



## Symposium on Peer Learning

Over the last few years, members from MCLL and the Community Learning Centres (CLC) have built up an exciting new partnership to promote the peer learning model. After many meetings and discussions the idea of holding a forum was conceived, an afternoon which would bring together people from the regions who had already set up or were contemplating initiating peer learning groups, as well as Montrealers interested in this model of learning who could become potential new members of MCLL. Consequently on November 19th of 2012, a Symposium/workshop took place which featured a simulated study group to demonstrate how to apply the model. Round table discussions were followed by talks on how to set up peer learning group in other areas, as well as how to moderate a study group effectively. At the close, a general discussion ensued reflecting upon the afternoon and how next to proceed. Approximately 60 persons attended from over 20 organizations (including MCLL members who assisted in presenting and supporting the model). We learned that three sites are up and running using the peer learning model, and that two others are in the planning stage. CLC Coordinators were interested to learn about the model, and there are definite hopes for more activity in various areas across Quebec. Judging from the evaluations, the event was a success with some recommendations for improvement for a next round.

Astri Thorvik



**Coming-up**  
**AGM**  
**Friday, March 15, 2013 at 1.30 p.m.**  
**Le Nouvel Hotel**

The AGM will be preceded by the Moderators' Lunch at 11.30 a.m.. Our speaker this year is **Isolde Lagacé**, General and Artistic Director, Music, at the Montréal Museum of Fine Arts, and responsible for the music and concerts in Bourgie Hall. She will talk to us on "Music at the Museum".

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Your Council and committees have been working hard on plans, projects and activities to attract new members and at the same time improve the services to you. Here is an update on some of these. We have finally equipped room 245 with a smartboard, computer and DVD equipment, similar to that in room 241. It is already in use by the study groups in that room. Room 245 also has a web conferencing capability, for which we plan a pilot test soon. Although we approved the equipment for this room last June, it was not installed until late November and therefore only ready for the winter term.

In October we held our biennial workshop, which was attended by 87 members and judged a great success. The theme was *Innovation and Involvement*- a reflection of the need for MCLL to innovate to continue its long-running success and the deep involvement of members in making this happen. Participants had an opportunity to discuss key questions of importance to MCLL in small groups, and the discussions were very animated and engaging. Our thanks go to Robbie Robinson and his team for planning and running the workshop.

Recommendations coming out of these discussions were submitted to Council in November and resulted in the creation of a new Membership Committee and an increased focus on electronic communications and social media. The Membership committee's prime responsibility is to increase the membership and to keep current members. Previously, membership responsibility was spread among a number of committees, with the result that no one gave it priority.

As part of our 'spreading the word' efforts, a symposium was held in November jointly by MCLL and community learning centres from across Québec. MCLL presented our 'peer learning model', demonstrated how we use it, and discussed how to set up peer learning groups.

We have recently approved a project to create a program database with detailed information on study groups and lectures to provide a cost-effective way to market the MCLL program and to maintain contact with former members by mail. It will automate much of the internal work of producing the term calendar

for members, as well as a mini-version for wider distribution.

As part of the initiative to reach a wider group of potential members, we have started a project to contact organizations and companies who have pre-retirement programs, to make them familiar with MCLL and what we can offer their retiring employees.

Colin Hudson

## REPORTS

### CURRICULUM COMMITTEE



Halfway through the Winter Term, we are busily preparing the Spring Term. There have been some changes in the committee. Sandra Frisby has stepped down, and Carol Treamaine and Dennis Creamer have joined it. We look forward to successful completion of the Winter Term and a rich program for the spring. It will be time for some outings, and for the Garden Exchange.

We are pleased to report that members have been flocking to the new Tech Savvy sessions initiated by Chantal Tittley. These provide a structured framework for members to learn how to use the new technologies that surround and frustrate us. We have also been working with the IT and Communications Committees to develop less expensive methods of providing members with printed versions of the Calendar. You should see these appear for the fall Calendar, and you will see us introduce a new concept of study group styles. This will allow us to provide you with a single letter to signify the type of participation that is expected of participants in a Study Group. We hope this will make it easier for you to select the study groups that suit your style of learning.

Paul Terni

### COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE



MCLL now has new visual identity with which I am sure many of you are already familiar – three figures and the slogan "for the joy of it". We now have all the tools necessary to promote our organization – new calendars, banners, posters and all the trimmings! The Communications Committee has been busy on your behalf. The Speakers' Bureau is up and running and we hope to expand it beyond

libraries into other venues. We have a very talented group of speakers on our rostrum and the more we promote them, the more we can attract new members to our unique community. A new era is upon us and we are looking for candidates for our committee with IT skills who will help up to promote MCLL in the technological era – so please step up to the plate if can help MCLL into the new millennium.

Astri Thorvik

## EDITORIAL



Published three times a year, *The Courier* continues to highlight the constellation of people who become MCLL moderators and to provide pertinent information about the organization's study groups and many popular events and activities. We, the editors, also strive to showcase MCLL thinking and creativity. Beyond just listing people, events and dates, we try to disseminate reliable and topical information that we believe would be of interest to the membership.

We would like *The Courier* to be a good read, reflecting, through articles by MCLL members, a wide range of interests and opinion. These articles can be professional in nature or a bit more personal, as long as we think their subject matter would appeal to our readers. We have had positive feedback on the synopses of books published by our author members. We encourage our yet unknown authors to step forward. There is room in our publication for commentary, discussion of issues and constructive criticism as well as for praise or promotion. If you are interested in submitting an article please let us know.

I want to thank the newsletter committee members and all the other contributors to this edition of the Courier. Looking forward to receiving your ideas and contributions.

Charlotte French

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I was so glad that I organized my schedule to attend Brian Webb's lecture on Camillien Houde at the Atwater Library. It was terrific! I thank him for linking his talk to MCLL. I think this is a wonderful way to introduce people currently outside of MCLL to the organization. It builds on the strengths of our study groups and moderators. Bravo to Brian and all of the MCLL members who supported this initiative. I

so enjoyed the talk and marvelled at his use of technology! The Alys Robi segment was a pleasant surprise. He also made a link to present-day city politics which made it all the more relevant to our daily lives in Montréal. I was so proud to be an MCLL member and I am sure that he inspired everyone who was there.

Marlene Chan

## MODERATOR PROFILES

### Jan Henry Morgan



Jan Morgan is one of our newer Moderators, who in the spring will be co-moderating, "The Computer and the Future of Education" with Paul Leong. Jan is certainly qualified to moderate such a study group, having spent forty-five years of her working life in the educational field. After thirteen years as a teacher and principal in community and regional high schools she was employed by the Québec Ministry of Education to work for DIGEC, organizing English-language CEGEPs. After opening Vanier College, Jan left the ministry and worked in administration at both McGill and Carlton Universities and taught at the Master's level.

Her final years of paid employment were with the Kativik School Board of Arctic Québec where she was the first Director of Education Services and Deputy Director General. After early retirement in 1982, she researched and wrote a series of three historical novels entitled: "A Chronicle of Lower Canada". These were published, can be found in many libraries, and will soon be available on line.

As if this is not enough to fill a life, after retirement, in Arundel (where her father had had his medical practice), she became a commissioner for the Laurentian Regional School Board and president of Rouge Net, a non-profit company to develop use of computers in the upper Laurentians.

She also was very active at St. Margaret's Home in Westmount and in 2005 was hired to manage their application for government certification. Jan and her husband now live in Westmount Manor (where she doesn't have to cook) and enjoy the freedom to come and go and participate in MCLL activities. What an extremely busy, rewarding life! She has much to add to our roster of moderators.

Mebbie Aikens

## **Colette Vidal**



Colette was born in the South of France near the city of Toulouse. She trained as a dress designer and worked in that field for 14 years, first in Paris, then in London, England, where she lived for five years and learned English. In 1970 she immigrated to Canada and settled in Montréal where she has lived ever since.

Once here, Colette left the fashion business and went to university, obtaining a BA in Sociology from Concordia and an MA from McGill. Following her graduation, she worked at the Native Friendship Centre of Montréal (NFCM) for six years, becoming Director after two years. Colette then taught Sociology at Champlain College but, realizing that all the tenure tracks were filled, she changed direction. She returned to McGill and got a teaching diploma in English and French as second languages. She taught FSL at Royal West Academy, then ESL at Collège Stanislas in Outremont for four years at both primary and secondary levels. She then went to Collège Marie de France where she remained as an ESL teacher (secondary level) until the end of her career.

Retiring in 2005, Colette discovered MCLL and has been with us ever since then. "MCLL made my transition to retirement a breeze", she says, "it has kept the old brain going, it gives my life a much needed structure and makes me get up in the morning, especially when it's freezing out there!" Colette has written poetry and is now venturing into short stories with a couple of them accepted in anthologies. She will be co-moderating a study group in the spring session on the Walrus Magazine with Chantal Tittley.

Charlotte French

## **Chantal Titley**



Chantal was born in Ottawa, moving to Montréal after her studies at a women's college affiliated with the University of Ottawa. At different times of her life she lived in London (England), Calgary (Alberta) and in Alsace (France). Her initial career was in retailing with the T. Eaton Co. where she was director of public relations for Eastern Canada and national fashion director.

In the late seventies, she branched out working as a freelance marketing and communications consultant in a variety of fields. In parallel, she taught courses in communications and trend forecasting and wrote

articles for consumer and trade publications. While her interests are wide-ranging, she has a passion for all forms of art, native cultures and crafts. This led her to work for the Canadian Executive Service Organization (CESO) as a volunteer consultant in developing countries on four continents. Chantal has been active at MCLL since joining in 2009. She has taken part in the SPEAK program and has worked as a volunteer in the office. She is a member of the Curriculum Committee and has played a role in the development of Tech Savvy workshops. After presenting two lectures, Chantal decided to try her hand moderating and will work with Colette Vidal's Walrus study group in the 2013 spring session.

Charlotte French

## **Paul Leong**



Although Paul Leong was born in Macau – in the year when a princess became Elizabeth Regina II, he lived most of his childhood in the then Crown Colony of Hong Kong. His family felt that the grass was greener over there under the 'jolly good old chaps'. *Rule Britannia!* At age ten, in the year when Britannia ruled a new wave with the debut of the Rolling Stones and James Bond, he and family emigrated to Mozambique, still in search of greener pasture in the African savannah! Fourteen years later, thanks to McGill University's Bachelor of Commerce Program, he landed alone at Mirabel Airport on Christmas Eve in 1976. He has lived in the Montréal area ever since (except for two years in London, Ontario where he studied for his MBA at the University of Western Ontario).

For the greater part of his career Paul was a Canadian investment advisor with RBC-Dominion Securities. Then, in the fall of 2007, realizing that RBC did not stand for 'Run by Chinese' as he says, and taking into account Cincinnatus' tenet, *Been there, done it, go home*, he mentioned he had experienced an epiphany. So, *carpe diem*, he decided to retire and opted for Freedom 55!

Thanks to Debbie Mercier of the McGill School of Continuing Studies who introduced him to George Latimer, then President of the then MILR, he became a member of this community in the fall of 2009. He has participated in many study groups with great enthusiasm. "Does the McGill Community for Lifelong Learning (MCLL) confer its own MBA (for

Memorable Balanced Alternative)?”, Paul asks. “Yes, you can *bank* on it!” says the retired banker.

Paul recalls these apt quotations from his missionary teachers. From Horace’s *Ode*: “*Eheu! Fugaces labuntur anni*” (Alas! The fleeting years slip by.) and from Virgil’s *Aeneid*: “*Forsan et haec olim meminisse juvabit*” (Perhaps someday it may be a pleasure to remember even these things.)

*Above text transcribed from an interview with Paul Leong.*

## Dennis Creamer



Dennis Creamer, who is co-moderating two courses, one on World War 1 with Paul Terni, the second on the UP Series, the British mini-series about the seven-year interviews with 14 selected children who have now reached the age of 56. He is well equipped to head up both these groups: he himself was born in England, which certainly had its role to play in the Great War, and grew up there.

After graduating from London University with a degree in Civil Engineering in 1960, Dennis, like so many Brits, went out to Australia for four years but, fortunately for MCLL, moved to Montréal in 1968. Working at first with Shawinigan Engineering, then taken over (in 1982) by Lavalin which later ‘fused’ (in 1991) with SNC/Lavalin. He traveled widely, mainly as a hydroelectric engineer working on dams and generating stations in over 20 countries scattered throughout the world. Reassuringly, he emphasizes that he retired from SNC/Lavalin definitively in 1997 and hence is quite clear of all the current corruption stuff. Furthermore, he never did sign the firm’s Code of Corporate Ethics! The expertise he built up there enabled him to carry on as independent consultant for several years during his extended semi-retirement.

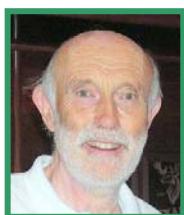
Dennis has become quite heavily involved with MCLL. First he joined two study groups, namely Macroeconomics and Geopolitics of Oil and Gas last April and enjoyed them so much that he signed on as moderator. In fall 2012 he steered a study group on Climate Change and co-moderated another on Hydropower.

An avid reader, Dennis also loves tennis but finds time to volunteer twice a week helping disadvantaged children do their homework. Before that he was an animator for an English-language workshop for immigrants. A busy man but not too busy to remain in

the background at MCLL. He is committed and we can only rejoice therein. Welcome Dennis.

Lesley Kelley Régnier

## LIVING IN INTERESTING TIMES



The famous Chinese curse about turmoil could hardly be more apt than when applied to the current economic situation. Economics was becoming a pretty boring subject in the closing decades of the twentieth century. Most economists who got any attention had little to say other than that the market was virtually infallible and, by corollary, government intervention and regulation only does harm.

It was a book by Joseph Stiglitz, a professor at Columbia University and a Nobel Prize winner, who rekindled my interest in economics by going against the conventional wisdom. As his title suggests, ‘The Roaring Nineties’ drew a parallel between the ‘everything goes’ attitude of the 1920s and that of the 1990s. Writing in 2003, he described dangerous trends accompanying the growing prosperity. Suddenly my 1960s era economics education no longer appeared redundant. Keynes is not dead but sleeping.

The storm broke in 2008. Potentially the threat of collapse was greater than in 1929. Notably, housing markets and private debt were still more important to the economy than stocks were in 1929. Given the spread of globalization in recent decades, problems in crashing markets were more likely to be contagious worldwide. However, damage was controlled by the swift responses of American authorities. A great depression was avoided; instead there was a ‘Great Recession’.

The fever was calmed in the most vulnerable parts of the US economy, but the world economy was still weak. This was particularly so in Europe where banks were more exposed than anyone realised and several economies were more fragile. Government capacity to intervene declined as public debt mushroomed, in Europe and in North America.

Unresolved problems have been compounded by premature and inappropriate government policies. Stimulus programs withered after 2010 as political climates changed. In the Eurozone, more time was spent in negotiation and punishment than in applying the swift and massive response seen in the U.S. Delay let problems grow out of control.

What next? Interesting times are not over yet. The Eurozone has not solved its problems and for several years the situation seems likely to get worse. The single currency is fundamentally flawed and will remain so until effective, coordinated governance is put in place.

Some emerging economies are showing signs of strain. Will China maintain growth? Probably, as long as it has a government that really governs, a feature all too often absent in some key Western economies.

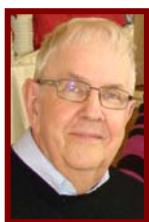
Even if the US economy hasn't fallen over the fiscal cliff there is less fiscal stimulus. Recent US economic indicators give hope of revival in the private sector. If this recovery fizzles out, the future looks grim for the US, for the world economy, and for Canada.

So far, Canada has done comparatively very well during this 'Great Recession'. However, now growth is slowing, the Canadian dollar is overvalued, debt levels are high and governments are less inclined to apply stimulus. The Québec public debt is at its limit. Low interest rates are distorting the economy. Let us pray for a strong US recovery that will increase our exports, GNP and government revenues. Until such recovery materializes, economics is going to remain a very important, fascinating and interesting subject to follow.

Tony Frayne

*Tony Frayne has been a member of MCLL since 2010. He obtained his first degree in economics from the London School of Economics and qualified as a chartered accountant. After obtaining an MBA from McGill University, he was an economist with Hydro-Québec and became a member of the Régie de l'Énergie. He retired in 2007 and has since done some consulting on electric energy rate setting in Africa.*

## Lecture on Camillien Houde



Recently, I gave a talk at the Atwater Library on the life of Camillien Houde, the controversial Montréal mayor. It featured guest appearances by, among others, Alys Robi, Brother Marie-Victorin, the King and Queen, Maurice Duplessis, Jean Drapeau and the Caron Commission. Mayor Houde was a man of contradictions. A Québec nationalist, he had an affection for the monarchy. A man with a strong sense of social justice, he tolerated corruption in his administration. Arrested in August 1940, he was interned until 1944 but was the first to apply for a certificate of Canadian citizenship in 1947. A family man, Houde chose not to live with his family however, but at the Mount Royal Hotel.

During the Depression, Houde instituted many make-work projects: the Botanical Gardens, chalets in parks, Beaver Lake, the Atwater and Jean-Talon Markets. And then there were the public restrooms. Known as "Vespasiennes", Montréalers called them "Camillienes".

Possessing a ribald sense of humour, when asked if he was building urinals, he replied "I am, and I am also considering building arsenals". Despite his faults, Houde had an underlying humanity, making him a fascinating figure in Montréal's history. Hugh MacLennan said of him: "No public figure has ever equalled Houde in his capacity to express Montréal's spirit ..."

I was delighted to be able to 'showcase' MCLL at the Atwater Library and demonstrate what an enriching program it is for so many of us.

Brian Webb

## Canadian Citizenship: Oath-Taking Ceremony



On Wednesday, January 30, 2013, our Ana Milic became a Canadian citizen as one of four hundred other new Canadians from 80 countries. Helen Forsyth and I went with Ana and attended the ceremony. It was a most impressive event presided over by former Citizenship Judge, Barbara Seal, who holds the Order of Canada medal and is on the Board of Governors of McGill's School of Continuing Education. All rose as the citizenship judge entered. She then addressed the crowd with words of encouragement and praise for the new citizens and for their willingness to enter what was a new life for each of them. Then the oath was sworn in both official languages, the same oath



Mebbie Aikens, Ana Milic and Helen Forsyth

many of us MCLL members have sworn as we became Canadian Citizens. After the national anthem, *O Canada*, was sung, names were called and each new citizen received his/her certificate from the judge. Ana said: "It was a great day and MCLL members, my Canadian family, made it even more special." We MCLL members all wish Ana a fulfilling, happy life as a Canadian.

Mebbie Aikens

## BOOK SUGGESTIONS by Pamela Sachs



### Non-Fiction

**The Search for Anne Perry** by Joanne Drayton (2012) hardback. Anne Perry was ousted in 1994 by the film “Heavenly Creatures.” Believing that it is time to move on,

Joanne Drayton focuses on her literary achievement and not on the crime. A must read for Anne Perry fans.

**You Could Live a Long time: Are You Ready** by Lyndsay Green (2010) paperback. Goes way beyond the usual aspects of retirement like finances and fitness to include chapters on Emotional Circle, Civic Engagement, and Legacy. In the chapter on the Brain there is a paragraph on MILR and peer learning.

**Team of Rivals** by Doris Kearns Goodwin (2012) paperback. A new edition of this book has recently been brought out. You will get a far fuller picture of Lincoln than you did in the movie. Nobody writes history more engagingly than Kearns Goodwin.

**In the Garden of Beasts** by Erik Larson (2011) paperback. A riveting account of Ambassador Dodds and his family awakening to the horrors of Hitler's Berlin, in the first period of Nazi ascendancy. Reads like a novel.

**The Untold History of the United States** by Oliver Stone and Peter Kuznick (2012) hardback. A critical overview of U.S. foreign policy during the past few decades. The chapter on nuclear danger is particularly significant. The book stands apart from the television series and has been widely acclaimed.

### Fiction

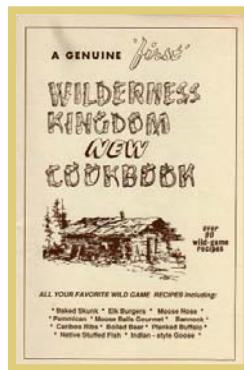
**How Should a Person Be?** by Sheila Heti (2012) paperback. A novel quite unlike any other, by a new young writer. Artlessly artful, a fresh new voice. Try it, it's interesting to note that Heti is currently writer-in-residence at McGill.

**The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel** by Deborah Moggach (2012) paperback. Just as funny as the movie, and there's more of it. A good read at this time of the year.

**Home** by Toni Morrison (2012) paperback. This slender volume is a major work encapsulating many of Morrison's themes from her previous novels.

**The Conductor** by Sarah Quigley (2012) paperback. The siege of Leningrad provides the backdrop for this ambitious novel about the first full performance of Shostakovich's Seventh Symphony. The composer himself is a major character in the novel.

## LE MOT FRANÇAIS: Cuisine exotique



Je me permets de reproduire, ici, un texte que j'ai présenté en 2010, devant le groupe *Littérature gourmande*, animée par la regrettée Michèle Barbeau-Monfette et mon épouse Thérèse.

Les voyages, c'est bien connu, forment la jeunesse. Au cours d'un congrès d'intervenants sociaux en milieu rural et

semi-rural, à Lakehead University, à Thunder Bay, en 1981, j'ai dû, pour me reposer, entrer dans quelques boutiques hétéroclites où j'ai découvert un petit bijou culinaire. Les participants à cette publication se nomment “Johnny Redsquirrel, Annie May Ratt, George Buffalo, Big Jim Bear, Moses K. Willowgrass, Beaver Joe Beaver, Tony Whitefish, Mary Laughingwater, Billy Joe Rain-In-The-Face, Jimmy Blizzard, Noolan Sparrow-Hawk and other unnamed Indian friends all over the North.” Le fascicule a été publié en 1972, 1976 et 1979 par Prairie Crafts à Saskatoon et s'intitule : *Wilderness Kingdom New Cookbook*.

Une des recettes m'a surtout frappé : la moufette braisée. Permettez-moi de vous la traduire : « La mouffette braisée est délicieuse et ces petits animaux au dos strié servent finalement à quelque chose. Pour manger de la moufette braisée au dîner du dimanche, il faut d'abord se procurer une moufette. Pas facile. Les trappeurs du nord recommandent la bonne vieille boîte piégée. Vous pouvez confectionner une de ces trappes et l'apporter à votre chalet. Vous serez ainsi protégés et nourris. Une fois la moufette capturee commence la plus délicate des opérations. Attachez une longue gaule au piège et, avec grande précaution, rendez vous au plus proche point d'eau pour y immerger la trappe et noyer la bête. Cette méthode n'est pas cruelle et permet, en même temps, de laver la moufette. Une fois l'animal mort, pelez la peau avec beaucoup de précautions et assurez-vous d'enlever, juste sous la queue, la vessie renfermant le liquide odorant car il pourrait affecter le goût de la viande. Une fois la moufette dépecée et coupée placez la viande dans une poêle et saupoudrez de paprika, de sauge, de sel et de poivre, ajoutez des oignons et cuisez jusqu'à ce que la viande soit tendre ... BONNE CHANCE!!! » Mignon, n'est-ce pas?

Paul Costopoulos



## Art in the Lounge

In his own words, John Ballard is self taught. Painting on and off for forty years, he would take his easel to the Tate and National galleries, meticulously observing and copying there works by the masters. This is amply evident from the painstakingly rendered icon which he included among his artwork shown in our lounge in the first half of the winter term. In retirement John now dedicates his time to painting local scenes in the Eastern Townships producing images that reflect his thoughts on art, news and life in general.  
Thèa Pawlikowska



June 13-16 participate in Bloomsday, an annual celebration of the life and work of James Joyce and of his most famous fictional character, Leopold Bloom. Montreal's 2013 festivities will include films, lectures, music, and public readings of the book, which runs to a quarter of a million words, and many find more enjoyable when heard rather than read. The Molly Bloom episode will be re-enacted on June 16 in a pub, with food and drink for the occasion. Events are being planned for McGill, the McCord, and four libraries: Atwater, Westmount, Côte St Luc, and Beaconsfield. Information: [bloomsdaymontreal@gmail.com](mailto:bloomsdaymontreal@gmail.com)

## Newsletter Committee

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