

Favorite Writer

05-19-21014 by Harry Zirkelbach

As you know, each member of the Writers Group chooses a topics every few months. Last week I was caught by surprise; hadn't prepared the topic in mind, blurted out Favorite Writer.

You did well.

The topic is so broad that I wrote thousands of words in my mind and in notes, discarded everything.

So to begin, a story not meant to be offensive. This most handsome of men, living years ago, found women loved him immediately, never refused their attention. Later asked which love making was the most memorable , responded without hesitation, "The last."

This germ of truth tends to color all that mankind endures. The last piece of candy, the last movie, the last rebuke, the funny joke, and of course the writer of the most recent literature.

With that apology, this secondary tale. In July 1960, a Navy Reserve Patrol Squadron began a two week training duty in NAS Los Alamitos California. We were Reservists from Denver or Albuquerque. From that adventure, and the fact that my employer also paid me, I had extra money for a change, subscribed to The New Yorker. It survives to this day, 54 years later. Famous for authors appearing in print, the New Yorker opinions, and naturally what may be their forte, Cartoons.

The New Yorker publishes weekly. Most Americas' writers of the 20th, 21st Century have appeared here. The Editors strive for the best, bribe and cajole these talents, and when needed can be dictatorial editors regarding one word in a 20,000 word essay. Or even one pen stroke in a cartoon. Their editors demanded and received quality.

Those writers, most of whom I am only vaguely aware except by name, have directed by pen. I am thankful for this continuous education, modest price.

Independently, the The New Yorker has published a yearly Journal (includes cartoons too). Their example became my Journal also, both begun in 1981. The last New Yorker Journal bought in 1989.

Favorite writer?

Who has not enjoyed the two books attributed to Homer.

Then the Books of the Old Testament and the Gospels New Testament, with their many contributors. (Considered The Bible by just about everyone).

The Romans step into the picture with Julius Caesar, Virgil.

In the middle ages, Chausers' Canterbury Tales was a must read for decades; the first narrative in English, describing adventurers told nightly as pilgrims walked from London to Canterbury. Then William Shakespeare arrives becoming the Bard for everything.

Suddenly, the 19th Century; writers galore standouts; two are contemporaries, England's Charles Dickens, and America's Mark Twain. Stories and personages thrilling to all taking the time to read in their day; and yes, today.

Recently, I found John Steinbeck to my liking. His early short stories have been the center for writing courses; and the two novels, Grapes of Wrath and East of Eden, made into movies; books and movies standing the test of time.

Let me think. What did I read last?

Oh yes. The Liberator. Featuring Felix Sparks, one of Colorado's WW II heroes. That tale soon to be made into a miniseries for TV. Still a boy at heart, and living the story with him as I read, I'd like a bit part.