

# UB professor animates Twain discovery

By TOM BUCKHAM

News Staff Reporter

The more Victor Doyno talked about the discovery of the long-missing first half of Mark Twain's manuscript of "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," the more animated he became.

"My mouth got dry. I felt a pulse in my head. It was absolutely a shock reaction," said the University at Buffalo professor and Twain scholar, recalling the moment he learned from his friend William H. Loos that Twain's handwritten pages had turned up in the attic of a Los Angeles home.

As Doyno spoke, his hands moved excitedly at the memory of the 1990 discovery, widely considered one of the most important in American literary history.

That was exactly the kind of spirited evocation Joan Owens, director of an upcoming television program on the "Huck Finn" discovery, wanted.

In fact, Doyno was so lively during taping this week in the Central Library that he was asked to do a second take — the better to capture his hand movements.

Ms. Owens, accompanied by camera and sound technicians from Andrew Soltz Productions of Los Angeles, came to the library's Mark Twain Room, where the complete manuscript is kept, to interview Doyno as

well as Loos, the library's rare books curator, and Patrick E. Martin, attorney for the Library Foundation, who played key roles.

The manuscript's discovery, 105 years after it was lost, will be explored in a 13-part series called "The Hunt for Amazing Treasures," scheduled to air early next year on the Learning Channel. Subjects will range from the raising of the Confederate submarine Hunley from Charleston Harbor to the discovery in an English country home of a page from George Washington's never-delivered inaugural address.

Loos, like Doyno a Twain expert, was the first person in Buffalo to learn the long-lost half of the manuscript, which Twain willed to the library in the late 1800s, had been uncovered in California and was about to be auctioned in New York City.

It was found in a steamer trunk by a granddaughter of John Fraser Gluck, the library trustee who received the manuscript from Twain but died before he could have the pages bound.

After learning of the impending auction at Sotheby's, the library quickly asserted its claim to the new-found leaves, blocking the sale.

A 17-month legal battle over ownership concluded

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SHARON CANTILLON/Buffalo News

William H. Loos, right, discusses recovery of the missing first-half of "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" with Joan Owens and Patrick E. Martin.

## Twain: Lawyer describes events as 'amazing experience'

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in a three-way settlement among the library, the New York City-based Mark Twain Foundation and Gluck's granddaughter and her sister, who also lives in California.

Once the library took possession of the coveted pages, Martin, who taught English at UB and was steeped in Twain before he became a lawyer, negotiated the sale of publishing rights to Random House.

"I remember discussing Twain with Leslie Fiedler and Vic Doyno, never having any idea I'd have this involvement," Martin said during his turn before the camera.

The manuscript's return to its rightful home "was an amazing experience," he said.

Ms. Owens, who before coming to Buffalo had tape a voice-only interview with Gluck's granddaughter — who has sought to remain anonymous — was drawn to the story by the discovery's accidental nature.

"It came about in a very prosaic way," Ms. Owens said. "She had not known (her) grandfather, who died when she was 7. She thought the trunk was filled with a lot of personal effects and had no idea what he had done for the Buffalo library.

"And there the manuscript was all along, right on top."