

# Twenty Years at the Top

## Remarks of William J. Bowe

The Cliff Dwellers

May 13, 2016

### During Cocktail Hour

Piano music	Arnie Lanza CD'09
Palm Readings by the fireplace	Victoria Martin

### The Evening's Entertainment

Introduction	David Chernoff CD'10
Master of Ceremonies	Bill Bowe CD'97
<i>Piano Medley</i>	Arnie Lanza CD'09
<i>Traditional Revival Skit</i>	Carolyn & Walker Johnson CD'84
<i>Henry Miller</i>	Jack Zimmerman CD'95
<i>Original CD Limericks</i>	Allan Alongi CD'12
<i>Driving Up Route 1</i>	Raquel Garcia Lauritzen CD'11
<i>A Scene from Orson Wells</i> <i>&amp; Roger Hill: A Friendship</i> <i>In Three Acts</i>	Todd Tarbox CD'93 & Larry Lund CD'02
<i>The Widow Clark House</i>	George Gabauer CD'94
<i>A Visit from Studs Terkel</i>	Richard Reeder CD'13
<i>Rap Poem by Eve Moran</i>	Read by Bill Bowe CD'97
<i>3 Songs from "Darlin' Bridget"</i> <i>By Cobalt Blue</i>	Peter Hurley & Trisha Ricketts CD'13
Closing Comments	Bill Bowe CD'97
<i>Zivio</i>	All Present, let by Trisha Rickets CD'13

David Chernoff CD'10 -- Introduction

## **Bill Bowe CD'97 -- Master of Ceremonies**

Thank you for getting us started David. Tonight we celebrate 20 years in this unique space originally designed by Cliff Dweller Larry Booth. It was just three years ago that our former President Charlie Hasbrouck led the sensitive updating of this Club we enjoy so much.

I love three particular parts of the renovation myself.

First, look at the stencil around our cove ceiling, starting in the northwest corner and moving clockwise. The text is taken from Hamlin Garland's letter calling for organization of a club focused on the arts. Quite a mission statement for its day if you take the time to read it, and a mission that has survived over a century now.

Let me just say to Pat Savage, who's here tonight, that if you'd like later, I'll privately help you sound out the letters in the words so you get a sense of what the adults here are now talking about.

I also focus on the new sculpture shelf on the perimeter of this space and the current Preston Jackson pieces that now grace it.

And finally, our bar. What a gem, particularly with Josh pouring. The only criticism of the bar I've ever heard was a garrulous complaint from Pat Savage one night. The bar had run out of his favorite brand of Irish whiskey. Given that the Coach's career has been all about running, it's perhaps understandable Pat was running off at the mouth.

## **Victoria Martin CD'94 – Palm Reading Thanks.**

Before we get started with our program, I wanted to thank Victoria Martin for volunteering to do the palm readings earlier.

She holds a BA in Art Education and a Master in Fine Arts in Performance from the School of the Art Institute Chicago and wrote Bloomberg News horoscopes for 19 years. A painter as well, her works have been exhibited at a number of religious institutions and museums.

I think Victoria is a real professional. When I asked her how she could foretell a person's future with certainty, she said she'd learned to read between the lines.

Notably, 20 years ago on opening night in this space, Victoria arranged for a Native American corn dancer to perform an authentic prosperity ritual. This reflected the Club's early longtime appreciation of the artistic culture of the cliff dwellers of the

southwest. I told our program committee I was willing to carry on this tradition tonight by performing a personal interpretation of a fertility dance by stripping down to only a loin cloth and busting some Anasazi fertility moves for a half-hour or so.

I think Eve Moran spoke for the whole committee with her feedback, "Yecht." She said this was a bad idea because unintended medical emergencies could be triggered in the audience. So be it. You can't fight City Hall.

I didn't have my palm read by Victoria tonight because of two earlier bad experiences.

When I was a young man, a palm reader told me I was very lonely. When I asked him how he knew, he said my palms were blistered and calloused. He said another giveaway was my palm's five o'clock shadow.

More recently, another palmist told me my life line was as crooked as a three-dollar bill. He said it was almost as flawed as Rod Blagojevich's. When I said I thought that was terrible, he said it wasn't really that bad, as I'd likely get only three to five years max.

When I asked what else he could tell from looking at my life line, the guy said it was a bad news, good news type thing. The bad news was that I would soon contract the Zika virus. The good news was that the odds were heavily against my being pregnant --- despite my having what he said looked like a serious baby bump.

### **Arnie Lanza CD'09 – Piano Medley.**

In addition to Victoria, I'd also like to thank Arnie Lanza for our piano music during the cocktail hour.

For those of you who don't know Arnie's musical background, in the 1960s he played guitar and base with the folk group, The New Wine Singers. They made two LPs back in the day, and Arnie appeared at The Gate of Horn and Mother Blues in Old Town here and Basin Street East and The Village Gate in New York. The group broke up in the late sixties and re-formed as, "Spanky and Our Gang," with national hits on Mercury Records.

Arnie turned to the piano thirty years ago and plays and performs in hotels, restaurants, and piano bars all around the Chicago area. We've been very fortunate to have his talents available to us here at The Cliff Dwellers from time to time.

Arnie, please get us started with a medley

### **Carolyn and Walker Johnson – Traditional Revival Skit.**

As many of you know, Walker Johnson served as Club president in the early '90s, shortly before our move from next door to this space.

Apart from the Club, Walker and Carolyn Johnson have been stalwart advocates of historic preservation and leaders in the field for decades. Walker, an award-winning architect, has worked on some of the area's most prominent sites, including the Marquette Building, Glessner House, the Chicago Cultural Center, Howard van Doren Shaw's Ragdale and the Wacker Drive reconstruction.

Carolyn Johnson joined the staff of the Landmarks Preservation Council in 1976, and during her years with the organization, she worked as a speaker, educator, and advocate for preservation in statewide and national venues.

Tonight, they will perform, "Traditional Revival." Carolyn and Walker, please.

### **Jack Zimmerman CD'95 – Henry Miller.**

Jack Zimmerman was my immediate predecessor as President of The Cliff Dwellers. I've always believed I was standing on the shoulders of a giant. Though no one else seems to remember it this way, I recall my succeeding tenure as President as the Club's Golden Era.

Jack grew up on the Southwest Side and spent four years in the Navy during the Vietnam War. Further tuning up his act as a young person, he worked as a parking lot attendant, dock hand, college instructor, piano tuner, and trombone player. Hitting his stride, Jack put in 20 solid years doing public relations for the Ravinia Festival and the Lyric Opera.

To keep himself entertained along the way, Jack authored 2,300 newspaper columns. On Amazon you can find a collection of those columns, *10,000 Years in the Suburbs*, his novel, *Gods of the Andes*, and his recent mystery-thriller, *Cooked*. Jack has told his tales on Garrison Keillor's *Prairie Home Companion* radio show and many of you may have seen the recent Chicago Tribune profile of Jack and his wife Charlene in an article about condo life in the Loop.

The late Harold Ramis once said of Jack, "He writes like the guy next door—if you happen to live next door to Richard Russo, Studs Terkel, or Mark Twain."

Jack, tell us a story.

### **Allan Alongi CD'12 – Original Cliff Dwellers Limericks.**

There are born poets and then there are the others. Allan falls with a thud under the latter category.

So, it is no wonder that he flew to the idea of limerick writing for this event.

Allan was born in Rockford in 1955 and grew up in a small town. He tells me he was weened well before he turned 10.

He chose to confide in me that through his high school years, he was able to maintain really close, private, personal relationships with nearby donkeys and other large farm animals.

Upon graduation from high school, Allan attended the University of Iowa. But no, that didn't stop him!

Turning to his expected pitiful performance in reciting limericks this evening, I say, "Give the poor bastard a break."

He has not one iota of experience at limerick writing. Yet he said to me earlier tonight with faux bravado, "I am brave, yet careless. And isn't that what makes a good Cliff Dweller?"

Ladies and gentlemen of the Kiva, I give you, our own Allan Alongi!

### **Raquel Garcia Lauritzen CD'11 – Driving Up Route One.** [no show]

Raquel Lauritzen has a master's degree in comparative literature and began her career as an English teacher. In her quarter century plus career in the non-profit arena, Raquel helped many charitable enterprises advance their missions. Mostly retired now, Raquel teaches English at Berlitz and is able to devote more of her time to writing and painting.

In her unexplained absence, and because she didn't phone it in, I'll imagine and recite myself her story *Driving Up Route One*.

"Why on a dark and stormy night was I driving up route one. To get to route two, of course!"

## **Larry Lund CD'02 and Todd Tarbox CD'93 -- Orson Wells & Roger Hill: A Friendship in Three Acts.**

Larry Lund immediately followed the Golden Era when he succeeded me as President of The Cliff Dwellers. When I asked him recently if building on my accomplishments was a piece of cake, he said it was more like the Fifth Labor of Hercules: Cleaning out the Augean Stables. Well, what does he know.

Tonight, Larry and Cliff Dweller Todd Tarbox will take us back in time to when Orson Wells was growing up in the Chicago area.

*Orson Welles and Roger Hill: A Friendship in Three Acts* was written by Todd. It chronicles the seven-decade relationship between Orson Welles and his mentor and treasured friend, Todd's grandfather, Roger Hill.

Welles's attachment to Hill was instant and reciprocal—from the moment Orson enrolled at the Todd School for Boys in 1926 in Woodstock, Illinois, where Hill was a teacher. Their intimate conversations and correspondence revealed in *Friendship*, at times frothy, and at other times solemn, reflect their wide interests and abiding fascination with the human comedy.

Roger Hill was a member of the Cliff Dwellers from the mid-1920s until his death in 1990. Todd's father, Hascy Tarbox was Roger Hill's son-in-law and a member of the Cliff Dwellers from 1960 until his death in 1991.

In Act Two, Scene Seven, set in December 7, 1984, Welles and Hill discuss Orson's upcoming trip to Italy, which leads to a discussion of dining etiquette from the Savage Club in London to The Cliff Dwellers.

Larry Lund will deliver Welles's lines and Todd Tarbox will speak for his grandfather.

## **George Gabauer CD'94 -- The Widow Clark House.**

George Gabauer tells me that it was a bitter cold December night in 1977 when three future Cliff Dwellers ventured to the southeast side of Chicago to witness a highpoint in the architectural history of our city. That evening Bill Drennan, Mike Deines and George stood in the Yukon freeze and witnessed the moving of the Widow Clarke House, Chicago's oldest structure to a new location in the Prairie Avenue District.

Built in 1836, it was raised up and over "El" tracks on the Englewood-Jackson Park line. George, once his fingers thawed, penned tonight's tribute. George, tell us about it.

## **Richard Reeder CD'13 -- A Visit from Studs Terkel.**

Richard Reeder is an author, college instructor and all around literary bon vivant. He facilitates our wonderful Cliff Dwellers book club that meets once a month on Saturdays. Richard is the President of the Chicago Literary Hall of Fame and was the moving force behind the Saul Bellow Centennial celebration in Chicago last year. At a memorable event at The Cliff Dwellers this past winter, Richard played Studs Terkel in character. Playing Studs once again, Richard will now read an excerpt from Studs Terkel's book "Working."

**Bill Bowe CD'97 -- Rap Poem by Eve Moran.** One of our tireless organizers for tonight was Eve Moran. When she ran into a conflict and couldn't be sure she'd be here, she asked me if I'd read the rap poem she wrote. I told her that asking me to recite a rap rhyme was akin to asking George the Sixth to recite, "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers." I said I'd probably make a fool of myself. That's when she did a fist pump and said, "Yes!" So be it. What does she know.

### **Rock on Cliff Dwellers**

Rock on Cliff Dwellers  
Don't you stop  
Rock on through the evening  
Party till you drop

You better move fast  
Raise hands to the sky  
Step to the left  
Don't ask why

Zivio I say  
Rules the day  
Zivio's the way  
Hooray! Hooray!

Rock on Cliff Dwellers  
Don't you stop  
Rock on through the evening  
Party till you drop

## **Trisha Ricketts CD'13 and Peter Hurley (Cobalt Blue) – Three Songs from “Darlin’ Bridget.”**

Trisha Ricketts received a lifelong love of music, the written word, the visual arts, and healthy arguing from her Irish Catholic family. Third of six children, she began penning short stories and poems from early on in her life, reading to her mother as she fixed dinner. Later she would teach English and Creative Writing in both Illinois and Kansas, a career that would span more than 30 years.

After receiving a 2010 scholarship in creative writing to the University of Edinburgh her passion for writing took off. Since then, she has had short stories published in *New Directions*, *The Slate*, *Meta*, *Realize* and *The Blue Hour* magazines and NPR’s “This I Believe.” Her love of the written word overflows into her love of music. A singer/songwriter, Trisha has written and performed her work in collaboration with Peter Hurley. Together they are known as Cobalt Blue. Trisha and Peter, please have at it.

## **Bill Bowe CD'97 – Closing Comments.**

Our move here in 1996 took place after disputes externally with the Symphony organization over termination of our Orchestra Hall lease and then internally within the Club as to the best spot to move to. Tonight we can symbolically say goodbye to that brief period of acrimony.

I have with me this quasi reproduction of a supposedly somewhat accurate imitation replica of what purports to be a Native American peace pipe. In a sign of the troubled times we live in, it is marked “Made in China.” After Trisha leads us in singing Zivio!, I invite you to join me in forming a circle by the fireplace and share a puff or two on the peace pipe with me. To ensure a sizable group sticks around, I plan to fill the bowl with the closest I’ve come to scoring medical marijuana – fresh oregano. I tried get a permit to buy real marijuana at a dispensary, but I was told blistered, calloused and hairy palms wasn’t an approved medical condition. Moral hazard they told me. What do they know.

Earlier we’d given brief thought to closing the evening by singing Zivio! outside Symphony Center. However, with only one elevator and so many of you three sheets to the wind, we’ll wrap things up right here, right now. Trisha, please lead us in Zivio!