

THE



FOSSIL

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1939 AAPA Convention Photo, New York City
reprinted from *The Fossil*, January 1959



Photo taken by George Trainer.

Shown in the Photo:

L to R, Front: Norman Lavine, *Islander*; Tom Farnsworth, *Eh What?*; Helen Vivarttas Wesson (now a Fossil), *American Dawn*; Fran Caliva, *Vox Juvenis*.

Center: Bruce Smith, *American Emblem*; Richard Schleihau, *Alabamiam*; Edgar A. Martin, *Contributor*.

Rear: Bill Groveman (now a Fossil, *Printer's Devil*; Byron Mack, *American Commentator*; Walter Voll, *Vox Juvenis*; guest.



Hudson Park Branch Library, New York City
1937 Addition

Courtesy New York Public Library Digital Gallery #1252737

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Guy Miller

A number of surprises greeted me on my recent birthday to remind me once again of how blessed I am to be befriended by so many unselfishly thoughtful individuals. I am thinking of the greeting cards, the surprise pizza party hosted by our condo cul-de-sac "gang," and, of course, the flattering recognition in the January issue of *The Fossil*. Also, I must mention the special invitation from my former student and friend Ken Metzgar who, to make it possible for me to attend the AAPA convention in San Francisco, originally focused in August, sent me a "Gift Certificate" entitling me to "one all expense paid excursion from Phoenix Arizona to San Francisco California." The final convention dates determined to be June 30-July 3 precluded my chance of attending the meet; but, during that August venture, I still might be able to accept the invitation from the Tribbys to pay a visit to their Sunnyvale CA home. That will, indeed, be a treat.

All of us surely agree that Dave has served The Fossils well as our Web Master, but few of us know just how well. It seems that over the years, each time our service subscription has come due Dave, for one reason or another, has had to personally pay the bill until your president was able to make things right. This latest episode took more time and effort than either Dave or I should have had to contend with. But thanks to Dave's patience and persistence and another personal retainer we are again in business for another year. We both hope that for a while, at least, we will enjoy a period of "business as usual."

On other fronts The Fossils have continued to be well served by our Official Editor Ken Faig and our ever-faithful former president and secretary-treasurer Gary Bossler who is working with Ken to produce quality quarterly issues of *The Fossil*. Director member Stan Oliner continues his work with the Graham-Wesson collection, and Secretary-treasurer Tom Parson regularly sends up-to-date reports to your president and Martha Shivers who, now in her 96th year, is still serving us as our Membership Chairman.

On the subject of longevity, I am joyful to report that I was able to visit with Louise Lincoln in Tucson on her 99th birthday, February 12. Louise remains active in NAPA, and presently is in the process of completing copy on the 109th Heating of *The Kitchen Stove*. Ken and I were treated to generous slices of her birthday cake, and, if I remember correctly, she has received over 50 greeting cards from well-wishers. Ken allowed that he didn't even *know* that many people!

Unfortunately, our activities were interrupted by news of the passing of former Fossil William H. Groveman, and Fossil Guy Botterill. Guy joined us in 1975 and had remained a faithful member until his recent death on September 26, 2010. Although I had met Guy twice, once at an AAPA meet and again at a NAPA gathering, and as Fossils president in 1994 had sent him a note wishing him well after an accident he had suffered, I knew him best through his type contests and related activities. Rich Hopkins has just completed a very touching commemorative of this singular individual titled *Truly Botts*. By now every ajay should have received a copy by way of the Bundles.

Bill Groveman joined NAPA in 1939 when he was 15 and, though he was also a member of the AAPA and published a journal *The Printer's Devil*, most of his labors were in NAPA which included numerous articles in the *National Amateur*, and service as Recorder, Executive Judge and Official Editor. Best known of his several publications was *Snafu*. I first met Bill in 1946 when he was attending Antioch College in nearby Yellow Springs OH. In that year we hitch-hiked to Detroit Michigan to attend the organizational meeting of the Great Lakes Press Club. At the 1996 convention in North Canton we got together for our last time and enjoyed pleasant moments reminiscing about that earlier experience and discussing ajay in general. Bill joined The Fossils in 1957, and although he did not continue his membership, in recent years he had been of great service to our current Official Editor. I am certain that Ken will have more to report about Bill's input. Bill died on February 25 at the age of 86.

THE MERRY METCHAPS

Arnold Pierce¹

A gay life, if a short one, has been written of many loves, and the memories of such youthful affairs have gladdened many reminiscences. Such is the story, then of the Metropolitan Chapter (Metchap) of the American Amateur Press Association (AAPA).

The Metchap had its serious significances sometimes even its serious moments, but these were so infrequent as not to cloud its carefree atmosphere. However, what remains is like the ghost of a first love an intangible wisp that brings smiles to the lips of those who remember. For what lives, twenty years later, is the mutual friendship of those who comprised the active nucleus of the Metchap.

The story of this first chapter of the youngest association must be, therefore, a meeting again of the Metchap Madcaps....

The Metropolitan Chapter, American Amateur Press Association, was organized April 8, 1939, at 2:30 P.M. It set precedent as the first AAPA Chapter, and its official organ issued later, *The Metropolitan Amateur*, bore AAPA Charter No. 1. The Metchaps sponsored the first actual AAPA Convention, in New York City, July 1939, and there set the precedent for all AAPA conventions following to date: fun, but no official business. So much for vital statistics.

Twenty years ago, in May 1938, New Yorker William F. Haywood made the following remarks in his *Topix* no. 3:

Sid Cohen, Second Vice President of the AAPA and publisher of *The Ajayer's Den*, is a contributor to this number of *Topix*. Sid is a high school senior and would like to see an American local club in the Metropolitan area. So would we. Any New Yorkers interested please write.

However, just who brought such wishful thinking into actuality is not clear, but certainly William H. Groveman comes first to mind. In *Siamese Standpipe*, May 1954, Helen (Vivarttas) Wesson recalled:

...Bill Groveman, then publishing *Printer's Devil*....the 13-year-old whose absorption and zeal matched mine in intensity; but whereas mine was effervescent, Bill's was dead-serious. His letters, written solid from edge to edge of the paper, were so light I sometimes wonder if he used a typewriter ribbon in his machine. They were crammed with news and views and plans, which culminated in the first meeting of AAPA's first local club....

It is clearly recorded that he called that first meeting, in a report published in the *American Amateur Journalist*, March-April 1939, and signed by Helen A. Vivarttas, Pres. Metropolitan Chapter, AAPA:

THE FIRST MEETING of what we believe to be the first local club of the AAPA was held April 8, 2:30 P.M. at the home of the writer in Weehawken. Present were William Groveman of *The Printer's Devil* and *By Heck*, who called the meeting and was later elected Secretary-Treasurer; Bernice McCarthy of *Happy Daze*; Byron David Mack of *The American Commentator*; Peter Grazeola and the writer. Several AAPA'ns who could not be present at the first meeting expressed their interest and will probably attend the next gathering.

¹ The editor thanks Stan Oliner for the discovery of this typescript, and Bill Groveman for providing some corrections and annotations. This manuscript was earlier published in *The Fossil* for January 1959 under the byline of Helen V. Wesson but the more than fifty years elapsed since its original publication more than justify its reprinting. Just why Helen chose to hide behind the pseudonym of "Arnold Pierce" when composing her manuscript will have to remain her secret.

The Chapter will announce its next meeting as soon as a central meeting place can be determined and obtained. We hope to have it in New York City. In the meantime, any AAPA members in the Metropolitan area are urged to contact our Sec'y, Bill Groveman....

Plans will be made, probably at the next meeting, for a printed club paper. With this report we are also asking for a little space to be assigned in the *American Amateur Journalist* for news and reports of local clubs. We are doing this because we have heard through the ajay grapevine system that local clubs of AAPA affiliation are being planned throughout the country a step forward for the association.

The aim of the Metropolitan Chapter of the AAPA is to promote first the American Amateur Press [sic], and second, the chapter itself. We expect our growth to be of a slow steady nature, for AAPA's in this area are widely scattered and meetings mean much travel for them.

Plans to welcome an AAPA gathering in New York are being formulated. We want to hear from all interested in the Convention Get-together, when they can get away to New York and perhaps what they would like to see besides the World's Fair. We would appreciate hearing from all out-of-town members who are planning to come to New York City this summer, and I might add, "the sooner the better."

Only one meeting old and biting off a Convention already! While this is not unusual for local clubs, still, in the present era of juvenile delinquency, when a teen-ager spurns murder, rape and larceny for a little enjoyable ajaying, he is considered a special sort of phenomenon and prodigy. Yet the guiding force of this group were teen-agers, without a fatherly, experienced adult to guide them.

And so the same May 1939 issue of *Printer's Devil* which carried announcement:

A bi-state chapter of the AAPA has been started in N.Y. and N.J. Watch this and other papers for further news....

also included this EXTRA!:

The Annual AAPA convention will be held this year on July 21-22 at the Hudson Park Library, 10 7th Ave. S., N.Y. The library is letting us use the large assembly room for the 2 days; the time is 1 to 6 P.M. on each day. Admission is \$.50; everyone may bring 2 guests....

Topix no. 6 also ran a notice, and so did other journals affiliated with the new chapter. Under the official editorship of Robert H. Price, the *American Amateur Journalist*, May-June 1939, devoted its green-printed cover to complete details including the Program:

Friday, 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Informal Gab-Gathering & Fun-Fest

Saturday, 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

1. Distribution of Souvenir Lapel Ornament
2. Welcome by President...Helen A. Vivarttas
3. Poem of Welcome...Byron David Mack
4. Musical Selections...Edgar Allen Martin
5. Chapter Report by Sec'y...William Groveman
6. Musical Skit (Written by Michael Phelan)

Musical Accompaniment by E. A. Martin

Recruiting Rally...William Groveman

PHOTO of those in attendance will be taken for the Official Organ of the association.

Refreshments...Exhibit of Amateur Journals

THE METROPOLITAN CHAPTER - AAPA
Helen A. Vivarttas, Pres. William Groveman, Sec'y-Treasurer
Byron D. Mack, Chairman

In addition to this publicity, Ed Martin printed a four-page program brochure which was circulated through the AAPA bundle. And so the Chapter prepared busily for the Great Event.

Meanwhile, on the side, the new club managed to consolidate its own amorphous organization. A meeting place centrally located was found: the Hudson Park Branch of the New York Public Library, two blocks from Houston St. To recapture the spirit as well as the activity of the Metchap, it is necessary to quote from the *Contributor*, AAPA journal printed in tiny 8pt. Caslon by one of the maddest of the Metchap Madcaps, Edgar A. Martin. He was then slightly but only slightly more coherent than he is now in his almost-40's dotage:

LIFE'S CONTACTS

(With apologies, of course, to Willard O. Wylie)

The members at the June 10 meeting of the "Met" Chapter of the AAPA were not as surprised as I was to find "Ye Editore" there. Bill Groveman had sent me a card concerning the convention in which he mentioned the June meeting and hoped I could attend which he doubted....

I was quietly reading in the Library. Two fellows came close so I stood up. We silently studied each other for a moment. One fellow was short and dark with a wild gleam in his eye "Ah!" thought I. "A true amateur." The other was tall and fair. (I don't know what they thought of me which is just as well.)

At a telepathic signal we mumbled our names. Not one of us heard the other. Perhaps I raised my voice a little wildly (I didn't recognize it myself) for it struck a "lost chord" in the mind of the tall fair one. After seconds of silence he said: "Martin?" It was both question and reproach.

We stared at each other blankly. Someone said we could be just as dull while sitting, so let's sit. We sat, and stared some more. The ice of first meeting was very thin and a whiff of warm humour would shatter it. It came unexpectedly.

"I got a card from Groveman," I explained. "He told me to come down."

There was a snicker from the dark one.

The fair fellow cocked an eyebrow and gave a hearty laugh. "I'm Groveman," he said.

After mumbling something about "doing it all over," I realized we were all at ease. I turned to the dark fellow: "I don't believe I quite caught your name."

He muttered something through his chuckling. I didn't get it but decided not to be insistent.

Discussion after that was rapid and leaped throughout aj with the speed of our thoughts. Byron David Mack joined us. He is of medium height, well built, blond, and quiet but his mind is quick and accurate and he offered much to conversation in the way of facts and interesting suggestions.

Mike Phelan would be an hour late and we were waiting for Helen Vivarttas. Byron spotted her when she was still blocks away. I looked down and wondered vaguely why she was carrying an open umbrella on such a nice day. Then I noticed the umbrella didn't have any handle and that she was swinging a closed one at her side the thing above her head was a hat. And a very pretty hat it was, fitted her perfectly for she is tall and stately.

As Helen came closer a shadow at her side became the form of a man. He was strolling in the shade. Helen introduced her father, and when he saw she was safely delivered into the hands of AAPA members he left for parts unknown. We went to the meeting room.

"What's your name?" I heard Helen ask. The dark fellow's eyes sparkled as he spoke. I listened sharply. Helen nodded her head with approval and looked intelligent. I had heard nothing.

The meeting room is not very large and was crowded with pew-like seats, blackboards, cabinets, and “No Smoking” signs. Groveman sadly pointed to a mirror on the wall and a sticker on its surface that proudly flared forth some propaganda about the United. We were not to be outdone. Some months before Unca George (Now Pres Kay...) had sent “YCon” a fist full of red octagonal stamps with the seal of the AAPA on them. I had one with me. It stands out with beauty and conservatism above the United blurbs.

For two hours Helen called for order. We did, though, in that time, get some work done. While home, Helen had written a tentative constitution and we voted on changing an offensive word in the second article. It was vetoed.

We inspected the assembly hall next door. It is large and airy, and will seat more than 200. There is a raised stage. I think we were all dreaming of the Convention, when Mike Phelan bounded in.

We had met last January 2, but, as I was bent in studious labor, he passed me. Suddenly, I felt there was someone new in the hall. I turned and saw Mike. The members must have viewed us with amazement and the proverbial alarm as we leaped about the hall, throwing things and pommelling each other, like a couple of “mad Russians.”

After several disappointing attempts Helen quieted us and led us back to the meeting room. Mike knew all the members but the dark one. He tried to find out and was unsuccessful.

It was due to Mike’s endeavors that some order of seriousness was maintained for the rest of the meeting. He spoke long and eruditely on a phase of the Chapter constitution. His suggestion was put to the vote. It was passed! The offensive word in the second article was changed. We had done our day’s work and we started home.

Somewhere between the Library and Times Square Byron disappeared. And at Times Square Bill Groveman wound into a twisting tunnel followed by his dark friend who waved a happy goodbye.

“You know him,” I said. “Our dark chum?”

Frustration!

We walked along 42nd towards a tossing Hudson. It was dusk now, and rain began to fall with light fury.

For a while, it was a question whether we should stay under Helen’s hat or open her umbrella. We decided to utilize both protections. Helen’s hat became a shield...

After an interchange of instructions and promises Mike and I left Helen at the...Weehawken ferry....

Little things stood out in my mind: Helen sternly demanding order, and her father walking in the shade of her hat and Mike with his little hirsute growth and ready Irish wit Byron far away in a world of his own, returning often with a needed thought Groveman disappearing around a corner with his nameless friend in tow. I wondered if the dark one was a member. I began to carefully piece together and tabulate the sounds he had made during the day. He had said many clear things but these were shrouded. They might make a name....

The dark one was little Norman Levine, later publisher of *The Islander* and *Long Island Amateur*.

A more official report, written by the president, was printed in *AAJ*, June 1939:

If New York City was noisier than usual on June 10, it was not only because of the visit of King George and Queen Elizabeth, for the Metropolitan chapter held its second meeting at its regular meeting place, the Hudson Park Branch...which we will occupy every second Saturday of the month.

Beside the usual stand-by, Bill Groveman of the *Printer’s Devil*, By Mack of *The American Commentator* and your reporter of *The American Dawn*, there were three new faces: Michael

(Good ol' Mike) Phelan of *The Katydid*, Edgar Allen "Poe" Martin of *The Contributor*, and Norman Levine, recruited by Bill. Everyone had lots to say and said it quite vociferously, and none of it had anything to do with the business at hand. However, we did formulate our constitution, which we predict will be a "wow," as one of the members put it.

With the idea in mind that chapters and local clubs now being formed would be interested we are submitting a copy of our constitution for publication in the organ. It consists of only five short and simple rules. We believe excess verbiage is totally unnecessary, and that the rules should be elastic enough to give much leeway in interpretation, thus avoiding "red tape." We expect to add to the Constitution only if and when it becomes necessary. AAPA'ns will note that all can be Chapter members, for if you live too far away to attend meetings, you can be a correspondent-member and enjoy the same privileges as regular members....

There followed the Constitution of five paragraphs, which stated:

1. The aim of the Metropolitan Chapter is first, to promote the welfare of the AAPA; second, to promote itself; and third, to work toward making people in general aware of the Prince of Hobbies, Amateur Journalism.

2. Membership in the Metropolitan Chapter is contingent upon membership in the American Amateur Press Association, and failure to renew Association membership will be taken as resignation from the Chapter. Six weeks' grace will be allowed for those wishing to be reinstated in both. Membership dues are twenty-five cents (25¢) a *month* for regular members and fifty cents (50¢) a *year* for correspondent-members member to designate into which category he wishes to be enrolled.

3. Membership is not restricted to those in the Metropolitan area, inasmuch as that is interpreted to mean New York City and its immediate environs, but is extended to those who wish to become correspondent-members, who will pay the dues set for their category, and who are otherwise eligible to join, *See Art. 2*. These members shall be kept informed of Chapter affairs and are eligible to vote and write for the Chapter journal, and other privileges of membership.

4. All matters of importance requiring votes, shall be decided by a two-thirds choice or decision of the Chapter members present at meeting. Officers, chosen for their activity and activity in the Chapter [sic] shall be decided by a two-thirds vote by the Chapter membership.

5. The Secretary-Treasurer shall keep records of all matters concerning the Chapter, and shall make reports of financial and other important matters at each meeting, including a brief resume of the preceding meeting for the benefit of members absent therefrom, and shall keep the membership informed of new members. The Official Editor of the Chapter shall edit and publish the Chapter journal to the best of his/her ability.

And so we have, in the span of Amateur Journalistic history, another local club foaled, by Enthusiasm out of Confusion.

Who were the young people involved? What were they like then? Fortunately in the effervescence of activity which characterized the Amateur Journalism of AAPA at that time, Personality Paragraphs and other introducers bubbled up as foam on the headier "literature."

In the *Metropolitan Amateur*, "published quarterly by the Metropolitan Chapter of the American Amateur Press Association under a rotating editorship. The 250 copies of this number edited and printed by William Haywood...Type set and printed by hand. No. 1, January 1940," Secretary-Treasurer Groveman reported that the following members had attended one or more meetings: Thomas Farnsworth, William H. Groveman, Norman S. Levine, Byron D. Mack, Edgar A. Martin, Francis W. Miller, Bernice McCarthy, Michael Phelan, Elliott Ruben, Robert L. Smith, James V. Taurasi, and Helen A. Vivarttas. Three non-members were listed as guests: John Giunta, Peter Grazeola, and Mario Racic, Jr.

Since Groveman was *l'homme necessaire*, and Bob Smith carried much of the second year on his shoulders as host, let us start with these two, who coedited *Printer's Devil*, Sept. 1940, in which these profiles appear, "Meet Bill and Bob":

WILLIAM HERBERT GROVEMAN: born October 10, 1924. Junior (1940-AP) at Hempstead High School; studying Latin and Spanish. A Republican this year (but that ain't helping Wilkie any as I can't vote yet). Interested in Esperanto (a universal language-AP) and a Federal Union of humanity. Follows avidly the Brooklyn Dodgers baseball team. Ambition is to become President of the United States (no foolin'). Published his first amateur paper in 1935, learned of ajay in 1936, and joined the AAPA in 1938....

The direct opposite of "Encyclopedia" Groveman was "Playboy" Smitty:

ROBERT LEROY SMITH, JR.: born June 21, 1925..in Brooklyn..Sophomore at Hempstead High School; studying Latin (as readers of *Sour Notes* and *At Random* will remember!-AP). Is in the school band and orchestra..bassoon. Also in school Honor Club. Joined the AAPA on September 28, 1939; recruited by Norman Levine. First paper was *The Little Boss* in October, 1939..Aside from amateur journalism his hobbies are philately, photography, chemistry and music. His ambition is to enter West Point and join the Chemistry Division of the Army.

In *Metam*, Autumn 1940, Bill Haywood describes young Norman Levine:

Normy is short and dark and wears glasses and horrible shirts, but he's a wicked man with a ping pong paddle! Now that he has a press, Levine is producing some fine printing, and a rash of papers. On the strength of his Metchap activity, Levine was elected Clubs and Chapter Mgr. of AAPA in 1940, reporting nine chapters as of August, 1940.

Of Edgar Allan Martin we have a vivid characterization in *Siamese Standpipe* 28, by Helen Wesson:

...his appearance was in perfect character with his exceptional talents in all media of the Weird. A tangle of raven hair surmounted a long, thin, rather cadaverous face with green eyes. His mad titter revealed rather fang-like white teeth, vampirish as his Lycanthropic Press, and his long thin fingers were as talented playing weird music on the library piano as they were cutting weird illustrations out of linoleum blocks for his *Contributor*.

Siamese Standpipe continues:

Mike Phelan, an Open Road boy, publisher of the *Katydid*...joined the Metchap circle....A stalwart in AAPA, an informal, college-bred roamer in corduroys and sweater, one of those men whom other men respect.

Mike was in his early twenties, of the same age group as Haywood and Miller, as opposed to the high school set centered in Hempstead. He had, in fact, been Vice-President of the Crusaders, publishing the *Atlantic Amateur* prior to his *Katydid*.

To the juveniles who met him, Peter Grazeola was "old" probably late 20's or 30's, dark, swarthy, round-faced, and immersed in UAPA politics. When he saw the youthful enthusiasts at the first meeting were naively and fanatically AAPA-minded, he lost interest forthwith and was never seen nor heard from again. The same with Giunta, Racic and Taurasi.

The *American Pressman*, May 1939 (Joe Shawhan, Publisher) introduced:

BYRON DAVID MACK by William Groveman

Born in Manitoba, Canada, 15 years ago...Editor of mimeo-sheet *American Commentator*...also a UAPAian...writes poetry and had some published in amateur journals...plans to sell mimeo this year and buy a 5x8 press and start a new journal...will attend American get-together this summer...interested in public speaking...has been bitten by the philately bug...only eats two meals a day and seems to like it...Writes nice long interesting letters on ajay and is one of the younger members who we expect big things from.*

(* From WHG, age 14 himself!)

Dark, thin-faced Elliott Ruben attended a couple meetings, one at a member's home where he sat enthroned in a great chair holding court with those present much to his own amusement, no doubt. Laureate Judge and Critic, he must have been on the early-twenty side, for he had been in UAPA previously. He was not omnipresent in AAPA journals, and disappears soon after from the Metchap. However, much to the delight and surprise of old friends in the hobby, he and his exceptionally talented wife, Butch, popped up on the cover of the Christmas 1957 issue of *Siamese Standpipe* with a be-sequinned, silk-screened greeting which was the artistic coup of the past few years.

If the teen-age Metchap President was innocent of parliamentary procedure, she made up for this with a flamboyant enthusiasm rampant on a field of "100% AAPAism." Helen A. Vivarttas (Wesson), or HAV, was omnipresent in AAPA journals. Her name, or that of her coedited journal, *The American Dawn*, appears in just about every issue of every AAPA journal published during those years a fabulous popularity (the "Vondy of AAPA") yet, strangely, there is no pertinent paragraph describing her during that time. She had joined AAPA early in 1938, bursting out all over with short stories, articles and poems, and was soon coediting the prize-winning *Dawn* with a Michigan student. Cutting her teeth on the Metchap presidency, she progressed to AAPA Presidency in 1940, and was listed by AAJ as No. 1 of the "five most active" members. Her single-minded devotion to Amateur Journalism is humorously revealed in this paragraph in *American Dawn*, May 1939:

METROPOLITAN CHAPTER
OF THE AMERICAN AMATEUR
PRESS ASSOCIATION

Bulletin: The Metropolitan Chapter welcomes the writing and printing sailors and marines who visited New York this spring and hopes their stay was a merry one, as they will be gone again by the time this issue comes off the press. However, as President of the Metropolitan Chapter of the American Amateur Press Association, I hereby name them Honorary Members of the Chapter. (Regular membership is contingent upon membership in the Association.) For they are all Amateur Journalists, even if they don't know it!

Helen A. Vivarttas, Pres.,
Metropolitan Chapter of the A.A.P.A.

Bernice McCarthy (Spink) attended two meetings. Sophisticated by reason of repeated attendance with Uncle Vincent Haggerty at NAPA Conventions, lovely Madonna-like Bernice must have found Metchap proceedings juvenile, but there was one meeting she certainly did enjoy the tug-o'-war for attention, with Groveman, Vivarttas and McCarthy each pulling their three separate directions, and Frank Miller in the center!

Mobbed by the girls at the Nov. Metchap meet, Little Sir ECHOES has dared to attend but one meeting since. You can come out now, Frank it's safe! (HAV in *Metam*)

Francis W. Miller (1914-1942) had entered the United APA about 1934 and began publication of *The Bostonian*, according to *Printer's Devil*, April 1942. He founded the New England Amateur Press Club and was later an active leader in the Crusaders who founded the AAPA. His paper was changed to *ECHOES from the Paper City*. He served the new association two terms as Mailer and "carried the AAPA along almost single-handed for a time while serving as Secretary" (George H. Kay in *Kaynotes*, Feb. 1942).

Frank was a tall, handsome Yankee a *typical* Yankee witty, with a "brilliant smile" and a "deep-bred New England conscience" (*Topix* no. 17), about whom it must be said that to know him was to admire him. His mere connection with the Crusaders and the new association justified and verified the essential righteousness of the undertaking, such was his character. Those who remember him cannot imagine him considering a biased or unjust decision, and so, with his *ajay* experience as background, his opinions on Metchap matters, as well as AAPA affairs, bore weight. He became the second Metchap president, in 1940.

1939 AAPA Convention Program

Courtesy Stan Oliner

Conventioneers will realize that ninety-five per cent of this program has been prepared by mail and that changes may possibly be made. However, the key-note is informality and whatever the outcome, we know that everyone present will have a fine time and will look forward eagerly to future conventions.

THE METROPOLITAN CHAPTER OF THE
AMERICAN AMATEUR PRESS ASSOCIATION
Helen A. Virattas, President
William Grovesman, Secretary-Treasurer
Bryon David Mack, Convention Chairman



Printed by
Edgar Allan Martin
Member of the
Metropolitan
Chapter

THE METROPOLITAN CHAPTER

of the

AMERICAN AMATEUR PRESS ASSOCIATION

Welcomes You To Its

1939 CONVENTION



BRING YOUR FRIENDS

SCHEDULE

DATE: Friday, July 21 and Saturday, July 22.

PLACE: Hudson Park Branch of the New York
Public Library, two blocks from Houston
Street, NEW YORK CITY. In the
Assembly Room.

SUBSCRIPTION: fifty cents.

Friday: One to five o'clock
Informal gab-gathering and fun-fest.

Saturday: One to six o'clock.



SATURDAY PROGRAM

1. Greetings from Chapter President
Helen A. Virattas

2. Poem of Welcome
Bryon David Mack

3. Musical Selections
Edgar Allan Martin

4. Chapter Report by Secretary
William Grovesman

5. Speaker

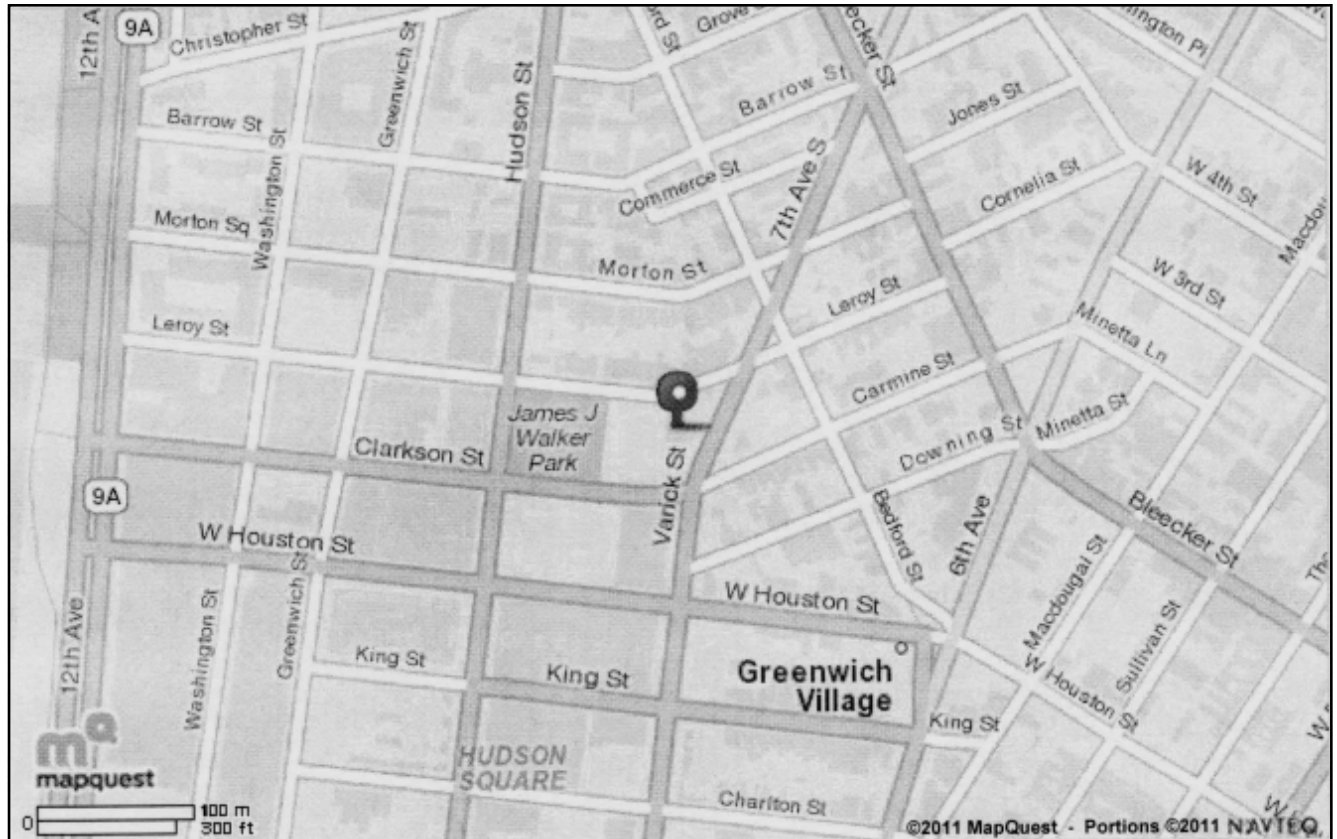
6. Musical Skit
Written by Michael Phelan
Accompaniment by Edgar Allan Martin

7. Recruiting Rally
William Grovesman

Photograph will be taken of Conventioneers for the
AMERICAN AMATEUR JOURNALIST, the official bi-
monthly organ of the A. A. P. A.

Refreshments

Exhibit of amateur journals published by members of the
Metropolitan Chapter.



**MapQuest Map of 66 Leroy Street
Where the AAPA Convention was held in 1939**

But what of the two who had wanted a local club in 1938, Haywood and Cohen? They turned up at library meetings, indeed they did.

Metam carries the impertinent announcement:

Catticism: Sid “6 to 60” Cohen is engaged *who’d guess it*.

Sid’s favorite diversion, at that age, was to whistle at all the passing girls much to the amusement, and perhaps elevated eyebrows of the other Metchaps who gathered at the Library steps before commencing the meeting inside. At first glance it is difficult to reconcile these frivolous wolfish actions girls, girls, girls with the worried tone of Sid’s discussions of national and international affairs, “World Cocktail” in his *Brooklyn Courier-Journal* and others. However, the child was certainly father of the man for the adult Sid manages now to devote as much of his leisure time to working on community problems of juvenile delinquency, as his household of girls (Mildred, Renee, Arlene) permits.

The connection of Metchap antics with the dignified president of the Fossils, ex-president of NAPA, ex-president of AAPA, William F for Frederick Haywood, may seem blasphemous name-dropping. Far from it. Bill has, bluntly, the Metchap to thank for his social and family life today, one thing leading to another, for *Siamese Standpipe* no. 28 states:

Bill was a dry-witted Yankee whose emergence from his cocoon of social introversion into a gay society changed his life completely.

Bill once said that the only color about him was his hair, which was red but not blatantly so, yet Bill is the only Metchap whose memory lives in Technicolor: a medley of tans, browns and rusts. He fitted well with his special cronies, Miller and Phelan. A correspondent-friend of all those present, he was yet a stranger, an interesting and interested stranger, for it was his debut that first meeting he showed up at the Library. Apparently he liked what he saw to the credit of the Metchap.

Nor were the Metchaps slow to appreciate Haywood, judging by his air of surprise in Chapter Chatter, *Metam* no. 1:

At the November 12th meeting, which we could not attend, we were elected to serve as the first editor of this journal. As we did not learn of this until some time later, and wanted completed copies for the December 29th meeting, we have had little more than a month in which to find spare time for its production...we would like to serve again when we have time to produce a better journal.

That first issue of *Metam*, though only 4 pages, requires no apologies. It flaunted an engraved masthead of skyscrapers, drawn by *Daily News* Staff Artist Haywood. It contained also Groveman’s Secretary-Treasurer report, which showed a balance on hand, from April 8 to Nov. 30, 1939 of \$1.68. High Finance for that club since the next report in *Metam* no. 2 stated a balance, from Nov. 30 to June 5, 1940, of 40¢.

All this, and we are only up to the third gathering of the Metchaps, which was the AAPA Convention of 1939. Properly, convention notes belong in a history of AAPA conventions, but the preparations were the Metchaps’.

The “souvenir lapel ornaments,” which still turn up from time to time, were “quills” lettered and cut by Helen Vivarttas from her Dad’s light blue specification paper, she said, undoubtedly the same as the cover stock mentioned in *Standpipe* 28 colophon. The quills were simple, almost childish, but perhaps it might be a good idea if newcomers to larger and more sophisticated conventions were to receive such introducers, instead of being “that dark-haired fellow in the corner who was always lost after business sessions.” On the walls of the assembly room were posters Helen had also arted. Other Metchaps worked on program details: Groveman the quiz, Phelan the skit, Martin the music....

AAJ, June-July 1939, carried the Metchaprexy’s report mentioning:

Metchap Bill Haywood, and Conventioneer Frank Galiva took photographs in front of the Library building...Bruce Smith, our Mailer, traveled 1560 miles for this occasion...Bernice McCarthy arrived direct from the California NAPA Convention, bringing with her Mrs. McCarthy,

and the Haggertys, who signed up to receive our splendid monthly bundles (and they were, too!-AP) promising in turn to circulate *Leisure Hours* to members of the AAPA...

A controversy on “Swing” was left unsettled, since both Pro, headed by “Swing to me is ecstasy” Farnsworth, and Con, led by “I’m agin it” Groveman, are both set in their opinions...

President Kay’s greeting to Conventioneers; telegrams from Louis Gilbert and Bob Bates, whose “Keep American Tops..” proved to be the theme of the Convention..an ajay quiz arranged by Bill Groveman, in lieu of the scheduled speaker..the Metchap prize for the quiz, a book...

Ice cream and soda pop—and still another gab-fest—followed the program which was viewed by Mr. Geo W. Trainer, new Metchap who took the flash photo of Conventioneers...

After all expenses were paid we did have \$0.70 for the Recruiting Fund....

So we meet another Metchap. In *Metam* 1, and other papers, appears the joyful note:

George Trainer has generously offered to print the Winter *Metropolitan Amateur* for the chapter gratis.

Research turns up no such issue at all. In fact, to be additionally critical, Trainer’s historic photo of the 1939 New York Convention is obviously incomplete.

For one thing, that photo shows only one Byron David Mack. There were two. Evidently God was so pleased (and justifiedly so!) with that particular mould— blond, blue-eyes, pink cheeks, dimple in chin—that he turned out an exact duplicate, an identical twin named William. Byron, like his namesake, was poetic, and introverted, serious, philosophic beyond his 15 years. William, wearer of the family pork pie (a flat-crowned hat popular those days), was the extraverted Play Boy, a contrast like the Hempstead Smith Bros. When William met an untimely death by accident not too long afterward, Byron, crushed, retired from the Amateur Journalism that might have helped even a trifle to assuage his grief. His friends have ever after had to conjecture, knowing nothing else but a wisp of memory that Byron entered the Marines when war came a couple years later.

Ajay Newstalk (April 1940) (Levine) carried the note:

Louis Gilbert is publishing a typewritten monthly, called *The Tower*, which is distributed only to members of the Metchap.

In the *Printer’s Devil*, July 1940, we meet Metchap Gilbert, who published *Chatham Chatter* for AAPA:

We (Groveman—AP) spent a pleasant time at the home of Louis Gilbert on May 18th. The Chatham Chatterer is a short, chubby fellow with a wonderful gift of speech and an attractive personality. His grandfather, Mr. Brandeis, is a retired Supreme Court Justice and some rather interesting photos of the “Nine Old Men” were scattered about the room.

Bruce Wilkerson Smith (*Four-Star Sports* and *American Emblem*), 15 years old, did travel 1560 miles from Wisconsin to meet the Metchaps. What did they think of him? Groveman writes in *Nutmegger* (published by Metchap Gabby Gabaree):

Bruce Smith..of genial face and chunky build, is probably the most popular fellow in the AAPA. He’s served the association faithfully and is everybody’s friend.

The reason for Bruce’s popularity is his consistence. He is no flash in the pan, and while others may surpass him at times with their publishing and writing, we always know that the gent from Green Bay is quietly on his way, working for a greater AAPA.

Groveman proved himself a prophet. Bruce is consistent as ever, still 100% AAPAn, still active through all these twenty years, except for a brief time when he was collecting the Distinguished Flying Cross and other medals “Up in Mabel’s Room” during World War II. In fact, Bruce Smith right now is President of AAPA!

In *Metam* no. 1, Secy-Treasurer Groveman reported for the period April 8th to November 30, 1939:

Five meetings have been held, two in the Hudson Park Branch Library, three at the home of Helen A. Vivarttas.

Chapter Chatter, by Editor Groveman, reported in *Metam* no. 2 a total of 12 new members, including Bob Smith's brother Willard (Bill) of *Nassau Amateur*, their teacher Dorothy Cantfil, Steve Bogart of *Postscript*, John Abbot of *Aces*, and Meyer Perlmut. Also:

The meeting of Dec. 29th was held at the home of Miss Vivarttas; those of Feb. 11, March 3, and April 14th at the home of Robert Smith, Jr.; that of May 5th at home of George Trainer and on June 9th at Norman Levine's.

According to an affiliated journal, it was standard procedure for a Round Robin letter to be circulated to all members after each meeting. This was an activity booster which induced Metchap members to travel an undue proportion of miles sometimes, as when Gabaree, Martin and Phelan attended several meetings from Connecticut, and Miller from Massachusetts. This letter may later have been mimeographed, as was the *Metchap Official News*, since *Metam* no. 3 records the transfer of the chapter mimeograph supplies from Vivarttas to Groveman.

With the second issue of *Metam*, the publishing policy of the paper changed:

Copy for the next issue must be sent to Mr. Groveman by August 5th, along with \$0.50 for each 200 words or less.

The Secretary-Treasurer (still Groveman) reported a balance of \$1.39 for the period June 5th to August 6, 1940, and added that "hereafter this report will be left out of the organ and mailed privately to chapter members only in the *Metchap Official News*."

The last *Metam* available leads off with a personalized report, "Metchap Monkey Bizness" on the Feb. 11th meeting by editor (and probably printer) Groveman, but the inside two pages of this particular copy are unintentionally blank! The last page states that "Secretary (Bruce) Smith also has awarded the *Metropolitan Amateur* Charter No. 4, Class A, formerly issued to *Type Talks*..." Apparently it was the kiss of death, unless further *Metams* escaped the writer.

As early as March, 1940, according to Haywood's typewritten *American News* no. 3 and Levine's *Ajay Newstalk*, the Metchap started planning an Eastern Ajay Meet, to be held in New York City on Sept. 3. "Eastern amateurs from Maine to Ben Bianchi are all invited..." (As the Metchaps were basically ignorant of UAPA current events, their selection of this date sets a precedent which justifies AAPA's claim when, later, UAPA and UAPA Alumni leaders, in the usual ranting Heins manner, claimed thievery of the Labor Day weekend by AAPA Conventions.)

METCHAP RE-ORGANIZED ON FIRM BASIS, was the headline of a news item, written by Gabaree, in Bob Kunde's hectographed *Ajay World*, Sept. 1940:

William Haywood has circulated a new Metchap Constitution which will put this Eastern Chapter on a more permanent basis. Frank Miller has been a big factor in this reorganization. New by laws make the Chapter dues 25¢ per year. Elections will be held once each year but members may vote by proxy instead of having to attend at least one meeting in three as per the old Chapter constitution. All members must live within a reasonable distance of New York and members must attend one meeting annually. Two big get-togethers are planned annually.

Also, reported *Ajay World*, about the 1940 AAPA Laureates:

THE YEARLY WINNERS were chosen from the Quarterly selections which were picked by the METROPOLITAN, GREEN BAY and the TEXAS chapters.

In fact, *American Dawn*, Fall 1939, editorializes:

Chief Critic Vivarttas promises full reports in the Organ...from Poetry Critic Phelan and Fiction-Essay Critic Elliott Ruben, all Metchaps...

Although Gabaree's *Nutmegger* enthused that he "had a swell time at the Feb. Metchap clambake," Frank Miller compared it unfavorably to previous meetings, in Haywood's *American News*:

I was in New York a few weeks ago to attend the Metchap meeting at Bob Smith's house in

West Hempstead. ...stayed overnite at the Wm. Sloane House, met Gabaree Sunday in the lobby, and together we went to W. Hempstead. The meeting wasn't too successful, as the only ones to show up were Groveman and Levine (of course), Gabaree, Smith and his brother, and yours truly. Neither Helen nor Bernice put in an appearance, and I am beginning to wonder if the former intends to remain active...

(The year of her first AAPA presidency, 1940, was the year Helen had increasing difficulty with her mother about the hobby, according to her autobiography in *Siamese Standpipe* no. 28. It is hardly likely she would be allowed to attend meetings.)

Groveman, in *By Heck*, June 1940, remarked:

Metchap is going classy, what with printed notices. And you should have tasted Bob Smith's home made ice cream sodas at the April 14th meeting. Metchap Prexy Miller threatens to have us investigated for misappropriation of Metchap funds...

Apparently Treasurer Groveman had his troubles, for another time he reports George Trainer spent most of the meeting demanding that Groveman give an itemized accounting for the 9¢ in the Treasury!

Perhaps the ice cream sodas offset the trend, but there was an ominous note creeping in, when Bob Smith exhorted in *The Scarlet Cloak*, April 1940:

Metchap meeting have (sic) been pretty poor lately as the February meeting only had six. Come on you Metchaps! What's the matter? Too lazy to stop over to my house for a couple of hours?

In a barely legible mimeographed broadsheet, Sept. 1940, Groveman spent one-third the page on news and plans for future activity of the Metchap. The other two-thirds was devoted to information about the First Annual Eastern Reunion to take place over Labor Day weekend, at the Hotel Parkside. The price of the banquet will be \$1.25. The menu follows:

Fresh Fruit Cup
Consomme
Roast Leg of Lamb, Mint Jelly
Whipped Potato, Buttered Peas
Lettuce and Tomato Salad
Apple Brown Betty
Coffee"

(All for \$1.25!)

However, if it sounded too good to be true, in a way it was. In his sincere and heartfelt eulogy to Frank Miller, who died in 1942 of a chest infection after a year's illness, Groveman reminisced in *Printer's Devil*, April 1942:

The visit Frank paid to New York over Labor Day in 1940 will not soon be forgotten. An amateur reunion was to be held at the Hotel Parkside and a great many invitations had been sent out. The affair flopped and except for a few amateurs who dropped in sporadically, Frank and I found ourselves the only ones present. We spent the afternoon together and later went out to eat. How the waitress admired that handsome lad! The next day Frank and I went to the World's Fair together....That day was one of the happiest in both our lives, and it was also the last meeting Frank had with an amateur journalist.

Groveman continued:

After that happy September day Frank began to drop out of amateur journalism. His letters became less frequent and in March of 1941 we stopped writing entirely. I never heard from him again. A few months ago I asked Bill Haywood about Frank and he told me that he had been flat on his back for months. I never had known about it and determined to write him immediately. Less important things were attended to but writing to this old friend in misery was put off and finally

forgotten. How ashamed I felt when the news came of Frank's death, and how miserably that day went. I prayed for him that night.

Throughout AAPA Frank was mourned. Bob Smith and Bill Haywood also eulogized, one of the rare times Haywood has put his inner self in print. As far away as Florida, Roy Lee Barron, inspired by the many eulogies by those who loved Frank, started the Francis W. Miller Memorial Library of Amateur Journals. Haywood was right and spoke for the Metchap as well as himself:

Nor will we forget his pleasant personality that graced our gatherings. I think we'll always remember his tall, wiry form and his dark, good-looking face with the brilliant smile. We've lost a friend, and somehow anything we say now seems pitifully inadequate.

With Frank passed the carefree days of Metchap merrymaking. The younguns were growing into another phase. Groveman entered into NAPA activities. Vivarttas evidently could not attend meetings. These two had been spark-plugs of enthusiasm. The next time they appear socially, with other metropolitan ajays, it is at meetings of the Amateur Printers Club.

Unlike the APC, the Metchap cannot boast that it "sponsored" any ajay marriages. It can, though, make the unique claim that one member proposed seriously after his first meeting!

The Metchap served AAPA and Amateur Journalism well. There are many who say social gatherings detract from loftier journalistic activity. Sour grapes, perhaps, or they judge others by themselves, for seldom has latter-day Amateur Journalism seen such frantic printing activity, such a flurry of association-wide ajaying. There are many who decry the personality paragraphs and personal and hobby remarks which appear in Metchap (and other) journals of that era. Where would the historian be without them? Has an impersonal article of pseudo-literary tone on the abstract virtues of Truth and Faith any human appeal, or any value to the historical researcher who would, for a moment, revive the past?

However, the true significance of the Metropolitan Chapter lies in the lasting quality of its friendships. Twenty years later, though not enough advanced in age to be sentimental, the ajays who formed the nucleus of the group still cherish these friendships. There is a real affection among them, scattered as they are. Perhaps it is only expressed by an exchange of Christmas cards. Sometimes it takes the form of teasing reminiscences about a chocolate soda, or, to the other extreme, even offers of aid in distress. But always mention of the Metchap will bring a bemused smile to flit about the lips of ajays, now parents, who deem those the halcyon years: youthful enthusiasm and *real ajaying*!

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS

Kent Clair Chamberlain

Sermonizing into darkness,
Gladness stirring
Before usual sundance.
Unions saved from
All fury, planet anew in
Rapture, dreaming of all
eternal!

THE METCHAP MEMBERSHIP LIST
(Complete to November 30th, 1939)²

Stanley Abrams, 275 Front St., Hempstead, N.Y.
Hans Autor, 2543 98th St., Elmhurst, N.Y.
Sid Cohen, 1775 E. 10th St., Brooklyn, N.Y.
Ted Conover, 538 Westfield Ave., Westfield, N.J.
Warren Cubberly, 78 Linden Ave., Irvington, N.J.
T. Farnsworth, 333 N. Pleasant Ave., Ridgewood, N.J.
Almon S. Fish, Jr., 57 Osborne St., Bloomfield, N.J.
E. Gabaree, Jr., 17 W. Porter St., Waterbury, Conn.
Louis B. Gilbert, 935 Park Ave., New York, N.Y.
Wm. Groveman, 18 Maryland Ave., Hempstead, N.Y.
Vincent Haggerty, 21 Stegman Ct., Jersey City, N.J.
Mrs. V. Haggerty, 21 Stegman Ct., Jersey City, N.J.
Herb Hall, Jr., 130 Cathedral Ave., Hempstead, N.Y.
William Haywood, 2986 Briggs Ave., New York, N.Y.
.

Mrs. Katherine Jamba, Paulmier Pl., Jersey City, N.J.
Norman Levine, 18 President St., Hempstead, N.Y.
Bernice McCarthy, 402 2nd Ave., Asbury Pk., N.J.
Byron D. Mack, 139 Sheridan Ter., Ridgewood, N.J.
Edgar Allan Martin, 2 Broad St., Manchester, Conn.
Francis W. Miller, 297 Elm St., Holyoke, Mass.
George Mudge, Box 22, Afton, N.Y.
Michael Phelan, Pomfret School, Pomfret, Conn.
Jerry Quarterolla, 527 Mace Ave., Bronx, N.Y.
Elliott Rubin, 10717 112th St., Richmond Hill, N.Y.
Robert Smith, 11 Andover Pl., W. Hempstead, N.Y.
Walter Strombach, 100 Rich St., Irvington, N.J.
James V. Taurasi, 137-07 32nd Ave., Flushing, N.Y.
G. Trainer, Jr., 95 Stuyvesant Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y.
H. A. Vivarttas, 452 Palisade Ave., Weehawken, N.J.

NEW YORK TIMES OBITUARY³
WILLIAM HERBERT GROVEMAN
1924-2011

GROVEMAN, William Herbert, 86, of Pompton Plains, NJ, passed away on Friday, Feb. 25, 2011. Born in Brooklyn, NY on October 10, 1924, William was active in the National Amateur Press Association from his teen years through the rest of his life. He graduated from Hempstead High School in 1942. He was a soldier and interpreter in the 78th Lightning Division in World War II, earning a Bronze Star and Oak Leaf Cluster, and graduated from Antioch College in 1949. He worked at both Simon & Schuster and Doubleday, later launching Transatlantic Books, an antiquarian book search firm. William is survived by Gertrude Groveman, his wife of 62 years, Helen Levine, his daughter, Bernard Groveman and Barbara Ancona, his son and daughter-in-law, and five grandchildren, Tamar, Ethan, Benjamin and Hannah Groveman, and Julia Levine. He is remembered for having generously shared ideas with family and friends. This virtual "clipping service" was how he showed his love and affection. Memorial contributions may be made in his name to the 78th Division Veterans Association, Kelley Scholarship Fund (www.78thDivision.org), American Friends of the Open University of Israel (www.afoui.org) or the National Amateur Press Association (www.AmateurPress.org).

² Contributed by Stan Oliner.

³ This obituary was published on NYTimes.com from March 4 to March 5, 2011. Fossil President Guy Miller kindly provided a copy to the Editor.

BILL GROVEMAN'S AMATEUR PUBLICATIONS
(abstracted from the Moitoret Family Index of Amateur Journals)

Stan Oliner

Amateurism, one issue, 1941
American News, with William Haywood
By Heck, 9 issues, 1939-1940
Devil's Advocate, 1 issue, 1946
Duet, with Richard G. Adams, 3 issues, 1942, 1944
Groveman Albert Paxton, with Ray A. Albert and Russell L. Paxton, 1 issue, 1944
Hustling Snail, with Burton Crane and Edward H. Cole, 1 issue, 1941
Informer, 4 issues, 1939-1940
Mad River Rat, with Bart Pedrick and Willametta Turnepseed
Massacre, with Albert Lee, 1 issue, 1941
Massaker, with Guy Miller, 1 issue, 1946
Metchap Official News, 1940
Metropolitan Amateur, Metropolitan Chapter, AAPA, 1 issues, 1939?-1940
Once Over, with Edward H. Cole
National Amateur, 4 issues, 1995-1996
Printer's Devil, some with William and Robert Smith, 23 issues, 1939-1942
Reluctant Dragon, 2 issues, 1951
Shampane, with Alvin S. Fick and Harold Segal
SNAFU, including Germany publication, 1944-1945
Spirit of '76, 5 issues, 1941-1942
Ye Scarlet Herring, with Robert L. Smith

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Ken Faig, Jr.

Some months back, Fossil Trustee Stan Oliner discovered the typescript of "The Merry Metchaps" by "Arnold Pierce" which is published in this number. We subsequently discovered that it had already been published under Helen Wesson's byline in *The Fossil* for January 1959. But after half a century, it is more than worthy of reprint. The late Bill Groveman made some corrections to the typescript for this reprinting. I really can't think of a better tribute to Bill, who died February 25, 2011, than the reprinting of this article. He and Helen Wesson were truly the dynamos of the amateur journalism hobby in the late thirties and early forties. Bill remained faithful to the hobby throughout his lifetime, rejoining AAPA in recent years. Bill very generously donated a large ajay collection to yours truly; and his collection has enriched *The Fossil* over my years of editorship. Bill was never too busy to help us, even in his last years. His comments on some selections from his ajay photo album ran as recently as our October 2009 number. The entire amateur journalism family extends its condolences to Bill's widow, his children, and his grandchildren. With our

President Guy Miller, I also take note of the passing of our member Guy Botterill and Rich Hopkins' very moving tribute to him distributed in the AAPA and NAPA bundles.

In addition to furnishing me with typescript for our reprint of "The Merry Metchaps," our busy Trustee Stan Oliner also put me in communication with John Flood, current manager of the New York Public Library's Hudson Park Branch Library. The Hudson Park Branch Library was originally opened on New York's West Side (near the Greenwich Village neighborhood) in 1906 and an addition on Seventh Avenue South was erected in 1937. This addition contained the meeting room in which the Metchaps held some of their early meetings and hosted the July 1939 AAPA convention. Mr. Flood has furnished us with two excellent photographs of the exterior of the Hudson Park Branch Library (images 100797 and 1252737 from NYPL's digital image gallery) and I thank him for thereby enriching our reprint of Helen Wessons' Metchap history. About the exact place of the Metchap meetings Mr. Flood writes:

It's hard to say what room would have been used for the meeting room 70 years ago. The first floor contains the Adult collection and the second floor the Childrens collection. The basement has several rooms: an auditorium-like space where theatrical performances were given between the time of the opening of the branch through the Depression. There's also a room under the gallery space in the addition that was opened in 1937, so perhaps that's where the Metchaps met. The auditorium was closed to theatrical performances sometime during or after WWII. The space was going to be used for civil defense, although I don't know if it actually was used for that purpose after all. Both those rooms are used at this time for community group meetings and library programs.

I thank Mr. Flood for this information and for the fine photographs of the Hudson Park Branch Library. Readers can view more photographs of the branch library on NYPL's digital gallery if they wish: just Google NYPL digital gallery and then search for "Hudson Park Branch." In April 2010, *The Fossil* covered NYC sites connected with The Fossils. Certainly, a stop at the Hudson Park Branch Library at 66 Leroy Street ought also to be a part of any NYC ajay tour, especially for AAPA members.

I also wish to take the opportunity to congratulate and to thank Jacob L. Warner, who produced the 500th monthly number of his journal *The Boxwooder* for the March 2011 NAPA mailing. "Jake," his wife Leah, his children and his grandchildren have done much to enrich and to support the amateur journalism hobby over the last forty years.

I am contemplating some "Zine-O-Scope" columns for future issues of *The Fossil*. Also, I have not forgotten about my intention to write about the collaboration of Fossil August Derleth (1909-1971) and ex-ajayer Carroll Coleman in producing beautifully-printed volumes of poetry from Coleman's Prairie Press. Helen's "The Merry Metchaps" in our current issue certainly shows there is a wide opportunity for writing the history of local clubs, if we can induce the potential historians to write them. Like Bill Groveman, Helen was another "living legend" who was never too busy to do something for the hobby. Two members who are never too busy to provide feedback for *The Fossil* are our poets Kent Clair Chamberlain and Martha E. Shivvers. I thank them for their support.

Helen and her family lived for some years in now-stricken Japan, and Helen and Sheldon produced from there the book for which The Fossils will be most remembered, Spencer's *History of Amateur Journalism* (1957). Our hearts all go out to our friends the Japanese people on account of the terrible loss of life and destruction wrought by the earthquake experienced in March 2011. Of course, many Fossils can remember Pearl Harbor and the time when Japan was the enemy of the United States. The threat of radiation resulting from the earthquake makes us hearken back to the use of nuclear weapons at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. *The Fossil* hopes that despite the tragedies of the past the Japanese and American peoples will remain friends for all the rest of human history.

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THE FOSSILS

<http://www.thefossils.org/>

This journal is the Official Organ of The Fossils, a non-profit organization whose purposes are to stimulate interest in and preserve the history of independent publishing, either separate from or organized in the hobby known as “Amateur Journalism” and to foster the practices of amateur journalism. To this end, The Fossils preserved the Library of Amateur Journalism, a repository of amateur papers and memorabilia dating from the 1850s, acquired in 1916 and donated in 2004 to the Special Collections Department of the University of Wisconsin Library, Room 976, Memorial Library, 728 State Street, Madison, WI 53706. (The Library of Amateur Journalism Collection is not yet open for use at University of Wisconsin at Madison.) Individuals or institutions allied with our goals are invited to join The Fossils. Dues are \$15 annually—\$20 for joint membership of husband and wife. Annual subscription to *The Fossil* without privileges of membership is \$10. Make remittances payable to The Fossils, and mail to the Secretary-treasurer.

500

The BOXWOODER
March 2011

Cover
500th Monthly Number of Jacob L. Warner's
Boxwooder
(March 2011 NAPA Mailing)



Hudson Park Branch Library, New York City
Original 1906 Building
Courtesy of New York Public Library Digital Gallery #100797



Guy Miller & Louise Lincoln
On Louise's Ninety-Ninth Birthday
Tucson, Arizona, February 12, 2011
Courtesy Ken Metzgar