



The Lawrence Durrell Society

HERALD

NUMBER 2

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Edited & Produced by:

Gregory Dickson
Susan S. MacNiven
Lawrence W. Markert

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James R. Nichols
THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

The Executive Board met during early June at Carol Peirpe's home and amid fine wine and superb cuisine your Board--minus Michael Cartwright--hammered out the new By-Laws which all of you have received and twenty-eight of you (to date) have voted to accept. We wish to thank those of you who commented on the By-Laws. The Lawrence Durrell Society now has its own set of formal structures, liberally sprinkled with your suggestions and revisions.

For the time being the present By-Laws will do the job, we believe, although David Russell has rightly noted that they need some clear legal cleaning up and development. The point is well made, and the Executive Board will work toward a more comprehensive and careful document as the Society grows. For now, the MLA has our application, documentation, publications, and By-Laws. Let us hope the MLA grants us allied organization status.

The Society now has an official Executive Board, Publications Board, Conference Committee (which during the winter will begin working toward On Miracle Ground IV with the aid of the Executive Board), Nominating Committee, and even those most marvelous of possibilities: ad hoc "Special Committees." At the June meeting the Executive Board also appointed Susan S. MacNiven our official archivist, partly because Susan and Ian have a complete run of Society documents, but mostly because Susan will do such a fine and careful job. We are a relatively young group, and to begin our archival trust now will ensure that we forget very little.

Now, as David Russell notes, we'd better delegate to ourselves the power to act. You bet!

Hope you all had a good summer. Mine was marvelous. ↗

Nancy Lewis
FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT

The first issue of the Herald was a treat to read; certainly congratulations are due to everyone involved.

Bill Godshalk's letter saying that On Miracle Ground III renewed his "whole outlook on literature" particularly struck me because I too left the conference feeling quite "up" about being in English literature: English literature is wonderful; the people in it are wonderful; it certainly is the right choice after all.


Then I returned to campus to almost total immersion in quite another aspect of academic life from English literature: a search and screen committee involved in many disputes over interpretations of affirmative action guidelines. The committee was one charged with hiring an additional person in our Black Studies program and an additional person in our Chicano Studies program. At the time I returned from OMG III, the committee was at the stage of interviewing finalists (an interesting but time-consuming process). Following directly upon that, however, were the deliberations, where all the usual conflicting vested interests in university politics surfaced.

My thoughts often strayed to Durrell during some of these long sessions. I thought of the number of times he has spoken of the psychic energy that one wastes or that gets siphoned off to no avail in the fray of day-to-day politics. I thought admiringly and perhaps a bit enviously of Durrell who seems to have kept his psychic energies undispersed, coherently focused on art and the artist within himself. How wonderful!

Almost concurrently, however, the usual nagging questions--nagging for an old Wisconsin liberal, at any rate--surfaced: can one really sit idly by while a democratic

society moves toward becoming a two-tiered society, with some members accorded full rights of citizenship and privilege while others are excluded? can one sit idly by while self-appointed censors "arrange" libraries and curricula to their liking? etc., etc.

So ultimately, my return from OMG III reflected my own mixed feelings about art and politics. I have conflicting opinions about Durrell's advice that we should preserve our psychic energies by avoiding the sound and fury of day-to-day politics (his overt interest in history over the long haul, so evident in the Quintet, seems to me quite another matter from day-to-day issues). The fatalism evinced by so many characters, especially in Livia, about the inevitability of World War II and later about the fate of the Jews may have much historical accuracy, but it is also chilling. How could people sit idly by and not at some point get involved in making better political decisions?

If anybody out there has been giving any thought to Durrell and politics recently, I would love to hear from you. Perhaps we could publish some other ideas on the subject in the next Herald. In the meantime, have a good fall semester and "enjoy" the U.S. election season. 

NECROLOGY

PETER BULL, stage and screen actor, writer, occultist, and arctophile died 21 May at age 72. During his Bloomsbury days in the early 1930s, Durrell met Peter Bull through George Wilkinson. A lasting friendship developed, and Bull and Durrell saw each other intermittently over the years, mainly in Corfu and London.

HALASZ BRASSAI died in July at age 84. Durrell met Brassai briefly in 1937 when one of the latter's photographs was printed in the first issue of the Booster edited by Ferlès, Durrell, and Miller. In the 1960s the acquaintanceship was renewed, and an enduring friendship ensued. Durrell wrote the introductory essay about Brassai for the book, Brassai, published by The Museum of Modern Art, New York in 1968.

GERALD SYKES, critic, author, and philosopher, died 15 July. Sykes became acquainted with Durrell through his wife Buffie Johnson, a friend of Durrell since the Villa Seurat days. After hearing about each other for many years and corresponding for two, Durrell and Sykes finally met in April, 1959. Sykes wrote laudatory reviews of several of Durrell's books for the New York Times.

Gregory Dickson

SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT

I would like to apologize for the recent "vacation" I took from my duties as Secretary/Treasurer. I went to California for what was to have been a ten-day trip to sign the final papers on the sale of my house. I ended up, however, putting a roof on the house, digging up the septic tank, pulling the 240-foot-deep water well three times (twice by hand), and staying eight weeks. But I have caught up (I think) with my Durrell duties now.

The Society monies are safely tucked away in New Mexico. Jim Nichols offered to keep them in Ohio because we had free accounts there, but I felt that he had done more than his share of money management in his four years as our Secretary/Treasurer and did not need poking calculator keys added to his presidential duties. The Bank of Northern New Mexico solved the problem with the offer of a free account here. It is a single account, so I must keep track of our General and Publication accounts in my own records, and it is a simple checking account, so we are not drawing any interest, but I am looking into solving both of these problems. Our records as of 15 September 84 show \$433.53 in our General account and \$364.02 in our Publication account for a total of \$797.60.


When I wrote the draft for this report, this paragraph began: "The response to Ian MacNiven's request for new members and membership renewals has been disappointing." The responses keep trickling in, though, and since OMG III we have gained sixteen renewals and four new members. The new members, to whom we extend a heraldic welcome, are:

Professor Corinne Alexandre-Garner

Professor James P. Carley
Dept. of English
College of Arts and Science
The University of Rochester
River Campus Station
Rochester, New York 14627

Professor Florence Talamantes
Dept. of Spanish LE-89
San Diego State University
San Diego, California 92182

Professor John Unterecker
Dept. of English
University of Hawaii
1733 Donaghho Road
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822.

A final note. I'm sure we all guessed at the amount of work Ian MacNiven and Carol Peirce did to organize OMGs I and II, but when I inherited the Secretary/Treasurer files I saw in black and white what Jim Nichols went through to organize OMG III. Whew! And he probably did just as much that did not go through official paper-work channels (in other words, that I'm not aware of). So, speaking for the Society, I propose a toast of fine French wine (or Perrier water; or Budweiser) to Ian and Carol and Jim for making the OMGs so successful. 

SOCIETY NOTICES

Foreign Correspondent For The Herald:

Peter Baldwin, who lives in Birmingham, England, has offered to write a regular column for the Herald. The editors are delighted! We look forward to news and discussions of Durrell from a European/British point of view.

On Miracle Ground II Proceedings:

Attention all participants of OMG II! If you have not yet returned the galleys of your paper to Wayne Markert, please do so. Wayne would like to get the Proceedings out soon, but he is still waiting to receive some of the galleys. Check your paper for typographical errors, and remember that this is the last time to make substantial changes.

On Miracle Ground III Proceedings:

Jay Brigham is gradually contacting the participants of OMG III about the publication of their papers. If you have not yet heard from Jay, expect the envelope with the Canadian stamp in the near future.

Deus Loci: Gascoyne Number:

For a special David Gascoyne number of Deus Loci: The Lawrence Durrell Quarterly, articles, criticism, memoirs, notes and queries are solicited. Please send contributions or proposals to James A. Brigham (4707 Raymer Road, Kelowna, British Columbia V1W 1J5, Canada) or Jan S. MacNiven

by 1 December.

Membership:

Any group that has the exchange of ideas as one of its tenets needs people with ideas to exchange: the more people, the more ideas; the more ideas, the better the exchange. Our Secretary/Treasurer's records show that twelve of our 1983-84 Society members have not renewed for 84-85. And there is an even larger group of potential members--scholars who have participated in our conferences--who have not responded to our requests. \$7.00 for an individual and \$10.00 for a couple gets you Deus Loci: The Lawrence Durrell Quarterly and the Herald, and (here's the clincher) if you don't respond soon this will be the last issue of the Herald you will receive. (Society membership now dates from 1 September through 31 August.) Send your check to the Lawrence Durrell Society, c/o Gregory Dickson

The following is a list of the present officers and board and standing committee members:

- President: James R. Nichols
- Vice-President: Nancy Lewis
- Secretary/Treasurer: Gregory Dickson
- Executive Board: Michael Cartwright
Ian S. MacNiven
James R. Nichols
Carol Peirce
- Publications Board: James A. Brigham
Michael Cartwright
Lawrence W. Markert

Conference Committee: Michael H. Begnal
James R. Nichols

Archivist: Susan S. MacNiven

If you have suggestions or questions about the Society, contact any of the above. If you know someone who is interested in Lawrence Durrell's work and life and might like to become a member, send Greg Dickson the name and address and he will forward information about the Society.

Herald, No. 3:

The next issue of the Herald is scheduled for 15 February 1985. Keep us in mind when you find Durrell-related material, publish or speak on Durrell, or engage in newsworthy activities. We need your contributions. Send them to Gregory Dickson (address above), Susan S. MacNiven (14 Magnolia Place, Silver Beach, Bronx, N. Y. 10465), or Lawrence W. Markert (3547 Newland Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21218).

QUERY

PETER CHRISTENSEN would like to know if anyone has a copy of David Gascoyne's first book of poems, Roman Balcony (1932). Also, if anyone has information about Gascoyne's poetry since 1970, would you please contact Peter (Box 342, English Dept., SUNY/Binghamton, Binghamton, New York 13901).

BIBLIOPHILES' SHELF

MICHAEL BEGNAL and WILLIAM GODSHALK both forwarded xeroxes of the pages with Durrell items in Catalogue 4 (Spring 1984) of bookseller R. A. Gekoski (14 Portland Place West, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV32 5EU, England). Pied Piper of Lovers (1935), a "nice copy in minimally soiled dustwrapper," is priced at £2,250. Anaïs Nin's copy of Transition (1934), with an inscription and drawing by Durrell to Nin, is listed at £3,750. Sir John Waller's copy of The Black Book (1938 Obelisk Press edition) is going for £1,250.

Thirty-six paintings by David Finn and the poems that inspired them, "Sailing to Byzantium" and "Byzantium," are reproduced in W. B. Yeats, Byzantium. Copies of this beautiful cloth-bound, slip-cased, limited and numbered edition published by JOHN WALSH sell for \$65.00 and are available from Black Swan Books Ltd., P. O. Box 327, Redding Ridge, Connecticut 06876.

PEOPLE, PLACES AND PUBLICATIONS

* LAWRENCE DURRELL finished the last volume of "The Avignon Quartet" in June. It is to be called Quinx, or The Ripper's Tale.

* Reading The Letters of Wyndham Lewis (edited by W. K. Rose, Norfolk, Connecticut: New Directions, 1963) while vacationing in the Vendée in August, PETER BALDWIN found a reference to Durrell in Lewis's 12 June 1948 letter to Geoffrey Stone: "But there is a book--a novel--that you would not be likely to hear of: 'Cefalu'. It was published here in the autumn (Poetry London--publishers). It is the best book I have seen for a long time. Tells of the Minotaur--Cefalu is in Crete. A tourist ship--the tourists visit the Labyrinth and lose themselves in it. They hear a roar--it is the M--! . . . The author's name, I forgot to say, is Durrell. He is young--was in Greece for some time, and at present is British Consul (or vice-consul?) somewhere in Mexico." (p. 446) Rose notes that there is no record of Durrell's having been with the foreign service in Mexico. [At this time Durrell was in Argentina.]

* During the summer MICHAEL CARTWRIGHT hosted an extended family reunion on the ancestral farm in western Nebraska to celebrate the centennial of his grandfather's arrival in Nebraska. This fall finds him back at California State University dividing his time between teaching English and, as Assistant Dean of Arts and Sciences, doing college-wide advising. (See below for address and phone number.)

* Seahorse: The Anaïs Nin/Henry Miller Journal ceased with Volume 2, Number 4. After producing Under the Sign of Pisces: Anaïs Nin and Her Circle from 1970 through 1981 and Seahorse from 1982 through 1983, RICHARD CENTING is taking a rest from Nin-related editing. A 40-page author, title, and subject index to the twelve years of Pisces (Under the Sign of Pisces: Anaïs Nin and Her Circle, An Index, 1970-1981) was published this summer by the Ohio State University Libraries Publications Committee and sells for \$5.00. Send a check payable to The Ohio State University Libraries to Richard Centing, Ohio State University Libraries, 1858 Neil Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43210. Richard Centing suggests that those interested in Nin and her circle subscribe to Anaïs: An International Journal, an annual edited by Gunther Stuhlmann (Subscriptions at \$7.00 [US] and \$8.00 [elsewhere] payable to Anaïs Nin Foundation, c/o Rupert Pole, The Anaïs Nin Foundation, 2335 Hidalgo Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90039).

* GEORGE CLEYET visited Nice, Florence, and Paris in August-September. Wonder if he left Los Angeles before the Olympics?

* GREGORY DICKSON has been named director of the new English Writing Lab at New Mexico Highlands University. He is starting off small with three rooms, a paid staff of two, and a volunteer staff of five. He no longer answers at Extension 350, and his new office does not have a phone yet. Until it does, you can reach him during the day by calling Prof. Bette Johnson, his wife, at 505-425-7511, Ext. 255 (her office is just upstairs from his) or the Humanities secretary at Ext. 388 (her office is just down the hall from his). Greg's home phone number remains the same (505-427-4127). and so do his home and school addresses.

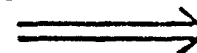
* EDWARD HUNGERFORD of Southern Oregon State in Ashland reports that he included Anaïs Nin in a recent class on British women writers because one of the authors he had scheduled was out of print. His students read Volumes 1 and 2 of the Diary and didn't mind that Nin was not "British." Ed is guessing that he will be retired from teaching when he attends OMG IV and promises that we will get to meet his wife in Pennsylvania.

* FRANK KERSNOWSKI is spending the fall/early-winter months near Dublin doing research.

* In July, JOHN LENZI vacationed in the Cathar area of southern France. At the Château de Montségur he had a fascinating experience, which he has promised to tell us about in a subsequent issue of the newsletter.

* End July to mid-August, LAWRENCE W. MARKERT was at Oxford to work on Arthur Symons and late 19th-century criticism of the Seven Arts.

* JAMES NICHOLS sent the following report of his summer adventures: "In May, IAN MacNIVEN and I cast off upon Albemarle Sound in North Carolina for ten days' sailing upon the Amber Summer, a 25-foot Venture sloop of formidable design and numerous journeys. We made passage from Edenton, North Carolina (200 years old and former state capital) to Manteo, N. C. on the Outer Banks (Virginia Dare country). We sailed well (sometimes at 50°+ heel--that's way over), ate well, tanned in motley fashion, and were often at noontime attacked by various and vicious black flies out for blood. MacNiven often teamed with Dr. Ed Barrett (a theologian no less) outrageously to display his memory for up to twenty or thirty verses of certain loud and vulgar drinking songs as well as the more questionable rounds of English poets. Durrellians will be happy to note that one night ashore was spent reading Durrell's poetry against a deep and fiery orange Carolina sky.



"Back on land with a grant from the Canadian Government, I traveled over 10,000 miles through Canada, from Quebec to British Columbia. I saw RAY MORRISON, whose Ottawa is a rare place. Both PETER CHRISTENSEN, who was visiting at the same time, and I were introduced to that most marvelous of all delicacies and repasts, the dessert buffet at the Château Laurier, where from approximately noon to 5 P. M. for a mere \$5 or so any Heraldic member may feast and sumptuate (allow for vocabulary building at such affairs) all afternoon on cheesecakes, German and French pastries, fruit salads, creams and cones, and delectable chocolates. It's good for dieting too in that a new concept (which will make a million in the book mart) called 'Selective Engorgement'--eat goodies till you can't look a Big Mac in the eye--allowed me to lose a full ten pounds while studying in Ottawa at the National Library and Carleton University.

"In Regina, Saskatchewan, I visited LYN GOLDMAN, who introduced me to some of the best people any town could boast. JAY BRIGHAM almost allowed your innocent and naïve president to be eaten by a bear at Banff. But Brigham made up for this at Athabasca Glacier in British Columbia: with awl and bare hands he scraped some hundreds-of-years-old ice out of a crevice, filled his plastic cup and mine to almost overflowing with it and old scotch, and we two travelers toasted Durrell's finished Quincunx while Jay's son, Adam, took photographs.

"Canadian books of note that might interest you are Robertson Davies' Fifth Business (introduced to me by Ray), Thomas Findley's Famous Last Words, Susan Masgrave's The Charcoal Burners, and Jay Mitchell's Who Has Seen the Wind (suggested by Lyn). Marvelous books all.

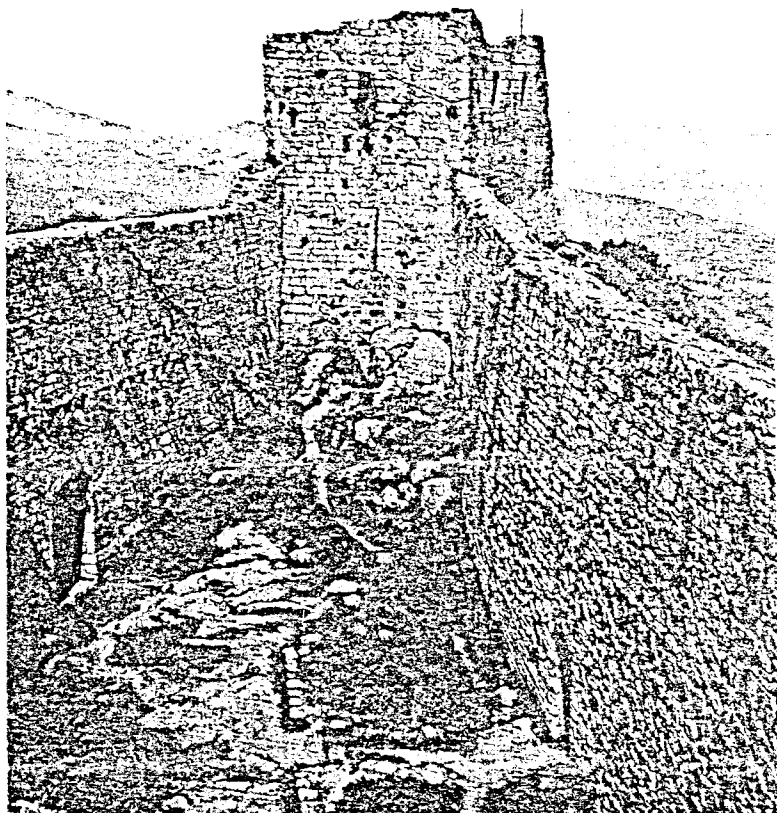
"If it hadn't been for Ray, Lyn, and Jay, my trip would have lost three quarters of its value. Carla and I finish my Canadian travels in October with the Maritime Provinces, and we regret that no known Durrellians live there."

* BROOKE PEIRCE is on sabbatical this fall, and spring term CAROL PEIRCE will have a sabbatical. In mid-December they plan to go to Egypt and spend about two weeks visiting Alexandria and Cairo and taking a trip up the Nile. Carol hopes to complete her book, "Lawrence Durrell's City of the Imagination: The Alexandria Quartet," a study of the intellectual and mythical backgrounds of the Quartet, next year.

* DAVID RUSSELL's wife read to him in Chinese the first stanza of Durrell's poem "Certain Landfalls" that was printed (in Chinese) in the last Herald. What about a reading of Durrell in various languages at the next conference?

* Sabbaticals ended, JAMES BRIGHAM, RAY MORRISON, and IAN MacNIVEN have resumed teaching at their respective schools (Okanagan College, Kelowna, British Columbia; Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario; SUNY/Maritime College, New York City). Rumor reports that WERNER RUBRECHT has also begun teaching again (at the University of Regina, Saskatchewan) after a year of travel and research.

* For those of you who would like to keep your membership lists accurate and up-to-date, we offer the following. Address Corrections:



Château de Montségur (Ariège)

REVIEWS OF SEBASTIAN

In the last issue of the Herald, we listed fifteen reviews of Lawrence Durrell's fourth novel of "The Avignon Quintet." Bibliographical information absent from two of these has now been supplied by Herald readers, and four new reviews have come to our attention.

* Alan Ryan's "An Avignon Quintet" appeared in the Washington Post Book World (Washington, D. C.), 15 April 1984, p. 4.

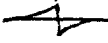
* Paul Skenazy's "High-Handed Mysticism/Lowdown Desire" was in the Review, the Sunday Supplement of the San Francisco Chronicle (15 April 1984, pp. 3, 7, 9).

(Our thanks to Carol Peirce and Dorothea Kupka for the above information.)

* Boyd, William. "Strung Quintet." The New Republic, 23 April 1984, pp. 33-35. Boyd finds Sebastian, "bogged down in its own pretentiousness," the least successful of the Quincunx novels and difficult to follow without knowledge of the previous three books. He admires Durrell's depiction of the Blanford/Sutcliffe relationship, and thinks Sebastian would have been better if there had been more pages devoted to them: "Whenever these two are the focus of attention the books come alive, . . . Without them, [Sebastian's] tone is either toilingly verbose, romantic-insipid, or simply ludicrous."

* "Briefly Noted: Fiction." The New Yorker, 23 April 1984, pp. 130-131. A snide paragraph that describes Durrell's characters as concocting "theories about Freud and Hitler, and limericks about sex and semantics, in English that sounds like a bad translation from the French."

* MacNiven, Ian S. "Durrell Castigates his Demons with Wordplay." Arts & Books/San Jose Mercury News, 24 June 1984, pp. 24-25. MacNiven thinks Sebastian "contains Durrell's most suspenseful writing since The Alexandria Quartet" and believes it makes sense without a grounding in the other Quincunx novels. He describes the plot as "tense with the insanity of individuals weaving through a society gone mad, both in murder and comedy" and enjoys Durrell's language that "still twists and glows" and stretches one's comprehension.

* Strausbaugh, John. "Durrell: Mixing Romance with the Occult." The Sun (Baltimore, Maryland), 1 April 1984. Strausbaugh considers Sebastian "possibly Durrell's most difficult and willfully un-stylish work." He states that one cannot understand it without having read the earlier Quincunx novels and The Alexandria Quartet. "Durrell seems to be working toward a magnum opus in which the Quartet and the Quintet are woven together into a single creative universe, an Alexandria/Avignon Nonagonet." 

PUBLICATIONS BY OR CONCERNING

LAWRENCE DURRELL

* Penguin Books has published paperback editions of Monsieur, Livia, and Constance this year; Constance sells for \$6.95, and the other two for \$5.95.

* "From the Elephant's Back" appeared in three parts in the ILEA newspaper. It may be difficult to get these, but try c/o Mr. Palmer, ILEA Teachers Art Centre, Oswin Street, London SE11.

* Marie-Anne Pini writes that the latest issue of Egoïste, "the most sophisticated French magazine," published an interview with Lawrence Durrell by Michel Braudeau entitled "Après ça, J'aurai Tout Dit." It is a two-page "inner monologue" by Durrell with a marvellous photograph of him.

* In October, Marie-Anne Pini continues, Gallimard (Paris) will publish the French translation of Constance.

* Century [London?] plans to publish an elegant edition of Ludo Chardenon's In Praise of Wild Herbs: Remedies & Recipes from Old Provence, with a Foreword by Lawrence Durrell and a Preface by Gerald Durrell, for this Christmas.

* In Groddeck, ou l'Art de Déconcerter (Paris: Editions Universitaires, [1984?]), Michèle Lalive d'Epinay, the Swiss psychoanalyst author, mentions Durrell several times. The book is a concise and clear analysis of Groddeck and his theories.

* Gemma Salem has written La Passion de Giulia, which uses Lawrence Durrell as one of the characters and, to a greater extent, Durrell's home in Sommières. The novel was recently published by Mercure de France, a branch of Gallimard.

* Vladimir Volkoff's Lawrence le Magnifique: Essai sur Lawrence Durrell et le roman relativiste has been published this month in Paris by Julliard/L'Age d'Homme. This 140-page book will be reviewed in a forthcoming number of Deus Loci: The Lawrence Durrell Quarterly.

(The editors wish to express appreciation to Mary Mollo and to Anthea Morton-Saner who also provided information for this column.) 