

1 Jan. '04.--I am married to a millionaire. How much more auspiciously could a year begin? C's TIAA/CREF pension fund at year-end had mounted to \$1,007,000; and our overall worth, which a year ago had taken a plunge that made us catch our breath a little, gained back that and about half more, to the total tune of \$4,152,000. And we know the next trick is to hang on to it.

To celebrate solvency and each other, we went to Ivar's on the pier--per tradition (ours, whether or not Ivar's is aware of it), we were the first customers of the year--and had a lunch of chowder and coleslaw and beer, probably the fourth or fifth New Year's Day we've marked that way. As C said with a grin, it's our idea of a good time.

The weather meanwhile is the opposite of nice. Chilly, gray, the Peninsula showing only headlands and the rest is murk. Spatters of rain that will surely have traces of snow later on. (Bulletin: hummingbird just zipped past, screeched to a mid-air halt at the feeder I hung out a couple of weeks ago, hovered for a look but didn't have any. Maybe he was just reassuring himself it's there if really needed.) We have lucked out, though, as Oregon and eastern Washington are getting a real wallop of snow and wind.

This morn C read over my week's work thus far, the book prospectuses for String of Pearls and St. David's Autograph, and probably I'll go on to one for The Rainbow Rope tomorrow. Give 'em all something to think about in New York, with such a batch.

4 Jan.--Clear and cold, 25 at 10 AM. Spectacular mountains, peaks like a flotilla of icebergs and a blue-white tone all the way down from there, like an ~~arctic~~ polar sea fog.

Am finally taking a day off, after having spent all week on the trio of book proposals to pass along to Liz. I am pessimistic about the prospects of reaching a deal with Scribner, which has caused me to grit through this marathon of prospectus-writing. But ship 'em in and see is all I know to do.

Hummingbird has just spent a couple of minutes tanking up heartily at the feeder; they spurn it when the weather is more clement.

7 Jan.--Powerless. Electricity went off at 9:23 this morn, and now at 1:40 it's a cold old house. We've weighed options of bailing out of here, and will make some kind of move toward that in the next half hour or so. The lack of heat and light is the consequence of about a 4" snowstorm y'day, really just a sideswipe from the big cold storm that went through Oregon. And we figure this outage came of City Light trying to balance power, rather than from a downed powerline somewhere--the lights struggled back on two ~~and then~~ or three times before dousing.

Just before the lights went out--one has to hope it isn't an omen--Liz called to say she's had a first look at my packet of book ideas etc., wants to read it all again and think on it and talk it over with Chuck, and will try to get back to me by the end of the week. She said it was useful to see my thinking on paper that way--i.e., my point about Nan simply having been too involved with her other duties to --11 min. until 2, the power came back just now; for good!?

as I was saying before the ^Celectrical god relented, Nan evidently too involved with all else that she has to shoulder within Scribner and sometimes even S&S to really be my editor, in a line-editing sense or for that matter much direction on plot. I do find it incredible, and sad for both of us, that I'm possibly the only writer on the face of the earth complaining about having Nan Graham for an editor; but as I tried very hard to convey to Liz, the Scribner team system ends up asking a lot of me and if the money isn't there and the ultimate marketing skill isn't there, why do it? In any case, for the first time Liz mentioned other editors she has in mind: Dan Frank at Pantheon, Andre Bernard at Harcourt, and after I prompted her, Becky Saletan at FS&G/Northpoint. The fact that she volunteered that thought may well be the turning point, away from Scribner. She's now ^{sounded out} to Susan--that is, rather than Nan, or before Nan--to see if there's a sense that a 2-book deal can be struck; I would about predict that her next phone call will say she thinks it's hopeless, time to try move on.

8 Jan.--Struggled back to The Whistling Season a bit today, feeling desperate to get going on fresh writing. Not much progress, but I can hope it'll lead toward the feel of the process again.

Meanwhile Liz and Chuck sat down with Nan, Susan and Brant, and don't I wish I'd had a periscope into the room. The upshot was that the non-fiction book proposal, St. David's Autograph, "gave them pause," made them think about whether it would "change the rhythm" of what they see as my steady but not good enough sales record. Liz said it was also admitted that they had dropped the ball on promoting Prairie Nocturne, not bringing me East etc., which I speculated to C could be laid off on the publicity dept. without anybody in the room getting smudges on them. So, the situation now is that Liz left them with the trio of book proposals and they're to make some kind of response pretty promptly.

Weather moderated today, up into 40s, showers, the snow all gone.

12 Jan.--Winsome weather, springlike on our early morn walk around the h'hood. We did an Olympian amount of yardwork y'day--building a veg bed from scratch, cutting down dead lilacs, cutting back the big fern--but I need to hunker in today, a true day of stuff:

--Just sold \$77,000+ of an ailing stock in the Profit Sharing Plan and will try to do another financial move or two yet this morn.

--Must prepare for interview @ 2 this afternoon w/ Marie Arana, editor of Wash'n Post Book World; it's to go with my "Writing Life" piece for them on creating fictional characters.

--And there's always the book(s) negotiation w/ Scribner, which may or may not clomp back onto stage today.

At the end of last week I did make a little progress on The Whistling Season. I suppose that'll mean Scribner will want the non-fiction book first, sure as hell.

13 Jan.--Liz called this afternoon to say Scribner wasn't "going anywhere" with our attempt at a 2-book deal, and so, onward we try to go, to elsewhere. The Scribs will leave their money on the table while we look around, says Liz, and will try "do right by us" on my backlist after we sign elsewhere or come back to them. Could be worse.

20 Jan.--And today the courting dance truly got underway, with Liz's phone call saying Andre Bernard at Harcourt is "very keen" to publish me, Becky Saletan is intrigued with the non-fiction book idea and would be calling me, and all in all, she, Liz, is "sanguine, optimistic, excited."

Naturally we're doing chores and trying to pack for Tucson so C pinch-hit for me on the trip to the post office to stop the mail while we're away, and sure enough, she was no sooner out the door, me sitting here frantically cramming from my non-fic prospectus of 3 weeks ago, than here came Becky on the phone. We talked half an hour, and as I later told Liz, without trying to put down Scribner, it was the most focused conversation from an editor I've had since I was edited by Becky. The long and short of it was that she was not grabbed by the yearlong journal structure of the proposal and wondered if there might be a better "subterranean" structure by which I could get at the material. I told her sure, I was not welded to the armature of a year, I frankly had come up with that as a deadline driver, on me and the publisher, to try to get a book achieved more quickly than was the case with *Prairie Nocturne*. Recited to her the lengthy process of getting *Nocturne* from ms to book. As we talked, we shifted the possible geographical locus more and more toward Montana, and after lunch and a nap, I called her back and said here's a thought you're responsible for so by god you ought to hear it--the book could focus on the Two Medicine country, actual and my invented version, which would give her the geography and rememberings by me that she wants and would give me the larger topics I want, a possible subtitle being Mapping a Latitude of the Imagination. "That's good," she said, and was off to a meeting, and she'll ultimately put in an offer to Liz. This could still all go to hell in various ways and I end up with no more \$\$\$ than the Scribner offer, but so far so good.

29 Jan.--Definitely back from vacation. About an hour before we were to leave the Windmill Suites y'day morn, phone rang, Liz of course. The situation: Harcourt and FSG offering identical \$200,000 for 2-book contract, Dan Frank at Pantheon declining to bid "because he doesn't think he can do any better." So, to today, wherein Liz wanted me to talk to Andre Bernard at Harcourt, Andre was in a meeting when I called, and just as we were firing up the soup for lunch, he called back. I entered these negotiations with a tilt toward Becky Saletan at Farrar Straus Giroux/Northpoint, but Andre did a nice job of explicating Harcourt, from citing his editor of five Nobel laureates (Drenka Willens) to admitting Harcourt is "window-dressing" for the Anglo-Dutch conglomerate owner, Reed-Elsevier. And yes, if that was my choice, he'd be game to be my editor himself.

So, Andre brought things about back to where Liz had described the pair of offers originally, equal. ~~Phewments~~ (In the what-a-biz-this-is category, Liz asked Nan her evaluation of our offers, and Nan told her they looked to her, yup, equal.) The tone of the deep Harcourt backlist and publishing for the ages comes out when Andre talks-- "I like mass and continuity," he said in offering to take on my 4 Penguin-refugees-to-be--versus Becky's energy and focus and, as we both blinked in respect in this household when she instantly re-shaped and doubtless strengthened my non-fiction proposal, sharing of instincts.

So, I thought it over for a couple of hours and then called Liz, and we agreed she'd ask both of them for a best, i.e., final offer, since they're dead-even so far, and see if Becky can match Andre's willingness to take on the quartet of soon-to-be-orphaned paperbacks. Now things wait until Monday, when Becky's boss, Jonathan Galassi, gets back from abroad. I think there's still a tilt in Becky's direction, from my having worked with her pretty happily before, and I figure Liz may put her thumb on the scale on that side for (a) my own good in providing me more editing than I've been getting and (b) her own good in dealing with an editor who's a bit more open with agents ("Andre is probably better with writers than with agents," she told me beforehand). We'll see at the start of next

29 Jan. cont. ~~week~~. In any case, I feel I'll be landing in reasonable terrain either way, perhaps more so than any of my other necessary leaps across the tricky archipelago of book biz.

The big downshift in money came as something of a stunner, \$50,000 under what I'd hoped/imagined might be the minimum offer (although Liz admitted today the \$200,000 offers were about what she had expected). So, good for our side for having leapt to auction with Bucking the Sun, making a good enough impression with Becky and the S&S coffers to maintain the same advance for Mtn Time, and then out-stubborning Nan to maintain it again for Prairie Nocturne; about 3/4 of a million dollars thereby, and we haven't frittered it away.

Speaking of Nan, Scribner, et al: Liz is not above primping a little revisionist history into how things are going, but there's probably a major flavor of truth in her revelation today that even before this pair of better offers came in, she was going to advise I leave Scribner. I asked, apropos of not quite clicking there, is it just me? She said no, it's everybody in my situation, by which I guess she meant any writer who isn't an automatic box-office wow; she said the bottom-line pressures are just so intense at S&S. As I said to C afterward, how long can that go on with Nan and Susan Moldow, both of whom are upscale literary types at heart?

Thus, indubitably, we are home. To rain, drilling down most of the day so far (3:15) and to a blizzard of 16 phone messages. We naturally suspected a bunch of fax beeps ratcheting up that total, but not a one. There were, however, 6 or 7 calls from Bill Glum of Michigan, who says ~~he~~ he's Grandma's great-nephew and apparently has just discovered This House of Sky; that return call, I'm putting off until the weekend. The other phone weirdness was with Rae Tufts of the Museum of History and Industry board, putting the arm on me to be one of the speakers at their tribute to Jean Walkinshaw. I told her OK, but how about 4 of the \$25 dinner tix if we could bring Tony Angell and Lee along? No way! Rae is some piece of work. She only reluctantly granted me tix for Carol and me, and firmly said Tony would have to buy his own and he ought to do it

29 Jan. cont.--soon as only 60 of the 170 seats are left. I chuckled, but a little incredulously: "Rae, do you know what my usual speaking fee is? \$8,000! And I can't get \$50 out of you?" She said back that after all the Museum had honored me, and I said yes they'd been nice to me or I wouldn't be returning her call...anyway, I gave up rather than sullyng Jean's occasion.

And somewhere back there, beyond the phone calls and the 8 or 10 pounds of mail and the phone blitz of negotiating, was Tucson, where 24 hours ago we still were. This *was a good stay, as distinct from last year's weeklong perfection of weather. We spent the first 3 nights with Betty and Pete Bengston, and probably would take a night or two off that if we crash on them again, just to get a bed apiece as we do at the Windmill Suites. We get along with Pete and Betty very well, and they again devoted a day to taking us somewhere, in this case Casa Grande Nat'l Monument about 45 mi. north of town. Otherwise, C and I hiked in Catalina State Park 4 or 5 times, once in Saguaro East, went to the Desert Museum, ate twice each at Terra Cotta and Poca Cosa and once at Parilla Suiza, and saw "Master and Commander." Ah, and dinner at Terra C the final night was with DeWitt Daggett, he of Audio Press and our bestselling audio of A River Runs Through It. DeWitt's new profession is shoeing horses. (With great forbearance, I have not passed this along to Liz as an example of what publishing can do to people, figuring her head is already spinning enough from the book biz.) It's pretty gutsy, since deWitt can't weigh more than 125# soaking wet. Good to see him again--I hadn't realized it's been possibly 8 years since we passed through Paonia--and listen in on his thoughtful takes on life, which he seems to take as a serial quest.

*Cloudy and showers the first three days or so; then it turned quite nice, though there was a day at Catalina and another at Saguaro East where we hiked with 4 layers on--shirt, heavier shirt, vest, rainjacket as windbreaker.

3 Feb.--So it's to be Becky Saletan again as my editor. I was pretty content with Becky the first time around (in fact, scanned back over the Bucking the Sun correspondence file to make sure my memory hadn't rosied up) and this feels right.

Liz called y'day to report that neither Harcourt nor FSG was willing to budge from the initial offer, and so with things dead-even at \$200,000, I told ^{her} that my tilt in Becky's favor might as well decide it. Certainly Becky's phone call to me instantaneously and astutely reshaping the non-fiction book idea impressed us both, too.

Now to see if I can actually get back to work on The Whistling Season. Last week, the weekend, and y'day all went to either book negotiations, reshuffling finances, or clearing the desk, and this morn when I couldn't catch Liz by phone I sat down and wrote the little speech I'm to give at Jean Walkinshaw's tribute dinner.

C and I have managed dabs of yardwork a few days, though this has been a showery period since we got back from Tucson.

4 Feb.--6a.m., and the moon has just peeked at me through the clouds over Kingston for half a minute. I have just flipped open the binder with the opening scene of The Whistling Season in it, to begin anew one more time in the craft of making books.

9 Feb.--Both of us are yearning toward the Skagit, to see the snow geese before they depart, but the drier weather that has finally come brings fog with it. The 12th now looks like our best shot.

This will be a choppy week, with the Jean Walkinshaw tribute to be rehearsed for on Wednesday and a medical appointment or maybe two on Friday. Will strive for some writing time, having put in much dogwork on finances last week.

It should be noted how magnificently we are eating, these nights. Friday to the Provinces, treating the Laskins in celebration of David finishing his book, The Children's Blizzard. And last night king salmon on our barbecue grill, I guess celebrating the return of enough daylight to grill something at 5 p.m.

12 Feb.--Is it possible I am finally breaking out on top of the ice jam of tasks, niggling chores and general distraction that I've been swimming under since about the start of last December? The book contract trek is over and if I have chosen right and there isn't a convulsion at my new publisher, I am through with contract perils until I reach, dear me, seventy. Finances are getting deployed as wanted, so there should be less cogitation time spent on those. And last night finished off the last speaking obligation, my short tribute to Jean Walkinshaw at the MOHAI party honoring her career. One more lift to my mood is the gorgeousness of this day--just now a bulk carrier named the Leros is catching the sun on its hull as it plies down the Sound beneath the ~~winter~~ snowcaps of the mountains--which we're going to mark by going up to the Skagit and the snowgeese.

Have not had time or energy to put down my thoughts about once again changing the guard, publisherwise. This is my third major migration from one publisher to the next (not counting the in-house sideways leap from Simon & Schuster to Scribner), in the course of eleven book contracts and 26 years. Since it's been necessitous every time, I don't feel any regrets or apologies about packing up and leaving, in a book biz where editors do it all the time. At Scribner, with its halo of literary history and Nan Graham's sterling reputation, I had the feeling of being somewhere around the thumbs or pinkies of deft hands that were always juggling frantically. And there was always the money issue there, with the level of advance they inherited with me, and the book biz apparently financially fraught enough that my earning-over-time type of books no longer compute well. It remains to be seen whether I have outsmarted myself in going with Becky's \$200,000 two-book offer, rather than Nan's \$130,000 for one and-then-we'll-see, but it thoroughly feels worth the try. I am at least, for the time being, up out of the situation of the past year-plus, partly Scribner's doing in their clunky production process and partly my own overdedication to the bookseller constituency, where I have been busy all the time on pieces of the book biz that do not actually produce words on pages.

12 Feb. cōnt.--So, mid-February it is, about a month later than I'd hoped, when the day-by-day production of The Whistling Season can really get underway.

Last night's shindig for Jean Walkinshaw: more on this later, as we need to ride the sun to the Skagit in the next few minutes, but the gathering was quite a generational, Capitol-Hill-liberal, civic gentry conclave: Kay Bullitt, Jim Wickwire, Rae Tufts and the other Museum board members who came up with the notion of ~~honoring~~ honoring Jean. The Doigs' eyebrows were up a fraction, all evening, at being there, but there we were, inducted by ~~hatched~~ dint of talent and tendency, and that's likely no bad thing.

13 Feb.--What a fine mellow day we had yesterday. (For that matter, this morning--ahead of rain moving in--is handsome as can be, a salmon-wash of light on high thin clouds and on the Sound, where an outbound ~~Hyundai~~ Hyundai vanship just passed with its orange deck cargo standing out in extraordinary clarity and its side deck lights twinkling.) Clear and 60ish, the kind of February day we think we used to have more of, and so we seized advantage and went to the Skagit delta. Somehow there was not a trace of the 26,000 snowgeese--we figure the entire flock must have been in the east end of the bay, off Camano--but we still had a fine time, doing the Indian Slough dike hike as pintails and cinammon teal dabbled all along the channel. Pizza and beer as usual for lunch at the LaCommer Brew Pub, where the service is as unreliable as the drink and grub are good.

24 Feb.--Long time no diary, and not much now either, as I leave pretty quick for my semi-annual MGUS checkup with Dr. Ginsburg. Always a bit apprehensive about these, although I'm feeling good.

By the end of last week I got the first couple of scenes of The Whistling Season polished to the point where C could read them over, and she found no fault. This week is off to a more stubborn start--y'day I spent much of the morning cleaning the desk and filing stuff away, routine stuff every damn bit of it--although this morn I roughed in enough material in a couple of spots

24 Feb. cont.--later in the ms to constitute the daily average of 2 pp. that I try to maintain.

Right now it's blustery, but we caught a terrific weather break over the weekend, mid-60s and nice, nice, nice. We went to Swanson's 40% off sale y'day and bought a \$200 Japanese maple to put near the front window.

25 Feb.--My medical session y'day could not have gone any better. My MGUS readings were unchanged, steady now across 3 years; in short, blessed reprieve. And my weight fully clothed was 155, down 11 pounds from that initial 3-years-ago session. Last bit of good news, my blood pressure, which has always been good, in the 120/70 range, was 100/60, perhaps due to leaning back in the car seat and doing some controlled breathing where I arrived to Gp Health with time to kill.

So, if I'm not a new man, I'm at least not a spent one. Marched back into the Whistling Season ms this morning, and while it's not been an inspired day of wordmaking, it's been productive enough.

Stints of rain are back, evidently to welcome Kay & Bill Pride on their visit from Denver. They're in town for Kay's library convention, and we're to meet them in a couple of hours for dinner at Union. Carol and Kay have not seen each other for nearly 50 years--I guess more like 45?--when Carol was her counselor at the NU Institute.

8 March--The gap in the diary represents some progress on Whistling Season, but also a lot of yardwork and sundry chores, financial dealings among them. To try to recap a bit:

--Went to the Provinces on 3rd with Ann and Marsh, many laughs as usual and at last a plan for us to visit them at their Arch Cape place--on our anniversary.

--Ms. Martha, she be guilty, my, my, my. Have followed the Martha Stewart case because of being briefly on the same radar screen with her during the St. Petersburg trip. We had two near-misses at having meals with her--to our relief then, and I think that still holds true--when (a) she didn't turn up for breakfast when Charles Simonyi sat down with us and the Calvins--"Martha is beautifying herself," said Charles and (b) at the start of the final

8 March cont.--gala, Charles and she plopped down at our table but that didn't last long, probably because she sniffed better social pickings elsewhere. Anyway, it was interesting to be around her--inasmuch as she was Charles' date and we were thrown together with Charles an inordinate number of times--without either of us introducing ourselves. She didn't seem to know how, or wouldn't condescend to--or maybe simply hadn't had to for years!--and we were behaving as if we belonged there, figuring it would be good for the celebs to have to figure out who we are. A few random thoughts emerge about Martha's evident decline and fall: She evidently passed up 2 chances to take a plea bargain--not able to believe she could be found guilty? Then there's the brutal rapidity of the media's turn on her--CNBC had ready an instant feature, after the verdict, titled "Life in the Big House." And lastly, C and I witnessed the penchant for corner-cutting, or at least behaving as if the rules are for other people, when she and Charles strolled off the ship in St. Pete, against the instruction we'd all been given not to wander off on our own, talked their way past security, and headed off into town on foot.

Here on our more grounded version of earth, we have a goodlooking warm day in prospect, and though I'm trying to transfer my website to the Authors Guild hosting service--all website stuff makes me grit my teeth--we should have a fine afternoon of yardwork. One of the unexpected outdoor strategies of the moment: I'm having to fortify my pea sprouts with a ring of mousetraps. 4 caught so far.

While I was writing this entry, quail made their spring debut in the back yard. About a dozen of them--parents & last year's offspring--raced across the veg beds and stopped in the rose patch to graze. Then 6 of them disported themselves in the camelia tree--not quite partridge in a pear tree but close.

11 March--As I will tell Becky Saletan in some kind of message early in the new week, ~~being~~ a month of being editorially re-attached to her has been more interesting than six years at Scribner. Liz called, quite excitedly, this morn with the news: I'm going to Harcourt with Becky as she becomes editorial director there. So, with barely a touch-and-go at FSG... This seems to be a major piece of luck for me, combining the editor I want at the publishing house I wanted, where indeed the longest-standing of my paperbacks still endure. As I noted in these pages, Andre Bernard was very impressive in the identical-offer wooing that went on, and this ought to be a tighter, tidier fit for me and my books. So, somewhere there on the slope of Olympus, Murphy, the all-thumbs god of publishing, has managed to hand me a good package.

As I said to C, unlikelihood seems to be in the air with spring. Liz's call of yesterday was to ask me if I had my spurs on. Mystified, I ~~was~~ asked her where this was leading, and she in turn caught on that Scribner had not passed the word that *Prairie Nocturne* is a finalist for a Spur Award for best Western novel. I am not sure what it says about the geezer shoot-em-up outfit, the Western Writers of America, that they have picked what is probably my least "western" book for this nomination.

Anyway, I'm doubtful that I'll win, and as I read the congrats letter sent to Scribner publicity by WWA's Paul Hutton--which seems to praise the publicity associate in charge of book-award submissions for writing *Prairie Nocturne*--the winners are announced in April, so we don't have to truck off to Mesquite, Nevada, unless *Prairie* wins.

C has deftly caught in her diary the Skagit experience of the 10th--our farewell to the snow geese, after greeting their arrival last fall--and the social hour at The Ram last night in celebration of Roy Mayfield's masters degree. I spent much of the time talking to Noel, who had been the last employee of Roy's Sitka Co. and now works on stream restoration. A good time was had, amid the roar of students marking Friday night.

19 March--Time to take stock, now that I am on top of the first plateau of Whistling Season: y'day I finished the draft of the first chapter, about 8,000 words' worth. Probably I am always going to feel behind on this book because of the "lost" year last year when I got so little done on it, but this is a welcome ~~progress~~ level of wordage. As ever, the opening chapter has been tricky, inviting my obsessive tinkering with it, but it feels reasonably accomplished now. Good enough.

As to the rest of life, the techgeek headache of trying to transfer ivandoig.com to the Authors Guild hosting service, at a savings of more than \$100 a year, is the only real complaint in the household. And if worst comes to worst, I can throw some more money at that and get some kind of result.

A cold front has been moving through, y'day one of the windiest days of the winter, and it's still below 40 and breezy this morning. The garden is prospering, though. Had a big bowl of salad out of it ~~fourteen~~ when Linda and Jeff came for St. Patrick's Day dinner, and the lettuce in the coldframe is about to produce steadily.

Becky called midweek, i.e. amid her last one at Farrar Straus, and we simply traded enthusiasm about the unexpected swing of the revolving door that's taking us to Harcourt together. She said Marshall had told the girls that now that mommy was editor-in-chief, they all had to call her "chief"; Anna asked, "Really?"

24 March--Midweek already of a new week, and things transpire in their unchartable ways:

--Today I finally have a diagnosis of my minor plague of itchy red bumps, and it seems to be Grover's Disease, a dermatitis aggravated by heat and friction. Such as, damn it, taking a shower and toweling myself off. Some amendment of habit is evidently in order, as the treatments for this stuff sound worse than the problem: Accutane can possibly affect the liver, and ultra-violet sessions can possibly produce skin cancer. I'm going to try the path of cortisone ointments, the mildest of three possibilities first, and see if I can tease some of this goddamn stuff out of my hide.

--The aforementioned website transfer muddle got somewhat explained, and as far as I'm concerned resolved for

24 March cont.--a considerable while, when today's mail brought back both of the sign-up fee checks I'd sent in to the Authors Guild. I'd sent them to the address used when I bought my domain name from the Guild, and apparently the outfit has moved, so that inadvertence has spared me from trying to get money back if, as looked thoroughly likely, we couldn't make the blasted transfer work. So, we chop through that Gordian knot, quick as if it was hot butter.

On the more usual side of life, C on Sunday read my opening section of The Whistling Season and liked it a lot, with no changes to suggest. I spent the last 2 days thinking on it--Monday I named all the kids of the Marias Coulee school and assigned them into grades, y'day I yellow-padded a sequence of events for ch. 2 (including, one that I hope is a keeper, Toby revealing the teacher's elopement by bursting out "Miss Trent loped!"), and today I wrote the requisite 2. pp I'm aiming for per day.

On the social front, we've been thick with the Damborgs, going to their place Sunday night for one of their meals we so love, when they feel the urge to experiment with a new recipe--this one Dijon-sauced porkchops out of the NY Times--and we perch on their kitchen stools with tumblers of scotch ~~innumerable~~ and happily watch them cook. As that was going on, we reported on our great eating at Union when the Prides were in town and Mark said oh, we're going there Tuesday night, want to come? We blinked at each other and said sure, as we'd talked about doing just that when we took our new Tony Angell prints down to Artform for framing. So there we were last night, the four of us pacing through Union's tasting menu, a March special of \$25 instead of usual \$48, drinking towering glasses of beer, Mark gallantly foregoing any ordering of wine when we said we really, really, really wanted a beer to start with in all the sipping required to get through 8 courses or whatever it was. Anyway, we had just as full an evening of conversation and good time with them as we'd done 2 nights before; and we get to congratulate ourselves that we turned down a birding trip/overnight with them to Sleeping Lady near Leavenworth, with a blustery and showery front passing through today.

March 24 cont.--And, another landmark date in the fine eating we do: today provides the first grand lettuce-based salad, for tonight's dinner of salmon salad.

12 April--The diary went badly under the weather, along with me, about a week ago when a cold took over. I am mostly over it, although still blowing my nose a lot, but it was quite a downer. With the crash of energy I got only a couple of pages of writing done all week, where I'd intended to get eight, but found I could manage numbers better and so ground my way through the final income tax and estimated tax calculations. Also, a milemark on the calendar of life: applied for my Medicare card.

Today has gone mostly cloudy, but y'day was an Easter of astonishing warmth; we sat around on the Damborg's backyard deck in shirtsleeves, some of us with sunhats on. Mid-70s, most of the afternoon. Mark and Lou as usual did heroic cheffing, Mark grilling ~~hark~~ butterflied lamb on the bbq. It could not have been a more pleasant bunch of people, either: Linda and Jeff, whom I think we would trust our lives with if it came to that, and folks we had never met, Jesse and Marie Tapp. Jesse is a retired medico--Lou though public health service was somewhere in his career, but what he mentioned included stints as prof at U. of Kentucky and U. of Arizona--and Marie operates a restoration tile business, which we got her to talking about in considerable detail. It was one of those dinner party rarities, where someone has a field of expertise that a really interested audience wants to hear all about. Jesse it turns out was a New Deal kid--he once went to a White House egg-roll on the lawn (it sounded like when he was 3, probably in 1936?) when his father was an economist in Henry Wallace's Dept. of Ag. (Marie told me there's a NY Times headline, maybe in '39, to the effect: TAPP SAYS NUTS AND QUILTS.)

And this weekend, if the plan holds up at their end, we're to spend our 39th anniversary at the Nelson's Arch Cape beach place.

Meanwhile the garden is luscious.

27 April--I'm ashamed of how paltry this diary has become, but I'm juggling as fast as I can and these seem to be the pages that get oftenest dropped. Even this entry has to be a quicky, as we're packing for the trip to Zion and Bryce parks, leaving on a 6 o'clock plane in the morning.

Must capture a nice event of the 25th, when we were invited to the Seattle Rep for reception for playwright Nilo Cruz and then the world premiere of his "Beauty of the Father." Talked with him a bit--Sharon Ott, the Artistic Director, got us together with him promptly--about how we both save the cuts we make in our stuff. Someone I did not get to talk to, giving him and Cruz a more valuable chance to converse, was Herbert Blau of the San Francisco theater scene; Sharon O. said he was her mentor. We actually had about as lively a table as possible when the Rep pr women, Cynthia and Natalie and the Montanan (GF & Niehart) Patricia Brinnen looked us up. As to the play, it was quite good with a soft spot or two, especially in either the character of the young woman Marina or the actress Onahoua Rodriguez--it wasn't clear how old this person was supposed to be, a naive gamin or a young woman with a bit of experience but not enough. On the other hand, the character of the ghost of Lorca was terrific, and splendidly played by Jonathan Nichols. And there's quite a theatrical coup, I thought, when Lorca takes the bullet--again!--and saves Emiliano.

And on the 23rd, sumptuous lunch at Etta's with Linda and Sydney. They reported on the NY trip and the stopover at the Associated Writing Programs shindig in Chicago, and we stuffed on seafood--C and I had tuna sandwiches that were almost overwhelming--and heard about Linda's forthcoming book of poems, First Hand. Talk about overwhelming, the ideas and provocative musings about science in this one beginning with Mendel's boss monk trying to improve the breed of sheep and ending with cloned Dolly--are boggling. As I said to C on the way home, Linda gets smarter all the time and she was a genius to start with.

And so to the suitcase.

May 7--We arrived back from our swing through SW parks mid-day on the 5th, on an earlier-than-expected flight from Las Vegas that we just managed to wedge onto and which turned out to prove that even lucky breaks in travel can turn out to be fraught: the Alaska plane aborted its landing at SeaTac because a plane in front of us had not cleared the runway "expeditiously enough." The pilot pulled out of the descent when we were already over the runway and off we roared on another loop out over the Sound and back in along the Duwamish waterway. I was near the back of the plane and C was a dozen rows forward--we'd wriggled out to aisle seats where they were vacant because our seatmate was a nice but very elderly woman traveling by wheelchair--and I was first uneasy about the bumpy air, so low, as we got beyond the Duwamish in the approach, and then I saw the runway passing beneath us while we were still a few hundred feet in the air and thought, oh oh. So, glad to be here.

The vacation was top-notch, with Zion Nat'l Park more than living up to my expectations, and a magical morning hour at Arches where we had the trail and the desert silence to ourselves, and a bit of snow dramatizing the hoodoo towers in Bryce. The initial night at Zion, we had reason to wonder if we ourselves were hoodoos of some sort when for the second night in a row--Seattle and Utah--a power outage occurred while we were having dinner. (The Seattle one came of a hell of a wind on April 27, I think a stronger blow than we'd had all winter. It made our departure morning, very early the next day, hectic with all the household devices to be re-set. And we spent much of y'day, our first full day back, cleaning up the windstorm detritus, including the fairly major limb from the Kastners' big tree that came down on our little Asian pear tree and somehow broke off only one limb.) We had our meals warm on our plates when the Zion Lodge dining room blunked out, so were able to keep on eating and spectate as everybody from then on had to settle for the probably wan salad bar.

Zion's titanic wind of the day we arrived--it was also 83 degrees--died off by the next day and we took the shuttle bus on into the park to as far as it goes, then did the mile or so River Walk to where a canyon intersects with the Virgin River. Anybody going on has to scramble

May 7 cont.--into the river to reach the narrow canyon, and we definitely didn't try.

Bryce was nearly incapacitated with road reconstruction. The only possible virtue of having Republican Senators: pork-barrel \$\$, at both Bryce and the new entry to Arches, in a time when the Bush bastards are otherwise starving or sabotaging the national parks. And it was chilly and had snowed an inch at Bryce; we saw it in a hurry, but it was a great sight.

21 May--More about this tomorrow, I hope, but this week's writing firmed up after C and I adjusted our daily neighborhood walk to earlier in the morn. Now I have a continuous stretch of concentration after we get back about 6:45 AM, instead of breaking up that portion of the day as we'd been doing with later walks. Also, I at last managed to dispose of some of the chores that have hung over me like a second day's work always there waiting--blurb for David Laskin's Children's Blizzard, response to the Hugo House commemoration of Jim Welch, various unanswered phone calls--and feel less nagged by those.

At last, too, a mild stirring on the book front: Brant called from Scribner to say the plan is to bring out Prairie Nocturne in paperback in May of next year--that's damnably late, but on the other hand it frees me from any booktour stuff this fall and I'll gladly enough take that--and along with it, the reverted English Creek and Mariah. Then Heart Earth and Sea Runners a year after that, although I want to talk to Liz about possibly fitting those in at Harcourt, a more logical home for those two. And lo, who is supposed to be in town tomorrow night for dinner with the Doigs, but Liz.

22 May--Heading toward 9 on a damp Saturday morn, and I've just gone back over y'day's ms work to spiff it up, gaining another half-page in the process. Tony and Liz just called to confirm that they're in town, so we'll see what tonight brings. I did ask her if they're going onward from here and she said yes, Victoria and the Canadian Rockies, which lessens (some) my suspicion that this could be a farewell tour of writers before she quits the business. Who knows, maybe she and I will go on together for another two dozen years.

22 May cont.--Carol has shouldered far more than her share of diary duty this spring; I see she has nicely summed our recent pair of library doings, Marcella's stimulating visit, and so on. I've at least done our garden diary, a steady stream of chores there to be noted down.

24 May--A day of good gardenable weather (forecast as the first of two) although I am out of commission for any real exertion because of a nagging spot in the right-hand side of my ribcage. I accidentally put my weight against a top corner of the orchard ladder 4 or 5 days ago when we were pruning, and while the fairly sharp contact didn't even leave a bruise, it bothers me to lift anything and is a nuisance in bed at night. So far I've decided against trying to doctor this through Group Health, figuring they'll tell me to take it easy etc. which I'm already doing; have begun taking aspirin and will use more cold packs, and see what happens the next few days.

Have once again laid eyes on my literary agent, a quite rare event in a relationship that goes back 24 years. Liz and her husband Tony Schulte passed through here on the weekend on their way to Victoria and then by train to Jasper and Banff, and the night of the 22nd we met them for dinner at Union. C and I got off to a horrific start for the 7:30 date, finding the freeway jammed to a near halt as soon as we got on at 145th, managed to bail out at Northgate over to Aurora, only to find the Aurora Bridge being absolutely strangled by maintenance work--down to one lane, from three!--to the extent that it took us nearly half-an-hour to make it from the zoom to ~~across~~ the other side of the bridge. I was steamed, as logistical snafus do to me, but damned if there wasn't a parking spot right there on Union's block when we roared up 15 minutes late. So, inward and onward, we found Liz and Tony already at the table sipping wine and that helped greatly with the recognition factor: hadn't seen Tony since the '87 ABA in Washington DC, and Liz maybe only once since then. They both look fit--Liz is pleasantly attractive without being a knockout nor evidently striving to be one, though as C pointed out her skin is perfect, in the face of (so to speak) being 61--and a stunt of fate surely

May 24 cont.--makes Tony the subject of a lot of second looks these days: he looks remarkably like a humane Donald Rumsfeld. The pair of them declared they had just had the best day, pingponging around Seattle. Among the pings and pongs, they'd visited the artist Julie Ruffner at her glass-art studio by way of people Liz's other writer here, Neil Stephenson, knows, and then their real coup, strolling up to take a look at the new Central Library, finding a door open, walking right in and attaching themselves to a tour being given to architectural critics by the architect himself, Rem Koolhaas. So, they were in a good mood, and C and I were bemused that Tony often would not let Liz get in a word edgewise, she whose profession is to spar verbally. Tony is quite funny, able to drily tease Liz in a way that has held up since 1971--she grins and takes it in apparently genuine appreciation. She had let me know she was going to get on me a bit about not letting her e-mail me, and Tony pitched in on my side wholeheartedly, apparently having been through this same war. Her particular complaint is not being able to fax me instantly (I usually don't have the machine on because it shares our phone line) and he pointed out that fax machines are set up to try and try again. I got in my shot by telling her she just doesn't phone me as much as she used to, and I am right there by the phone the majority of the time, monitoring calls. So, we'll see if she phones more. All in all, we had a good time, although with no business accomplished. I'm still writing for free, the Harcourt contract in limbo now until she gets back to NY at the end of the month and Becky starts at the job.

28 May--Start of a Friday afternoon, and I've reached the 25,000-word mark on The Whistling Season. Best week of writing I've had for quite some time, attributable to the tidier (earlier) schedule of walking the n'hood and then settling in for unbroken work the rest of the morning. Certainly I have my head into the book: y'day I did not even think to look at my desk calendar and thereby stood up Tony Angell for our coffee-and-gab time in Edmonds. Luckily Tony did it to me once years ago, so we laughed our way out of it and will try again next Tues.

28 May cont.--What has come to seem an unusually rainy spell is with us, perhaps through the Memorial Day week end (it wouldn't be the first time). An all-night rain on the 25th, then again much of y'day, with showers between. Even so, this region is nearly 4" short of the annual average by this point of the year.

Went to the Walkinshaws for dinner on the 24th. They'd only been to Singapore, Bali, Tucson and Ashland since we last saw them. Not much to our surprise, Jean is taking a TV production job at Seattle Central Community College.

30 May--Cool and mostly overcast, indicative of Memorial Day eve. Ann and Norm are dropping by for supper before long, and the Damborgs blessedly called y'day to ask us to an afternoon of bird-watching and hamburgers at their place--as I told Lou, not 36 hours after Carol had lamented, "I wish somebody would throw a Memorial Day party."

We've chored considerably this weekend, tackling things like droopy doorstops. I've also put in a little desk time, a little thinking about the book after Whistling. This ms, by the way, is becoming to seem quite smooth to me.

6 June--Life on the shore. Y'day at 4:30 I watched the ferry at the Kingston dock until it left, got in the car and picked up Eric and Jan Nalder at the Edmonds dock. Given enough caliber of telescope, I maybe could have seen them leave their house at Suquamish.

So, we had that pair of good people here for drinks and cruise-ship watching and dinner of cold Copper River salmon and salad from our garden. Eric is soon to head for Atlanta for the investigative reporters' convention. I asked him how many would be there and he said 1300-1400. I told him I'd feel better about this country if there actually were that many investigations going on. He himself is probably going to have to hop from the San Jose Mercury-News job he's had the last, what, 2-3 years. It's hard for a newspaper management to swallow part-time presence in the newsroom, even from someone as productive

6 June cont.--and intuitively brilliant as Epic, who seems determined to stay based in Suquamish. I think he'll likely fetch up at the P-I, when the showdown comes at the Merc-News.

Saw another of our outsize-talent friends--how lucky we are to know these people--when I went to Edmonds for coffee with Tony Angell on the 1st. Tony is truly thinking big: he's going to cast in bronze a pair of 7-foot ravens. Showed me pics of the clay ~~model~~ forms and those babies are big as truck cabs. So, a good catching-up with Tony. He told of having to fend off his lifelong friend, Bert Bender, newly retiring English prof at Arizona State, who is skeptical of the "co-evolution" between birds and humans that Tony and his co-author suggest in their crow book. Bert had either offered or asked to look over the ms for him, and Tony either turned him down or finessed it on a schedule basis. I backed Tony, seeing no reason why Bert should be more of an authority than Tony and his biologist co-author. Surely Carol and I can testify to altered habit patterns, in our combat to keep crows at a distance and thus out of our garden: upstairs and downstairs BB guns.

Still working backwards on the social schedule, Mem'l Day went very comfortably when the Damborgs took us bird-watching on the Montlake landfill. Highlights: watching a heron work on the swallowing of a fish about as long as my forearm, and a session with a muskrat who came out of the water and winsomely ate grass on the bank about a doz. feet from us.

The work front: a bit flimsy because of the Monday holiday, and more sidetrack on Tuesday when I did the foreword for Ralph Walcott's MT Conservancy book, but I managed the 2 pp./day minimum the other days of the week, and even did some editing brushup y'day, Saturday morn. The stretch of the story I'm on now has to (I guess) carry some exposition about dryfarming vs. irrigation, so it's not the most thrilling stuff to work on. After this "Big Ditch" scene I likely have 5 more--I've done some rough work on most of 'em--to finish this section of the book and provide the turn of the story into Morrie coming as teacher at the Marias Coulee school. It has dawned on me, from hearing a very astute singer/songwriter named

6 June cont.--Patricia Barker talk with Marian McPartland on ~~the~~ McP's jazz show 2 weeks ago, that I'm trying to reach what jazz musicians call the "bridge" of a song, where it makes some movement, some distinction, from the opening.

And speaking of, we just got a packet of mail the goddamn Scribner publicity dept. has been sitting on for 6 months or so, and in it was an invitation from Marian McP. her very self, pleased to have found herself in Mtn Time and asking ~~us~~ us to be her guests at, alas, already-gone May 6. I've done a reply asking if we can count the lost letter as a raincheck and try again.

And now to try a new ribbon, and see if it'll change the luck of this hiccuping diary. Marginally, it looks like.

10 June--The media are laden with remembrances of Ronald Reagan. I remember him, the sonofabitch.

Misty day, which hasn't produced any meaningful moisture. It at least lets me hole up in good conscience and write, and I made 3 or 4 pp. of progress on the ms today. Am pushing to have a full draft of this longish second section of the book by the week of my birthday, which I'm largely going to take off and which slopes off into the 4th of July weekend anyway.

*** We staged a grand lunch here yesterday, when Linda & Syd stopped by on their way back from Camano to finish off their UW grading. The weather was decent enough to walk them through the garden and for that matter the rest of the property; what a keen audience they are. Then we shop-talked for awhile, Linda having had a rave letter from her editor Marian Wood--unprecedented, Linda says--about the forthcoming book of poems. She'd also brought a treasure for her work, an old anthology of articles from Nature magazine going back into the 1870s, i.e. down the byways of science and thought she's so great at writing about. She asked a bit of help in savvying an observation some Oxfordian of far back was reporting, that when he swished his toasting fork with the plane of the tines perpendicular to him, "the singing of the wires in the
***from my garden, lettuce, sugar peas, radishes & onions, piled high in a salad & topped with Copper River salmon.

June 10 cont.--wind" was audible to him, but not when he swished it with the tines flat out from him, and why was that? Linda hadn't been sure just how the guy was swishing the fork, so I demonstrated with my extended fingers as tines how it seemed to me the fork was turned in each try. Anyway, she'll do something magical with it. Sydney, for her part, had just done a bit of academic black magic of her own at an English faculty meeting and it was hilarious. The meeting had been engineered by the department's faction(s) that tout text-not-literature, gender studies, etc. and had come up with "cluster hiring" which would kick the old routine of hiring, say, an 18th-century specialist in the head. Syd, of all people given her background with the Women's Center and her Woolf and Mansfield scholarly credentials, finds herself to be a conservative on this "redressing" or whatever it is, driven there by the ahistorical ideologies of the redressers. Anyway, there she sat, stewing over this proposal, while Linda and Rick Kenney tried to figure out how to make any headway against the fix the poets would be left in--they're short about two people, and there's no priority for poetry in cluster hiring. Things go on and on, not much toward anywhere, until Syd suddenly raises her hand and dept'l chair Dick Dunn, maybe hoping for some kind of movement in the argument, calls on her. Syd flat-out proposes: "I move we make poetry our number one priority in hiring." Linda says, "I second." Before the redressers can quite get themselves together, the motion passes, something like 18 to 7. Bang, it's done, and if the redressers want to insert politics instead of history and literature into the professoring of English, Syd gave them some. So, a good high time with the dynamic duo here, and soon they're off to Great Britain for 2½ weeks. They had Ollie the clumber spaniel with them--i.e., in the Jeep, which seems to be the only habitat Ollie can get his mind around--and C and I shook our heads: it's like having a massive stuffed animal around, only it pants.

18 June--2:30 Friday afternoon, 81 on the downstairs deck thermometer, 3rd in a row of fine bright but warm days.

With luck I'm within a week of finishing the draft of Whistling Season's big 2nd section, a hundred-pager. A scene to finish off on Monday and/or Tuesday, another not very long one to do after that, then the fairly short finale; it'll be a push, but I might make it by birthday week. After that and the 4th of July holiday, a week or so of polishing, C can look the ms over, and thereafter it can go to Becky if she's ready. The book seems to me quite funny, but I suppose the peril of this story is that nobody will give a damn about its persona and setting the one-room school kids and the homestead generation.

Since I last visited the diary we had a good dinner out with the Atwoods, at the Provinces, and heard of their trip to Venice and such. We have another Provinces date with the Nelsons on the 23rd, but otherwise we're socially in abeyance until after our Victoria trip-the 4th-etc., not that we haven't tried. David and Marjorie are out of town this weekend, when we proposed a Lock walk with them (and likely will do ourselves), and C just phoned the Nortons to try to catch up with them, and it sounds as if it'll take well into July. So it goes, but we are mightily enjoying the place to ourselves, with the veg garden producing gorgeously (lettuce, peas, onions, radishes, raspberries, and tomorrow, voila, the first beans for supper). We've hit on a mouthwatering supper regimen of buying a 4 or 5# Copper River sockeye, cutting it into 8 pieces and thereby getting one hot meal and 3 cold ones out of it--with the salmon improving when it's cold, tra la. I have my head deep into The Whistling Season, but yanked myself out enough to go into hot-weather mode, providing videos for cool downstairs evening viewing: last night's, a glacial volcano pic, so to speak, When Time Ran Out, with Paul Newman and William Holden and Genevieve Binochet and half the character actors in Hollywood in a slooow soap-operaish story; so clunky it entertained the hell out of us, sitting there predicting "She's expendable" just before a nameless blonde slipped into the lava.

18 June cont.--The state of the world beyond our little blessed realm, I continue not to say much about, because history is going to say it better. Last week's gushing over Reagan would, as we used to say in Dupuyer, about gag a maggot. Luckily a few lines from the likes of Lou Cannon crept into the edges of print, that Reagan smugly never knew how much he didn't know. Along with that goes the incredible religiosity of much of the population, which buoys Bush toward re-election in spite of the evidence of Abu Ghraib, daily slaughterous car bombs in Iraq, and the rest. So far I don't have any confidence that Kerry can get traction in the race. On that uninspired thought, I'm going to switch diaries and catch up on our indisputably rational gardening doings.

24 June--About 3 y'day afternoon I finished the draft of the first two sections of The Whistling Season. Will read over it today, then set it aside until we're back from my birthday trip to Victoria, when C can read it and I can start thinking about the synopsis to send with it to Becky.

The feel of this book so far? Entertaining, in the loping manner of a good shaggy-dog story; in and under that, some pretty decent consequential dramas of existence at the edge of things. Or so it seems to me; maybe it'll be seen as antiquated. In any event, it's my own patch of storytelling--I can't think of any fiction that takes the same direction as this one. Nor am I alone in thinking there's something to this Montana era of homesteading. Mary Blew's book about her aunt Imogene has just come out, and Judy Blunt is said to be gathering homesteader material. One more school of achievement by those of us writing out here, if anybody in the English departments was sharp enough to see it.

The home front: perking along on the bounty of the garden and stints of gardenwork.

28 June--Now I am 65, in the most painless possible fashion. Weekend of lovely weather, mid-70s, clear, the Sound diamond-specked with sailboats. I lazed on the actual day, yesterday--our daily n'hood walk in the early morning cool, then berry-picking, a beer on the deck before lunch, reading in my Citroen-like deck chair in the afternoon, Copper River salmon salad with our own garden makings for supper. C nobly provided me CDs of Chick Corea and Miles Davis and a pint of vintage Chivas Regal. Nice, all-around nice.

In a couple of hours we head for Kenmore Air and a floatplane to Victoria. It's election day in Canada, so that ought to be a fascinating sidelight.

Back to the occasion of reaching nearly 2/3 of a century: I find I don't have any overriding philosophy about this supposedly significant birthday. No "why me?" No particular sense of "how can this much time have passed so swiftly?"--it seems to me a very long time since I was a kid in a ~~hay~~ hayfield where teams of workhorses were used on buckrakes and overshot stackers. Mostly I am gratified to have lasted this long, and a little surprised: the incident at Ellen Creek, the wreck when I was a teenage grain truck driver, the flight I happened not to be on that fell back to earth at Denver, and of course the body's built-in modes of mortality, any of it could have got me, long since. Healthwise, I feel better than when we moved here six years ago--my knees are less troublesome, I'm about ten pounds lighter, and so on. Much of this mood I know I owe to the move. This miraculous house, on this blessed site, makes C and me marvel to each other about it every day. And so, as long we can make this go on, it is as fine a life, with C, as I can imagine.

7 July--The birthday trip to Victoria has come and gone, as has the 4th, all copacetic. Butchart Gardens again were a knockout, and we had a blessedly quiet stint at the BC Museum by going there as soon as it opened. Good meals at Cafe Brio and the beloved goofy Bengal Lounge. On the 4th, we simply stayed home and worked in the yard. But

7 July cont.--on the 3rd we uncharacteristically boated. Betty & Roy Mayfield took us out on their Nordic tug Arnie, from Anacortes to a bay off Lopez I. where they threw out their crab pot and sent us home with 2 nice small crabs for supper. The day turned nice and the water was bascially calm, but even so there was quite a chop across Rosario Strait, and comfy as the boat was, I came home feeling I'd had enough wallow for a while.

And, in the world of writing, C y'day read the Whistling Season ms so far and thought the story ripped right along. I called Becky at Harcourt this morn to make sure she's ready to see ms, and she says she is. So, after I read it over one more time and do a fresh printout in double-space (instead of the triple- I like to draft in), off it goes to my once and future editor.

Also have been working on finances, all y'day and most of this morning. We are as usual cash-flush, but there are quandaries about where the money can make money.

Y'day Kerry picked Edwards for VP, which seems to us the best that could be done.

13 July--Hottest day in a while, 80 now @ 3 o'clock. I am feeling the heat, lacking pep, and so not getting anything of consequence done. Past couple of morns we have trimmed the mighty hedges of this property, and y'day was a big session of picking blueberries for freezing, so physical chores do get done to some extent. And this morning I express-mailed the 1st 100 pp. of The Whistling Season to Becky and Liz. The next stunt needed is to gear up into resumption.

Bill Lang overnighted with us, a good entertaining stay. He's researching the never-materialized Columbia Valley Authority and so has been talking with old pols and operatives and it's a tonic for him, the doses of stories back to the days of Jackson and Maggie and Neuberger and Morse.

And on Sunday, the 11th, we met Linda and Syd at Ivar's and treated them to king salmon lunch on the basis of our overlapping birthday certificates--with a couple of freebie like that, the tab was about what it should be. They recounted their Wales trip for us, including a magical piece of luck when they were the total audience for a

13 July cont.--Welsh chorus's rehearsal night.

On another musical note, at C's instigation--she claimed this as her birthday gift--we went to Benaroya Hall for a night at the Seattle Symphony, specifically the performance of "Carmina Burana." What a whale of a piece of work it is, and the conductor Christian Knapp and the symphony and chorale and soloists all hit it, right on. I followed along in the text in the program--probably about half the audience did, and for once the massed rustle of all of us turning a page together was highest tribute to the musicianship--quite entranced with the Latin rhyming. 1st $\frac{1}{2}$ of the program was Rimsky-Korsakov's suite from "Mlada" and Stravinsky's "Firebird" suite, which also were terrific

19 July--Am using the spare Royal that I've had tucked in the supply closet, and am more than ready for my usual machine to come home in a couple of days from cleaning and fixing; we'll particularly see if the phantom 'h' has taken on coporeality after repairs.

Began trying to rev up into writing mode again, and of course the weather, 80ish, refuses to help. Slow start this morn as I worked at list of scenes-to-come, but things do occur. As ever, step off boldly into the blank of your mind...

C has done definitive diary entries on seeing F'heit 9/11 and on the visit here of the Rodens and Goodloes, so I won't go over those again. Except to reiterate that it was a good time with the Rodens and Goodloes, brought about by C arm-twisting Jean a bit to get 'em all over here, unlike on their last visit out here. The Goodloe girls are delightful sprites, a blonde wand and a brunette one, and were heard to say they wished they lived here, after the blackberry-picking excursion. I don't know whether any of the rest of the bunch did, but I file it away that someday the grown Abigail or Natalie will recall a time their grandparents took them to see a white-bearded writer...

21 July--By god, look at this incredible writing machine. The Royal typewriter is home, spiffed up, and with its limping 'h' fixed. Good-oh.

Without much definite intention from me, this turned into a day of total chores, starting with the garden. I went out there about 7:30 this morn, began thinking about what needed transplanting and watering and whatever before really hot weather sets in for 3-4 days, and it was 10 before I was done. This afternoon I had to designate to upkeep--needed the typewriter back, had to buy new shoes before the old ones started hurting my feet--and got everything quickly enough done except for a haircut. I am at a point of the summer, or the book schedule or something, where I spend a lot of my time just trying to get to the playing field, ie. the manuscript. I did manage some notes and thinking the first day of this week and slammed some material onto the computer y'day, but not a whisker of work on the book today. The promised weather in the 90s may make me hole up and get at it, although the tradeoff is that my energy wanes with the heat.

We went visiting, away into the past, late y'day afternoon when we called on Gabriel Miller and Linda, ending her stay with him at his lakeside cottage--a respectable shack, really--on Mercer Island, 20 or so blocks in north of the Paul Allen compound. Gabriel fed us at a picnic table by the lake, with waterskiers passing and the downtown Seattle skyscrapers looming beyond the far shore, we had the foresight to bring our own beer, and it was good to see Linda, who looked better than she did a year ago Thanksgiving. Thirty-eight years ago about now, Linda and Clint came to Seattle, a month or so ahead of us, to paths of life none of us could have expected, although C's teaching and my writing were already on our map in previous small print.

26 July--Becky just called from Harcourt, after 6 NY time, and the 1st report on The Whistling Season is good. She likes the centaur-like schoolkids ever on horseback, likes the Milliron family, "loved" the revival meeting and Aunt Eunice, and so on. Cited about 3 aspects that might be heightened--landscape one of them! she wants more! as C said, does she realize who she's dealing with?!--or delineated, and I'll transcribe those notes for myself tomorrow.

more

26 July cont.--Here on the homefront, we did what we could to celebrate C's birthday on a record-hot 24th: 95 degrees.

She has put the specifics in her diary, including the unexpected neighborly visit from our uphill neighbors, the Wards, who have been largely terra incognita to us the six years we've been here but who seemed to want to make contact with at least one set of neighbors not out to get 'em on their beleaguered remodel plan.

27 July--82 degrees, just before 4.

Sat down with C this afternoon and talked the rest of the plot of Whistling Season to her. She thought it sounded good, made a few stitches of suggestion--that I maybe don't have to say what happened to everyone after summer of '10, and how Paul might angle his outwitting of the appropriations chairman. So, the book is pretty well laid out in my head, and o lord, don't I wish it was out the ends of my fingers, in that elusive writing substance called first draft.

4 Aug.--Damn, do I need a couple of highly productive ms days. This week got off to a slow start when I had to give Monday to my semi-annual Gp Health blood test and assorted yardwork and financial chores (a CD run to Edmonds, for one). And as sometimes happens, this scene that opens ch. 3--roll call @ Marias Coulee school--is simply slow to jell; it's also of course quite a hell of a sophisticated challenge in technical terms. This afternoon, after a slow day and a half, I began to get on top of it.

Meanwhile C has a truly wretched blistering patch on the back of an ankle; insect bite of some sort, say the Gp H docs. Luckily it doesn't itech with hypercortisone cream on it, she says.

Dinner at the Walkinshaws last night, bless 'em; Wellcott (?) Bay oysters, steamed, that they'd brought back from their stay at their San Juan Islands place. Walt is 87, with a bit of bother in his balance, but going along actively.

Night of Aug. 1, we were at the Angells'. Tony has hit a dip in the road of his intentions with the 7-foot ravens--the Jackson WMQ Museum of Wildlife director he'd been counting on to be interested is otherwise involved, in some kind of lawsuit--so Tony is not going to cast them yet. On the other hand, Yale U. Press likes the crow-&-raven book, wants

4 Aug. cont.--to turn it into a coffee-table for Xmas next year.

13 Aug.--Whoo, rough week at the skunkworks. Did not manage to get to the ms on Monday because of necessary yardwork and other chores, Tuesday was tough gearing-up but I got out of one scene (Morrie's 1st day in classroom), Wednesday I managed some promising roughing of the next scene, then y'day went to other biz (encouraging Liz to try the Heart Earth and Sea Runners paperbacks on Harcourt; trying to nix Scribner's static cover sketches for English Creek and Mariah), and today is medical. It's my semi-annual session with Dr. Ginsberg about the MGUS findings--this time Grp Health sent me lab results on 3 of the 5 tests and the figures are stable, but I don't really know how things stand until Dr. G tells me--and C is to have a routine colonoscopy, if that can ever be called routine.

So, I have to try to figure out how to get more pp/week in the time ahead. Good news of the week is that Becky and Andre Bernard will be in Seattle as they go around the country schmoozing booksellers, so we'll have dinner with them and meet Andre for the first time. Ah, and the other publishing event of the week, my \$50,000 chunk of advance finally made its way to us.

Some good socializing lately, the Nelsons here the other night instead of our monthly meeting at the Provinces. Warm clear evening, we sat on the deck and drank and talked, then had salmon salad and ice cream with blueberries--Ann and Marsh seemed charmed with what we've done to this place and our garden plenty.

Weather is still pretty hot, mid-80s, with lower 80s in forecast.

16 Aug.--On medical Friday--the 13th--the shoals of mortality did not drag either of us in, for now. C came out clean on a colonoscopy. My numbers on the semiannual blood tests were not dire enough to change the MGUS diagnosis for the worse, i.e. any fire in the bone is still latent.

People say to us all the time how good we look--indeed, Dr. Ginsberg said it to me, after going over the test results--which likely comes from keeping our weight down as we are.

Weather has moderated, mid-70s, some clouds.

23 Aug.--End of a Monday, tough day of gearing up on the ms but I maybe have things loosened up enough for a decent start tomorrow.

Weather has turned; $1\frac{1}{2}$ " rain the night of 21st and on into morning, and it's still showery-looking.

Supper last night at the Barking Dog Ale House w/ David Williams and Marjorie. David's Seattle naturalist book is done, in fact is on our coffee table in ms for me to give it a blurb.

4 Sept.--We are heading into Labor Day weekend by going to the Atwoods' in Poulsbo for lunch. More of a visit was intended--Peter wanted to take us to the Keyport Naval Museum--but my left knee turned cranky (and my right one a little cranky) y'day when C and I rebuilt the washed-out goddamn ramp path south of the house for the 2nd time this summer. The day before I installed a 4x4 across the hedge opening between us and the Nesses where the overflow from their drainage system has been coming from, and hope that runoff will now be diverted into the escallonia which can use it. Until now I have come thru the summer of garden- and yardwork quite well.

On the 1st, Wednesday, I finally wrote my way out of the wolfer scene of the ms, which had taken at least 10 days of tough writing. Am not happy with the summer's output, about 7500 words. Have felt caught between, in that slough of diligence which is perhaps intrinsic to writing, neither having the summer time off I'd like to nor achieving the wordage that the workhours ought to produce. Evidently there will ever be vectors pushing on the pace I would like to have in life. With this wonderful place to live and the gardening and reading and general life with C, I feel the undertow of having to strive to get this book done as soon as possible, not knowing what next February's diagnosis may show (but damn well knowing that if it's the one I don't ever want, it'll send me into a funk). So, I am moodier than I should be, currently, and need to find a new angle to look at how things are going.

Speaking of funk: politics, and the Republican hatefest in NY.

11 Sept.--And so we are in autumn, whatever the calendar says. Considerable rain last night, windy this morn although clouds are clearing away. I don't think I managed to put it down, but C and I noticed the trace of snap in the air on our morning walk, which we used to take note of around Aug. 16 or 15, this year on Aug. 1.

On Labor Day we labored, as is our wont. Both Sunday & Monday we put in big days of yardwork, driven by feel of the summer going, and by my policy of getting things done with an interval for my knees to be babied before we go on a trip. We head to our week on the Oregon coast on the 20th, so I want to avoid ladders, standing on hard floors etc. from the 15th on.

The 7th, day after Labor Day, was one of the prettiest in months and so I did not go back to making words, but kept on with outside work. (Counting back, I see that the Sunday before Labor Day was devoted to scraping paint on the SW picture window's bottom sill; C then painted it w/ primer, to hold it until we can get the Conine painters here to do other dabwork.) That meant starting the writing week on Wednesday, ~~thru~~ and it was a fairly tough go until after Friday lunch, when the scene of Paul and Rose whispering in the kitchen while the rest of the household sleeps began to shape up. I have been worried that the ms will show a seam at the hundred-page mark--the portion written earlier this year and smoothed for Becky's reading of it, and the summer's scunter production--but this is not really the time to judge that; rewrite must have its day, when and if needed.

13 Sept.--Well, there. A good writing day to start the week. Three pages went together without undue fuss. Am now at 10,000 words for the summer, which for some reason feels like just a hell of a lot more than the 7500 of ten days ago.

We are functioning pretty well, in this countdown to the Oregon Coast jaunt next week. It rained last night and has showered some today, but now--3:35--there's some sunshine and our blueberry plants are redly and orangely ablaze against the blue Sound. Y'day afternoon I managed to put in hours in the veg garden, doing away with the mature Brunia lettuce crop and starting over with seedlings, plus other lettuce starts in other beds. The day-&-night before, Bill Lang and Marianne Keddington were here and we helped them

13 Sept. cont.--celebrate their 13th anniversary by going to Jazz Alley, where the McCoy Tyner trio was astounding.

With Bobby Hutcherson on the vibraphone, they played the opening set a hundred miles an hour and the momentum kept on from there for an hour and a half and, incredibly, a nearly full-throttle encore when they had the second show coming before long. Lang said Tyner and Hutcherson are both at least in their late sixties, and Tyner more than looks it up close. I love old-pro, and thus admired Hutcherson's pacing of himself--going off to the back of the stage to stand, sometimes to sit, when he was done in a set until the final one or two when he stayed centerstage, looking around and grinning as the others played on, keeping time with a bent knee in a baggy pantleg. Tyner was all generosity, and maybe this was his version of pacing, in giving everybody tremendous solos. There was a lovely little span when Hutcherson stood by Tyner at the piano while drummer Louis Nash and Charnett Moffett on bass went back and forth with

everything they had, Hutcherson grinning and Tyner with a little smile at this nightly cutting contest. Moffett showed no sign whatsoever of being out of his league, doing some magical bass sounds in his solos or up against Nash, and Nash was equally a marvel on the drums. Virtuosoes all, Lang coming out saying a person is not going to hear better jazz anywhere, and I can't imagine so either. (Am putting the newspaper review of the trio's opening night, freshly dried out from my slopping tea on it just now, at back of the diary.)

16 Sept.--One of the better publishing nights on the town in a long time, on the 14th. We joined Becky Saletan, my once and regained editor, and Andre Bernard, my new publisher, at Union for dinner and schmooze. Becky looks quite unchanged in the 8 years since Bucking the Sun, admitting that a little hair coloring helps. Andre, as C noted, was taller than expected, with a good-faith mustache much like Marshall Nelson's, somehow a decency-of-character in expression there. He was immediately chagrined that he hadn't worn a necktie, and I explained my dressed-to-the-nines outfit by saying never mind, I went without one so much I had put one on just in his honor.

MORE

16 Sept. cont.--C and I got to Union about $\frac{1}{2}$ hr early, given our traffic nightmare of getting there when Liz was in town, and as we were having a beer in the bar of this place we had chosen for its pleasant quietude, a baby began to squall. And squall. And squall. I made a reconnaissance trip through the restaurant by way of the men's room, and singled out a quiet back table farthest from the squall line. We then ~~we~~ promptly claimed it with the maitre d', me brandishing Andre's book to enforce the point he had two writers in the place who needed all the quiet they could get, and the spot worked out well. C noted what was bemusing to us, that on considerable spectrum of Union's menu Becky and Andre, thoroughly different personalities, both chose the same two items, crab salad and pork bellies. Becky was barely into her chair before asking me how the ms was coming, and I was able to ~~we~~ report it was 10,000 words plumper than when she saw the first batch. Ms progress came up again as we walked up First Avenue together, C and I to our CRV and the two of them to the Inn at the Market, when Becky asked if she would see an interim chunk of ms before I finished it all. I thought for a moment, as we stood there amid the Skid Row panhandlers, and came out with "I think not," which sounded regal enough that the New Yorkers chuckled. I am quite impressed by the chemistry between the two of them, Becky telling me on the phone she loves working with Andre and Andre praising her to her face for her why-aren't-you-doing-thus-and-such style of suggestion, taking things on, and so on. Along with this arrangement has to go quite a level of patience, nearly tutoring, on Andre's part, inasmuch as Becky originally didn't want to be an editor-in-chief. Liz had told me Andre can be hard to read, but I viewed him as simply introspective, willing to listen and chip in when he thought appropriate. I am delighted with them both, and Andre and I swapped good tokens of esteem--he brought up how much he liked Sea Runners when he met up with it early in his career at Penguin, and at the end of the evening I pulled a copy of his Madame Bovary, C'est Moi out of my pocket for him to sign, which quite clearly surprised and gratified him. If my health and Harcourt's both holds, we should be able to do some respectable books together.

Couple of publishing tales from Andre:

--I asked if he has anything new coming from Y.B. Yehoshua, and he said indeed he does. That led on to

16 Sept. cont.--saying that Harcourt also publishes Amos Oz and he has to be careful not to publish books of theirs at the same time, as they're oldest friends and rivals.

--As ever with book people, all our genealogies were traced back and forth, and in my naming of editors I came to Lee Goerner. Andre then told of going to Lee's funeral-parlor viewing, walking ~~in~~ in to find only one other person there--Don DeLillo with his hand on Lee's casket. Andre says DeLillo famously is hard enough to talk to even under more ordinary circumstances, so that was a surreal tete-a-tete.

Down to earth, literally, here at home, I spent most of the day planting the rest of the winter garden--spinach, kale, ever more lettuce--ahead of the rain that began tag-playing in mid-afternoon.

22 Sept.--Autumn arrived at 9:30 this morn while we were on the beach at Nehalem, amid our week of borrowed leisure at Ann and Marshall Nelson's place at the Oregon shore. Left home a little after 6 a.m. on the 20th--it's $4\frac{1}{2}$ hrs to get here--and did our first walk on that broad and blessedly sandy Nehalem stretch of shore. Y'day was particularly brilliant there, with Neahkahnne Mtn sunlit and clear in every detail, and after C spotted the spouting of a whale, I got a binocular look at it surfacing. And pelicans wow us every time with their terrific levitating glides through the wave troughs. Our Nehalem routine is to hike south, from the parking spot on the farthest south beach in Manzanita, for about 40 min., rest on a log for my knees' sake for about 5 minutes, then hike back.

Here in the handsome airy house, we've investigated all three bedrooms in hope of getting away from the road noise of highway 101--40 or 50 yards away--to no real avail. Earplugs at night, we figure, are worth the sumptuous free lodging.

Although blitzed by powerlines and poles, the ocean is remarkably close here, the oceanfront places across the street sitting above a shallow slope of very nasty shingle rock, maybe 75' wide, and then a not very wide beach. At breakfast time, with ~~sumat~~^{not} ~~very~~ an average high tide coming in, the surf roar in parts of the house sounded like a windtunnel. So, all this is great for a visit, but doesn't lure us from our high bluff.

5 Oct.--Phew. The Oregon coast seems a long way back there. Since that week of "summer" vacation, we have painted trouble spots on the deck railing and bay windows (last weekend), done a lot of gardening, and after a slow week of gearing up into the ms again, I've produced a couple of pretty decent pages a day this week.

12 Oct.--Am dancing as fast as I can on Whistling, but am daunted about reaching my year-end goal; it looks like 10 scenes in 10 weeks, and meanwhile life is too damn busy. I am going to have to be very focused, and probably give over this coming Saturday to it, to handle my part in the Hugo House event honoring Jim Welch. They've plotahed

12 Oct. cont.--me into a session on the battle of the Little Bighorn, for instance, and while I am perfectly game to get through it on smoke and mirrors, I need to assemble some smoke and mirrors. Ah well. The doings plainly mean a great deal to Lois, and so I shall participate tooth and nail.

Tonight we are off to the Provinces to fetch up with the Nelsons for the first time since they loaned us the Oregon house--that nice coastal respite seems a hell of a time ago--and the week starting this weekend is terrifically social. On the 8th we forged our way up Highway 99 to the Everett Country Club (and found out no, it doesn't take an hour to make it there by 6:30, it takes $1\frac{1}{4}$ hours at best) for dinner on Doug Smith's tab. Oldest friends of Carol's family, the Smiths have been a sterling part of our lives too, and Doug's life--two golden daughters and an addict some--always makes for piquant meeting and listening. To our astonishment, the eviction drama we had been watching about a dozen houses south of us was maestroed by Doug's son-in-law, Jeff Lum. Replete with money from his Microsoft days, Jeff has been buying property, snapped up that house at auction, and as C has sorted it out, resorted to eviction when the mortgage holder didn't come up with the money.

As I write, my winter ~~bed~~ ^{salad} rows are glowing green, backlit by the low afternoon sun. 70ish this afternoon, in a run of fair weather we're using for afternoons of yardwork.

22 Oct.--It has taken brutework all week until right now, 3:40 on a Friday afternoon, but I have produced the additional scene--the death of Aunt Eunice--which along with the Brose Turley-in-the-schoolroom one gives me two for the past two weeks. Onward to the Hugo House doings for Jim Welch tomorrow.

24 Oct.--Have pulled free of the Hugo House involvement and am now at liberty to enjoy Annick Smith and Bill Kittredge when they come for dinner in about $\frac{1}{2}$ hour. The weather has been benign, today and for y'day's Jim Welch conference. C has done a fine diary entry on the conf'ce, which I'll try add to when I can pry loose time to do it. Two quick things, on the stud boors of the day, who unfortunately stick out

24 Oct. cont.--in the mind from an otherwise celebratory occasion. Jim Harrison at dinner: oh what a bulletproof romance it is, Jim's love affair with himself. Kittredge was terrific as a buffer at the tableful of H., Gretel Ehrlich, Bill and us; Harrison really needs to get some new stories, inasmuch as even I, who've only been around him 2 or 3 times, can recite 'em ahead of him. Sherman Alexie: what came out of him when a woman in the audience asked why in his poster quote about Jim being our Donne, our Dickinson, our Frost, our Stevens (I mordantly thought when I first saw it, gee, he left out Shakespeare and Michelangelo) he hadn't had Scott Momaday etc. somewhere in there was not pretty. He began with "That's stupid!" and toward the end came "I'm smarter than you are." Sherman is quite something to watch, with a lightning-quick mind--it's easy to see that he wins poetry slams, hands down--but without a sense of judgment to match. He gets away with a lot of laceration ~~and~~ wrapped in the funny stuff. Maybe it was fair game on the Guterson fame when he said after introducing the film of David's son Taylor, "Bastard family." Then he kept going on Taylor being "cute," and I'm probably hopelessly generationally off the mark, but how comfortable was Taylor, age likely 20 or 21, with that in front of a couple of hundred people as he makes his film-maker debut? Even onstage with Gretel (and Bill, in their discussion before the final night readings), he zapped her with "getting hit by lightning again." I imagine he's going to be able to get away with it, as Picasso or Cobain et al did, orneriness forgiven for the rest of what he generates, but it's still needless for him to slap crap on people that way. Jim Welch would have raised an eloquent eyebrow.

1 Nov.--Drizzly day, probably an apt prelude to tomorrow's presidential election. Bush leads in every poll--not by much, but the SOB leads. It seems to me there is some chance Kerry might carry the Electoral College vote while losing the popular vote, but I would not bet on it.

3 Nov.--What a pretty morning, and how disastrous a one. Bush leads by $3\frac{1}{2}$ million in the popular vote, and of course Ohio is kicking Democratic hopes in the Electoral College out the door. We face thorough Republican control of all three branches of government, a knell for progressives like us.

8 Nov.--We are in fog season, the far side of the Sound only now a determinable smudge in the wash of gray. On the 4th, we gambled on a trip to the Skagit to see the snow geese--and to clear the fumes of the election out of ourselves a bit--and that turned out to have been the best day to do it. There was fog on the flats as we came over the rise and down to Conway, but about two-thirds of the way along the road to Fir Island it cleared enough to see into the fields and there was the flock, landing and swirling just as we got there.

For what solace it was--and it was quite considerable, actually--we had the right company in the gloom after the election. Met the Nelsons for our monthly meal at the Provinces the night after, and Marsh came in late saying "The damned Republicans can't even make the buses run on time." Saturday night, the 6th, we were at the Damborgs with Jackie and Walt Williams. Walt wrote, from his perspective as a political scientist and policy analyst, a devastating anti-Bush series in the P-I just before the election, 6 days' worth; the op-ed page editor Kimberley Mills deserves a medal. As C noted in her diary, but I hereby independently credit her, she led a toast to Patty Murray at the Damborg dinner table.

Bush moved his smirky mouth in platitudes of conciliation and all-working-together after the election results, but he could barely contain himself at his news conference--"Now that I have the will of the people at my back, I'm going to enforce the one-question rule." Nervous laughs from the press corps. The administration immediately began rolling the Marines into Fallujah. Hubris will likely do the Bush bastards in at some point, but when?

Here in the household, I edited and rewrote this morn rather than start on a fresh section of Whistling, inasmuch as I had to rehearse my Sky talk this afternoon for the Monroe library appearance tomorrow night. It is heartening how much a go-through of revising bolsters a piece.

9 Nov.--More rewrite on Whistling this morning, and another rehearsal at the top of this afternoon; in about an hour and a half we start trying to wend our way through traffic to Monroe. Thank goodness I had the Sky speech in good basic trim--needed to re-do only the opening page, and the rest of it is already marked up for rhythm and emphases of delivery. The trick of doing it well onstage will

9 Nov. cont.--depend on pacing myself, finding the energy and rationing it into the words. We're meeting Tom & Carrie Jones for dinner beforehand, so that should be a brightening prelude. Am a bit uneasy about the logistics of finding the high school where I'm speaking etc., as we haven't been to Monroe for so long it's like the edge of the earth to us, but we're allowing mucho time.

As to Whistling, as I've done these couple of days of revising I've recast the pp. from my triple-spaced working pattern to the double-spaced version that goes to Becky, and of course that shrinks the page count in heart-stopping fashion. Double-spaced total is now 165 pp., with some more ahead in rough form that qualify into the count by Xmas, and how the hell I managed to get 100 pp. done in the first $\frac{1}{2}$ of the year and have worked like a ditchdigger to achieve 65 pp. in the second $\frac{1}{2}$ is one of those perpetual writing quandaries. I am in fact fretting that I won't get done the $\frac{2}{3}$ of the total ms that is my goal by the week before Xmas; but if I don't, I don't. I have got to have some decent time off there at year's end.

Hummingbird bulletin: h'bird just pulled up to the red trumpets of the pineapple sage, took a slurp, turned its head as if looking me over, went back to slurping.

14 Nov.--A quiet Sunday, light rain at dawn, the sky and Sound and mountains now (9:40) a wash of various grays and blues. I managed to get our Xmas letter invented and photocopied y'day, so am momentarily ahead of the game on that. Our big event of the day is intended to be dinner @ Union, to take advantage of their \$25 special. It's going to be just us, neither the Nortons nor the Damborgs could be rounded up, but that's okay too.

This spate of mid-50ish weather is mild enough that we've done some outside work, and made a trip to Swanson's the afternoon of the 12th to buy winter plants for the pair of pots C maintains at the front door.

On the ms, I think I am down to the last scene needed to reach my holiday goal of $\frac{2}{3}$ completion of the book, but it has to be a knockout scene. Am hoping to get it achieved by Thanksgiving, then go over the entire 50,000 words the first couple of weeks of December. I've been telling myself I want the last few weeks of the year off,

14 Nov. cont.--but I notice in looking back at least year's idea that may not be such a hot idea, may indeed be funk-inducing. Try a light schedule of writing/thinking? Go through file cards for ideas?

There's been a surprise march of handsome books into the house lately, first the out-of-the-blue inscribed copy of Yale's books of James Swan's artwork, sent by the ms curator there by dint of my having met the ass't curator, Nancy Kuhl, at the Jim Welch event. Then came Ralph Waldo's Crown of the Continent, pics and prose of the beloved Rocky Mtn Front with my foreword in it.

I see this is the first diary entry since speech night in Monroe, and it should be recorded that the event went very well, although it took us an hour and 5 min. to go the 30 or so miles to there. I felt comfortable with the Sky talk, with a couple of rehearsals under my belt--the talk itself has quite a good structure--and C said it was a night when I was on. Crowd of about a hundred, which could have been better, but they then lined up and bought books, a good

strong signing afterward. We treated Tom and Carrie Jones to dinner beforehand at the Sailfish, apparently just about the only reputable eating place in Monroe, and everybody else had pretty good food while I paid for my cleverness of ordering what I thought would be safe--filet mignon--by getting a not bad small steak but not identifiable as a filet. Except for the traffic hassle, which we expected, it was a well-run occasion--Betsy Lewis, the librarian in charge, was nicely efficient--that paid off in \$2,000 for an evening's work.

Later: afternoon now on this unrushed Sunday, and I have just finished Pascali's Island; damn, Unsworth can write, although there's an odd little plot glitch near the end when he has the narrator tell what's going to happen, even though when it happens the narrator is involved and thus could have carried the story better that way. The Unsworth book was in a stack of about a dozen I bought at the U Book Store a few weeks ago as "winter reading," which apparently we're going to demolish before the first day of winter hits the calendar, and also in the pile is Vittorini's Conversations in Sicily. I searched it out because Lois Welch was coming to dinner, prior to the Hugo House do on Jim, and I wanted to ask her about Jim's long-ago touting of

14 Nov. cont.--Vittorini and that specific book to me. Yes, said Lo, Jim had at least four copies, he'd pick one up whenever he had a chance. She scanned into this one, which is a new translation, and estimated that this is a stiffer more formal version (which now casts me into the odd position of wanting to search out an old used copy of the prior translation). Came the Hugo House day and I got there that morning with time to browse the display of Jim's things that Lois had curated with her trademark incomparable stick-its, and one of the items was Jim's 4 or 5 pp. of jotted notes that evidently are all that exists of what would have been his next book, a sequel to Heartsong of Charging Elk. He intended to bring Elk back to the American West, I think in 1916, have him visit his Sioux people, maybe get involved with a movie company, have him cross paths with Chief Joseph if that fit the actual history... Jim's notes indicated **technique decisions--"POV" (point of view), 1st person, third person etc.--and there in the middle of the set of pages I spied "like In Sicily." I didn't bring it up in my bit of talk about Jim that afternoon, but it buttresses the point I made, that one of the importances of our Montana growing-up was that it gave us a place to be from, that while I wouldn't exactly call us an exile movement it surely was more than just coincidence that he was in Greece writing Winter in the Blood at the same time ('72-3) I was in London working my way toward This House of Sky. In short, writers of place, hell. I brought up the Vittorini fixation again when Annick and Kittredge were here, and they vouchèd that they'd heard Jim speak of ...In Sicily lots of times (along with a Mexican novel I'd never heard of, Pedro something). Bill said, "Yeah, Jim was a French intellectual." "And getting Frencher all the time," I said, meaning Heartsong and the intended sequel.

**I see by my pocket notebook that what Jim had jotted was "Shift POV 1st person 3rd person etc." Also among the display items was the typed quotation that Lois said always hung over Jim's desk, from Under the Volcano, Lowry's graf about "Ah, to have a horse..."

Ah, and a last note on Jim: Lois has an early ms, a novel Jim felt didn't make it. She's apparently going to run it by Kittredge for his opinion, although I wish she'd pass it to Gerry Howard, Jim's editor, instead.

20 Nov.--I seem to have had a magical week. I went into it trying to calculate how and if and whether I could attain a full and gone-over 2/3 of the ms by the Friday before Xmas, i.e. about a month from now. Monday dawned uncomfortable in all ways--in what I suppose I should treat as a parable of an irritating grain of sand ultimately producing a pearl, I was so bothered by a hemorrhoid I didn't want to be seating and reseating myself between desk and computer all the time as I do when I'm rough-drafting--so I went to work on the pleasanter task of going over the ms. Three days of that, and damned if I wasn't out of ways to improve it any more. I then slogged into the one scene more I needed, and double-damned if I wasn't finished with that by late y'day, Friday, afternoon. This morning, the momentum is such, and the crisp head-clearing weather, that I went to the ms as I very rarely do on a Saturday, and I've now fought a handful of paragraphing and word changes through the printer, and there sit the 55,000 words. Huzzah!

25 Nov.--Thanksgiving morn--6:30, dark as catsout--and at noon we'll gather at the Maloofs' for the customary occasion, 14 of us. It should be grand.

On my desk sits the inch-high ms of The Whistling Season thus far, 180 pp. C will read it over for me on the weekend, and after that I'll have some deciding to do: whether to pass it along to Becky at this point or wait until I have the entire book ready; and, tantalizingly and dauntingly, whether to try to finish it in time for fall '05 publication or ease it along for spring '06. I think the reality is that I can't quite pull everything together by February, which I believe is when Becky would need everything for fall publication, so I should just stay methodical.

Since the wondrous revision week noted above, I've put in 3 days of first-drafting, picking up the story after the death of crabby Aunt Eunice. It does seem a slog after that week, but that's what's to be done now. Y'day afternoon I did some planning ahead on the yellow pad and think I see how to make appreciable progress between here and Christmas. One thing that sticks out is to take that last week before Xmas, and on into whatever work stints I do through the holidays, to work on the last scene of the

25 Nov. cont.--book. On this recent stint that brought the 2/3 to some kind of complete form, it really saved my bacon to have Aunt Eunice's death scene already done and there to be worked toward. So, I'll try something similar in the sched ahead.

To a surprising extent, this household is pretty well ready for the long holiday season, even before it kicks off today. I went out on chores and shopping on the afternoon of the 23rd, and C that morning made the heroic run to south Seattle for replacement tubes in the damnable bathroom cabinet lighting. I did the Xmas letter earlier this month, and its stack and the stacks of envelopes are ready to be stuffed. Ah, and garden news; I mustered myself to order a 2nd Juliana coldframe for lettuce, C set me up on the Internet long enough to find somewhere to get one, and the thing is supposedly on its way. Meanwhile we had a glorious salmon dinner salad last night, from the makings currently in the garden and 'frame. And, by damn, raspberries for breakfast this morn. Not shabby.

27 Nov.--A spectacular time of sunset, with last sunshine traveling parallel along the Olympics to light the south sides of clouds down amid the peaks. The water of the Sound is on the move, a single vast ripple. The day has been blowy. Nonetheless I've covered the salad rows with frost blankets.

A low-key day, after Thanksgiving and Ann and Norm's stay with us until nearabout noon y'day. C is reading ms for me, and I've spent the day mostly in the company of James G. Swan, Seamus Heaney, and Bill Calvin. This has been my 1st chance to slowly page through the Swan art book sent me by the Yalies, and it's quite moving to see all those endeavors, added to his diarying. Have done some thinking on whether I would have altered Winter Brothers substantially if the iron-grip Dr. Stenzel had let me see the art back in 1979-80 (as I remember it, I tried all the writerly wiles and arguments I had, including wasting a signed 1st edition of This House of Sky on the bastard), and I conclude I was probably lucky to concentrate on Swan's words. It does bemuse me to have Yale standing up and saluting, as George Miles does in his foreword to the book and in this inscribed copy coming in through the transom.

27--As to the other literary stops of the day, Heaney in Finders Keepers is pure wonderful. I hate to think what it means about my fellow prose practitioners that the best writing about writing seems to come from poets: in prose!

And after an acquaintanceship with Bill Calvin of 4 or so years now I'm looking into A Brain for All Seasons, and it too seems demon smart. Times like these I wish I had the great wrap of mind to fully hold and draw on the brainwork of our circle of quite astounding friends. The scatter of words is where I best delve, I know, and would not really trade that for a deeply longitudinal expertise such as, say, Bill Calvin's neurobiology. Ah, Eiseley, I know ye were a bit of a literary cardsharp there in the night country, but I'd take a bit of your skill at fleecing the real scientists and raising the ante into prose poetry.

Well, Thanksgiving. John and Katharina Maloof and grown daughter Carla, hosting this year in their Laurelhurst home; with pillows from Mexico and art from lots of places and a vintage tile fireplace with scenes of wagontrains coming west, it's remarkably like something I'd imagine in Taos or Santa Fe during the Mabel Dodge era. Jeff Saeger and Linda Sullivan came, first time in several years they haven't been traveling, warming the hearts of the Doigs. Ann and Norm, down from Bellingham and then overnighthing with us; the news there is his forthcoming hip replacement. Mark and Lou Damborg, stalwart as ever. Peter Rockas, our solo, our wild card, our Greek bachelor farmer (after 3 marriages). There have been Thanksgivings when Peter carried--pretty much high-jacked--too much of the conversation, but that wasn't so much the case y'day, and I spent quite a bit of perfectly fine time one-on-one with him. C has remarked how much Peter probably needs these gatherings, along with his morning klatches at the Capitol Hill Tully's where Bill Calvin is a regular. Ray and Priscilla Bowen, Priscilla on my right at the dinner table and a good companion; when talk turned to politics later when we were all in the living room, she announced herself convinced there's hanky-panky between Bush and Condoleeza Rice. There was considerable angst in the group over Bush's re-election; it quite surprises me how much we and virtually all of our friends are of one mind, on current politics (if that's what the divisions in this country qualify as).

5 Dec.--Wind and rain supposedly are on their way in the coming week. This still-dark morning (7:15 now), it as if this house and its decks and the west thrust of garden are a knife edge and the weather of the Sound is teetering on it. Absolutely straight across from where I glance sideways to keep track while typing this, there are blue ribs in the general clouds, and the snowtips of the mountains show through. We are due to walk with David Williams and Marjorie @ 9:30, most likely Green Lake, and we shall see if the gray to the south lets us stay dry or not.

December is sneaking past fast, and thank heaven we got out ahead of its holiday tasks, pre-emptively last month. Xmas letter done and mailed, mailed, mailed, our little gifts to one another stashed around, Xmas dinner with the Rodens and Clemenses at least pinned down to our own turf. It's still, what, 16 days until the official start of winter, but this is growing into a considerable stint of chilly gray weather without productive precipitation (although this week may change that a bit). We've brazened out occasional garden and yard chores--the garden diary is my next stop after this--and y'day afternoon worked a while in the garage, C tightening the bolts of the groaning garage door--every time it goes up, it sounds like Gulliver with arthritis--while I fashioned stakes to hold down my next Juliana coldframe when it eventually arrives. (Speaking of: the disadvantage of free shipping from the Detroit outfit found on the Internet is that it's apparently by oxcart.) And we have ahead the paced social schedule of the sort I like, and I think is acceptable to C--Ann & Marsh, Linda and Syd, the Mayfields, the Damborgs on an excursion to the Tacoma Art Museum at our invitation. Beyond, there'll be the Tucson week. More beyond, I think I am stirring toward the notion that we should do some real travel in the next year or two. C is ready, I just need to say the word.

But first The Whistling Season, and I gutted through the past week with at least 2500 words, and maybe 3,000, to show for it. Damnably, the rough drafting gets tougher from here. The book is about to turn toward climaxes, and

5 Dec. cont.--they have to riff one after another like jazz passages. I'm pretty sure there are 2 tough weeks ahead, one of dancing the story toward the turning point--the accident to Toby--and one of working on the ending of the book. Am convinced it's worth hammering together a version of the ending at this stage of the process, to produce something out of the same level of energy as the rest of the book. Also, it's a gambit that has worked on other books; whatever their virtues or nils, my books don't just stop, as if the case with a helluva lot of novels.

And, on the book beyond the book, a possible title came to mind which has held up for a couple of days and ought to survive as a chapter heading, if nothing else: The Weight of the Wind.

11 Dec.--Had a 36-hour rain, which stopped just before midnight. An incredible sight at daybreak this morn, as the storm system (a big warm tropical one) could be seen moving south, along the marker of the mountain peaks. There was a sharp curtain of weather, gray and showery to the south, blue sky to the north, on a line straight out from our house; in 15 minutes the line had moved even with Point Jefferson, and in about half an hour it was far up the Sound. Out the window now, @ 10:10, it's all blue water and snowy mountain skyline.

Magical evening last night, when we linked up with Betsy Wilson at the UW Library and listened to the Medieval Women's Choir in the reading room. The acoustics are sheer heaven for the group, the nearest thing this region has to a medieval cathedral's interior, and Betsy thought this year's performance--this is their 3rd year, we've been to 2--was the best. When we walked into the reading room, which is achingly beautiful in and of itself, Betsy asked somebody from the choir management where we had best sit, and the firm answer was the middle of the room. Truly, the music sounded wondrous there, and the terrific bonus was that one of the pieces, I think it was "Polorum regina," was performed right beside us by about half the choir. They formed a circle with their 3 soloists in the middle; a striking dark-haired soloist, I think Katherine Hanson-Mack, who has a superb voice, at one point let out a spiral of sound, a cross between an ooh and a hum, and it could be heard traveling

11 Dec. cont.--straight up to the vaulted ceiling. Another soloist, Marian Seibert, a very tall Elizabethan figure, grinned and gave a surreptitious thumbs-up within the circle when they finished. As well as the music, we enjoyed Betsy, who is something like a beatific genius administrator. As C said, after we'd watched staffer after staffer and person after person come up to her in the course of the evening, Betsy's life is one long interruption and she calmly smiles through it all.

Have just bought Ox-Bow Man, the bio of Walter Van Tilburg Clark, and scanning it a bit I see it's rife with Clark's writer's block, and the author, Jackson Benson, did not know I am the footnote behind the extract on pp. 354-5, from Clark's wife:

11/11/65 Walter working on piece for Rotarian--What the West Means to Me.

12/2/65 Walter still working on article for Rotarian.

12/8/65 Walter depressed about writing...

12/12/65...Walter very depressed about article for Rotarian.

12/14/65 W. still working on article.

I was the 26-year-old assistant editor in charge of the "High West" issue who commissioned the piece from him. Evidently I was onto something in trying the topic on him, enough allure in it for him to take it on. And as an assignment, if there ever was a fat softball pitch right down the middle, this was it; Vardis Fisher turned out a piece almost before I put the phone down, when I had to turn to him. I can't remember if Clark ever let me know he was having trouble with the piece, but I think I ferreted that out myself when ~~the~~ nothing arrived and the deadline got close. I do recall, when one or the other of us desperately picked up the phone, that he outright said to me he simply could not do the article, he was "blocked."

21 Dec.--Solstice, and not before time. C and I will be grateful for that daily smidgin of daylight, "a chicken step longer," as Grandma always said it.

Since the last diary entry, we have lunched with Linda & Sydney--at the truly tacky UW faculty club--and had dinner @ Union Bay Cafe with the Mayfields and Betsy Wilson and Dean. Good talky times, in both cases. Tomorrow we're taking the Damborgs to the Tacoma Art Museum and they're in turn providing us dinner. Come Saturday, it is Christmas, and the Rodens and Clemenses coming for dinner.

Meanwhile I have stayed with the Whistling ms, working on what will be the final section, on the veteran hunch that it will serve me well to be able to simply touch up the book's ending when that time comes. It's been tough writing, wrapping up so much of the plot, and I have quite a lot more of it to do, but at least I've sculpted 10 or a doz. ms pp that I'll badly need later. Becky left a phone message saying they wouldn't try to cram the book onto next fall's list even if I finish early, so there's no real deadline push. But I intend to push as hard as I can anyway to get this one done. Ahead, ~~next one~~ never do know.

Over the weekend, banged my brain on finances. And the weather let up, a couple of afternoons lately, for yardwork.

Have now finished Oxbow Man, and pondered Walter VT Clark a bit. It was later in his life than when I did Winter Brothers, but he took on a mass of pioneer diary highly similar to Swan's, and it capsized him. Why the Alf Doten material didn't provide him the basis for a novel, or at least a speculative biography, I cannot fathom. But then that is the human condition, different fathoms. I wonder if it goes back to class structure, the difference between Clark, an evidently honorable man if gabby and dramatically self-critical, and some of the rest of us. Rural kickabouts that we were, Stegner and I wrote like our pants were on fire while Clark, university president's son, seems not to have been able to look at finances or sensible schedule structuring. Something mentioned by Jackson Benson in the book stirred a faint memory in me: Clark was so, what, tender-skinned or rarefied during his writer's block that he couldn't deal with the telephone. I recall that I was astounded when I somehow got hold of him about the Rotarian missing piece and he asked me to deal with it by letter.

24 Dec.--A foggy Christmas Eve, with gray streaks on the water of the Sound like surprise islands and, just now (2 p.m.), the big TOTE vessel Midnight Sun ghostly as it passes. I'm taking off most of a week from the ms--until the 27th--although as I told C, doing nothing is something I achieve only by working at it. Nonetheless, spent this morning reading the newspapers and finishing up the great Sjovall/Wahloo police procedural Roseanna; the mail blessedly brought a couple of seed catalogues, so I can usefully tinker with veg garden orders this afternoon. And ah, how the garden pays off; supper tonight is salmon salad, with all the greens picked this morn.

On the 22nd we went to Tacoma with the Damborgs and toured them through the Art Museum on our membership and a couple of guest passes. Patricia McDonnell came in on a day off and gave us a curator's tour, quite wonderful of her; the big visiting show is Hudson River School landscapes (from the Wadsworth Atheneum; much of it was collected by the Colt family of deadly .45 fame), with 3 Bierstadts and a George Caleb Bingham etc.) and the regional artist show is works of Scott Fife, a Seattle guy who works, astonishingly, in shaped and painted cardboard. Fife's 9-foot-high beagle puppy sitting in the middle of the gallery is quite a stunner. Patricia had to go off to dentistry rather than joining us for lunch at the Swiss, but Mark and Lou seemed to get a great kick out of the place, indeed the whole day. Spent some time in the St. Historical Museum after lunch, then they fed us chili supper.

On the 20th, I think it was, we had Kaare and Sigrunn Ness come from next door for coffee and C's quick delicious muffins and to tell us the tale of their latest trip to Norway, mid-month. This began a month or so ago when we were working in the back yard and Sigrunn hove into view over the hedge and said oh golly, they had to go to Norway, they'd been invited to dinner with the king. What's that about, we said, but she didn't really understand it, Kaare was the one who knew all that. We kidded her a bit and I demonstrated how she'd have to curtsy, and in a day or so Kaare came over to ask us to bring in their mail while they were gone. The king? we prompted. By golly,

24 Dec. cont.--yah, says Kaare, we're invited to that Noble ceremony. So it was that we got a first-hand report of the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony (this year's winner Maathai of Kenya). Funniest bit: the Oslo Town Hall where it's held is small enough that spouses didn't get tickets, so Kaare went, by dint of being at the Ambassador level--heavy contributor--of the Norwegian-American Foundation, and Sigrunn went off to a fancy lunch or some such. Going in to the ceremony, Kaare was snared by the Norwegian oil minister, a woman he'd known when she was the fisheries minister, and she said, come on, walk in with me. He stuck with her and went on to a hotel reception afterward, and ultimately Sigrunn wonders where he is--"and den," she tells the story, "here comes my husband out of the hotel with the oil minister."

Christmas--Mild rain, sky and water silvered by general overcast. We did our daily early morning walk through a nearly trafficless n'hood. I've spent some of the morn readying my veg seed orders. Also have gone back through the '98 diary, that vast year of buying this house and finishing Mtn Time and the Allen trip etc. The look back was triggered by a welcome piece of mail y'day--Idaho Humanities Council offering \$7500 for a speech next Oct.--that mentioned my '98 Boise speech. Alas, the year was so colossally busy the Boise diary entry is scant. All in all, I am reminded by the diary retrospective that I hopèd, when we made the blessed move to this house, that we could get five good years of life here. We are beyond that, running on gift time, huzzah.

31 Dec.--10:15 in the morn, the year is going out in good weather, mostly clear, the Sound very blue, winter sun creeping onto the heather blossoms. Any beneficence from nature is particularly welcome right now, with news still coming in of the monster tsunami that devastated Indian Ocean coastline countries. (It took Bush 3 days to emerge from his bunker in Crawford to say anything about it.)

I worked on the Whistling ms the first 4 days of this week, determined to get some gain out of a time of year when everything can go moribund, but today--Friday--and probably through the weekend I am pecking away at year-end

31 Dec. cont.--chores. Minor rituals, but I am fond of them: stapling my new desk calendar, which I make each year myself because I can't find commercial calendars that won't smudge when I make my penciled entries, into its plastic backing; hanging the '05 calendars, including the handsome gardening calendar I buy every year for the garden room; mulling the finances a bit...and so it goes.

We did quite well with Christmas, no political histrionics or other filibusters, when the Rodens and Clemenses came for dinner. Two years since we'd seen Lisa and Jerry, and as C noted, that time was quite readable on Lisa, who had a narrow escape in a car wreck and has been rehabilitating a finger ever since. C's rib roast was terrific, and we're still having lunch sandwiches off it.

The day after, we went to the matinee of Black Nativity at the Intiman. Quite good, particularly the 1st half which employs Langston Hughes' prose work. The 2nd half a bit more labored, as the audience, a white one and gray as well, intrinsically could not be roused to the gospel fervor level onstage. A good time was had, even so. C and I agreed the Rev. McKinney is a great piece of work, troupering at all these performances at an age that can't be much short of 80.

And unless something nominates itself for the diary this afternoon, thus endeth '04.

MOHAI presents

An Evening with Jean Walkinshaw

February 11, 2004



*Celebrating Forty Years
of Contributions to the History &
Cultural Life of Our Region*

Appreciation of Jean Walkinshaw by John Voorhees

Viewers who tuned in to Channel 9 to watch a program called "Faces of the City" in 1975 were witnessing an extraordinary event in TV. It was the first documentary created by Jean Walkinshaw in an impressive career of more than a quarter century - from "Faces of the City" to last year's "Hall for All," about Seattle's new opera house.

Jean was hardly a novice. In the late '60s and early '70s she produced more than 200 editions of KING-TV's "Face to Face," a stimulating, wide-ranging in-studio talk show hosted by Roberta Byrd, back when TV stations took community service seriously.

But moving to Channel 9 allowed Jean to get out of the studio and since then Jean has focused her ever-inquisitive mind on a remarkable variety of subjects to create over 40 documentary films of a marvelously wide range. Give Jean any subject and I'm sure she'd have several ideas about how to turn it into a provocative film - as an examination of her body of work shows.

For a filmmaker, she has shown extraordinary interest in and respect for the written word, with documentaries about such diverse authors as Ivan Doig, Tom Robbins, Raymond Carver, Theodore Roethke, Charles Johnson, and Emmett Watson. Her resume also includes films about such musicians as Kitaro and Alan Hovhannes, artists Jacob Lawrence, George Tsutakawa and Guy Anderson, as well as dance ("Inside Pacific Northwest Ballet"). These films join Jean's imaginative explorations of subjects from mountain climbing, Native Americans and Western art to the homeless, Soviet émigrés and the Trident nuclear submarine!

Jean always finds a way to solidly ground her films in the Pacific Northwest. Whether it's her notable examinations of Mount Rainier and the Columbia River or such internationally-oriented programs as "Japan Northwest" or "Young Storytellers in Russia," there are always ties to our area, creating a body of work provincial in the best sense of the word.

While we've been privileged to enjoy and learn from Jean's visions these past 25 years, future generations will find Jean's films a rich source of information about the Pacific Northwest in the last quarter of the 20th Century. I can't think of a greater contribution to the history and industry of this area.

~ John Voorhees

John Voorhees was an Arts reporter for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* and the *Seattle Times* from the 1960s to the 1990s.

Program

Welcome.....Leonard Garfield

Recollections.....Ivan Doig
Jim Wickwire
Kent Stowell

Afterword.....The Honorable Jean Godden

Presentation

*This evening had been made possible in part by the generous support of
Beatrice Roethke Lushington in honor of Jean Walkinshaw
and the late Theodore Roethke.*

Host Committee

Ruthanna (Fam) Bayless

David Brewster

Kay Bullitt

Joel Connelly

Ivan and Carol Doig

Ellen Ferguson

Jay McCarthy

Ancil and Valerie Payne

Constance Pious

Doug and Kathie Raff

Mary Randlett

David Skellenger

Rae Tufts

Jan Thompson

Ayame Tsutakawa

John Voorhees

Jim Wickwire

This evening's supper has been provided by Baci Catering & Cafe, Nola Nevers, proprietor

Zion-Moab
April 28-May 5, 2004

AlaskaAir 1-800-252-7522.

Wed., April 28 Fly to Las Vegas on Alaska #198 @ 6:10 a.m. # DMWISC.

Pick up Alamo SUV. #44105242. 1-888-426-3299.
\$287.94 weekly, incl. taxes & fees. (116 mi. to St. George)

W-Th., April 28-29 Cabin at Zion Lodge. Confirmation # CJC5BB. 160 mi.
Phone (435) 772-3213.
6:30 p.m. dinner reservation, Apr. 28.

F, April 30 Torrey. 190 mi.
Austin's Chuckwagon Inn, #043004 RA. (435) 425-3335.
\$59+ AAA. 2 queens upstairs. 48-hr. cancel.
127 mi. from Bryce; 3 hr. min to 5 or 6 sightseeing.
Be over mt. before dark; elk on road.

Cafe Diablo a possible for dinner.

Sat, Sun, Mon, May 1, 2, 3 Moab. 253 mi via Rte 95

Aarchway Inn, Moab. 1-800-341-9359.

\$85.50 w/ AAA discount. #00298368.

2 beds; NS. Visa guarantee. 24-hr. cancel.

Sunday: call Andy @ home (435) 259-2639

Monday reading/signing. Andy Nettles 435-259-0782.

4-radio interview

Fat City Smokehouse has moved 1/2 block to Rio Colorado. *(Monday, w/ Andy)*

Buck's Grillhouse is 1 mi. n. of town on Rte. 191.

Center Cafe is on First West, has renovated w/ Fulghum \$.

Desert Bistro is on Center, where Center Cafe used to be.

T, May 4 Cedar City 188 mi via I-70 & 15

Hampton Inn. New. Natl 1-800-426-7866.

\$89.10+ w/ AAA or senior. #848960028

W, May 5 *Alaska flt #187, Seats 24DF @ 11:02 a.m. DMWISC.

Arr. Seattle 1:34 p.m.

Confirm return. \$50 ea. for change.

~ Sharon Ott ~

You and a guest are invited to join Artistic Director Sharon Ott for a cocktail reception as we welcome Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Nilo Cruz to Seattle.

Mr. Cruz will also talk about his work and his play

*Beauty
of
the Father*

which will receive its world premiere production at Seattle Rep this spring
under the direction of Ms. Ott.

We also invite you to stay for that evening's performance as our guests

Sunday evening, April 25, 6:00 pm
Performance at 7:30 pm

RSVP to Natalie at 206-443-2210, ext. 1003 or natalieg@seattlerep.org

Nilo Cruz was born in Cuba and lives in New York. He became the first Latino playwright to receive the Pulitzer Prize for Drama when *Anna in the Tropics* was named the recipient in 2003; he also received the American Theatre Critics Association Steinberg Award for the play. His other works include *Lorca in a Green Dress*, *Two Sisters and a Piano*, *A Park in Our House*, *Night Train to Bolina*, *The Museum of Dreams*, *A Bicycle Country* and *Dancing on Her Knees*.

Beauty of the Father is his newest play. The mysterious moonlight of southern Spain sets the stage for this poetic and sensual story of love, art and reconciliation.

Ivan and Carol,

Thanks for the Washington Post piece—mighty impressive and “Rhapsodist”, well that is one helluva moniker for a guy from White Sulphur. I spent three weeks riding the rails to D.C. for research and then to Independence, Missouri, for a week at the Truman Library, still chasing down info on the Columbia. I think I am getting closer to something to say, but you know how much easier it is to dig through archives than get the stuff down chapter by chapter.

While in D.C., I stayed with Joe Miller, an old lobbyist and political manager who had a lot to do with Scoop's and Maggie's campaigns, to say nothing of being the whizkid who engineered several Demo upsets in the early 1950s, including knocking off Joe McCarthy. He was involved in some of the Columbia Valley Authority promotions in 1949-50, so I hoped to learn some inside stuff on that effort. I got less than I had hoped, but his stories of political maneuverings and his knowledge of NW politics enlightened me about how wires are pulled and arms are twisted. He has great stories about LBJ, Rayburn, and more.

All of this is leading up to a story I think you will like. Joe is a voracious reader, even at 83 (God do you think we can still read then, too?), and he reads everything political, plus novels, travel books—just about anything about the PNW. He piles in the books week by week from his local library branch on Capitol Hill. He is also one of your great fans. Not long after *Rascal Fair* came out he was attending an early morning Congressional hearing in his capacity as a lobbyist for railroad and maritime unions. By chance he sat next to Max Baucus, someone he holds in medium regard, but likes. Joe said a few pleasantries and remarked that Max looked like he draggin' a bit. Max looked at Joe and said: “You're not lookin' so peppy yourself. Have you been out too late?” Joe admitted that he was beat, but he had an excuse. He told Max: “I went to the library yesterday and got my reserved copy of Doig's latest novel. I started reading it right before dinner and I just could not put it down, so I read on until 3:00 this morning, and even then I didn't get much sleep.” Max looked at Joe with a semi-shocked expression (as well as Max can make such an expression) and said: “Bullshit, you're pulling my leg. You were out with your boys at one of the watering holes.” “No,” Joe replied, in a half-defensive manner, “I don't do that anymore. I'm telling you the truth, that book just grabbed me and would not let go.” Max looked at him again and said: “I'll be damned. I did exactly the same thing last night! How likely is that?”

Joe told me his estimation of Baucus ratcheted up a couple of notches. I thought, well, if Ivan can make a couple of D.C. pols bleary-eyed the Republic is still in safe territory.

Hope all is well with you. See you this spring when I am back digging into the federal records at Sandpoint.

Bill

Ps - thought you might
enjoy the enclosed

tribute to Jean Walkinshaw, Feb. 11 2004

PACE

I was never more glad to be a writer, self-unemployed and customarily at my own keyboard in a workplace of my own choosing and with no one to boss me around other than the words waiting in my fingertips, than that first morning when Jean set about turning me into a television performer.

OCCURRED

That dubious day ~~came~~ in Port Townsend, where we were starting to film **Winter Brothers**. Or more accurately, I was standing dead-center in the middle of a Port Townsend street,

OR SCHOOL BUS

dodging the occasional passing car² while desperately trying to
recite from memory the lines from my book needed for that scene.
With Jean all the while hovering just out of camera range,
instructing me to look more relaxed.

Next came the scene to be shot in the Port Townsend
courthouse, that wonderful old pile of a building which, however,
was a tiny bit dim inside. In what I supposed was the natural way
of television people, Jean and cameraman Wayne Sourbeer
proceeded to set up enough lighting equipment to illuminate, say,
Husky Stadium. As I blinked there in the glare and tried to
remember my lines--Jean again encouraging me to look more

relaxed--I opened my mouth and the Channel 9 lighting gear³ blew
the fuses for the entire Jefferson County courthouse.



3

out, the Channel 9 lighting gear blew the fuses for the entire
~~control house.~~

// With that kind of a launch of my TV career, it did take me a while to figure out just what Jean, in her role as producer, was actually producing. Did I understand the call letters of the station properly, I wondered--was it KCTS, or something like K-A-O-S?

// But I have long since seen that I should not have been so surprised at the strange abracadabra rattled out at me by a sorceress-like blond woman in places that had never known a TV camera before. / Magic / does not come easy. Jean in her miraculous blend of empathy and push has given us absolutely

magical views and insights⁴ of the Pacific Northwest/and the larger West that will last and last.

In her work, and her personality--and my wife Carol and I can testify after twenty-some years^{NOW} of doing half the laughing^{DURING}

inspired evenings with Jean and Walt, in the sparkling quality of

her friendship--she has kept faith with the terrain that produced

her. The late oracle of western writing, Wallace Stegner, once

called the American West "the native home of hope." In her

KEEN-EYED

~~inspired~~ explorations of our region and we its people, by coaxing

us and our truths to stand stark in lens light, Jean has been/our

glorious geographer of that territory of the soul.

#

| JAZZ ETC.

McCoy Tyner, a wonder of jazz world

By Paul de Barros /
Seattle Times jazz critic

Walking out the door of Jazz Alley Tuesday into the real-life alley behind the club, a guy turned to his date and said, "I've never heard anybody play the piano like that in my life."

McCoy Tyner has been around for four decades, but this young fan's astonishment was understandable.

Before McCoy, no one else had ever heard the piano played like that, either, and — like the Grand Canyon or the Taj Mahal — it's still amazing, no matter how many times you see it.

Tyner is at the Alley through Sunday (\$24.50-\$28.50; 206-441-9729 or www.jazzalley.com) with the reigning master of the vibraphone, Bobby Hutcherson, bassist Charnett Moffett and drummer Lewis Nash (not, as previously announced, Eric Harland).

Tyner's thunderous, two-fisted virtuosity came to light in the '60s with the classic John Coltrane Quartet, where the pianist added a spiritual dimension to the dazzling mastery of Art Tatum and Oscar Peterson. Hutcherson's secular good humor — but equal virtuosity — are a great foil for the earnest Tyner.

Their resplendent Tuesday-night set offered one emotional peak after another, as well as a few fun surprises. On the standard "I Should Care," the quartet created a roiling sea of sound, with Tyner's triumphant mood suggesting nothing less than the parting of waters as Hutcherson's red mallets flew over his instrument in a blur.

The clear ring and pungent attack of the vibraphone — and Hutcherson's uncanny way of suggesting bent, bluesy notes — nicely cut through Tyner's oceanic overtones while massaging the pianist's squared-off sense of phrasing.

The tip of one of Hutcherson's mallets flew off during "Mana Layuca," a driving,



Piano legend McCoy Tyner plays at Jazz Alley through Sunday. He is joined by vibraphonist Bobby Hutcherson, bassist Charnett Moffett and drummer Lewis Nash.

martial tune, as he swiped sideways at a tone bar to create a pinging effect. Mugging with bemused annoyance, he finished his solo, then walked back to the dressing room for another pair of mallets.

Moffett laid down his bass and the band left the stand as Tyner offered an a cappella solo on "December," mixing tenderness with bombast. Piano virtuosos often showcase fast, two-handed unisons, but Tyner goes them one better by deftly playing figures that flow slightly against each other, creating astonishing overlaps, like waves folding over other waves.

Back on the stand, Moffett and Nash offered one of the highlights of the evening, a vigorously competitive, witty conversation of traded, eight-bar solos on "Steppin'," teasing new textures, melodies and rhythms from each other.

The quartet delivered a swinging, uptempo edition of "Come Rain or Come Shine" and Hutcherson shoehorned a quote from "Old Devil Moon" over the droning pedal bass of "Song of the New World." The quartet closed with the buoyant "Blue Stride."

Like the astonished fellow in the alley, the crowd had nothing but praises for this long,

satisfying set and leapt to its feet in a standing ovation.

TAKE NOTE

There are two local jazz events of special note this week. Eastside Jazz, the plucky Bellevue presenting organization, opens its fall season at Sherman Clay, 1000 Bellevue Way, at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday with five acts: pianist/vibist Bud Schultz, vocalist Dina Blade, pianist Bill Anschell, pianist/vocalists Hans Brehmer and Gary Finkelstein and A.W.P., a blues group featuring local singer Al Green (\$10; 425-828-9104).

Seattle-based Pony Boy Records, run by local drummer Greg Williamson, celebrates its 10th anniversary with a showcase at the First Annual Pony Boy Records Jazz Picnic, with the Larry Fuller Trio, the Big Bad Groove Society, the Jim Cutler Quartet, Dan O'Brien's Inside Out and others. Festivities begin at noon Sunday at Sand Point Magnuson Park Amphitheatre, 7400 Sand Point Way N.E., Seattle (free; 206-522-2210 or ponyboyrecords.com).

Paul de Barros: 206-464-3247
or pdebarros@seattletimes.com

Medieval Women's Choir



The
Medieval Women's Choir
Margriet Tindemans, *Director*

presents

Llibre Vermell
The Red Book of Montserrat

Medieval Christmas Music
from Northern Spain

Friday, December 10, 2004, 8:00 PM
Saturday, December 11, 2004, 8:00 PM

Suzzallo Library Reading Room

Llibre Vermell

Music from the *Llibre Vermell* and *Cantigas de Santa Maria*

Program

Laudemus virginem
Splendens ceptigera
Stella splendens
O virgo splendens
Polorum regina
Imperayritz
Cantiga de Santa Maria 52: *Mui gran dereit'e*
Mariam matrem
Cantiga de Santa Maria 57: *Mui grandes noit'e dia*
Cunċti simus
Los set gotxs

Please hold applause until the end of the concert

Marni Asplund-Campbell,
Ann Glusker,
Katherine Hanson-Mack,
Marian Seibert
soloists
John Gibbs
recorder
Peggy Monroe
recorder, percussion
Margriet Tindemans
vielle

Notes

In northern Spain, high in the mountains, is the monastery of Montserrat. Century after century pilgrims have made the trek up the steep trail to pay homage to the statue of a black Madonna and child and to seek solace and mercy. To this day it is one of the most famous pilgrimage sites in Europe.

In the 14th century the fame of the miracles performed by the Virgin of Montserrat had spread. The small church and monastery could not provide adequate lodging for the visitors who came. It became customary for pilgrims to spend the night keeping vigil in the square outside the church. Local priests helped the monks deal with the throngs. They also preached the miracles of the Virgin, sustaining the listeners' enthusiasm. One of the monks recorded in a little red book what happened during the long cold nights spent on the mountain in anticipation of the arrival of Christmas. He instructed the priests on the pilgrims' needs and recorded songs and dances deemed appropriate: "The pilgrims are encouraged to avoid frivolous songs and lascivious dances".

In this holiday season we invite you to get away from the usual hustle and bustle and imagine yourself on that square, surrounded by the mountains of Montserrat, under a dark sky, brightened only by stars and an occasional candle. Let the magic of the music bring you a moment of peace and calm.

We gather our 'pilgrims' as they arrive, singing some of the simplest and most enchanting rounds found in the

medieval repertoire, *Laudemus virginem* and *Splendens ceptigera*. *Stella splendens* is one of the few two-part pieces in the collection. It is an account of all the various people who came to Montserrat: kings and queens, princes and barons, but also shepherds, woolworkers, merchants and boatmen, servants and regents, old and young.

O virgo splendens describes the rugged and mysterious mountain landscape of Montserrat, and how the Virgin chose this place to be venerated. We present it as a monophonic chant and as a three-part round.

Polorum regina is called a *bal redon*: a round-dance. No record of any dance steps survives from the Middle Ages, but we have taken inspiration from the simplicity of the meter in this antiphonal song.

Several languages are represented in the *Llibre Vermell*: Latin, Catalan and Occitan. *Imperayritz* is one of the songs in Catalan. Its haunting beauty sets it apart from the more popular dance songs.

Around 1300 King Alfonso X, also called *El Sabio* (the Wise, or Learned One) brought numerous poets, composers, scribes and painters to his court to compile all known miracles the Virgin had performed. Beautiful illuminations adorn the manuscripts containing the *Cantigas de Santa Maria* (Songs of the Blessed Mary). In one manuscript they depict the stories told, in another all kinds of musical instruments. Sometimes already existing melodies were used, to enhance the appeal of the text. The stories are told in quasi-folktale style, although the language used is not the one commonly spoken at Alfonso's courts, but the language used for courtly poetry, Galician-Portuguese. The antithesis

between 'high court' language and 'popular' construction is one of the many fascinating aspects of this repertoire. Musically the songs illustrate many different styles, representing the wide variety of musicians involved in the production of the manuscripts: we know that Christians, Moors and Jews all worked together, even though the subject matter of course is uniquely Christian. The geography of the settings ranges from Spain, France, England, and Germany, with mentions of Jerusalem and the Middle East, but the majority of the stories are set in northern Spain. We have chosen two of the stories that recount events in Montserrat.

In the first Cantiga, *Mui gran dereit'é*, we hear how every day for four years the Virgin makes a flock of mountain goats come down to the monastery, so the monks can milk them. But foolishly and greedily one of the novices kills a kid to eat it. This causes the animals to cease their generous visits.

Mariam matrem is probably the latest piece in the *Llibre Vermell*: it is written in a three-voice refrain form, in notation and style closer than any of the other songs to 14th-century secular compositions.

Cantiga 57, *Mui grandes noit'e dia*, tells of a Lady who with her retinue is on her way to Montserrat when she is set upon by the robber knight Raimundo and his band. She and her party flee to Montserrat, while the Virgin takes care of the robbers: they are mysteriously paralyzed, one of them unable to move the piece of chicken he has stolen to his mouth. All of them are afflicted with cuts and wounds. But after the abbot of Montserrat and his monks take the robbers prisoner and bring them to the monastery so justice can be done, the Virgin takes mercy on them and heals them, provided they will forever refrain from attacking Christians!

Cuncti simus is another *bal redon*, a round dance, alternately sung by soloists and choir.

Written in the Catalan language, *Los set gotxs* is an exuberant celebration of the Virgin's beatitudes, a very popular subject in medieval poetry. Seven joys are specified: the annunciation by the angel Gabriel, Mary's virginity after conception and birth, her pleasure in accepting the gifts of the Three Kings from the Orient, her relief at finding an empty tomb after Christ's death, His ascension to heaven, the appearance of the Holy Spirit, and above all the moment Mary takes her place in heaven as Eternal Queen.

—Margriet Tindemans

This event is co-sponsored by the Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs, City of Seattle.

Support the Medieval Women's Choir!

Ticket sales cover only a small portion of the costs of concert production. If you would like to support our work, donation envelopes are available in the lobby outside the Reading Room.



About the Choir

The Medieval Women's Choir promotes and performs medieval vocal music, exploring its history, language and culture. Established in 1990, the choir is open to all women in the greater Seattle area. If you are interested in singing with the choir, sign our "new member" list in the lobby, contact the choir at 206-264-4822, or visit our website at www.medieval-womenschoir.org.

Our 2004–2005 Season continues!

A Great Experiment

Saturday, March 5, 2005, 8:00 PM

Sunday, March 6, 2005, 2:00 PM

Seattle Asian Art Museum, Volunteer Park

Medieval music specialists Eric Mentzel and Shira Kammen join Margriet Tindemans and choir soloists Ann Glusker, Katherine Hanson-Mack, and Marian Seibert for this special concert of 14th-century court music of France and Italy, in the intimate setting of the Seattle Asian Art Museum. Works by Guillaume de Machaut, the blind organist Francesco Landini and others illustrate the rhythmic and harmonic experiments that paved the way for the new music of the Renaissance.

Heaven's Harmonies

Sunday, May 22, 2004, 8:00 PM

St. James Cathedral, Seattle

In the splendor of St. James Cathedral the choir presents music by Saint Hildegard of Bingen – known as the Sybil of the Rhine – and other women mystics of medieval Germany. For the choir's 15th anniversary celebration past and present soloists join director Margriet Tindemans, percussionist Peggy Monroe, and the choir in a festive tribute to the least anonymous woman composer of the Middle Ages.

The Medieval Women's Choir

Caroline Alexander
Maxine Anderson
Karen Andrews
Marni Asplund-Campbell
Linda Berlage-Metz
Barbara Bishop-Sand
Sally Black
Ruby Blondell
Beatrice Booth
Joyce Brewster
Clare Brown
Victoria Brown
Nancy Cochran
Leslie Cohn
Trilby Coolidge
Nancy Cushwa
Chayna Davis
Barbara Deppe
Lucretia Devine
Cynthia Dillard

Alice Dubiel
Ann Glusker
Alice Goodwin
Mary Ann Hagan
Emily Heindsmann
Carol Henderson
Maureen Hoy
Barbara Huston
Elise Jones
Margaret King
Amber Knox
Sandra Larkman
Dianne Lattemann
Rachel Lawson
Morgan Martin
Jennifer Mayfield
Mayumi Ochi
Hannah Peragine
Suzanne Peterson
Nancy Quensé

Amber Rack
Jocelyn Raish
Mary Randall
Faith Rayman
Elizabeth Riggs
J'May Rivara
Gretchen Savage
Ann Schuh
Ellen Seibert
Lynn Shelton
Judith Suther
Sheila Teeter
Donna Thompson
Julia Tracy
Tjitske Van der Meulen
Carolyn Wallace
Virginia Warfield
Ann Wilkinson
Brandy Williams
Tonya Zarlengo

Margriet Tindemans, *Director*

Katherine Hanson-Mack and Marian Seibert, *Associate Directors*

Peggy Monroe, *Percussionist*

Nancy Sharp, *Administrator*

Ann Stickney, *Concert Coordinator*

A very special thank you to our 2004–2005 donors for their generous support of the Choir:

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