent years. Because of this replica carpeting has been purchased and installed. The manufacturer of the 76 year-old carpeting should be commended; it has served the Wilders and now their current visitors will for an extraordinarily long time. Certainly a million pairs of feet have walked over the parlor carpet through the years...

The Homes and Museum will remain open for tours this season until November 15. Tours by appointment will be available another month of the Museum and the Wilder farmhouse.

DONOR RECOGNITION TREE NOW IN PLACE

The plan for a new museum to house the treasures of the Ingalls and Wilder families continues to move along. You are invited to be a part of this project, and your financial support will be recognized by a Donor Tree now in place in the Museum building.

For a minimum \$200 donation your name or organization's name will be engraved on a leaf of the tree. This will be located in the current museum and transferred permanently to the new building, which is currently being planned. We look forward to your support in making this dream come true.

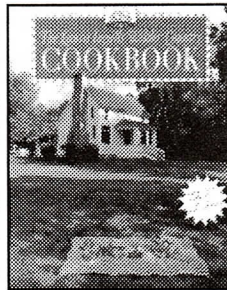


NEW IN THE LITTLE HOUSE BOOKSTORE

LAURA INGALLS WILDER COUNTRY COOKBOOK

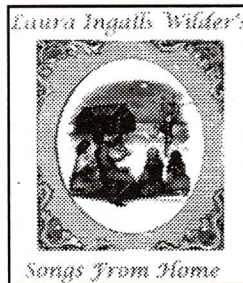
With this recently RE-PUBLISHED cookbook, Little House fans can share Laura Ingalls Wilder's original recipes and enjoy her wholesome country cooking. Updated for the modern kitchen, these recipes are enriched with anecdotes about Laura's life on the farm by noted Wilder historian William Anderson. Leslie Kelly's handsome full-color photographs of Laura's beloved farmhouse bring her recipes and stories to life. Pull up a chair, don your apron, and enjoy the old-fashioned warmth of a Little House country kitchen.

Available in soft cover only - **\$12.95**

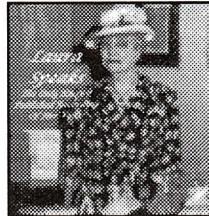


LAURA SPEAKS & SONGS FROM HOME NOW AVAILABLE ON CD

SONGS FROM HOME - Here in this unique recording, Pa's fiddle sings again. And the old 1890 pump organ, so long a part of Laura's Mansfield, Missouri home, plays once more. Here are songs Laura loved; some are sung by singers from her hometown. And a portion of a rare radio broadcast in her honor is heard again. These are historic songs...music Laura heard...from her Rocky Ridge Farm in Mansfield, Missouri. - **\$10.95 each**



LAURA SPEAKS - This is the only known published recording of the voice of Laura Ingalls Wilder with fiddle music played on Pa's fiddle. - **\$10.95 each**

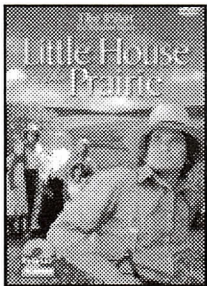


Seen here is Reka Souwapawong and Museum director Kathleen Forte during the presentation of a set of Little House Books published in Thailand.

Ms. Souwapawong, who lived near New York City, was a previous visitor to the Home and Museum, and noted that no Thai editions were among the translation exhibit.

Although no conclusive facts are available, it is safe to say that the Wilder books have been printed in thirty to forty languages and dialects.

LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE NOW ON DVD



THE PILOT - PREMIERE MOVIE - Based on the best-selling books by Laura Ingalls Wilder, this classic produced and directed by Michael Landon, launched the Emmy Award-winning series. This MOVIE TAKES US FROM THE WOODS OF Wisconsin to the plains of Kansas where the Ingalls struggle to build a new life. - **\$14.95**

Seasons 1, 2, & 3 of LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE now available on DVD - seasons 4 & 5 will available soon - **\$49.98 each**

**Laura Ingalls Wilder -
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Visit us on-line @ www.lauraingallswilderhome.com