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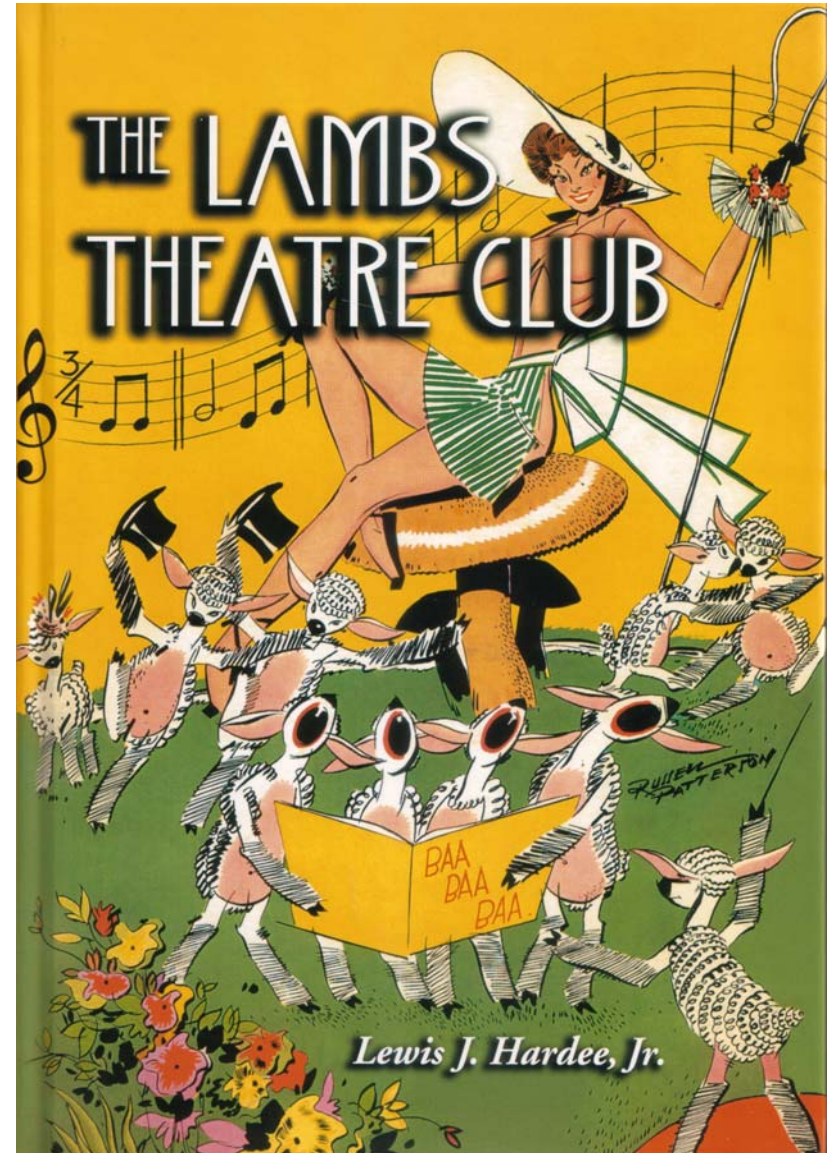


The Lambs'  
**Script**



A publication of The Lambs®  
*America's first professional theatrical club, established in 1874*

**Spring - Summer 2006**



## The Lambs' Script

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### Editor's Notes



Our cover for this issue is that of the first complete history of our club, *The Lambs Theatre Club*, published this spring by McFarland & Company. A celebration to kick-off the book was held at a Shepherd's Luncheon on June 19. Our cover story is by Gary Shapiro of *The New York Sun* who attended the event. The ad for the book that appears on McFarland's web-site states,

"Drawn extensively from The Lambs' official archives, and including many anecdotes from oral histories, this is the definitive history of the venerable club."

Nearly twenty years went into this work. Besides The Lambs' archives, major sources for the research were the Billy Rose Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library at Lincoln Center, The Museum of the City of New York and other institutions in New York, as well as the Theatre Museum in London. The book will be available for years through the publisher, [www.mcfarlandpub.com](http://www.mcfarlandpub.com).

This issue of *The Script* also includes an account of the Shepherd's Luncheon honoring Cliff Robertson in April, news of other club events, as well as our regular columns, and a report from David Dow Bentley III on his visit to the University of Texas, Austin, Ransom Humanities Library which purchased much of The Lambs' library in the 1970's. Davida Rothberg's *In the Fold* will appear in our next issue.

### It's a Gift!

- Terry Melfo has donated a 1944-1952 Blue Book for our archives, as well as interesting theatrical photographs and antique sheet music. Among the music is an original edition of "Garden of My Dreams" from *Ziegfeld Follies 1918*.
- The Actors' Fund has donated a very handsome and impressive volume, *Hollywood and Broadway*, by Darcie Denkert of the Fund.
- John Anthony Gilvey, who was guest speaker at an earlier Shepherd's Luncheon, donated a copy of his fine biography of Gower Champion, *Before the Parade Passes By*.
- Joyce Randolph has presented us with *Plays by Alan Browne*, the libretto of Terrence McNally's *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, and a play script for *Incorruptible* by Michael Hollinger.
- Bob Heffernan has donated a video tape in memory of his good friend and past Lamb, Maurice Johnson.
- Alice Dillon has given us the delightful book, *A Pictorial History of Vaudeville*, by deceased Lamb Bernard Sobel.
- Dennis Baker, PhD, Director, Flagler College Tallahassee Campus, has given us a scarce copy of the 1907 Blue Book (Constitution, By-laws, etc.). Only a photocopy of the document was previously available in our archives. Dr. Baker's father had rescued it years ago from a dump-site in Cohecton, New York. His mother had held onto it all these years. Dr. Baker also gave us an old quill-pen that had been kept with the Blue Book. Both the Blue Book and quill pen are valuable additions to our archive.
- Wally Munro has donated a 1946/47 *Lambs Script*, and a photo dating from 1928 of a Lambs gathering at the Savoy Hotel, London.

Many thanks to all these generous donors!



going to be a busy time for **Bernice Lee**. Her musical *Nellie* will be produced at the Street Performance Theatre in Nashville, Tennessee. The show, which received critical acclaim off-off Broadway in 1997 and 1998, will be directed by Ann Street Producing/Artistic Director, Jay Dorsey, Director of Nashville's Dramaturgy Project composed the music



and co-wrote the lyrics. I'm going to cross my fingers that it finds its way to New York again ...

**Sarah Zenis** will be doing a poetry reading in October ... **Scott Glascock** will be appearing in *Why We Shot John* by Walt Stepp, directed by B. Peter Westerhoff. The play runs September 7th through October 1st at Altered Stages on West 29th Street ...

Maestro **Don Pippin** (pictured here) keeps busy. On March 7th he conducted the Naples Philharmonic

Orchestra in a Tribute to Jerry Herman. Don is a collaborator, conductor and friend of Herman. During the concert Don also played piano, reminisced and even sang! Jerry Herman made an appearance and joined him and all the featured soloists to sing "Hello Dolly!" ... **David**

**Rothberg** is working with **Francis Anthony** on a new children's TV show, *Grandpa's Gee-Licious Garage*. Sounds like a winner ... **Marc Baron** just marked his 5<sup>th</sup> year as the voice of Screen Actor Guild's Casting Hotline. In March Marc was featured in an Associated Press article that ran in 256 newspapers world-wide, he was also on 6 TV news show and 20 radio shows – all about his expertise on the HBO show, *The Sopranos*. Marc just directed two episodes of *Talking Over Coffee*, a California based talk show – one episode was about The Lambs and the other about **Steve DePass**. Marc is pairing up again with **Richard Wolf**, directing a reading Richard's *Bookstore* at the York Theater November 1<sup>st</sup> ... On May 4, Cameo Productions presented "Abraham Lincoln's Music"—songs that sustained our nation throughout the Civil War.

**Jacqueline Kroschell**, its artistic director, led the cast of talented singers. Steve DePass was the Master of Ceremonies. The event was held at the Soldiers' Sailors' Marines' and Airmen's Club on Lexington Avenue ... The 12<sup>th</sup> annual All-Club St. Patrick's Day Celebration was held on Friday, March 17. Members enjoyed fabulous Irish Corn Beef and Cabbage Buffet. The Quinn Brothers provided lively entertainment ... **Bill Knowlton**, Syracuse, NY, a Life Member of The Lambs who first joined in 1968, has recently been installed in the Syracuse Area Music Awards (SAMYS) Hall Of Fame. Bill has hosted his three-hour Sunday night "Bluegrass Ramble" radio show for over 33 years, as well as the annual "Bluegrass Ramble Picnic," the oldest bluegrass festival in the State of New York.

## *The Lambs, Yesterday and Today*

by Gary Shapiro

(Reprinted by permission of the author, as published in  
The New York Sun on June 29, 2006.)

New Yorkers may not know that America's first professional theatrical club – The Lambs – meets regularly near Rockefeller Center. But they do. And they're well aware of their "rise and fall and rise again," as author Lewis Hardee Jr. describes in his book "The Lambs Theater Club" (McFarland & Company).

Mr. Hardee, who is former chairman of the musical theater department at Wagner College, spoke to the group last week. He told the story of the origin of the club; The Lambs began in 1874 as a dining club for actors. By the [second] decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it boasted luminaries from Irving Berlin to Will Rogers. The club declined into bankruptcy in 1975 but was relocated to 3 West 51 Street where it is today.

The group's name comes from an English critic and essayist, Charles Lamb, who worked as a clerk at East India House. He saw his friends becoming successful at writing plays and tried his hand at a farce called "Mr. H." The audience was filled with his friends. The curtain rose, the prologue went all right, but the only drama seemed to be what the real name of Mr. H was. (It was Hogsflesh.) After that, there was little to interest the audience. "From then on, it went downhill," Mr. Hardee said. The audience at Lamb's play began to hiss, jeer, and shout. "It is said that Lamb stood up and booed louder than any."

Lamb and his sister Mary were famous for Wednesday soirees, around which a glittering group of talented writers assembled, such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Wordsworth, Mary Shelley, and John Keats.

Mr. Hardee told about actor Henry Montague, who became America's first true matinee idol. Men copied his "Montague curl" hairstyle, and women swooned when he was onstage. Montague, who belonged to the London Lambs club, proposed the American Lambs club, while at Delmonico's on Broadway and 14th Street.

Throughout the years, the growing group had many "gambols," evenings of entertainment consisting of plays and skits. Some of these productions went on to Broadway or film such as "Stalag 17" and "Mark Twain Tonight," with Hal Holbrook.



Pictured above: Seated (L-R): Judy Lunde and Deidre Shaffer of Wagner College, Neil Gould, Keith Addy, Sandy Green, Martha and Bill D'Arbanville. Standing (L-R): Michael Blechner, Peter Monteleone and Scott Glascock.

Mr. Hardee pointed to one gambol in [April] 1925 that was a high water mark. The [cast] included Fred Astaire, W.C. Fields, and John Philip Sousa, among others.

Mr. Hardee's talk was interspersed with accounts of entertaining figures who had been members over the years, none more colorful than Wilton Lackaye, whose portrait is in the club. Mr. Hardee told how once Lackaye complained that nobody would produce his dramatization of "Les Miserables" based on Victor Hugo. "Can't you find somebody who can produce it?" asked John Drew. "Produce it?" replied Lackaye, "I can't find a manager who can pronounce it."

Mr. Hardee gave other examples of Lackaye's wit. A younger member of the club approached him and said, "How are you, Mr. Lackaye. I met you last week. Do you remember my name?" "No," Lackaye shot back, "but I remember your manners."

Actors Lionel and John Barrymore became Lambs club members in 1900 and 1905, following their father, who had been a member. Mr. Hardee told of some stories that have been passed on about John Barrymore's wit. About a play, Barrymore commented, "The curtain rose at 8:30 and the audience at 8:36." He said about one untalented actress: "She is the most trustworthy performer in show business. Yes. She'll

## News of The Lambs

By Gerry Ruth



It's been a busy spring and summer. **Linda Fields** was a smash in her *Cabaret on Park Avenue* in April. She looked and sounded great and the audience which included many Lambs and members of The Ziegfeld Club greeted her enthusiastically ... I was so pleased to see a review of **Lewis Hardee's** book, *Classic Southport Cooking*, published early in March, in *The New York Sun*. Lewis's latest book, *The Lambs Theatre Club*, was launched at our clubhouse with a festive Shepherd's Luncheon and book signing -- and within days it, too, was nicely reviewed in *The Sun*. (Read elsewhere in this issue.) ... Early June brought **Sandra Bendfeldt** to Don't Tell Mama. The audience was sprinkled with Lambs. **Chuck Prentiss** was in town, and he and **Sylvia Schwartz** stopped by to say hello to **Kathy Kelleher** and I as they left **Jan Waldman's** table. Sandy looked lovely, her musical selections were remarkable. She went from Jerry Herman to Cole Porter to Chuck Prentiss without batting an eye. Woody Regan supported her with his usual wonderful piano artistry ... In my diary the summer of 2006 will be known as the Summer of The Shooting Star Theatre. On three evenings of this long, hot summer **Helen Klass** and I braved the Second Avenue evening rush hour on the M15 South Ferry Limited bus from 57th Street to Peck Slip to reach the theatre by 8 o'clock curtain. The first evening we were tempted by **Camille Savitz** in her *Italian Dish: Diet Edition*. We'd both seen her act at The Lambs, but we agreed that our second helping was just as tasty. I loved her 'Diet' recipes, and intend to follow them for a cool weather makeover, knowing that she offers no guarantees. It was delightful summer evening. The following Tuesday, called by one and all the hottest day of the year, we tottered over the cobblestones to 40 Peck Slip and met several Lambs, including Linda Fields and Ellen Evans, preparing to mount the stairs for **Kathy Kelleher's** show, *Love Who You Love*. **Vivienne Gilbert** arrived minutes later. Kathy looked great in a stunning black sequined outfit. I had a hard time believing that the show was not a completely new vehicle. She, and Paul Chamlin at the piano, did a wonderful job. For our third venture we were joined by **Ellen Berry**. Surprise, surprise, our Woody Regan, master of the 88s, was transformed into an actor, playing the title role (and star) of *The Match Maker*. We all enjoyed it tremendously ... **Helen Klass** was a big hit at St Peter's Saturday entertainment for senior citizens. Her cabaret 'view of life' brought the audience to gather around her after show with wonderful words of praise ... The fall looks like it's

Lest we think that sexual politics are something new to the theatre, consider these pre-Revolutionary War plays I encountered: *The Suspicious Husband* (1770), *The Wonder!: a Woman Keeps a Secret* (1770), and *The Careless Husband* (1769). There was an 1820 edition of Sheridan's *The Critic; or a Tragedy Rehearsed*, which might make useful reading for this humble reviewer, "Donated by H. O. Watron 3/90". Other titles of interest included, *History of the American Theatre 1774-1797* (1896), a 1901 edition of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables* (1875), and a 1776 edition of John Dryden's *All For Love: or, The World Well Lost: A Tragedy*.

I found one especially interesting volume; the 1927 work *Reminiscences of DeWolf Hopper: Once a Clown, Always a Clown*. Fellow Lambs and readers of Mr. Hardee's history are well acquainted with the revered, turn-of-the-century Shepherd. The sixth and final chapter in Hopper's book is titled: "Wolfie Loves the Lambs." It is full of interesting tales of club members and activities, and some interesting background on the competing clubs: The Friars, and The Players. As a critic I found Hopper's description of Edwin Booth's (founder of The Players) vision for his club's composition: "Any male more than twenty-one years old in any way connected with artistic life, if only as a patron or connoisseur, [would] be eligible. Professional theatre critics, only, were barred." Hopper also described the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century organization, The Actors Order of Friendship of Philadelphia. Even the ladies of the early stage and their "Twelfth Night" club are referenced.

Hopper gives interesting insights into early labor struggles that touched the theatre, as was the case with the Actors' Strike of 1919. It was quite successful in establishing rights for performers due to, in large measure, the support of the many leading actors that comprised The



Lambs. The Lambs had its humble roots described by Lamb's poet laureate at the time of our club's Golden Jubilee:

"Hardly a man is alive no more  
who remembers that day in '74  
when five performers,  
none of them hams,  
got together and formed The Lambs."

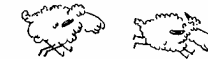
*Left: Margaret Tufts Tenney and David Dow Bentley at the Reading Room*

never steal a scene from anyone." About Algonquin Round Table member Edna Ferber's work, he quipped, "Well, once you put down one of her books, you just can't pick it up."

Mr. Hardee ended the talk with this anecdote about Barrymore:

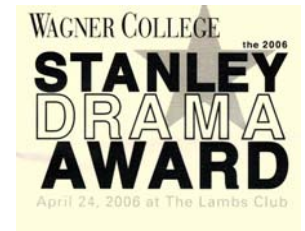
"When a Hollywood restaurant served him a lobster with one of the claws missing, he summoned the headwaiter. "Could you explain to me why this lobster has only one claw?" he complained. "Well, you see, Sir, they are kept in a tank, and they fight each other." "Next time," snorted Barrymore, "serve me the winner."

Earlier this spring, the club held a lunch for actor Cliff Robertson; its current members include Broadway conductor Don Pippin, as well as Joyce Randolph, who played Trixie in "The Honeymooners," and who was present for the talk.




### *Stanley Drama Award Ceremony*

For the eighth consecutive year, on April 24, The Lambs hosted the Annual Stanley Drama Award Ceremony. This year's event was in the Grand Salon of our clubhouse facility. The presenter for this year's award was Broadway director Drew Scott Harris. The recipient of the 2006 Award was Richard Aellen for his two-act play *Farmers of Men*.



The Stanley Drama Award, administered by the Theatre Department of Wagner College, was established in 1957 by Mrs. Alma Timolat Stanley to encourage and support aspiring playwrights. The award carries with it a monetary prize as well as the distinction of joining an illustrious list of past Stanley Award winners that includes playwrights such as Lonnie Elder III, Megan Terry, Adrienne Kennedy, Jonathan Larsen, and Terrence McNally.

## *A Proclamation!*

 On May 9<sup>th</sup> the Mayor of New York City, Honorable Michael J. Bloomberg, issued a proclamation naming May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2006, “Lambs’ Day” – in honor of the anniversary of the incorporation of The Lambs in 1877. The proclamation reads,

“Office of the Mayor, City of New York Proclamation

“Whereas: New York City owes much of its vitality to the theatrical community, which since 1874 has been represented by The Lambs. As America's first professional theatrical club, The Lambs boasts a rich tradition as the social gathering place for men and women in the entertainment industry, including performers, directors, writers, and technicians. The club remains a place where members can enjoy the company of their peers and hone their craft.

“Whereas: Since its founding, more than 6,000 Lambs have raised a toast to the club's motto, Floreant Agni – “May The Lambs Flourish.” This renowned group includes such greats as Fred Astaire, Irving Berlin, W.C. Fields, and Will Rogers. These famous members would be pleased to know that The Lambs Foundation continues to support worthy charitable endeavors.

“Whereas Oscar Wilde said: “I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being.” The distinguished history of The Lambs is a vindication of Wilde’s sentiment, proof of theater’s continuing relevance and vitality. Today we celebrate the 129th anniversary of the club’s official incorporation in 1877. New York City takes this opportunity to commend The Lambs on its many cultural and charitable contributions.

“Now therefore, I, Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor of the City of New York, in recognition of this important anniversary, do hereby proclaim Tuesday, May 9, 2006 in the City of New York as “The Lambs’ Day.”

*(Signed and marked with the official seal of the City of New York)*

## *Lone Star Library for The Lambs*

*by David Dow Bentley III*

[www.ThePeoplesCritic.com](http://www.ThePeoplesCritic.com)

**H**aving graduated from the University of Texas, my interest was piqued when I heard rumors that a significant collection of The Lambs’ Library had found its way to my alma mater during The Lambs’ bankruptcy of the 1970’s. I began to correspond with Texas University library, specifically with Margaret Tufts Tenney, the knowledgeable Head of the Reading Room at the university’s Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center in Austin. This summer she welcomed my visit providing helpful information regarding The Lambs’ materials.

The Ransom Center is a secure environment for rare manuscripts, works of art, photographs and book collections. Before I could enter the exclusive “Reading Room,” I had to undergo a formal registration process then view an extensive video on the proper handling of library materials. (*ie.* The use of velvet “cradles” to support the book being viewed, and weighted velvet “snakes” to hold the pages open without touching them). Thus armed, I ventured into the inner sanctum where Ms. Tenney directed me to a large wooden tray which held the cards for The Lambs’ collection. Each card was specifically labeled with “The Lambs Club (New York).” Ms. Tenney was kind enough to supply me with a complete bibliography of the collection, which I shall entrust to our Club historian, Lewis Hardee, so that it may be retained for the reference of fellow Lambs. Interestingly, Mr. Hardee’s recently published history, *The Lambs Theatre Club*, had been added to the Ransom’s collection just prior to my arrival.

During my visit I viewed some interesting treasures, all of which were marked for “use in library only.” My first selection was a 1769 publication of *The English Theatre in Eight Volumes*, subtitled “Containing the Most Valuable Plays, Which Have Been Acted on the London Stage.” Despite the loose binding of its leather cover — and evidence of dampness through the centuries — the overall book condition was quite good. There was interesting use of both red and black ink in its printing, as well as liberal elegant engravings illustrating such works as Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*. Like many of the volumes in the collection, this had the special Lambs’ Club book plate. The inscription appeared to read “Presented to The Lambs club by J. A. Roweland.” The name G. P. Dodge was inscribed as presenter to The Lambs of volumes of *The Works of Ben Johnson* (1838), and *Dramatic Works of William Shakespeare* (1866).

### *P's and Cues!*

The management of 3 West reports that room rates will be going up. As of September 1<sup>st</sup> member rates will be \$155 (plus taxes); non-member rates will be \$205 (plus taxes). Members are reminded that, for room or dinner reservations, or questions on your monthly bill, call the 3 West management at (212) 582-5454.

### *Another Lambs Membership Benefit*

**T**he Lambs is pleased to announce another benefit for its members. We are now an accredited associate of the Actors' Federal Credit Union. Normally, only those who belong to the professional unions such as SAG, Equity, AF of M etc. are qualified to join. Now Lambs may open an account! Thanks to AFCU's Stephen Sabotta for his assistance in making the arrangements.

Those interested in opening an account need only to present their Lambs membership card at the AFCU offices at 165 West 46<sup>th</sup> Street.

In addition to savings and checking accounts, the AFCU offers good loan rates, free ATM's, low-cost internet access, and more. Visit the credit union's web site at [www.actorsfcu.com](http://www.actorsfcu.com). Brochures are available at The Lambs' clubrooms. If you wish a brochure, let us know.

### *Trixie Honored*

Joyce Randolph was honored at the 2006 Heart-to-Heart Awards from Encore Community Services, which is part of the actors' chapel, St. Malachy's. Joe Benincasa, President of the Actors' Fund of America,



presented the award on April 24th. The photo here shows (l.-r.) Fran Gaar, Peter Kingsley, Joyce Randolph and Alice Dillon.

### *Lambs Foundation Honored*

**T**he Lambs Foundation was honored by the Episcopal Actors' Guild on June 15<sup>th</sup> in gratitude for a recent grant by the Foundation. Guild President Beth Holland (a Lamb) presided over the Guild's 2006 Annual Meeting and presented the certificate to Shepherd Bruce Brown, noting the Foundation as a member of George Holland Society. Attending the meeting on behalf of The Lambs were Treasurer Robert Winter-Berger, Corresponding Secretary Peter Kingsley, and Boy Marc Baron. Other Lambs—who are members of the Guild—and in attendance were Gene Smith, Bernice Lee, Elowyn Castle, Sylvia Schwartz, Lynn Rogers, Louis Rachow, Nils Hanson, Guild Treasurer Scott Glascock, Guild Recording Secretary Kay Arnold and Aaron Frankel. George Holland was elected to The Lambs in 1893, and was one of a long list of Hollands that have populated the Club over many years.

### *More Reciprocity*

Members of The Lambs have yet another club that offers reciprocal privileges, The University Club of Pasadena. If you plan to visit, ask a Lambs' officer for a letter of introduction and present it on your visit. More information on the University Club is available on their website [www.universityclubpasadena.com](http://www.universityclubpasadena.com). You may also find a link to all reciprocal clubs on The Lambs' website: [www.the-lambs.org](http://www.the-lambs.org).

### *Lambs Artwork Inventory*

Lambs Terry Wells and Gini Dustin have undertaken a thorough inventory of our club's extensive collection of paintings, drawings, sculpture and other memorabilia. This ambitious project so far has documented about 400 items. Their work will lead to a printed guide for those visiting the 5<sup>th</sup> Floor.

### *Welcome to The Fold !*

We are pleased to welcome the following new members: **Martha Arnold**, a talented singer sponsored by Scott Glascock; **Terry Chester Shulman**, theater historian and writer living in Richmond, Virginia; **Mary Gilbert**, actress; **Paul Fowlie**, an audio/video engineer and producer; **Candy Benge**, actress/singer; Rev. **Gerardo Ramirez-Miller**, **Eric McCann**, attorney and writer; **F. Eugene Reil**, a harbor pilot; and Honorary Member **Cliff Robertson**.

*Luncheon Honors Cliff Robertson*

On April 19, 2006, a Shepherd's Luncheon featured the Academy Award winning actor, Cliff Robertson. An excited crowd gathered over a lavish buffet and listened to Cliff reading a piece he called "Dumb Luck," which he wrote specifically for our luncheon. He was very gracious signing programs and posing for photos. After his reading Cliff was presented with an Honorary Membership to The Lambs.



*Cliff reading "Dumb Luck"*



*Cliff and Abe Vigoda*



*Cliff, Billie Stewart, Jennifer Johns and Victoria Reed chat.*



*Cliff with Peter Kingsley and Richard Wolf.*



*Cliff and Joyce Randolph*



*Cliff talking with Robert Winter-Berger, James Merrill and Lewis Hardee.*



*Collie Marc Baron presents Cliff with a Certificate of Honorary Membership to The Lambs*