

Story^{the} Catcher

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“Sandhills Women” Opens 2015 Conference

The first insane asylum opened in Nebraska three years after statehood. Many of the early clients were women, some of them Sandhills women. With that, history Professor Dr. Renee M. Laegreid made another point in the 2015 Pilster Lecture on "These Were the Sandhills Women: Stories, Images, and Mari Sandoz.," Her talk was given to a crowd of more than 100 who gathered at the Chadron State College Student Center. The talk and the following day of conference workshops is sponsored by the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society. Laegreid, associate professor of history of the American West at the University of Wyoming, said that despite isolation, lack of property rights and a severely different social environment, most of the Sandhills women found a way to have a happy life. Women have seldom been the feature of pioneer stories and were often cast as good women, sad women or bad women. The relentless winds, said historian Walter Prescott Webb, caused many women to go insane. But, Mari Sandoz wrote of the diverse lives of women who called the Sandhills home, Laegreid said. Who is the bad woman and who is to decide, she asked. Sandoz wrote of the wide-ranging and sometimes shockingly unexpected experiences of nineteenth-century Plains women. Laegreid said Sandoz's stories were an accurate depiction of the hard life led by these women who came west from the more populated areas of the country and were left on their own to find ways to have a happy life. They were married to men who had settled the land and lived as bachelor farmers. Given that mix, it was not surprising that many marriages didn't last. She spoke of Mari's father, Old Jules, and his four wives as symbolic of what happened during this time. Sandoz gave a human touch to many historical topics including Manifest Destiny and social issues including marriage and divorce. Women's rights in society were intermingled with women's property rights. Laegreid said she painted women as the true pioneers of the American West.



2015 Pilster Lecturer Renee Laegreid at Chadron State College

The annual Pilster Great Plains Lecture series was the opening event of the two-day conference presented by the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society and supported by the Esther and Raleigh Pilster Endowment. The mission of the lecture series is to bring speakers of national renown to the Chadron State College campus for the benefit of the college and residents of the high plains of Western Nebraska. The endowment started with the gift from the late Esther Pilster of ranchland in Dawes County in honor of her late husband Raleigh who grew up there with his parents John and Grace Pilster. Esther, a teacher and school administrator for 44 years, lived in Omaha. Following her death last year, a special memorial plaque and photo of the ranch have been installed at the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center in Chadron. It was dedicated during the 2015 conference in September.

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MEMBERSHIP! Join us in keeping the spirit and work of Mari Sandoz alive by supporting the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society with a new membership, gift membership or renewal! Visit our website at www.marisandoz.org and complete the online form, or you can download a copy of the membership form and mail it to us.



Inaugural Sandoz Scholar Shares Research at Conference

The first Sandoz Scholar, Jillian L. Wenburg of Durango, Colorado, discussed Mari Sandoz writing and its impact on androgyny and activism in the Great Plains. Wenburg's lecture officially opened the 2015 Sandoz Conference in the atrium of the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center at Chadron State College. Her lecture was the first of several on the general theme Sandhills Women. Wenburg received a \$1,000 research grant from the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society to



Jillian Wenburg, the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society's First Sandoz Scholarship Recipient

complete the work toward her Ph.D. at the University of Missouri – Kansas City in an interdisciplinary program in English and History. She thanked the Society for the funding which came at a crucial time in her quest for the degree. She said Sandoz's dedication to her research topics, personality, candor, and work ethic allowed her an intimate place alongside those she chose to write about and yielded a moving written product. In the same way that Sandoz was able to infiltrate the groups she researched, they permeated Sandoz's consciousness. The scholar said Sandoz developed story ideas and observations about Plains life. But it was her encounter with unjust treatment of certain people that led her to use her platform as a writer to address a number of issues. Her work with Native Americans, women, farmers and laborers greatly touched the people she wrote about and for. Her acerbic writing, in both her literary texts and letters, was remarkable in a time and place when and where women typically did not provide such pointed commentary.

Author Says Sandhills Women Improvised, Cooked What They Had

Christianna Reinhardt, an avowed "foodie" and recognized author, discussed "Cooking in the Sandhills." Her talk on recipes and cooking traditions of women on the high plains was mixed with a heaping helping of history and an occasional recipe. She introduced the audience to a new culinary-literary device called marginalia. The author of "A Culinary History of the Nebraska Sandhills: Recipes and Recollections from Prairie Kitchens," said that virtually every old recipe had



Author Christianna Reinhardt

hand-written annotations in the margins that spoke of everything from the results to be expected to slight adjustments in the ingredients. Her tiny apartment in California became a test kitchen and she soon learned that Sandhills women cooked in large batches. She said she had no idea how many molasses cookies that eight cups of flour (as per the recipe) would make. But she can tell you now that her friends appreciated gifts of cookies from the 14 dozen it made. Sandhills women had to learn to substitute because of their isolation. They learned to make do and take advantage of what they had. She saw a number of recipes for prairie chickens because there were lots of them. "Stew until done," was the usual formula. As the recipes became more elaborate, Reinhardt decided to look at what raw ingredients came from the area – milk eggs and cream – and what had to be shipped to the Sandhills. With the help of the Union Pacific Railroad, she went to Omaha and scoured 25 boxes with bills of lading from 1857 to 1950. She found things such as flour, sugar and barrels of pork. "Beef, it's not what was for dinner before the 1970s," she said. It was difficult to store. Fried chicken was a staple because it was easier to obtain. Meat

lockers with giant freezers changed things. She also examined the social functions surrounding food. The importance of the ice houses and the cream shack and egg money and yeast starter which was the social media before 1930. People shared it and sold it with the same passion and stealth of a drug deal, that's how important it was, she said.

Lakota Women Battle the Buckskin Ceiling

Cecelia Fire Thunder was the first woman elected President of the Oglala Indian tribe. Still, she said, Native American women have to battle the “Buckskin Ceiling,” in a world that favors men. She was joined in a discussion of Lakota Women’s Issues by longtime educator Janice Richards who was one of 18 children raised by her grandmother. The role of Lakota women has been diminished because of our first contacts with anthropologists and military people, Fire Thunder said. We have to rewrite the history of Lakota women on the Pine Ridge Reservation. The women were stronger than history indicates. Fire Thunder said no one in her family spoke English and everyone was given a Lakota name. Yet, when she went to school, she was given a different name. “They watch you and give you a name to change your personality,” she said. Yet, if you know who you are, no one can hurt you. Richards and Fire Thunder both related how the teachers at the reservation schools didn’t want students to speak their native language and they were often punished if they did. As a result, Richards said, Lakota children don’t learn the heritage and the history they should. Both speakers said it’s time to restore the story-telling tradition to help the younger generations learn about and respect their heritage. Many of the old ways were good teachers, Fire Thunder said. We still need to respect that.



Lakota Women panel moderated by Sandoz Society Board Members Holly Boomer (far left) and Kimberli Lee (far right). Panel presenters (L-R) Cecilia Fire Thunder and Janice Richards.

The StoryCatcher

The “StoryCatcher” is the title of a book by Mari Sandoz and it is the title of Helen Winter Stauffer’s biography of Mari, *Mari Sandoz: The Story Catcher of the Plains*. The StoryCatcher is published four times a year by the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The vision of the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society is to perpetuate and foster an understanding of the literary and historical works of Mari Sandoz and to honor the land and the people about which she wrote; Native Americans, ranchers, farmers, and the people who settled the High Plains country. The Society hosts an annual conference, the Pilster Great Plains Lecture Series, and a writer’s workshop. Additionally, the Society provides collections on loan to the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center at Chadron State College in Chadron, Nebraska.

Address Changes

Address changes should be mailed to:
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Contributions to the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society are tax-deductible. To join the Society contact visit our website at www.marisandoz.org



Mari Sandoz

The feats, the passions, and the distinctive speech of the West come alive in the writings of Mari Sandoz (1896-1966). As the author of 23 books, including *Old Jules*, *Cheyenne Autumn*, and *Crazy Horse, the Strange Man of the Oglalas*, Sandoz was a tireless researcher, a true storyteller and artist passionately dedicated to the land. With her vivid stories of the last days of the American frontier, Mari Sandoz has achieved a secure place as one of the finest authors in American literature and one of Nebraska’s most important writers. As a historian and as a novelist, Sandoz was inducted into the Nebraska Hall of Fame in 1976 and posthumously received the coveted Wrangler Award from the Hall of Great Westerners.

Sandoz Exhibit Available for Loan!

Thanks to a grant from Humanities Nebraska, the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society has available for loan, a portable exhibit featuring photos of Mari Sandoz and the Great Plains landscape in addition to text about her books and quotes from her writings. The exhibit is comprised of two pull up floor banners, two 16-inch photo spinners, a digital photo frame, table covering, and printed materials about Sandoz and the Society. It is available for loan to libraries, schools, historical societies, museums and other non-profits in Nebraska on a first come, first serve basis. It can be used as part of an existing exhibit or for a special event. If you or your organization are interested in reserving the use of the exhibit, please contact the Society Executive Secretary Elizabeth Chase echase@windstream.net or Public Relations Coordinator J.L. Schmidt jlschmidt67@gmail.com.



Visitors Leave Notes and Impressions at Gravesite

For some years there have been notebooks at the site of Mari's grave south of Gordon for people to record their thoughts. Mari Sandoz Heritage Society Board Member Dan Kusek of Alliance collects the notebooks so the comments can be archived. Here are some recent excerpts.

"I've probably been coming to the site at least 20 years; I don't remember when I first read Old Jules, but I do know it touched my soul. I fell in love with the Sandhills when I first came out about 1986. Then when my son actually settled here, I knew I had my base to refresh my soul with peace and nature. And this spot gives me the quiet, unhurried place to balance against the hectic, complex world that we now have to live in and acknowledge."

—Sharon Gatewood, Cedar Falls, IA

"I've lived in the Sandhills for over 40-years and this is my first visit to the ranch. I'll be forever grateful for the stories she's (Mari) written about our unbelievable area."

—Becky Herrian

"Have been meaning to stop here for several years and have finally made it, am not disappointed. It looks the way I expected from Mari Sandoz books. I am inspired to read more of her books and come back. There is no place else quite like this. I grew up in Eastern Nebraska but love Western Nebraska."

—Kent and Mary Muelle, LaCrosse, WI

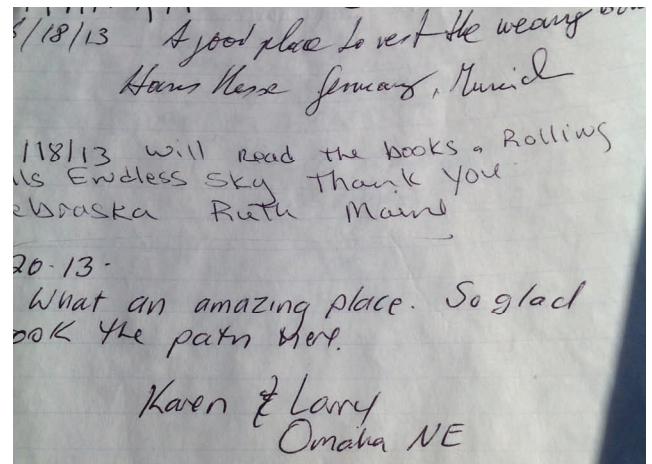
"This elemental spaciousness gets into the blood and liberates the imagination. For Mari and all her comrades in words, I thank you for all the gifts you continue to offer."

—Rowland Russell, Keene, NH

"You are an inspiration, dear lady Ms. Mari Sandoz what an honor to sit here with the view you chose for everafter. Where I stay, in Seneca when in the Sandhills, I was pleased to find I was

reading a signed copy of your book, Old Jules. Your spirit must be free to soar here, in sight of the orchard. Thank you for leading me here when I was looking in the wrong place near Smith Lake. There is a light wind today; the clouds are now behind the hills. The sun has set and the chill is coming on. My fingers are getting too cold to write."

—Jan Christenson. Artist,
photographer, writer.



"This is my third visit to you. Much has changed. I now live in the Shurtleff Arms in Lincoln where you lived in 1937-1940. I live a floor below your old apartment, but I feel you are there nonetheless. I'm still reading you – last book was Beaver Men. I'm writing a fiction styled account of your account of your life in Lincoln. That town can be cold. On my way to Chadron to look at your hats again."

Love—Jamison Wyatt

"Thank you Mari for doing what few would have had the words to do: tell the story of the people, the land, the clash of ideals."

—Larry and Faye Brandstetter,
Red Oak, Iowa.

"Here from Sydney, Australia. Beautiful place for a beautiful person and writer."

—August Simonelli

Mari Sandoz Heritage Society Seeking Next Scholar, Also Awaiting Publication of Sandoz Studies

The Mari Sandoz Heritage Society is looking for its second annual Sandoz Scholar. Application information will be available March 1, 2016 with late summer deadline. The award of the \$1,000 scholarship will be made at the annual conference in October. The recipient will receive half of the award to begin their work. The remainder will be awarded a year later after the work is completed and presented at the 2017 annual conference. Watch for details on our website www.marisandoz.org

Publication of the first ever Sandoz Studies book is expected in early 2016. Attendees at the 2015 Conference will receive copies of the book in the mail. Additional copies will be available from the website. Watch for further details on the website or follow us on Facebook. If you are interested in reserving a copy of the book prior to publication, please email your contact information to Elizabeth Chase, Executive Secretary at echase@windstream.net Copies of the book will be available for \$10 + tax and shipping.

Chris Steinke Appointed to Sandoz Society Board of Directors

Dr. Chris Steinke, Assistant Professor of American Indian and Regional History at the University of Nebraska-Kearney, is the newest member of the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society Board of Directors. Steinke has a PhD in history from the University of New Mexico. He earned his MA in history at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and his BA in English at Harvard University. Steinke's work focuses on Plains Indian history in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.



According to information provided by UNK, Steinke is particularly interested in indigenous communication and transportation networks and how they linked Plains groups to one another and to colonial outposts. His current book manuscript, "Rites of Passage: Indigenous Travelers on the Missouri River," reconstructs the history of indigenous mobility on the Missouri River, a vast transcontinental corridor of Native movement and travel. His

research in Pawnee and Arikara history has appeared in the William and Mary Quarterly and Great Plains Quarterly.



The Mari Sandoz Heritage Society is on Facebook!

The Mari Sandoz Heritage Society has a Facebook page. Keep up to date with Sandoz Society news, events and activities by "liking" our page!

The Mari Sandoz Heritage Society welcomes contributions to our newsletter. If you have a story idea or articles you would like to share, please contact our public relations coordinator J.L. Schmidt at jlschmidt67@gmail.com



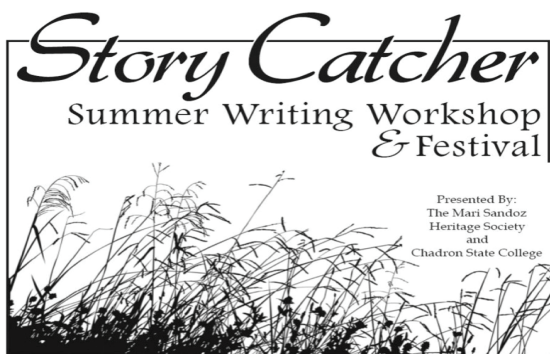
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To learn more about how the Nebraska Cultural Endowment promotes the livelihood of arts and humanities in our state, visit NebraskaCulturalEndowment.org

Photo by Bill Peters

“Writing Wild” is Theme for 2016 Storycatcher Writer’s Workshop at Chadron State College in June



Poet Robert Wrigley and his wife Kim Barnes will be the writer’s in residence for the 2016 Storycatcher retreat at Fort Robinson on June 9-12, 2016. Nature writer Joe Wilkins will join the couple for the workshop and help aspiring and novice writers learn how to write wild.

Plans call for the workshop to shift its focus to the Chadron State College campus on June 11 and 12 where a “Mari Sandoz Emerging Writer” will be featured. The familiar “festival” will wrap things up on Sunday June 14 with an open mic for participants, a book fair, and a round table discussion on publishing or some related topic.

Barnes is an essayist and fiction writer (and poetry) and her first memoir “In the Wilderness” was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. Wrigley is a poet, also known for his nature writing. Wilkins recently published an award-winning memoir/non-fiction work called “The Mountain and the Fathers.”

Wrigley was born in East St. Louis, Illinois. He was the first in his family to graduate from college, and the first male for generations to escape work in a coal mine, Wrigley earned his MFA from the University of Montana. He said he believes that poetry can influence the world and people’s lives rather than just reside within the confines of academia. His poems are concerned with rural Western landscapes and humankind’s place within the natural world, and he aims to “tell all the truth, but make it sing.” He has been awarded fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Guggenheim Foundation, and the Idaho Commission on the Arts. His poems have been widely anthologized, twice included in Best American Poetry, and featured on NPR’s The Writer’s Almanac. He has taught at Lewis-Clark State College, Warren Wilson College, the University of Oregon, the University of Montana, Warren College, and the University of Idaho. He lives in Idaho with his wife Kim Barnes.

Kim Barnes is the author of *In the Kingdom of Men*, named a best book of 2012 by San Francisco Chronicle, The Seattle Times, and The Oregonian, and long-listed for the International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award. Her second novel, *A Country Called Home*, winner of the 2009 PEN Center USA Literary Award for Fiction, was named a best book of 2008 by The Washington Post, The Kansas City Star, and The Oregonian. She is a recipient of the PEN/Jerard Award in nonfiction for her first memoir, *In the Wilderness*, which was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize. Her work has appeared in a number of journals and anthologies, including The New York Times, WSJ online, The Georgia Review, Shenandoah, Fourth Genre, Los Angeles Review of Books Quarterly, and the Pushcart Prize anthology. She is a professor of English in the MFA program at the University of Idaho.

Joe Wilkins’ memoir, *The Mountain and the Fathers*, captures life in the Big Dry, a desolate region in eastern Montana that shapes the men who live there and rarely lets them go. He is also the author of the poetry collections *Killing the Murnion Dogs* (2011), a finalist for the Paterson Poetry Prize and the High Plains Book Award, and *Notes from the Journey Westward* (2012), winner of the White Pine Press Poetry Prize and the High Plains Book Award. His third full-length collection, *When We Were Birds*, part of the Millers Williams Poetry Prize Series, is forthcoming from the University of Arkansas Press in the spring of 2016. His essays, poems, and stories have appeared in many magazines and journals, including The Georgia Review, The Southern Review, The Missouri Review, Harvard Review, Orion, The Sun, The Utne Reader, and Slate. As the winner of the Boyden Wilderness Writing Residency from PEN Northwest, he and his family spent the summer and fall of 2015 living in a remote cabin along the Rogue River in southwest Oregon. Wilkins was born and raised in eastern Montana. After graduating from Gonzaga University with a degree in computer engineering, he spent two years teaching ninth grade pre-algebra in the Mississippi Delta. He then went on to earn his MFA in creative writing from the University of Idaho, where he worked with Wrigley and Barnes. Wilkins now lives with his wife, son, and daughter in western Oregon, where he teaches writing at Linfield College.

Registration information for the 2016 workshop can be found at www.storycatcherworkshop.org

Thursday June 9th – Sunday June 12th 2016
“Writing Wild”—Retreat and Festival

Story Catcher

Summer Writing Workshop
& Festival

Presented By:
The Mari Sandoz
Heritage Society
and
Chadron State College



For 2016, plan on joining us the second week of June for a great series of writing events centered around the theme of *writing wild*. We will start on Thursday with a set of pre-workshop events devoted to advanced writers. We will then spend Friday and Saturday together on a writing retreat--set in the beautiful Pine Ridge Region of Northwest Nebraska, working with writers exploring the “wild” terrains of our lives: in nature and the outdoors, in our relationships with one another, in our place and purpose in the world.

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We will wrap it all up with a festival celebrating the work of everyone involved in the workshop, from published authors to beginners.

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"... Indians still consider the whites a brutal people who treat their children like enemies -- playthings, too, coddling them like pampered pets or fragile toys, but underneath always like enemies, enemies that must be restrained, bribed, spied upon, and punished. They believe that children so treated will grow up as dependent and immature as pets and toys, and as angry and dangerous as enemies within the family circle, to be appeased and fought."

—Mari Sandoz from *Sandhill Sundays and Other Recollections* (1970)

Custer & Sandoz Set for 2016 Pilster Lecture/Conference



Mari Sandoz shown with Colonel Edwin S. Luce at the Custer Battlefield. September 1949. From the Caroline Sandoz Pifer Collection courtesy the Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center at Chadron State College

Custer and Sandoz will be the theme of the 2016 Pilster Lecture and Mari Sandoz Conference October 13 and 14 at the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center in Chadron. The Pilster Lecture will be held Thursday night October 13 at the Chadron State College Student Center. American cultural historian Dr. Paul Hutton will deliver the keynote on the Battle of the Little Bighorn. Hutton

is professor of history at the University of New Mexico and executive director of the Western History Association. Hutton is also a documentary writer and producer known for Wyatt Earp: Walk with a Legend (1994), Investigating History (2003). At the University of New Mexico, Hutton helped to gather information about George Armstrong Custer for the The Custer Reader, a collection of essays, photographs, and fiction regarding Custer and his complex personality. Hutton's 1985 book Phil Sheridan and His Army received many awards for historical writing. He has done a great deal of work in television documentaries, and was a historical consultant for the films The Missing and Cowboys and Aliens.

In The Spirit of Mari Sandoz Award Given to Pilster Family

The 2015 In The Spirit of Mari Sandoz Award was presented to the Pilster family during a special ceremony at the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center in Chadron. Longtime family friends Vernon and Gladys Rumbaugh accepted the award and witnessed the unveiling of a plaque that will be prominently displayed at the Center. The plaque includes a picture of the historic Pilster Ranch which was located northwest of Whitney. In 2006, the endowment fund established by Esther Pilster of Omaha to support programs offered by the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society was enhanced when she donated 3,731 acres of rangeland. The gift totaled more than \$900,000 when the land was sold. Raleigh Pilster was born on that ranch October 4, 1913. His grandparents, Henry and Hulda, homesteaded near Whitney in 1886. At age 19, their son John purchased 160 acres. He married Grace Burnidge in 1911. They eventually grew the ranch to 6,000 acres and their flock of 1,200 ewes was Nebraska's largest for a number of years. Raleigh and his sister Hazel Campbell inherited the ranch when John and Grace died just hours apart in 1965. Raleigh developed high school judging teams that often placed high in national competition. He was named Nebraska's Outstanding Vocational Agriculture teacher in 1984. Esther grew up on a farm near Wymore and was an elementary teacher and principal for 44 years. An eight-acre city park in Omaha is named for her. In September 2002, six months after Raleigh died, Esther attended the dedication of the Sandoz Center and was impressed by its goal to promote the heritage of the High Plains. The gift to the society continues the Pilster Legacy.



The Rumbaugh Family with the new plaque to be displayed at the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center at Chadron State College

Lincoln Man Leads Sandoz Ghost Tours

Photo and article reproduced with the permission of the Daily Nebraskan (originally published 10/26/2015)

A group of about 16 people gathered outside of The Coffee House on Friday night, braving a few sprinkles to retrace the steps and learn about the life of Nebraska's own Mari Sandoz, author of "Old Jules" and "Capital City."

To start the tour, Jamison Wyatt, the leader and creator, began with an overview of Sandoz's life prior to her arrival in Lincoln and touched on her childhood growing up in the Nebraska Sandhills. Tour participants then traveled a few hundred yards to the east for the first stop of the tour. This took them to the red-tinted brick building on the corner of 14th and P streets, which was once home to the Lincoln Business College, where Sandoz studied typing and dictation on the second floor. Sandoz didn't like to talk about her time at the college, and it is unknown how many months or years she spent at the school, as many of her associates didn't even know she had been a student there.

The noise of cars and Friday night crowds on P Street, along with the fact that the first stop on the tour is now home to Raising Cane's, could sometimes make it difficult to imagine Sandoz spending time in any of these buildings. But, the relative quiet of University of Nebraska-Lincoln's campus, along with the narration provided along each stop of the tour, made it easier to picture a 20-something Sandoz living, working and learning around the campus. Stops on campus included the old teacher's college, where Sandoz was admitted when she was 26, and the old social sciences hall, now Canfield Administration Building and the College of Business Administration.

In the midst of the hustle and bustle of 12th Street, the buildings were the next few stops along the tour. Sandoz worked at the American Educational Digest, a publication for teachers, which was located at the corner of 12th and P streets, where the Lied Center for Performing Arts now sits. Sandoz began her career at the digest working as a ghost writer and eventually moved up to be an associate editor before quitting in 1929.



While the tour and studying the history of Mari Sandoz is a hobby for Wyatt, who is a legislative aide for a state senator, his passion for the subject became clear as the tour continued. Wyatt's interest in Sandoz began in high school, when he found a copy of "Old Jules" in his grandparents' basement. "I read the book; I was enamored," Wyatt said. "Later at the university,

when I was a student there, I took a course under Dr. Wunder. It was a course which focused on Mari and the works of her literary contemporaries. So we got to read more Sandoz there in that class, so my fascination with Sandoz is intensified through academic study. And since then, I've kind of delved into personal research."

While walking from stop to stop, Wyatt sprinkled the tour with smaller bits of information about Sandoz's life. The tour wound its way down 12th Street, past The Cornhusker, A Marriott Hotel, where Sandoz spent much of her time, writing and relaxing in the air-conditioned rooms and on toward the former location of the Boston House, at 1226 J. Street, where Sandoz lived for much of her time in Lincoln.

The journey ended on the west side of the Nebraska State Capitol, where Sandoz worked on the ninth floor while employed by the Nebraska State Historical Society. It was in this office that she received the news that her biography of her father, Jules, had won the Atlantic Press non-fiction contest. From that point on, she was a full-time writer.

While the participants on the tour only stalked Sandoz's ghost for about an hour and a half, Wyatt, who lives in the same apartment building Sandoz did, said he follows her every day, walking the same streets and sidewalks she did. "She's, in essence, become my personal hero, my personal religion, if you will," Wyatt said. "I decided maybe other people want to know about her, and we kind of stalk her ghost and follow her shadow here in the city."

What's In It For Me As A Member of the Sandoz Society?

In addition to supporting the work we do to further people's education about one of Nebraska's favorite and most prolific authors, your memberships and contributions to the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society are used in a number of ways to touch many people. You probably know us best for our annual conference and the Pilster Lecture series held in the Fall at the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center on the campus of Chadron State College in scenic northwest Nebraska. The two-day event features a keynote lecture from a noted Sandoz scholar as well as a day of workshops and discussion panels examining a particular Sandoz theme. The recently completed conference dealt with Sandhills women through the writings of Sandoz who was truly an inspiring and pioneering Sandhills woman. Sandoz Society Board Member Dr. Renee Laegreid of the University of Wyoming delivered the keynote in 2015. The conference featured discussions about issues faced by Native American women as well as a look at Sandhills cooking as it evolved with the westward expansion of the railroad. Think of the differences between making do with the food you have at hand, compared with the availability of commodities shipped in by rail. Conference attendees also heard a research paper done by the first ever Sandoz Scholar. The search is on for the next Sandoz Scholar to be announced next summer. Mari Sandoz loved to teach and was very supportive of young writers. She traveled extensively to research her work. To that end, the Society is dedicated to funding research and encouraging young writers. Final edits are being made on the first Sandoz Studies publication, a paperback book that compiles works of a number of scholars who have examined various aspects of Mari's work. We expect that book to be available at a nominal fee early next year. Also fairly new and very successful is the summer Storycatcher Writer's Workshop held in conjunction with Chadron State College. Each workshop is themed and nationally recognized authors are brought in to teach, coach and critique the works of the participants. Part of the event includes a retreat at nearby Fort Robinson and the four-day event always concludes with an open mike to allow the new writers to share their work. The workshop accommodates writers at all levels, from beginning to advanced. There are some things you probably don't know about the work of the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society. We have a website www.marisandoz.org that includes the latest news and scheduled events of the Society as well as things happening at the Center. The website also features fully integrated e-commerce capabilities that make it very easy for people to join the society, renew their memberships and also register for conferences and other activities. This gives us the worldwide reach that has allowed us to serve folks in England and Australia and other parts of the globe. The Society is also very active on Facebook.

It is interesting to contemplate what Mari would have thought about social media which came along well after her death in 1966. With that spirit in mind, we try to keep the page active and ever-changing. If you are the least bit curious and want to receive "instant" updates about our work, check us out on Facebook. Thanks to a grant from Humanities Nebraska, the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society is spreading the word about Mari Sandoz, the Sandhills author and teacher who had an impact on America's understanding of the West. A traveling exhibit about Sandoz and the Society is available for use by libraries, schools, historical societies and museums in Nebraska on a first come, first serve basis. It can be used as part of an existing exhibit or for a special event. If you are interested in reserving use of it, please contact us! Whether it is this newsletter, the website, the Facebook page or the traveling exhibit, our mission remains the same: building an appreciation of Mari Sandoz's work and preserving the legacy of this premier historian by bringing people together for the discussion of her works; creating a distinguished Great Plains Lecture Series; continuing Mari's legacy through a writers' workshop; and administering and raising funds to support these efforts. We couldn't do this without your help. Your membership enables us to safeguard, collect and exhibit the history of Mari Sandoz and the High Plains and make it available for the research, education and inspiration of future generations. The society provides collections on loan to the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center at Chadron State College and supports the center's academic, archive and research programs. We appreciate your contribution by mail, or through our website at www.marisandoz.org. Your membership payment is tax deductible according to IRS regulations. As part of our mission is to inspire future generations, it is easy for you to give a gift membership to a young person or anyone who enjoys Mari Sandoz. The Mari Sandoz Heritage Society works to preserve the legacy of and foster an understanding of the literary and historical works of Mari Sandoz; and to honor the land and the people about which she wrote: Native Americans, ranchers, farmers and the people who settled the High Plains country. In addition to hosting the annual events, the Mari Sandoz High Plains Heritage Center works to preserve the literary works of Mari Sandoz by maintaining an extensive archive of materials including manuscripts of Mari's works, research she compiled in a meticulous and copious index card system, written histories, essays, short stories, correspondence and personal items. Many of these collections are permanently on loan to the Center. The Society supports the Center's academic programs and collections by raising funds for the current needs while also sponsoring a scholarship program, an annual award program and an academic journal of research and writing.

New Displays Coming to Sandoz High Plains Center January to May 2016

“Changing the Face of Power: Women in the U.S. Senate,” an exhibition produced by the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at The University of Texas at Austin, will be on display at the Mari Sandoz High Plains Center in Chadron January 11 through March 4, 2016. Presented in partnership with Humanities Texas, the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. “Changing the Face of Power” is made possible in part by “We the People” grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

“Changing the Face of Power” is an exhibition of photographs by Melina Mara, who began photographing the 13 women in the U.S. Senate in 2001, continuing as their number grew to 14 in 2003. At a time when access to national politicians is increasingly controlled, Mara persuaded a majority of the senators to allow her to document the unprecedented role of women in the Senate, both behind the scenes and before microphones.

“Changing the Face of Power,” which opened at the Smithsonian Institution in 2003, includes informative text provided by the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University. Veteran White House journalist Helen Thomas, a longtime employee of the United Press International news wire service, conducted interviews with 10 of the senators which have been distilled into two audio presentations. A photography-based video presentation portrays exhibition images with narration by photographer Mara. Humanities Texas develops and supports diverse programs across the state, including lectures, oral history projects, teacher institutes, museum exhibitions and documentary films.

Beginning March 14 and running through May 14 is AMERICA'S PARKS, a traveling museum exhibition of paintings depicting scenes in parks of all kinds in the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

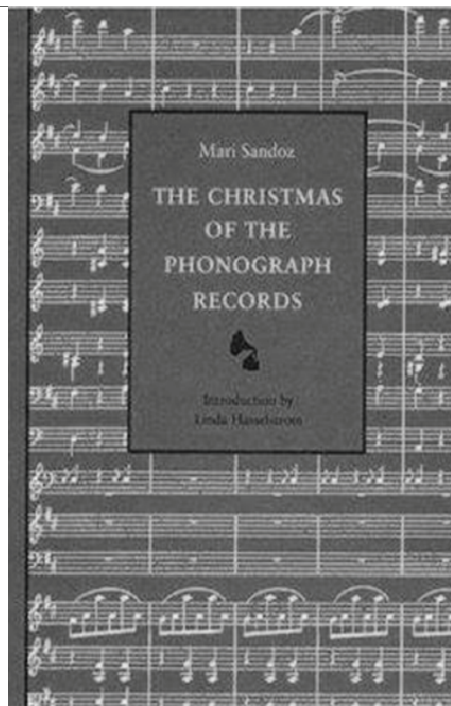
Jurors for AMERICA'S PARKS included: Pam Dean Cable, Executive Director, Susan Kathleen Black Foundation; M. Stephen Doherty, PleinAir™ Magazine Editor; and Todd Wilkinson, Managing Editor, Wildlife Art Journal. To encourage diverse, museum-quality entries, a number of awards were offered including: America's Parks Curator's Choice Award; America's Parks Sculpture Award; The Michael C. and Priscilla V. Baldwin Foundation Sonoran

Desert Art Award; PleinAir™ Magazine Juror's Choice Award; Society of Animal Artists' Wildlife Art Award; Susan Kathleen Black Foundation Floral Art Award; and Wildlife Art Journal Magazine Juror's Choice Award.

Artists world-wide were invited to submit paintings of national parks, city parks such as Central Park in New York City, state and county parks in the U.S. as well as parks of all kinds in Canada and Mexico. The exhibition is organized by David J. Wagner, who served on the Advisory Board of the National Park Art Academy, and proposed and managed the very first tour of ARTS FOR THE PARKS.

The history of park art in America is broad and deep, going all the way back to Wyoming in 1871 and the campaign to rescue Yellowstone by transforming it into the nation's first National Park. In that year, Ferdinand V. Hayden, director of the Geological and Geographical Survey of the Territories, led an expedition to explore the then-unexplored Yellowstone region. Accompanying Hayden were landscape painter Thomas Moran and photographer William Henry Jackson. After the expedition, Moran's watercolors and Jackson's photographs were used to lobby Congress to pass a bill to protect and preserve Yellowstone as “a public park or pleasuring ground.” President Ulysses S. Grant signed the bill creating the nation's first park on March 1, 1872. Other National Parks, including Yosemite in 1890 and the Grand Canyon followed in rapid succession. Since those heady days of the Conservation Movement, innumerable more parks have been created throughout Canada, Mexico, and The United States.

Mari Sandoz tells of a long-ago Christmas in western Nebraska when her father's house was filled with good music from an Edison phonograph and boxes of cylinder records from the East which had been ordered by Old Jules. “The music is for everybody,” he said. This story was first published posthumously in December 1966.



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