

# Klein

(Continued from page 16)

press our concerns privately the next day. When a few parents said they wanted to hear us, she said they too could come to her office.

I stood up and said that Ali and I would definitely not return the following day. The principal then said we could speak at the end of the three-by-five question-and-answer session. About this time a *policeman* walked into the room and stood in the back.

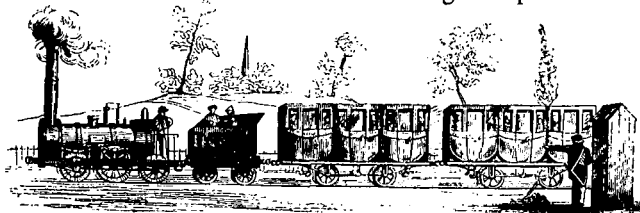
The praise of integrated math droned on and the last three-by-five card was finally read. At that point a parent said that he wanted to hear what the "opposition" had to say. The principal said that it would not be fair for her to allow Ali and me to talk, since we were not previously scheduled.

Objections to the censorship were stronger this time. One of the parents demanded a vote. There was a spontaneous show of hands overwhelmingly in favor of letting us speak. I introduced myself, explained the importance of algebra and the weaknesses of integrated math. I explained how a concentrated course in algebra is better for those who intend to go into math, science, or engineering. I talked a little about the excellent new California math standards. I introduced Ali Zakeri as one of 20 recent recipients in the U.S. of the Mathematical Association of America distinguished teaching award. He continued on the same theme, indicating the superficiality of integrated math compared to a good algebra course.

Then we had a question and answer session. One of the fuzzy math advocates demanded an example of how integrated math was more superficial than the traditional sequence. I talked about the treatment of the quadratic formula and

explained in detail how it was splattered over three years in the integrated sequence and still not done properly. LA-SI leaders moaned audibly in derision. All the while the policeman was standing in the back of the room staring at me and Ali. An education professor from CSUN, with a child attending the school, stood up and explained that education professors at CSUN disagree with the "subject matter professors" and that from the point of view of research on how children learn, integrated math is better. These are the people who train our teachers.

Eventually the fuzzies took over the microphone again and resumed efforts to get the crowd to worship the goals of the \$15 million NSF grant. I wish now in retrospect I had said something about the power of money to force programs in school districts. \$15 million buys many true believers. Unfortunately, I didn't think of it at the time.



# Kurzweil

(Continued from page 26)

of Republicans that will include three members of the Legislature, the representative of at least one more — the ranking Republican on the Assembly Judiciary Committee — the Treasurer of the California Republican Party, and, most importantly, the Chairman of the state Party's Judicial Evaluations Committee, appointed by Chairman Schroeder .... Send someone to defend your side, and leave off childish name calling ....

Khachigian did not respond.  
Should Republicans discuss is-

Ali and I left at this point. The situation was chaotic with parents not knowing what to believe. But as we left, the high priests were once again baptizing the parents in the true religion. I don't know what the outcome will be. Diana Dixon-Davis remained and fought it out. She was tersely instructed by the cluster leader not to announce that money had been allocated for any Algebra I course, unless she had proof.

She obtained that proof the following day in the form of a memorandum of understanding from Asst. Superintendent John Liechty. I have learned that some parents are now adamantly demanding a real algebra course instead of the NSF-funded stupification program. But I'm inclined to believe that the LA-SI leaders will ultimately have their way. Algebra and geometry as individual subjects will be abolished through government power. The sole right of parents is to agree. CFP

sues openly, like responsible adults? Should the California Supreme Court respect the people of California as their rulers in a system of popular sovereignty? The answers seem to depend upon which motto you follow: Reagan's or Wilson's.

In a sense, we *are* having a debate. Two conflicting ideas are being played out here, in actions as well as in words: two ideas about the people's role in our society, and about the definition of responsible behavior by those whom the people trust to administer their government and keep its rules. Listen to the words. Observe the actions. Choose your side in this debate. Thank you for coming. CFP

## ARTS & CULTURE



# Dreaming Spires

B Y G . B . T E N N Y S O N

*That sweet city with her dreaming spires.*

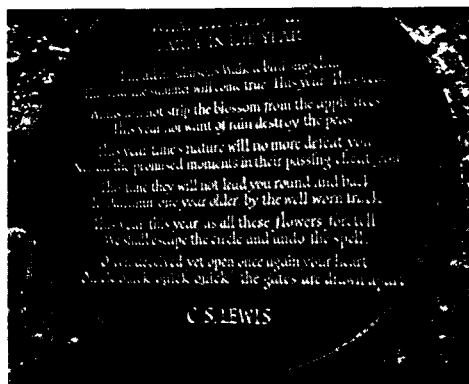
— Matthew Arnold

ONE OF the aspects of being an American abroad in Europe is that one is often taken to be, shall we say, intellectually challenged or at least uninformed and in need of elementary instruction. This is largely a correct perception, occasioned in no small measure, Criticus believes, by the Hollywood-encouraged, perpetual teenager quality of American speech and demeanor. It can even work to one's advantage in countries where one does not speak the language, for then one can point and grunt and use sign language without embarrassment and usually gain a helpful response from the locals. It can also be wearying, as when a Parisian points to the Eiffel Tower and informs you, "*C'est la Tour Eiffel.*" It is to avoid having co-stermongers and the like point out Big Ben, saying, "That's Big Ben," that Criticus falls into his *faux* English accent when he finds himself in Britain. A pardonable peccadillo, he hopes.

There I was in the Eagle and Child (popularly "Bird and Baby") pub in Oxford having a pint of bitter with Walter Hooper in honor of

the Inklings when a party of Americans came into the back room to look upon the various Inklings photographs that adorn the walls. They were speculating on who was who in the pictures, so Criticus enlightened them. "This is Tolkien, this is Charles Williams; over here is Joy Davidman Lewis; and this is a group picture of C.S. Lewis, Owen Barfield, and their friends Cecil and Daphne Harwood." And so on. They were extremely grateful, so I gave them further information, such as that the gentleman sitting with me was the one who provided these pictures in the first place, and that he was the world-renowned Walter Hooper, biographer and editor of the very C.S. Lewis whose fame had drawn them to the pub. This gave them a sense both of continuity and immediacy, and they thanked me most profusely. Then they began asking why and when I had

put these pictures up, and I realized that they had taken me to be the landlord, which in Brit-speak means the proprietor or, more often, the manager of the pub (most pubs are actually owned by breweries rather than individuals). Warming to this thought, I told them the story of the Inklings and their patronage of the Eagle and Child (to use its official name) and all the rest, not



The Centenary Stone

## THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY C.S. LEWIS SOCIETY

invites you to the unveiling of

### The C.S. Lewis Centenary Stone

on Wednesday 13th May at Magdalen College, Oxford

Proceedings will commence at 6.00 p.m. with Evensong in Magdalen Chapel  
A drinks reception will be held in the President's Lodgings after the unveiling

troubling to disabuse them of the notion that I had been the instrument of all this homage. They left happy in the knowledge that they had come face to face with the last and noblest living representatives of the Inklings and in the very heart of Inklingsdom.

Well, perhaps they had in one sense, but not in another. They did not realize that they had been speaking to two Americans. Hooper, of course, has lived in England and indeed in Oxford for the past thirty-odd years, so his assimilation is understandable, whereas mine was mostly assumed. As I preened myself over their misperception, thinking how it also confirmed the general impression of Americans abroad, the real landlord came in to clear the table, greeting Walter as a regular and chatting briefly with me the stranger before asking where in America I came from ....

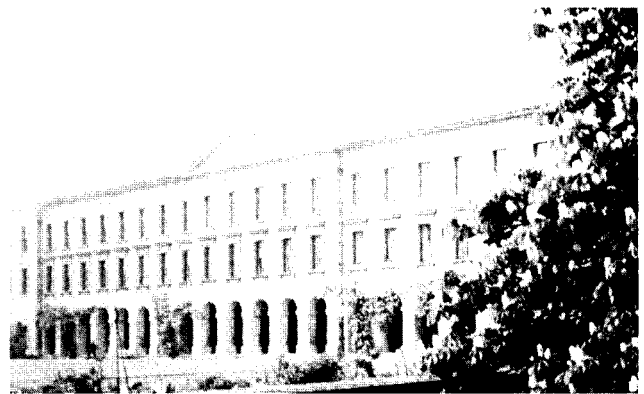
So, it was on to the primary reason that I was in Oxford at all. It was not to masquerade as a barkeep, but it was certainly Inklings and Lewis related. It was to attend the dedication of the C.S. Lewis Centenary Stone. What, Constant Readers will inquire, is a "Centenary Stone"? Well, it's not as such an established thing; in fact I know of no other Centenary Stone, but it was very much the right thing for Lewis. The Oxford C.S. Lewis Society conceived of the idea of honoring Lewis in this the hundredth year since his birth with a circular stone plaque bearing the text of a poem he wrote in 1938 set in Addison's Walk, a mile-long path along the Cherwell River adjacent to his rooms at Magdalen (pronounced "maudlin") College. It was one of Lewis' favorite perambulations during his Oxford years, as it had been for the eighteenth-century essayist Joseph Addison whose name it bears. Lewis walked along it almost every day during his years at Magdalen from 1925 to 1955. We were fortunate this year to have the ceremonies in an exceptionally balmy mid-May when the chestnuts and the wisteria were in full flower and the days had lengthened so that sundown did not come until nine in the evening. Matthew Arnold's Oxford, "lovely all times," was especially lovely this evening in the "year's primal burst of bloom."

*G.B. Tennyson attended the Centenary Stone dedication ceremonies at Oxford as the editor of Owen Barfield on C.S. Lewis (Wesleyan, 1989) and as CPR's European correspondent.*

By the time of the poem, Lewis was an established and published scholar, as well as author of books of poetry, apologetics, and science-fiction, and on his way to becoming the leading popular spokesman for Christianity in this century, though fame in that sphere would not come until 1942 with the publication of *The Screwtape Letters*. The poem, however, is more about nature, hope, and promise than directly about religion. It is titled "What the Bird Said Early in the Year." The text being in copyright, it cannot be reproduced here, but the plaque being in a public place was, and is, happily available to the camera. It appeared the next day in *The Times*.

TO GIVE the dedication an appropriate grace and gravity the Society arranged for the proceedings to begin with a Choral Evensong in Magdalen College Chapel. Viewers of the Lord David Attenborough film "Shadowlands" will remember the early scene shot in that impressive, mediaeval setting. The choristers, rendering the service mainly in Latin, were from the choir school operated by Magdalen College. Lessons were read by two persons close to Lewis during his lifetime, Lady Freud and Lawrence Harwood. Lady Freud is one of the now grown-up schoolchildren evacuated from London to Lewis's home in Oxford, the Kilns, during some part of the 1939-45 War and hence one of the catalysts for his *Chronicles of Narnia*, which casts four such children into the magical world of Narnia when they enter an old wardrobe in the Oxford professor's home. Lawrence Harwood is the son of one of Lewis's best friends, A.C. Harwood (pictured, you will recall, in the "Bird and Baby," as the "landlord" pointed out); Lawrence Harwood is also Lewis's godson. Together, Lady Freud and Lawrence Harwood helped bridge the gap of years since Lewis's death in 1963 to the present. Here again was continuity and immediacy.

There were perhaps two hundred at the Evensong, Criticus being very likely the one who had come the far-



New Buildings



Magdalen College Chapel

thet distance. Following the ceremony the guests filed out of the chapel and proceeded through the quad of Magdalen, passing across from the New Buildings where Lewis had his rooms to Addison's Walk and along the river about a half-mile to a small bridge leading to the walls surrounding Magdalen's deer park, where fittingly the deer were grazing. There on the wall was a drapery covering the stone. And there we gathered to hear words from the President of Magdalen College, to meet the sculptor of the stone, and to attend to a most felicitous address by Michael Ward, Centenary President of the Oxford C.S. Lewis Society and current resident curator of the Kilns, which is being restored as a Lewis study center. Finally the plaque was unveiled, and Walter Hooper read aloud in genial tones the poem inscribed thereon. The time was not, as in the poem, "early in the year" but rather mid-spring, but it was the right time, for the promise of the poem had been realized in the richness of the flowers and the foliage.

We proceeded back along Addison's Walk, and about a third of the group by special invitation continued on to the chambers of the president of Magdalen where we enjoyed drinks and good company in elegant surround-

ings. Criticus was permitted by the president to photograph the bust of Lewis that graced one of the tables, but he forbore to try to explain to anyone anything about it, even though he did know the story of its provenance.

Although Lewis eventually left Magdalen College, Oxford, to take a professorship housed at the differently-spelled Magdalene College, Cambridge ("I have left the impenitent Magdalen for the penitent one," he quipped), he continued to reside in Oxford half the week and never ceased to love the place. The Inklings' regular meeting day at the pub was even shifted to accommodate Lewis's Cambridge schedule. Because Lewis, though enjoying a glittering Oxford career, was finally denied a professorship, some have seen him as one of the many lost causes that Matthew Arnold said Oxford was the home of. But Lewis's cause was not really anything so worldly as the title of professor (which he gained in any case at Cambridge with a chair created especially for him). Who else of his era has an Oxford society dedicated to his work? Who else of his era has a Centenary Stone? And above these (also worldly) honors, who else continues to teach, delight, and inspire readers all over the world? For Lewis's cause was that which Arnold in richly poetic prose claimed Oxford itself represented:

And yet, steeped in sentiment as she lies, spreading her gardens to the moonlight, and whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the Middle Age, who will deny that Oxford, by her ineffable charm, keeps ever calling us nearer to the true goal of all of us, to the ideal, to perfection?

In this May-blooming Oxford, Criticus stayed at the Old Parsonage hotel, so named because it was once a



C.S. Lewis's rooms, above wisteria with flower pots.