

7. Book Reviewing

As noted earlier, it had been suggested to Jo by her pediatrician that she find something to do other than hover over her sick daughter. With a little thought and energy, she came up with what eventually became one of her most acclaimed achievements—reviewing books for audiences.

In the days before television people loved gathering in the evenings for various kinds of entertainment. There were a great number of traveling troupes that would go from town to town to perform. But book reviews were different. And Jo's style of reviewing was entirely unique. She never spent much time talking about the author, she went straight to the story. Using a narrative style she would enhance it with memorized lines of script. She would actually play all the parts much as an actress would do in reading a book for an audio presentation. People loved it. She could keep them on the edge of their seats for a couple of hours, especially those who didn't read much.

The books she chose were always of great interest to a broad audience. Often they were bestsellers. Her amazing ability to memorize and to recall dialogue kept her audiences spellbound. She used notes only rarely. However she did make copious notes for herself in preparation for her reviews. These extensive files are now (as of 2005) in the possession of her daughter, Bobbie Jo Irwin.

An undated letter from her friend, Marguerite Vorbeck, applauded her book review:

Jo dear,

I had forgotten what an extremely talented person you are. You should be on the stage with your name in blazing lights on Broadway. I had forgotten, too, because it has been years, remember, since I have heard you, your inimitable technique in doing a book review.

No, I didn't like the book. I hate to have my heart pulled out by the roots if only for an hour or two. I stayed up until almost one reading a mystery which engaged only the surface of my mind before I got in the mood for sleep.

You looked so pretty last night. I concentrated on that when your book got too heartbreaking.

I'm writing this because I don't have time for a long telephone talk. We are going to Colorado Springs and Denver over the weekend and I still am working on lengthening dresses for Mary and me and also some Republican work which must be done before we leave.

We are to hear the Philadelphia Symphony in Denver Monday night and home Tuesday. I'll call you.

Lovingly,

Marguerite

As soon as Jo began reviewing books for clubs and other groups, she gained a following of great admirers. Soon she was called upon frequently for larger gatherings. Often she

performed for fund-raisers. But she never charged for her work. She always felt that was beneath her calling as a reviewer. And so she became greatly revered by many, as the following news clippings will attest:

WISEMEN HEAR BOOK REVIEW OF "REBECCA"

1939 Interesting Program
Highlighted by Mrs. Earl
Schaeffer's Review

By DARLEEN DeFORD.

Featured at Wisemen's club last night was a book review by Mrs. Earl Schaeffer of Daphne Dumaaurier's "Rebecca."

In a fast-moving, first person style Mrs. Schaeffer told the story of the "best seller."

The reviewer preserved the dramatic atmosphere of the story of an awkward and naive "second wife," taking the place in Manorly hall headed only ten months by a beautiful and greatly loved woman who had faced a tragic death.

"The merits of the book are controversial," Mrs. Schaeffer said. "It has been named by some critics as a great book, called 'just plain rotten' by others. At any rate, it certainly is a best seller, holding the same place occupied by 'Gone With the Wind' three years ago.

Wiseman Bill Barnes spoke briefly on the "Organization and History of the Colorado National Guards." He stressed the great importance of organization and the strict supervision that is necessary in any military group. The history of the Colorado National Guards, Barnes traced the history two short lived groups, the Jefferson Rangers and the Denver guards. Barnes traced the history from an unstable organization, varying in size and permanency, to the now efficient and loyal body of seven units.

Lester Worley and Roger Frohu, guests of the club, played several musical selections on the saw, an interesting arrangement of bottles, and a "home made" piccolo.

Dr. Gail Ingraham was program chairman.

Guests of individual members included F. O. Vincent, Mace Ingraham, and Frank Colburn.

Plans for the outdoor meeting to be held in Monument canon next Thursday night were discussed. The club will meet at the Y. M. C. A. at 6:30 and leave from there for the canon.

Capacity Crowd At Fourth Book Review Wednes.

1939 Mrs. Schaeffer to Repeat
Review of "Rebecca" at
Library Thursday, March
16

Before an interested, capacity audience at the city library, Mrs. Earl M. Schaeffer vividly portrayed Daphne du Maurier's "Rebecca," Wednesday afternoon for the fourth of the series of nine public reviews sponsored by Mesa college.

Mrs. Schaeffer told her story well as she put her personality into her interpretations and called upon her dramatic talents to enhance the scenes and point up the characters of the best seller, "Rebecca."

The heroine and narrator of the story, after a brief courtship, becomes the wife of an English aristocrat, Maxim de Winter, owner of a fine old country seat in the south of England. These two are deeply in love but the memory of Max's first wife, Rebecca, still lingers on at Manderly; her beauty and charm contrasted in the minds of servants and neighbors with the shyness of the new wife. Little by little, however, the mystery of Rebecca's life and death is revealed and the burden Max has born can finally be shared.

Because of the many people who were not seated at the review, Mrs. Schaeffer has consented to present "Rebecca," again at the city library Thursday, March 16, at 4 o'clock.

Mrs. Schaeffer Gives Review For B. & P. W.

1940 Program for the Business and Professional Women's club regular meeting last evening was an outstanding one, featuring a book review by Mrs. Earl Schaeffer, whose talent in this field has gained for her widespread recognition.

By special request, Mrs. Schaeffer repeated the review of Nina Fedorova's prize-winning novel, "The Family," which she presented in December under sponsorship of the local Woman's club. Both those members who had not heard her previous reviews of the book and those who had listened to Mrs. Schaeffer's excellent interpretation with a great deal of pleasure.

Reports of the mid-year council meeting of the state B. and P. W. clubs they attended in Denver last weekend were given by Mrs. Bob Evans and Miss Charlotte Fisher.

During the business session a new member, Miss Lettie Holmgren was welcomed into the club membership.

Plans for the next meeting, which is to be a party and membership rally in charge of the courtesy and membership committee, were discussed last night. Each member is to bring a guest to the party, scheduled for Feb. 12.

Guests last evening were Mrs. K. L. Moriarty, Miss Mendicelli, Mrs. Lewis Burch and Miss Holmgren.

MESA COLLEGE BENEFIT
"Grapes of Wrath"

Book review by
MRS. EARL SHAFFER
And a One-Act Comedy

MESA COLLEGE ORCHESTRA
Under the Auspices of the
Woman's Club

Thursday, Feb. 8th
High School Auditorium

25c

Woman's Club to
Present Mesa
College Benefit

To Mesa college will go proceeds from the program that the Grand Junction Woman's club is presenting Thursday evening, Feb. 8, in the high school auditorium at 8 o'clock. A large crowd is expected to attend, for the program is an excellent one and the cause worthy.

Featured on the program are a review of John Steinbeck's "Grapes of Wrath" by Mrs. Earl Shaeffer, and a one-act comedy, "Never No Third Degree" by John Bayly.

Under the supervision of the Mesa college benefit committee and with the cooperation of the entire club, an unusual accompaniment for Mrs. Shaeffer's book review has been arranged. Members of the club and various other residents of the city have been selected to represent the members of the Joad family and will be in character, ready for introduction Thursday night, when Mrs. Shaeffer will tell their story. Settings will be by Mrs. Claud Stevens.

Personnel of the Joad family and those who will impersonate them include: Grandma, Mrs. Claud Stevens; Grandpa, Claud Stevens; Ma Joad, Mrs. Homer Jenkins; Pa Joad, Paul Prinster; Ruth, Patsy Tucker; Winfield, Edwin Oberto; Rosasharn, Mrs. L. G. Heinlein; Connie, Ben Walker; Uncle John, Alfred Nestler; Al, James Robinson; Tom, Wilford Cheedle; Noah, Keith Toplas; Casy, Eugene Mulford.

Mrs. Horace Tracy is director of "Never No Third Degree," and the cast of the comedy is composed of women's club members Captain MacWorkins, Mrs. Milla Faye Aydelotte; Lieut. Prouty, Mrs. Harold Read; Mr. Burke, Mrs. Horace Wubben; Mrs. Vance, Mrs. Sidney Hoel; Mr. Maroni, Mrs. Barbara Taylor; chief of police, Mrs. William Currier.

Incidental music preceding and during the program will be furnished by an orchestra from the Mesa college.

College Benefit
To Be Repeated

By popular request, the Mesa college benefit program presented on Feb. 8 under the sponsorship of the Grand Junction Woman's club is to be repeated next Thursday evening at 8 o'clock in the high school auditorium.

A large number, for whom there were no seating facilities, were turned away from last Thursday's performance. So Mrs. Earl Shaeffer will again review "Grapes of Wrath," and the members of the club will again present their part of the program next Thursday night, Feb. 15.

1940
Good attendance
At Second Mesa
College Benefit

There was a good-sized audience gathered in the high school auditorium last night for the second presentation of the Mesa benefit program, sponsored by the Grand Junction Woman's club.

The program, featuring a review of "Grapes of Wrath" by Mrs. Earl Shaeffer and a one-act comedy, "Never No Third Degree," was repeated by popular request because so many were unable to attend last Thursday's presentation, which was attended by an over-capacity crowd.

The Mrs. Shaeffer has reviewed Steinbeck's much-talked of social study a number of times, she never loses any enthusiasm and interest in her story that is contagious to her listeners.

The Woman's club followed a different procedure in presenting their annual Mesa college benefit program this year from that of other years, by opening the presentation to the public, and the change in policy has been so successful that it no doubt has set a precedent.

Mrs. Earl Shaffer¹⁹³⁹ Is Guest Reviewer

The La Lectura club entertained Tuesday evening at one of the most interesting affairs of the month, when Mrs. Earl Shaffer of Grand Junction was the guest reviewer.

Forty members and invited guests assembled at the charming home of Mrs. W. H. Fluallen, who was assisted by Mrs. Herbert Broadhead and Mrs. Raymond Farmer.

Mrs. Shaffer, who is a reader of unusual ability, reviewed "Rebecca" by Daphne Du Maurier. In place of an ordinary review, Mrs. Shaffer told the story of the book in the first person, as it happens to be written in that way, and it was almost as though she were telling her own experiences. She held the interest of those fortunate to hear her to the last word.

After this review, lovely refreshments were served, and there was an opportunity for everyone to meet and talk with Mrs. Shaffer. Then by special request, she graciously consented to tell the story of "Joppa Door," by William Sykes, and this was equally enjoyed.

In speaking of her reviews, everyone insisted that it was almost impossible to believe that Mrs. Shaffer was not a professional actress, and all look forward to the opportunity of hearing her again at some future time.

Among the guests was Mrs. C. B. Bare, of Grand Junction, who came with Mrs. Shaffer.

Over 300 Hear¹⁹³⁹ Repeat Review

Before a crowd of approximately 300-350, Mrs. Earl Shaffer presented a repeat review of "Rebecca," du Maurier, in the Grand Junction high school auditorium Thursday afternoon. Mrs. Shaffer had previously given the review at the regular Mesa college hour March 8.

Mrs. Shaffer again held her audience in suspense as she told the story of a woman with "strange eyes."

"Rebecca," Mrs. Shaffer said, "is not a best seller today but ranks high on the book sales lists."

Mrs. Earl M. Shaffer will repeat her review of "Rebecca," Daphne du Maurier, at the city library Thursday, March 16 at 4 o'clock. Mrs. Shaffer gave the review Wednesday but many people were unable to be seated.

The Fairmount Community club enjoyed a social meeting at the hall Tuesday afternoon. Meeting opened with singing "Sweet Hour of Prayer," accompanied by Mrs. Beaver. Mrs. Hibbs, president, presided over a short business session. Some discussion and plans for the convention at Crawford in May were made. Mrs. Dennis Beaver had charge of an interesting program on the "American Home." Mrs. Lythgoe delighted the ladies with two piano solos, Liebestreum by Liszt, and Prelude in C sharp minor by Rachmaninoff. Mrs. Beaver read a splendid paper on the four divisions of the American home as planned by the federation chairman. Mrs. Earl Shaffer reviewed the book, "Joppa Door," by Hope Williams Sykes as only Mrs. Shaffer can. It was a rare treat for the ladies of the club and we hope to have Mrs. Shaffer again as she lives among us even tho she belongs to the Grand Junction club. Guests of club were Mesdames T. E. Lythgoe, Earl Shaffer, Clifford Shaffer, D. D. Critch and Walter Wilson. Refreshments were served by Mesdames McKisson, Moore and Patterson.

Book Reviewed At Mesa College Assembly Thurs.

Mrs. Earl M. Shaffer gave a review of "Joppa Door," Sykes, at the regular assembly of Mesa college Thursday morning. Mrs. Shaffer captivated the spirit of the story and held the interest of the large crowd thruout the review.

Willard Lewis, student body president, said that the review was one of the highlights of the year's assembly programs. He said, "I have heard many students say that they enjoyed Mrs. Shaffer's review and believe that we should have more programs of this type. Apparently the student body of Mesa college appreciates the cultural advantages offered in Grand Junction."

Mrs. Shaffer will give a repeat review of "Rebecca," at the city library Thursday, March 16, 4 o'clock.

Mrs. Shaffer Gives¹⁹⁴¹ Review for Camaraderie

With Mrs. Earl Shaffer as guest reviewer, the program at Wednesday's meeting of Camaraderie was exceptionally interesting. Mrs. Shaffer reviewed "Let the Hurricane Roar" by Rose Wilder Lane.

The group met at the A. B. Thruston home, 505 North Seventh street, with Miss Betty Gentry as hostess, and Miss June Walker, co-hostess.

Guests of the evening were Mrs. Thruston, Mrs. Clarence Kurtz, Mrs. E. W. Dinwiddie, and Mrs. Arthur Biggs of Canon City. Programs of the year's activities were given out to the members by Mrs. Emerson Class, chairman of the yearbook committee.

During a short business discussion, the group decided to continue their custom of giving Christmas presents to children suggested by the county welfare office.

The next meeting will be at the home of Mrs. Haydon Newton.

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Feb 9 - 1940

THE DAILY SENTINEL, GRAND JUNCTION, COLORADO

Woman's Club Hears Review by Mrs. Shaeffer

The Grand Junction Woman's club met at the home of Mrs. Roy Chapman Tuesday.

The "Literati" department had charge of the program. Mrs. Milla Faye Aydelotte presided at the meeting. In answer to roll call many interesting current events were given.

Mrs. Earl Shaeffer reviewed "Grapes of Wrath" by John Steinbeck as the principal feature of the afternoon.

Christian Women Have Evening Meeting

At an evening meeting Thursday, approximately 100 members and guests of Women's Council of the First Christian church heard Mrs. Earl Shaeffer review the new book, "Out On a Limb," by Louise Baker. In addition, Mrs. Shaeffer recited two poems, "Not Understood," by Thomas Bracken, and a dissertation on the Twenty-Third Psalm.

Mrs. George Shull, program chairman, also presented the following numbers: devotions on The Old Rugged Cross by Mrs. Loring Jordan, assisted by Mrs. Fred Clymer singing The Old Rugged Cross, accompanied by Mrs. Floyd Hutton; and a vocal trio, Mrs. Don Rogers, Mrs. Shull and Mrs. Clymer.

Mrs. Alfred Gram's group served refreshments afterwards, with Mrs. O. E. Jadwin and Mrs. C. A. Lamberson pouring at the tea table.

MRS. EARL SHAEFFER REVIEWS "GRAPES OF WRATH" BEFORE LARGE AUDIENCE LAST NIGHT

By CHARLOTTE FISHER
Mrs. Earl Shaeffer, whose remarkable talent as a reviewer continues to incite wonder and admiration from everyone who hears her, thrilled the large audience that more than filled the high school auditorium last night, with her review of Steinbeck's "Grapes of Wrath."

Using no notes whatever, Mrs. Shaeffer literally "dramatized" the story of the Joad family, with an animation and feeling that fascinated her listeners. She not only brot the characters and their adventures to life with startling vividness, but also handled the moralizing chapters of the book in a splendid, capable manner.

The fact is, there is only one way to realize the extent of Mrs. Shaeffer's talent, and that is to hear and see her as she not just reviews the book, but as she tells the story, completely and with unbiased interpretation.

Preceding the review members of the Joad family, characterized

by Mr. and Mrs. Claud Stevens, Mrs. Homer Jenkins, Paul Printer, Patsy Tucker, Edwin Oberto, Mrs. L. G. Heinlein, Ben Walker, Alfred Nestler, James Robinson, Wilford Cheadle, Keith Topliss and Eugene Mulford, were introduced by Mrs. A. R. Daniels.

Mrs. Daniels also gave the introductory remarks at the opening of the evening's program, giving a brief background of the book "Grapes of Wrath" and something of its author, John Steinbeck.

At the close of Mrs. Shaeffer's performances, Mrs. Claude Stevens, president of the Grand Junction Woman's club, which sponsored last night's program, extended thanks to all those who had cooperated in making the event a success.

Second feature on the program was a one-act comedy, "Never No Third Degree" by John Bayly. The play was directed by Mrs. Horace Tracy, and the cast was composed of members of the Woman's club: Mesdames Milla Fay Aydelotte, Harold Read, Horace Wubben, Sidney Noel, Barbara Taylor and William Currier.

Last night's affair was a benefit for the Mesa college, and the large number of people attending indicate that it was not only an entertainment success, but also a financial one.

Incidental music during the evening was furnished by musicians from the Mesa college.

"Grapes of Wrath"

reviewed by

Mrs. Earl Scheaffer

of Grand Junction

Monday, Feb. 26

Starting at 8:00 p. m.

at the

Collbran Congregational Church

Admission: 25c.

BOOK REVIEW GIVEN FOR RIVERSIDE CLUB

The Riverside Woman's club met at the home of Mrs. K. E. Rowland on Orchard Mesa Wednesday afternoon.

Guests were Mrs. Earl Shaeffer, Mrs. K. M. Cox, Mrs. John Fante and daughter, Marjorie, and Mrs. James Ingle and daughter, Jane.

During the business meeting, the club voted to donate \$5 to the Red Cross War fund.

The entertainment program for the day included two readings, "The Little Diplomat" and "Bliss On My Tongue" by Jane Ingle; a short poem, "Not Understood," and a book review, "Who Walk Alone," given by Mrs. Shaeffer. Also taking part in the program were Miss Marjorie Fante and Miss Beth Rowland.

A quiz game was enjoyed, the hostess, assisted by Mrs. Fante and Mrs. Cox.

**Study Club Sponsors Review of
"Grapes of Wrath" Monday Night
1939-40**

Collbran book lovers will be offered a real literary treat Monday evening, February 26, when Mrs. Earl Schaeffer of Grand Junction will review John Steinbeck's great novel "The Grapes of Wrath." The review, which will be given at the Congregational Church, is being sponsored by the Study Club. In addition to the review, there will be musical numbers by Gerald McNew, and by Mrs. Tom and Mrs. George McKelvie.

Collbran is very fortunate in getting Mrs. Schaeffer, whose reviews are much in demand, not only in Grand Junction, but also in neighboring towns. She is well-known to Collbran audiences, who have not forgotten her unusual and compelling reviews of "Rebecca" and "Joppa Door."

When she reviewed "The Grapes of Wrath" recently in Grand Junction, her review met with such enthusiastic response that it was necessary to repeat the review in order to accommodate all of those who wished to hear her. Mrs. Schaeffer uses no notes, and her dramatic style holds the interest of her audience from beginning to end.

"The Grapes of Wrath", which is Steinbeck's greatest work, is without a doubt the most talked of book of our time. Over 300,000 copies have been sold, and it is still a leader among best sellers. Many commentators hail it as the great novel of our time. Storms of comment, favorable and unfavorable, have arisen over the problems presented on its pages.

These comments have come from ministers, educators, literary critics, and the ordinary reader. At a review of the book given in a Denver theatre this fall even standing-room was not available.

Anyone who is interested in important contemporary literary events, as well as an evening of interesting

Book Review

'THE FAMILY'

By

Mrs. Earl Shaeffer

TUESDAY

Feb. 4, 8 p. m.

F. U. H. S. Auditorium

Sponsored by Progressive

**WOMEN'S CLUB
OF FRUITA**

1940

Mrs. Earl Shaeffer

reviewing

"The Family"

added attraction

THE BOW TIE CHORUS

Wednesday, Dec. 4

8 P. M.

**MESA COLLEGE
AUDITORIUM**

Sponsored by Grand Junction
Woman's Club

1940

**Mrs. Shaeffer
To Give Book
Review Dec. 4**

"The Family" by Nina Fedorova, the \$10,000 Atlantic prize novel, is to be reviewed by Mrs. Earl Shaeffer at the Mesa college auditorium Wednesday, Dec. 4 at 8 p. m.

The review is under the auspices of the Grand Junction Woman's club. Also on the program will be numbers by the Junior high school chorus, directed by Goodsell Slocum, and music by the Mesa college trio.

Attention is called to the fact that Mrs. Shaffer will not review this book for any group other than the Grand Junction Woman's club.

Characters of the book will be presented in a tableau preceding the review. The introduction is to be given by Mrs. A. R. Daniels.

The prize novel, "The Family," is the story of a family of White Russians. It is a novel of middle length, the meandering type in which the plot is incidental to characterization and not a rigid framework. It has a Chinese setting and begins at the time of Japan's undeclared war on China, but since it is a story about a family of White Russians who keep the wolf from the door by running a boarding house, it might just as well be set in Buenos Aires or Sydney.

There is no space here to enumerate the things Nina Fedorova does with her people, a family of five. One should be mentioned, however, which is that she reinforces with them the essential dignity of the human being.

Proceeds from the review will go to defray expenses of the woman's club convention recently held here, and to the Mesa college. Members of the Woman's club Mesa college committee are Mrs. Leo Oberto, chairman; Mrs. Horace Wubben, vice chairman; Mesdames Claud E. Stevens, Eugene Mulford, J. W. Atkinson, A. R. Daniels, Lee Yochum and Earl Shaeffer.

Admit One Adult

"THE FAMILY"

A Dramatic Review by Mrs. Earl Shaeffer,
Friday, December 13, 1940

With Music by Chorus and
Mrs. Ruth Plute on Sonovox

Sponsored by Paonia Woman's Club

High School Auditorium, 8:00 o'clock 25c

1941

MRS. SHAEFFER GIVES VIVID REVIEW OF "THE FAMILY"

Large Audience Hears Expert Interpretation of Nina Fedorova's Prize-Winning Novel in College Auditorium Last Evening

By CHARLOTTE FISHER
Vividly, sympathetically, with the versatility that continues to amaze all who hear her, Mrs. Earl Shaeffer brought to life on the stage of the Mesa college auditorium last evening the characters of Nina Fedorova's prize-winning novel, "The Family."

Narration such as Mrs. Shaeffer's cannot be limited to the confines of the word "review," for hers is truly the work of an artist. It is story-telling at its best, with the audience transported, as it were, into the action of the tale, laughing and sorrowing along with the characters.

The review, presented under sponsorship of the Grand Junction Woman's club, was attended by a large audience, an audience whose appreciation was manifested in the close attention given the reviewer throughout her performance.

As Nina Fedorova's heart-warming story of a family of White Russians exiled in Tientsin, China, unfolded under Mrs. Shaeffer's expert guidance, the audience heard and felt and was inspired by the love and unselfishness of this family—a wonderful family, yes, but a human one of warm, personal appeal. Each character—Granny, Mother, Pete, Lida, Dinna, Mrs. Parrish, Madame Militza, Professor Chernon, Khan—and even "just dog"—was vivified by Mrs. Shaeffer and so skillfully did she change from one to another that each personality—separate and different as they were—was portrayed with clarity.

Preceding Mrs. Shaeffer's review an introduction was given by Mrs. A. R. Daniels in which she spoke briefly concerning the book and its author. "The Family" received the \$10,000 Atlantic Monthly prize and ranks second only to the best-seller in popularity.

Characters of the book were presented in tableau form, those taking part included Mrs. Sam Porter, Mrs. Horace Wubben, Hazlett Wubben, Mrs. Amos Rasco, Marty Shaeffer, Mrs. E. H. Dreher, Mrs. Claud Stevens, Stefan Biskup, Mrs. Horace Tracy, and Edwin Oberto.

Musical features of the evening included selections by a string trio composed of Miss Adeline Van Gundy, cellist, Lawrence Sardon, violinist, and Goodsell Slocum, pianist, and numbers by the junior high school chorus, under the direction of Mr. Slocum. The chorus sang "Jeannie With the Light Brown Hair" and a negro spiritual, "Standin' in the Need of Prayer."

Mrs. Leo Oberto, chairman of the Mesa college committee of the woman's club, announced the program.

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Literati Tea Is Woman's Club Event

1941

There was an exceptionally large attendance at the meeting of the literati department of the Woman's club Tuesday to hear an excellent program that featured a book review by Mrs. Earl Shaeffer.

The meeting was held at the home of Mrs. Glen Harbert on Orchard Mesa. Mrs. J. F. Beattie, literati chairman, was leader of the meeting, welcoming the guests and new members.

New members of the club were introduced by Mrs. J. C. Mardis, membership chairman. Those reinstated into the club were Mesdames George McKelvey, Helen Harrington, A. C. Milne, Sidney Bull, Alfred Nestler, George Fickinger, Robert Best. New members are Mesdames O. O. Taylor, T. J. Snyder, Charles L. Walker, Clyde Biggs, H. R. Augustus, Robert Evans, Fred Minnesang, Vern Caldwell, Richard F. Gilmore, George Osborne, Linn Sommers, W. H. Robinson, Harold Palmer, I. Soelberg Sr., Ralph Kemper, John W. Groves, Steve Scovill, James Zanolio, E. D. Bloye, E. E. Sanders, D. M. Rogers, J. W. Ridley, Oscar Miller and J. K. Perley.

Mrs. Eugene Mulford, poetry chairman, introduced Mrs. J. A. Dix, who gave an interesting study of Thomas Hornsby Ferril's poetry. The study consisted of a short review of Ferril's life and a few of his prize poems: "Ninety Miles East of the Range," "This Foreman," "Two Rivers" and "Magenta." Thomas Hornsby Ferril's work is of additional interest here because of his being the brother of Mrs. W. D. Ela, and poet laureate of the Rocky Mountains.

Mrs. Earl Shaeffer held the group spellbound with her dramatic review of the book, "Let the Hurricane Roar" by Rose Wilder Lane.

A musical trio consisting of Mrs. W. J. Chiesman, piano, Mrs. Julia Wilson, violin, and Miss Edith Noe, cello, played several numbers.

Refreshments were served from a beautifully decorated tea table. The color scheme of yellow and white was carried out in the centerpiece and menu. The literati and poetry committees, with Mrs. Glen Harbert, were hostesses for the day, with Mrs. J. F. Beattie as chairman.

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Review by Mrs. Shaeffer Highlights Clifton B. & P. W. Club Guest Night

By PET WICKHAM JONES
Approximately 70 persons shared the annual guest night dinner party sponsored by the Business and Professional Women's club of Clifton, held Tuesday evening in the parlors of the Methodist church, when husbands of members were among the special guests. A program of music was given during the dinner hour, but the evening highlight was the book review by Mrs. Earl Shaeffer of Grand Junction.

For their excellent dinner, tables were attractively decorated with St. Patrick's day suggestions and vases of cut flowers, with the flowers a compliment of Watson's Floral shop.

Mrs. Arline Sroaf, club president, presided over the dinner and program. The Rev. D. J. Grooters, pastor of the Clifton Methodist church, offered grace. Group singing opened proceedings, led by M. L. Dilley. First members and then guests were led in the lively singfest. Roll call was answered by guests and members alike, some giving current events and some telling jokes.

During the dinner hour, contest soloists from the Clifton schools appeared on the program, accompanied by Mrs. Ben Spitzer and Mrs. Oscar Jaynes. Those presented included Bob Howell in a baritone horn solo; Elaine Hornbaker, vocal; Don Santesson, saxophone, and Elwin Keller, sousaphone.

Mrs. Shaeffer reviewed the book, "Who Walk Alone," by Perry Burgess, director of the Leprosy Foundation in America. This book won a prize for its author in 1940 for being the most unusual book publication during that year. Mrs. Shaeffer was presented to the guest night party by Mrs. Nora Gilbert.

The speaker prefaced her review by telling interesting facts about the author, stating that his book was non-fiction and "absolutely authentic." Since the book is written in the first person, Mrs. Shaeffer gave her review in the same manner.

The dramatic and moving story of a young United States soldier contracting leprosy during the Spanish-American war, of how it suddenly and completely changed his life, and of the brave life he led in a leper's colony is one of the most absorbing stories ever told.

Mrs. Shaeffer's treatment of the

story, her vivid word portrayal, left her audience feeling that they had not heard one person give a book review, but that they had attended a moving picture with all the characters and scenes shown to them.

Club officers will be elected at the next meeting and Mrs. Sroaf named the following nominating committee to serve: Mrs. Mabel Dilley, Mrs. Jeannetta Hornbaker, and Miss Mary Salatino.

Guests included: Mr. and Mrs. Earl Shaeffer, Rev. and Mrs. D. J. Grooters, Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Guy E. Jones, Mrs. W. B. Nelson of Glens Falls, N. Y., Mrs. J. W. Corbin of Moab, Mrs. J. P. Johnson, Mrs. Charles Salatino, Mrs. Nnez Jackson.

Bruce Anderson, Earl Sroaf, M. L. Dilley, J. E. Hornbaker, Jay D Sanders, W. A. Smith, Ben Spitzer, J. D. Morgan, Dale Lundy, A. M. Wilson, Bert Rucker, Earl Lowder, Oscar Jaynes, M. G. Redmon, Kenneth Sorter, H. G. Long, Wendell Smith, J. L. Grant, Raymond Riley, and those appearing on the program.

Red Cross Benefit Book Review Success

Mrs. Earl Shaeffer Reviews Dramatic Story of "Mother of the Smiths";
Over \$50 Realized by Sponsors

Successful from both the entertainment and financial standpoint was the Red Cross benefit book review given by Mrs. Earl Shaeffer Wednesday evening, under auspices of the Grand Junction Woman's club.

The sum of \$51.25 was realized from the event, and the entire amount will be turned over to the Red Cross.

Actually "dramatizing," rather than reviewing the book, Mrs. Shaeffer again proved herself the master of her art last night, as she brought to life in the high school auditorium the story of Sabe, "Mother of the Smiths."

"Mother of the Smiths," a first novel by Lorraine Carr, is the story of Sabe Smith, her almost worthless husband, Si, and her six sons, for whom she fights heroically, shaping and strengthening them until they are able to help. Taos is the setting for the story.

The drama and rare good humor were brought out by Mrs. Shaeffer with understanding and feeling, as she was, in turn, Sabe, Si, the "young 'uns," and the Mexicans whose love Sabe wins with her many kindnesses.

Preceding the review several numbers were played by the Mesa college string trio of Miss Adeline Van Gundy, Miss Gay Clymer and Miss Lycille Lende. Mrs. T. E. Leiper, woman's club citizenship chairman, led in the salute to the flag, Mrs. J. F. Beattie, literary chairman, made numerous acknowledgements, and introduced Mrs. Shaeffer.

Last night's presentation was effectively concluded with a patriotic pageant, showing a Red Cross nurse, a marine, sailor, soldier and aviator, marching arm-in-arm. The auditorium was darkened, and a quartet composed of Raymond Eddy, Guy E. Jones, Orville Levan and Edwin Johnson sang "Remember Pearl Harbor," as the lights were gradually turned up and the curtain rose on the pageant.

Those appearing in the pageant were Sergeant Paul LeRoux, John Reeds, Sergeant A. A. Smith, Earle Hightower and Mrs. W. H. Snyder.

Society and Clubs

L. A. L. Sorority Heard Mrs. Shaeffer

Approximately one hundred members and guests of Lambda Alpha Lambda sorority were entertained Monday evening by Mrs. Earl Shaeffer when she presented for their enjoyment a review of "Who Walk Alone" by Perry Burgess. The affair was held in the library room of Mesa college.

As in the case of all reviews which Mrs. Shaeffer gives, her handling of "Who Walk Alone" was admirably done and those who heard her last night or who have heard her previously present the tragic but beautiful life story of one whom fate decreed to spend many years in a leprosy colony, have been greatly impressed with the understanding which she reads into the story. Mrs. Shaeffer gave this particular review last night at the special request of the sorority members.

Following Mrs. Shaeffer's presentation, the group was served refreshments in the home economics room. Serving was from a table attractively appointed with red roses and lighted candles. Miss Genevieve Roessler and Mrs. James Tomlin poured. Sorority hostess committee for the evening was Miss Gladys Glendenning, Mrs. Henry Galley, Mrs. Charles Holmes and Mrs. Gail Ingraham.

Mrs. Shaeffer Reviews For Dorcas Class

Mrs. Earl Shaeffer reviewed "Let the Hurricane Roar," at the meeting of the Dorcas class of the Christian church, held in the church parlors Tuesday evening.

Preceding the book review, the class members, their husbands and friends enjoyed a covered dish dinner.

Those present were Messrs. and Mesdames J. A. Kreps, R. R. Giffin, L. W. Jordan, A. J. Westlund, G. B. Shull and son, George, Floyd Hutton and daughter, Ann, Earl Wiley, Cecil Hopper, Z. B. Scott; Rev. and Mrs. J. J. Hutchison; Mesdames George Lowe, W. E. Shropshire, Claire Richardson, Homer Edris, Harry Bennett, D. J. Elsea, M. H. Pryor, E. J. Frederick, Earl M. Shaeffer, L. W. Wilson, C. K. Enstrom, Chester Elgin, Lewis Johnson, V. E. Bunt, Floyd Kendall, Earl Goodale, Ida Rhone, Violet Yarnell, Dorothy Ellington, the Misses Edith Scott, Richalyn Kilborn, and Messrs. Donald Frederick and David Hersch.

♦ ♦ ♦

Book Review For Clifton Woman's Club 1942

Mrs. Earl M. Shaeffer, distinguished reviewer of books, appeared before the Woman's club of Clifton, and their guests, Wednesday afternoon in one of her unique reviews and as always completely won over her audience.

She preceded her review with two interesting poems, and then presented "Let the Hurricane Roar." Mrs. Shaeffer stated that altho the book is not new, its simplicity of style and its beautiful poetic quality, combined with its American pioneer characters, create a story she never tires of telling. The book was written by Rose Wilder Lane.

Mrs. Jay D. Sanders, president of the Clifton club, presided over the brief business meeting, and she dispensed with roll call in order to give the time to the guest speaker. The members recited their motto in unison at the close of the business discussion.

The meeting was held in the home of Mrs. J. E. Hornbaker, and the hostess served delicious refreshments at the close of the review.

Club guests and their hostesses included: Mesdames Earl Shaeffer, Floy Sloan, Joseph Benson, B. F. Cooper, John W. Groves, E. R. Anderson, A. J. Harvey, G. A. Stout, Wesley Henderson, M. L. Dilley, Bert Atherton, Laura Jaynes, May Patten, Guy E. Jones.

Mesdames W. A. McMillen, Elizabeth McWilliams, E. M. Straka, M. G. Redmon, W. A. Smith, J. D. Murphy, Percy J. Gates, W. A. Hubbardt, W. H. Barr, H. G. Long, Clarence Williams, W. E. Stout, K. C. Hornbaker, and J. E. Hornbaker.

♦ ♦ ♦

Jan. 23 1943

MEEKER

R, (Rio Blanco County) CO

Tuesday Was Ladies Night At The Meeker Lions Club

Periodically the Lions feel that they should entertain their Lionesses, and Tuesday evening of this week was one of those occasions. The party was held in the Methodist church annex with ladies of the Methodist church serving dinner. The hall was crowded to capacity with the Lions and their ladies and guests of the club; over eighty being seated for dinner.

After an introduction of the guests by President Le Roy Purdy, he turned the meeting over to Lion John Youmans, chairman of the program committee for the evening. There were two musical numbers; one by the brass quartet composed of Carol Agee, Clayton Carstens, Dorothy Hollenbaugh, and Le Roy Graham; and a second number, a brass duet by Carol Agee and Le Roy Graham.

The feature number on the program, was a "book review" by Mrs. Jo Schaeffer of Grand Junction. Mrs. Schaeffer opened her program by giving two short and humorous readings; then stated she would review the book, "Who Walk Alone". It was not many minutes after Mrs. Schaeffer started her "book review" that she had undivided attention of her entire audience and until the end of the review you could have heard a pin drop in the hall. We do not feel that "book review" is the proper description of Mrs. Schaeffer's presentation; we would say that she Dramatizes the book rather than reviews it. The book itself is wonderful, and the way that Mrs. Schaeffer presented it, made you feel that you were at a movie and could actually see each character acting out his or her part. It was one of the finest presentations it has ever been our privilege to hear. We have heard of Mrs. Schaeffer for a number of years, and had heard that she was good, but the program which she gave the Lions club, "good" doesn't half describe it. Mrs. Schaeffer is the wife of Earl Schaeffer, cable man for western Colorado with the Mountain States Telephone company, and she has often visited the Purdy home from Grand Junction. The Lions club feel that they owe her a debt of gratitude for coming to Meeker Tuesday to present her part of the program.

The Tailtwisters fines from Tuesday night's meeting were voted to go to the "March of Dimes" fund, and over six dollars will be turned over from the club to the Infantile Paralysis committee treasurer.

Clifton B. and P. W. Hears Mrs. Schaeffer

Members and guests of the Clifton Business and Professional Women's club had the privilege of hearing Mrs. Earl M. Schaeffer of this city, outstanding book reviewer, give a review Tuesday evening, when they were entertained in the home of Mrs. W. A. Smith for their dinner and program.

First, Mrs. Schaeffer gave a dissertation on the Twenty-Third Psalm. Her review was of "The Mother of the Smiths" by Lorraine Carr.

Mrs. J. L. Grant, club president, presided over the business meeting. Red Cross reports were given, in regard to club activities. For their April meeting, members voted to hold a potluck supper in the home of Mrs. J. A. Smith. New officers will be elected at the next meeting, and Mrs. Grant appointed the following members on the nominating committee: Mesdames A. L. Gilbert, E. J. Woods, and E. N. Sroaf.

Assisting hostesses to Mrs. Smith were Mrs. M. L. Dilley, Mrs. Jay D. Sanders, and Mrs. Oscar Jaynes. They served a chicken-pie dinner at small tables.

Guests of the evening were Mrs. Walter Stout Jr., Mrs. E. M. Straka, Mrs. Beulah Rait of Palisade, and Miss Velma Lehmkuhler also of Palisade.

WOMAN'S SOCIETY HEARS MRS. SHAEFFER

Mrs. Earl Schaeffer was presented on the program for the Woman's society of the Congregational church at a meeting held Thursday afternoon in the club room, following a dessert-luncheon.

Mrs. A. L. Gilbert, president of the society, presided over the business meeting. Devotionals were conducted by Mrs. J. F. Shults, whose topic was, "The Educated Heart." Mrs. H. T. Kurzhals presented several of her piano students in a brief program of music.

Mrs. Schaeffer first gave a dissertation on the Twenty-Third Psalm. She then reviewed the book, "I Go By Land, I Go By Sea;" and again proved her capabilities as a reviewer of books.

Rotary Club Meets

One of the outstanding programs of the year was presented at the Rotary club meeting Monday noon when Mrs. Jo Shaffer of Cripple Creek reviewed the book "They Who Walk Alone." Mrs. Shaffer had appeared in Salida earlier under the auspices of the local Beta Sigma Phi and her interpretation was so outstanding that Rotarians had been looking forward to the program.

She reviewed the dramatic story of a leper, painting strong word pictures of each character from first to last.

She was introduced by J. Russell Purse. Joe Stewart, president was in charge. Several guests were in attendance.

Mrs. Schaeffer Gives Camaraderie Program

Mrs. Earl Schaeffer was a guest of Camaraderie Wednesday evening, giving an excellent program that included a review of the book, "Mother of the Smiths," by Lorraine Carr, a dissertation on the 23rd Psalm, and a satire on "Gone With the Wind."

Last night's meeting was held at the home of Miss Betty Gentry, with Mrs. Perry Olsen as co-hostess.

Guests included Mrs. Harry Peck, Mrs. M. J. Thomas of McCook, Neb., Mrs. Jack Blundell, Mrs. Robert Lende and Miss Hazel Duer.

Refreshments were served at the close of the evening.

WOMEN'S CLUBS ENJOYED MEETING MONDAY NIGHT

The Burlington Woman's club gave a reception Monday evening at the Community Center, to which other federated clubs of this area were invited. About one hundred and thirty club women from Burlington, Flagler, Stratton and Kanorado attended the event, feature of which was an evening's entertainment by Mrs. Earl Shaeffer, well known book dramatist and reviewer.

Mrs. Shaeffer, whose home is at Cripple Creek, was here at the district meeting of federated clubs last spring, giving an outstanding review at a tea in her honor. Her program Monday evening began with poetry. She then gave a biblical reading on the twenty-third psalm and the book she reviewed was "We Walk Alone," by Perry Burgess. Making the author's words dramatically alive, Mrs. Shaeffer left no dry eyes in the audience, and as an encore gave two very humorous readings.

Refreshments were rose bud cakes, punch, candies and nuts from the tea table, which was beautiful with lace, American Beauty roses and candles to match. Three Woman's club members, Miss Ora Baker and Mrs. C. G. Gould, violinists, and Mrs. John Hudler, pianist, supplied the music.

Represented were the Flagler Woman's club, the Stratton M. S. A. club, Kanorado Sorosis, the Burlington Garden club, Inter Sese, and the Burlington Jubilee Junior club.

A seven o'clock dinner was given at the home of Mrs. Orin Milburn in honor of Mrs. Shaeffer by the Burlington Woman's club. Hallowe'en decorations and beautiful fall leaf motifs, clever candy favors were used at the bounteous meal, after which Mrs. Shaeffer was presented with the gift of a war bond, as a token of the club's esteem for her.

9/16-18-1946

Lambda Alpha Lambda Hears Review by Mrs. Schaeffer

Lambda Alpha Lambda sorority members were delightfully entertained Monday evening when Mrs. Jo Shaeffer appeared before the group in a review of "The Life of Stratton—Midas of the Rockies," by Barry Walters. Mrs. Shaeffer, always a popular entertainer, is being welcomed back by local friends and organizations following an absence of several years during which time the Shaeffers resided at Cripple Creek, and while residing in this famous old Colorado mining town, Mrs. Shaeffer supplemented her repertoire with books and study of that section and of the men who gained fame and fortune from the early day gold mining. Her delineation of the life of Winfield Scott Stratton was ably handled and intensely interesting. As a prelude, Mrs. Shaeffer gave "Hillborn," a poem by Fred Whitney and a letter written during the war by a soldier seeing action in the war zone.

Thirty-five members and three guests who are assisting the sorority in this year's presentation of the Christmas Candlelight, Mrs. O. M. Eddy, Mrs. Ona Lou Ackley and Mrs. Grace Ritchie, were present. Refreshments were served at the close of the review.

June 2 1948
Mrs. Earl Shaeffer Is Lambda Alpha Lambda Reviewer

Fifty member and guests of Lambda Alpha Lambda sorority heard Mrs. Earl Shaeffer review the current widely read and much-discussed book, "Knock on Any Door," by Willard Motley, Tuesday evening following a dinner at the Legion hall. Always a popular entertainer and reviewer, Mrs. Shaeffer's portrayal of the life of a young boy, committed to a reform school for a crime he did not commit and his subsequent education in crime, resulting in his paying, at the age of 21, the supreme penalty for his deeds, was handled in an intensely interesting and gripping manner.

1947
Mrs. Earl Shaeffer Is Book Club Reviewer

For the November meeting of Friday Book club, held at the home of Mrs. Lincoln Coit, First Fruit-ridge, Mrs. Earl Shaeffer gave a review of the book, Joppa Door, by Hope Williams Sykes.

Special guests of members were Miss Mary Smith of Chicago, Mrs. Richard Deam, Mrs. Richard Wells, Mrs. Albert Turner, Mrs. Jane Ann Mars, and Mrs. Herbert Wright.

Lavender chrysanthemums and aqua candles formed the tea-table decorations, with Mrs. Mars and Mrs. Wells pouring. Mrs. Coit was assisted as hostess by Mrs. Evans Kaye.

Members are making plans for a dinner-dance for their husbands during the Christmas holidays.

Mrs. Shaeffer to Be Reviewer for Women's Luncheon

A worthwhile program is being planned for the annual May luncheon of the Grand Junction Council of Church Women featuring Mrs. Earl Shaeffer as reviewer. Her subject is to be in line with the program theme, "With Malice Toward None: With Charity For All." The program will also include musical numbers, readings, and a short resume of the council's accomplishments.

The luncheon is to be Friday of this week at 1 o'clock in the Christian church. All church women of the city are cooperating in the endeavor. Mrs. C. A. Lamberson is general chairman of the luncheon committee and reports that plans are progressing nicely. Tickets are available from representatives in each church or from the general ticket chairman, Mrs. Charles Stokes, telephone 2795.

All reservations are to made before Thursday, April 30, and those in charge wish to stress that all church women of the city are invited to share this friendship, and to help in carrying on a worthwhile program thus linking themselves with Christian women of other communities around the world.

As one can see, Jo was much sought after as a speaker, entertainer and inspirational leader. Her years of reviewing books were rewarding to her in many ways, but not financially, as she refused to charge anything for her work. She gained a following as she became well known in the communities in which she appeared on stage, and was admired and recruited by others to join organizations, clubs and other social groups.

Much later, Jo wrote about her years of reviewing:

My favorite and most enjoyable hobby is the reviewing of books for groups of people. A hobby that not only gives me the utmost pleasure, but I think is giving listening pleasure to others, makes it a worthwhile outside interest for me.

I have found this engrossing hobby a means of sharing my reading and deep love of books with others. By "others" I mean a heterogeneous lot of people. Sometimes it will be a large audience, or again very small, occasionally highly cultured, next time uneducated. Every type of group interests me in a different way.

I believe in all life we have to be contributors to be happy. This is my means of giving my very small bit to beauty. If it is possible for me, if but for one hour, to lift one person, or impart one word of the author's that gives hope, or consolation, or joy, or inspiration to one person in the audience, it has been a well paid effort.

Reading is the opening of doors into great and wonderful things. I try to give those seated before me a glimpse through those doors: to travel with me into far, strange places—to live for a moment in the lives of other personalities—walk for a short time in another "slice of life"—laughing with the humorous characters—weeping with the sorrowing.

Reading is a delving into another's mind where we may grasp and take things we want to keep and reject that which we do not want to retain. In [my] reading I am especially drawn to those passages which reflect [my] own thinking.

Through depicting a book to my best ability I attempt to awaken new vistas of thinking in my audience. I hope to challenge their opinions and ideas, broaden their views. Above all, and most important, is to increase their tolerance and enlarge their understanding.

The personalities I encounter in my listeners are a large factor in contributing to my love of reviewing books. I have found many friends down my "book avenue." The friendships I have made thus have been deep and lasting, and so have made life richer.

I am reminded of an elderly lady who accosted me as I entered the shabby, ill kept room of an isolated, dilapidated farm house in a lonely community. "I'm sorry I came. If I'd knowed they was agoin' to be a book lady here I'd a never come. I read the Bible onest and that's all I need to read." She was my most apt listener.

A week later I answered the knock at my front door to see the same little old lady. She handed me a pint jar of cream saying, "Here—I want you to have this. I wanta say thanks to you."

Many people have asked me why I do not charge money for my reviews. I can only answer by saying that I cannot accept money for something I try to give that comes from way down deep. Would any amount of money pay for the gift of a pint of cream from a little old lady that had read the Bible and that was enough for anybody to read?

Along with her many, many book reviews, Jo was occasionally asked to do a poetry reading. With these readings, she would have her friend, Beulah Baker, accompany her on the organ. She also narrated the script for at least one fashion show in Grand Junction:



Ready For Show

Miss Bonnie Ratkovich, one of the models for the American Cancer Society benefit luncheon and fashion show, models a Jim Church Original gown and Facon Boutique hat. She is shown with Mrs. Earl Shaeffer, who will do narration, and Mrs. James Baker, organist for the show. Sentinel Photo.

Cancer Benefit Models Told

Sixteen local models have been named for the American Cancer Society benefit luncheon and style show, planned here next Saturday. The event will be held at 12:30 p.m. at Book-cliff Country Club.

Models will include Mrs. James Mahannah, Mrs. Stormy Stucker, Mrs. Bud Simmons, Mrs. Richard Sparkman, Mrs. Victor Sacco, Mrs. Cecil Knight,

Mrs. Warren Gardner, Miss Rita Hildebrand, Mrs. Ed Whalley, Miss Charmaine Barnes, Mrs. Leland Schmidt, Miss Carolyn Schmidt, Miss Bonnie Ratkovich, Miss Roxie Boyd, Mrs. Susan Marcus and Mrs. Ed Busch.

Fashions to be shown will be from the Vogue, with shoes from Benge's and Foster's. Hair styles will be from the Terrace, Edith Justice's, Nova Jean's,

Patty's and Mildred's. Makeup will be under the supervision of Mrs. Nora Massey.

Mrs. Earl Shaeffer will be narrator, and Mrs. James Baker will be organist.

Reservations for the \$3 tickets for the luncheon may be made to Mrs. Henry Fausone, 243-1545; Mrs. Victor Crumbaker, 243-2267, or Mrs. Gordon Munro, 242-2491.

Books were reviewed by Jo in many communities around Grand Junction and Cripple Creek and even further afield, like Glenwood Springs, Colorado. One friend wrote her the following:

*1032 Pitkin Ave.
Glenwood Springs, Colo.
May 12, 1942
My friend – Jo Shaeffer,*

Greetings of affectionate admiration to you, my clever little friend! I am very happy in looking forward to your coming here next Monday evening when you will be the guest speaker at the Beta Phi Sigma social gathering.

Because I received an invitation to enjoy you with them at this gathering I am now as happy as a robin in a cherry orchard and I am singing out to you a cheerio greeting.

I have a message for you, too, my dear, from the members of my Reading Club. They are hopefully requesting you to stay over in Glenwood the following Tuesday and be their guest at a gathering Tuesday evening.

This meeting will be the closing meeting of our club year and is in the nature of a gala celebration (by very, very, very dignified matrons) for the lofty completion of a year of self culture – ahem!

The meeting place of the Beta Phi affair is right next door to my “Bide a Wee Nest” so you could stay with me, you see, that Monday evening and the next day while I “labor in the field with Young America” you could lounge around and rest yourself for our evening’s rendezvous!

You know how informal and friendly our group is. We don’t take our social affairs as obligations and you can relax with us and can feel very free and easy in making your own choice of the selection to review.

As a very pleasant and fruitful treat for the ladies we have coveted the enjoyment that you can so ably present in your refreshing, original way of reading for us.

Will you kindly phone me Thursday evening at my expense to let us know if you can be with us on the evening of May 19th? Surely hope we can have you! My phone number is 496-W – just call the McDermott residence please.

And now wishing you a sunny path on an upland way, I’ll sign off, happy over the promise of a visit with you soon.

Very sincerely, Mame Tully McDermott

A “thank you” letter arrived some time later:

*Lazy Lane
McDermott’s Apt.
Doldrum’s Corner
Undated*

Greetings to you, my endearing clever friend!

After this long elapse of time I should ask, “Remember me?” and then add by way of apology that the above address tells the whole story of the passing weeks since you were here.

Usually my stock of energy keeps boiling up pretty vigorously but this spring drained me of the “will to do” until I have been just as idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean.

I have slept with utter abandon late these mornings until the activities of my industrious neighbors wham my conscience into unwilling wakefulness—and for many hours of the day I have been content to read quietly here at my desk thinking the long, long thoughts of mellow maturity—just an “on-looker” of life.

This long sweep of the strong, green hills facing my windows prods me into earnest appreciation of the wonders of life and I keep promising my school-teacher mind that I am going to snap out of this lazy serenity and swing into action again.

I want to tell you that I appreciated your friendly thank-you note. You have a real genius for affection – do you know it?

The other ladies to whom you wrote were so proud and pleased over your letter to them, and by the way, they were gracious enough to write you and express their sentiments. But for me—alas and alack for the good intentions harbored in a jaded spirit like McDermott’s—it took the vitalizing power of glorious free vacation June time to stir me up, as a jaded flower waits for sunshine after rain.

Well my friend, the clippings from the town’s “Bugle Call” seem to be rather empty but the newspapers have a way of shading down the high lights into prosaic happenings. Anyway, the clippings will serve as markers of time in your scrap book. And your visit to us will stand out in our memories like impressive mountain peaks of glory.

We will look forward to the next visit you can make us. I have an appealing little story called “C’n I have a Dog?” which I’d love to hear you interpret. I’d send it to you only that it is in a school text. But when you come to Glenwood town again I’ll read it to you. It would do nicely for an encore. I found some of the letters I spoke of too, so when you come up, my friend, we’ll have happy crowded hours together.

*My Tom is still impatiently waiting his summons, but still in high courage and lofty patriotism. He is working at Pando * at present faring very well. The wages are very generous but the living conditions are as primitive as Abe Lincoln’s log hut...*

Thinking of your “appreciation for every-day” philosophy I offer you this bit of verse in closing my letter.

*May the Giver of Gifts give unto you
A gift that is noble, a gift that is true:
The will to work and the power to do,
And the courage to sing the whole day through.
Whether the skies be gray or blue
May the Giver of Gifts give these to you.”*

Your procrastinator friend, Mame Tully McDermott

* Pando was a small camp that housed the construction workers that built Camp Hale. Camp Hale was a huge facility that was home to the 10th mountain division during WWII. Troops were trained there in all forms of high country warfare. These troops then fought in the Apennine Mountains of Italy. Constructed in 1942, Camp Hale contained over 1000 temporary structures and housed approximately 2500 men. It was dismantled in 1965 (See www.ghosttowns.com/states/co/camphale.html).

Another thank-you letter :

*“Dear Jo,
Just a little note to thank you for the book review that you gave for our Guild meeting. Everyone enjoyed it so much. To me it was like a rainbow in the midst of a storm.*

Sincerely, Edythe Noe”

The following enthusiastic thank-you letter was written to Jo after she gave a book review in Montrose, Colorado:

Precious Friend,

In spite of our many moves (yours and ours) and lack of [illegible] that is the way I often think of you, and oh, what joy! To have you close yesterday, and what a

pleasant surprise when I heard just the day before that you were coming. On your next visit to Montrose, may I plan on your spending your spare time with me?

... Truly I'd have been disappointed if you had not chosen to review the book you gave us yesterday. I keep wondering if the author has ever heard you give it? And what a thrill it would be to hear one's own book brought to life. Because, my dear, that is exactly what you do and your audience "lives" it with you. You don't have the wildest idea how much we all appreciated you. And to think of the many who will regret not having been there. Of course, I think anyone who has not had that pleasure has been cheated. What I'd like would be an advertised return engagement for the same book. In fact I'd have you go on tour doing just that one.

Don't you charge any fee for your work? If not, why not? Please dear, explain this to me. I'm on the entertainment end of an Episcopal Guild meeting at Mrs. Moynihans some time this year and oh, how I'd love to plan on you for another big "treat." But it must be the same book. Do you think me completely crazy?

Then, too, what is your secret for eternal youth? You surely have it. So many ladies thought you looked like a little girl when you were standing up there giving us so much of your very self. I marvel there is anything left of you. Do you notice how quiet and rapt your audience is while you talk? Oh dear, I could go on and on and still not express how I really feel.

I am sending a wee book our Guild puts out and hope you will enjoy especially, the passage I have marked on page 52. Should we belong to the same church? You, of course, will have one of these, so just pass it on.

I'd like to hear more of you and your dear ones and now, back to earth and the daily "blessed" toil. Thank God for continued strength to carry on, and for you, my dear, in whose presence I feel so very humble.

Bye now,

Bert (Mrs. R. W. Sloan)

The praise, even adulation Jo received over her book reviews made her extremely conscious of her effect on others. She went to great lengths to be kind to everyone. Of course, she would have been gracious to others just on the general principles of her upbringing but the attention she received as a popular book reviewer made her particularly careful to never say or do anything that might offend others. Thus, the praise for her continued to grow.

Jo recorded a number of things that others said about her. Perhaps it is a good idea to do this, in order to recall one's value to others especially on days when one is feeling a bit low. Some of these notes were credited, others were not:

One small clipped portion of a note or letter read: "You unusual you! Always jet propelled, even handwriting exotic. Where do you get your steam? It's wonderful."

Esther Kerr to Eliz. Gauer: "Jo is one of those people we meet in life to bring us a little joy – make life a little easier."

Mrs. Dickerson: "Jo, I believe in listening to you do that poetry I felt closer to Heaven than I ever have in my life."

Mrs. Heinson (Glenwood Springs): "I feel very honored, very honored to have Jo Shaeffer in my home (to the audience)."

Mrs. McDermott: “You could give Helen Hayes lessons.”

Mrs. Keith (minister’s wife): “You have helped me to like Grand Junction. You’ve made it a nicer place to live.”

Mrs. McHannah: “I wasn’t conscious of you, or an audience or myself—just a book was living.”

A: “Jo, you are the most perfect human being I’ve ever known.”

S: “She is a keen, alert, capable, shrewd, generous, gracious, lovely lady.”

Kate Harper: “I do not need to introduce Jo Shaeffer to this audience. You all know of her talent and I would like to say to you, Jo is just as sweet as she is talented.”

Goodell Slocum: “Jo is our color here. We can’t see her leave town. She adds color and zest to every gathering.”

Grace Markley: “We are very, very fortunate to have such talent as Jo Shaeffer living in our community.”

Loretta Davis to Bobbie Jo: “Your mother is the most wonderful woman I’ve ever known.”

Bobbie Jo: “Mother, you are just my idol. I try to be like you, but I fear I will be like Scarlet O’Hara, who always tried to be like her lovely mother but couldn’t.”

Earl: “I could search all over the world and never find as wonderful a woman as you.”

As Jo’s favorite author, Adela Rogers St. Johns said, “those who have not contemplated the difficulty of telling the truth about anybody,” the following list of compliments are included here. They were recorded by Jo under the heading of “Sam” or simply “S.” In any case, Jo noted these compliments from someone who was evidently quite taken by her. Perhaps she did not respond in kind, but it must be pointed out that since she saved these notes, it was as important for her to feel appreciated as it is for any of us. As Bobbie Jo said, “The men in our family should read this because they need to realize that women, too, need to feel valued.” However, about this person Jo wrote:

S. reminds me of the amateur strategists that hang around Washington to tell the Army how to win the war or the guys in the bleachers that tell Babe Ruth how to hit the ball. Words are like jewels, pick and choose long enough and you get one that exactly fits the sentiment expressed, and when you have finished to be sure you have the right one, it must raise the right inference as well as say the right thing. That is a real art, to not only make the reader know what you want to say, but to throw out little fishhooks to make him have a thought that will be pleasing and convincing as well. Did you ever think of that, if you let him infer, instead of saying it boldly, but be sure ‘tis the right inference, ‘tis perfect.

Sam: “A compliment puts a lilt in her voice, a sparkle in her eye, a spring in her step. Too much would ruin her. Two glasses bring a sparkle and a glow, five, intoxication.”

S – “Jo, you can cram more punch, more thoughts in the fewest lines. If you would write a book on any subject that really interests you, and put the same color, punch, verve, vitality and personality in it you do in your best letters, that book would be a best seller for years to come and mark a high-water mark in contemporary publishing.”

S – “There is so much to YOU, you are inexhaustible in your power to bring to the lives of others something of sweetness and light – just because you are you.”

S – “Funny thing, understanding! Precious few people can really grasp any emotion beyond the realm of their personal experience. You are one of that finely and divinely gifted few! You do far more than anyone I ever knew! I think the ability to do that is an attribute of a totally unselfish mind and heart—of one who lives for others first of all.”

S – “Other women are just stuff, stuff—fill in time but not empty places.”

S – “Winged messages [are] my main interest in life. These winged messages veritably breathe a personality without which my life and deeds are but an empty shell. I’m in a pensive, languorous mood. Someday you shall occupy this guest room with me.”

S – “I could write pages on every sentence you write. It breathes, lives, moves, inspires. If you could put that same thing from the preface to the finish of a book – ‘twould be the 4-star best seller of all best sellers. You will some day, when years and years have left their star-dust of happiness and communion.”

S – “Here is gracious, generous, yet thrifty living—wealth at its best. Alas, few people of any large wealth are thus. They run to extravagant and excessive personal indulgences and orgies for personal pleasure. Wealth brings out their animalistic nature instead of the higher, nobler, more spiritual virtues. Wealth masters them and not they wealth. They are surrounded, protected, buttressed and dominated by the accumulated wealth of bygone generations. They have now become conservatives, looking askance on new ventures, quite content to clip the coupons from their gilt-edged 2 ½ government bonds. I haven’t been poured in the mold of eastern culture, Thank God. Give me the virile cities of the west. N.Y. is a frontier, it craws the best blood from the hamlets and pays off on the ability to stand the gaff and produce just a little better than the rest.”

S – “Clean living as well as clean thinking pays rich dividends. Those who cater to their baser emotions are not living, they are squandering a heritage they can never replace, and this is not a withdrawn-from-the-world esthete talking, either.”

S – “[I have] A sort of squirrel cage of existence of going round and round in a mechanical way, ‘something accomplished, something done,’ but oh, so unsatisfying! I realize how far short my old motto ‘Get your happiness out of your work’ is short of the truth and yet for more than two score years I believed that.”

S – “I begged, pleaded and implored but one woman, not only because I could not picture life without her. I was prepared to give all, go all the way, with her. Of all the personalities that have ever touched my life, and I mean all, one stands far above the rest. There are simply the others and Jo! Honestly none of the others are or ever were indispensable to me.”

S – “May 1943: “In fact, looking back over the years and of all the people I’ve ever known there is only one of whom I’d never tire—who would bring relaxation, understanding, instant and electric telepathic spontaneity—keeping my interest in good times and bad—in joy and sorrow—always inspiring –and I mean every word of that!

“Well, my effusion is over. My word battalions are drawn up on the parade ground of several scrawling pages. ‘Tis time to sound taps.

“And so I close, to you and yours a toast, may you have the best always.

“July 7 is a hallowed day for me.”

At the end of all these recorded lines of praise, Jo wrote:

I loathe the cheap lionizing, the easy adulation which follow a public success. It is very quiet here today..., but I still have my husband, so kind. Earl: no suavity whatsoever, but an enormous kindness. We are like two halves of the same thing, somehow grown together like two branches of a tree. It was built, of course. It did not happen. I do not believe that real marriage ever just “happens.”



The books Jo reviewed, listed in the approximate order in which they were reviewed:

Gone With the Wind, Margaret Mitchell – reviewed about 1939. In 1943 she did a satire on this book.

The Congo: A Study of the Negro Race, Vachel Lindsay prospectus, 1931 – a memorial to Rey Eldred, a Disciple of Christ missionary on the Congo River.

Rebecca, Daphne de Maurier, best seller in 1939 – reviewed same year.

The Joppa Door, Hope Williams Sykes – reviewed in 1940.

Mother of the Smiths, Lorraine Carr, 1940.

Grapes of Wrath, John Steinbeck, reviewed Feb. 9, 1940 and many more times.

The Family, Nina Fedorova – reviewed Dec. 5, 1940 and a number of other times.

Who Walk Alone, Perry Burgess, Leprosy Foundation, voted Most Unusual book of 1940.

Let the Hurricane Roar, Rose Wilder Lane – reviewed in 1941.

I Go By Land, I Go By Sea, reviewed in 1943. On the same occasion she “gave a dissertation on the 23rd Psalm.”

The Whole Heart, Helen Howe, 1943.

Midas of the Rockies: the Story of Stratton and Cripple Creek, Frank Waters, 1937. Reviewed in 1943.

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn, Betty Smith, 1943.

Papa Was a Preacher, Alyene Porter, 1944.

Out On a Limb, Louise Baker; Chicago, Peoples Book Club, 1946 - reviewed in 1946. On this occasion she also recited two poems: “Not Understood” by Thomas Bracken and a dissertation on the Twenty-Third Psalm.

The Life of Stratton—Midas of the Rockies, Barry Walters – reviewed in 1946. On this occasion she read a poem “Hillborn” by Fred Whitney and a letter written during the war by a soldier seeing action in the war zone.

Checkerboard, Neville Shute, 1947.

Kenny, by Louis Bromfield - reviewed in 1948.

Knock on Any Door, by Willard Motley - reviewed in June 1948.

The Big Divide, David Lavender, 1948. Reissued classic in 2002.

Big Doc’s Girl, Mary Medeiros, 1950.

Karen, Marie Killilea, 1952.

East of Eden, John Steinbeck, 1952.

O Rugged Land of Gold, Martha Martin, 1953.

Soapy Smith-King of the Frontier Con Men, Frank C. Robinson and Beth May Harris, 1961.

The Apostle, A Life, by John Pollock, 1969.

The Honeycomb, Adela Rogers St. Johns, 1970.

Brother Billy, Ruth Carter Stapleton, 1978.

Edge of the Taos Desert, Mabel Dodge Lujan, 1987.

Bobbie Jo recalled that her mother would often do a review for the family in the evening. She said, “These were always memorized and she used no notes.”

Other books were later read during her years of college training. She made notes on: The Romantic Revolution by Vernon Parrington, Killers of the Dream by Lillian Smith, Woodrow Wilson, by Ruth Cranston, The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Interpretation of Dreams by Sigmund Freud, A Russian Journal by John Steinbeck, The Romance of Leonardo da Vinci by Dmitri S. Merezkowski, and An Almanac of Liberty, by William O. Douglas. It is interesting to note in the post 9/11 world – a world Jo would never know about – that she concluded her review of the Douglas book with “As I read this I am struck again and again with how security conscious we have become. I wonder if we’re not becoming almost security warped! Why has America become afraid?”

Jo’s all-time-favorite book was The Honeycomb, by Adela Rogers St. Johns, Doubleday, 1969, which she read and re-read often in her later years. She would turn to it when she didn’t have anything else that interested her. She reviewed it numerous times for audiences and it was always popular. She kept a file of lines from the book that she used in her reviews and it is quite extensive.

Some of the lines from The Honeycomb she jotted down and memorized to share with her audiences:

Women are cheats! Serenity I had never known. My mother saw to that when I was little. At first, alone, it was wonderful to do everything my own way... I am sorry, Ike.

My divorce from Ike St. Johns came while we were still living in Hollywood at the beloved Whittier Ranch, 22 acres of walnuts, tennis courts and servants. We were married 15 years and there was never enough money. I thought Ike should be smart and handle the money. He was a born loser.

Billy, my son had tenderness, he had nightmares one whole year. I wouldn’t go out at night so I could rock him when he awoke with nightmares. Elaine was beautiful. A beautiful daughter has to be a joy and a scourge.

When I was 18 and still in pigtails Papa took me to meet Mr. Randolph Hearst and I became the first woman reporter. I will never forget my first police-ambulance call. No woman had ever done that before. I was substituting for a police reporter. “Alright Swifty,” the boys in the press room said, “Get going.” Breathless and shook I followed the white-clad intern to a small flat on the outskirts of town where a family of 5, father, mother and 3 kids were all dead on the floor, reeking of vomit. They had all eaten

toadstools they thought were mushrooms. I've never eaten a mushroom since. This may not be learning philosophy in the gardens of Academia, but it is one way.

Mr. Hearst was a few years older than Papa, and one of the handsomest men I've ever seen, and oddly enough he didn't scare me. He lived with the actress, Marian Davies thirty years in complete devotion. She sassed him back, though she stuttered when she did it. The character and genius of this man influenced us all. He caught us young and taught us young—speed and accuracy. We who became The Herald got out a paper that became the biggest money maker and circulation smash in the evening field anywhere.

In the 40 years I worked for Mr. Hearst I never reaped an angry word. There were no meetings, no chewing things over until they were pre-digested hash. He had a high, unique voice. He was shy with strangers and he listened much more than he talked. He was very kind. At his beautiful castle there was little drinking as he didn't believe in it and everyone had to sit through the movie shown and get up and attend breakfast. In all that ornate grandeur it was a comfortable place to be. I have found when the host and riches are one it is. People who have always had money take it for granted. They are different than people who scramble for money.

At this time I was a rash, reckless, opinionated young woman, a know-it-all trying to drink up all the gin in Los Angeles and San Francisco and having some success.

Along came Ike St. Johns fresh out of Stanford and a good newspaper man. I wanted babies and so I got married. I lost my first baby. What has God done for me? He hadn't helped my father in his fight with John Barleycorn. If there was a Father, I couldn't hear him, see him. Ike and I lived a poverty-stricken, who-needs-money, badly overworked and loving it, mad whirl – riotous, uninhibited, sleepless, ain't-we-got- fun life. We drank too much. Ike continued at poker 6 nights a week.

Why didn't William Randolph Hearst marry Marian Davies? Two good reasons: Millicent Wilson Hearst and Marian Douras Davies. Mrs. Hearst would never, beyond doubt, hold a man against his will and she wore her ring when she was 86. Mr. Hearst never asked for a divorce. We all loved Marian Davies because she never once used her enormous power for anything but good. One time when Marian was upbraiding him for being too easy with his youngest son, saying people who are divorced are always too soft with their kids because they have a guilty conscience. "But," said Mr. H., "I am not divorced and I do not have a guilty conscience." It was the only time I saw Marian cry. She said, "Sometimes I don't know what to do. You know you can't live without me." "I would prefer not to," Mr. Hearst said gently. She replied, "I won't let you get a divorce. I've told you before and I tell you again, you're a great man, a great power, you must have dignity. You marry a Follies girl 20 years younger than you and you cannot live down being ridiculous."

I got married again. Most of the time I ask myself to believe that I have forgotten his name. A good memory is a good thing but the ability to forget is the true token of greatness.

A home is made of smells – of touch – warm bricks of sight. The baby Dickie now had a stepfather. Children of broken homes manipulate and maneuver. We had to move. Parting with a home you love is leaving some of your heart behind. It didn't work. All women who are still women are horrified by the common easy-go vulgarity of a second divorce. My second marriage never could have been anything but a calamity.

In the Hollywood house there was room for Papa. He began fading like a light-bulb that goes out. Now and then I talked to him about writing a book and he answered, "I must think about that." Earl Rogers, a great criminal lawyer defending the underdog, was

gone. My eyes were saying, "Once upon a time you came first, Papa." I think I would have died for him. You see it can't be like that now there are babies to care for. All of a sudden he gave me the most radiant smile, and I knew he said goodbye with that. He left later that night and died a few weeks later. Papa had said, "You will never lose me. You will always know what I would have said or thought."

Then my famous debate! Mr. Hearst arranged that I, a reporter of the Hearst paper, debate with Alice Ames Winters, national president of the Confederated Women's Clubs on "Is Modern Woman a Failure? I said the modern woman IS a failure. Women are miserable in their so-called freedom. They know it is built on selfishness and indulgence. The way women are handling the gift of freedom has to lead directly to the destruction of a sane civilization." I won this famous debate. Modern Woman is a failure, the judges decided, and we better get back on the road! There I was waiting for the jury to decide. I had spent so much of my young life doing that with Papa—and three men and four women were the judges of a debate. The women there actually stood up and broke into cheers. Mr. Hearst was there and Marian Davies and my editor, Campbell, and there were tears on his face!

There are extensive notes on this and other books in Jo's files, but hopefully this little excerpt will give the reader a taste of this, her favorite book. Locate it and feast properly!

Perhaps the cleverest of all the compliments Jo received regarding her book reviewing came from her friend, Margaret Vorbeck, who had missed her earliest performance of Steinbeck's book, The Grapes of Wrath:

*Elusive lady, please be kind
And stay at home one day
So I can tell thee, in all truth
What those maids o'mine do say.*

*Of praise they area more than lavish.
Of censure there be none.
They say your telling The Grapes of Wrath
Was magnificently done.*

M.P.V.

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