



inklinations

http://www.okcu.edu/english/csliis*

Hwæt we inclinga on ærdagum
searþancolra snyttru gehierdon. . .
þara wæs Hloðuig sum, hæleða dyrost, brad ond beorhtword. . .**

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

On the weekend of March 23-24, 2007, presenters from over 25 different university campuses across the U.S., both secular and private, came to the 10th Annual C. S. Lewis & The Inklings Conference at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas. Scholars hailed from the following states: Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Texas. One scholar from Kurume University, Miho Yamaguchi, joined us all the way from Japan.

Our hosts, Dr. Larry Fink and Dr. Keith Waddle and all the other organizers and sponsors at Hardin-Simmons University (HSU), provided an energizing weekend of spiritual and intellectual renewal, bringing not one, not two, but four plenary speakers who each brought their considerable academic knowledge and Christian wisdom to address the conference's theme of "The Inklings & the Spiritual Journey."

Dr. Thomas Howard, our banquet speaker, eloquently related his own experiences of coming under the spell of the Inklings and their predecessors' tales—and read a brief letter he'd received from Lewis himself—reminding us how their gift of Imagination

nourishes and challenges us. Now retired, Howard has had an illustrious career as an English professor as the author of a number of studies on Lewis, Williams, and T. S. Eliot, as well as his writings about own journey with Christ.



Larry Fink, Rolland Hein, Thomas Howard, Kerry Dearborn, David Neuhouser

Dr. Rolland Hein clarified many important features of George MacDonald's fantasies, relating how his protagonists' journeys differ from those of Bunyan's and Dante's pilgrims in being initially more weak, confronting sexual temptation directly, and undergoing totally immersive conversions. Retired from Wheaton College, Hein is America's leading expert on MacDonald.

*The C. S. Lewis and Inklings Society is based out of Oklahoma City University. See website for information.

**"Lo! we have heard in old days of the wisdom of the cunning-minded Inklings. . . One of them was [Lewis], dearest of men, broad and bright of word" (Humphrey Carpenter, *Inklings* 176-77).

Dr. David Neuhouser, director of The Center for the Study of C. S. Lewis & Friends at Taylor University, opened the conference with his unique perspective on the role of mathematics in building Christian faith. Offering numerous examples from George MacDonald—who, as Neuhouser points out, taught maths and science—and many Inklings and related writers, Neuhouser reminds us that developing one's mathematical prowess strengthens the capacity to appreciate paradoxes and to apprehend beauty.

Dr. Kerry Dearborn, a theologian at Seattle Pacific University, delivered an inspiring and informative message Saturday morning on the sacramental aspects of ministering to strangers. Vivid examples from Lewis's Ransom trilogy and Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* illustrated the ways that Christians have historically offered healing to outsiders and have found spiritual sustenance for themselves in doing so. A gifted and popular conference speaker, Dearborn has recently published a book on George MacDonald.



Once again, Warren Farha of *Eighth Day Books* brought a dazzling collection of Inklings-related books for browsing, which not only helped many of us relieve our

sagging wallets, but provided a festive atmosphere with inspiring Inklings book covers and other conversation pieces for participants between sessions.

The HSU Theater Department put on a moving performance of Charles Williams' drama "The House by the Stable" for our after-dinner entertainment Friday evening. Their creative masks and staging effectively introduced the allegorical text to many first-timers to Williams' work.

NEWS

CSLIS Conference April 4-5, 2008. The next CSLIS Conference will be hosted by Grove City College in Pennsylvania! Dr. Janice Brown has organized the program whose theme is "The Inklings: Communion of Saints." Keynote speakers are James Como and Jerry Root. The deadline for paper proposals is Jan. 30, 2008. See the conference website for registration, travel, scheduling, and other details:

<http://www2.gcc.edu/dept/engl/conference/index.htm>

Writing Contest. The Society hereby announces its first Writing Contest! Winners will be published in the newsletter and/or future publications of the Society. Submissions of up to 2500 words are requested in the categories of:

- (a) Creative Writing (poetry, fiction, etc.)
- (b) Academic Essays (10 sources minimum)

For creative works, we are seeking poems or short stories, which may be inspired by, or take place in, the mythopoeic worlds of the Inklings, but must not be simply derivative (direct imitations) of prior works. Of course, they also may bear no relation to them.

For academic papers, we are looking for research-based essays (minimum of 10

