



McGill

School of
Continuing Studies
McGill Community
for Lifelong
Learning

The Courier

Fall 2012 Volume 23, No. 2



From left to right: Colin Hudson, MCLL President
Ron Smith, Professor Emeritus, Concordia University
Robert Robinson, Chair, Planning Committee



MCLL BIENNIAL WORKSHOP Innovation and Involvement Bright ideas put into action! Active participation! October 26, 2012



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



From Bloomsday to the start of registration, it was a quiet summer at MCLL. With the term now well underway, the number of study groups offered this fall and registration for them are almost same as last fall. Our registrations are only very slightly down, but

we are still well below the numbers of 4-5 years ago. Registration for lectures is excellent, reflecting the wide range of topics and speakers. The same holds for the Tech Savvy workshops, where a number of them will be repeated to accommodate the demand. Clearly our members want to be more up to date in exploiting the computer/internet world.

The large turnout at the moderators' meeting on September 13 produced lively discussions and suggestions about how we can improve and expand on peer learning in our study groups.

We are still waiting to install the "smartboard" and web conferencing in room 245. The order was placed months ago but the McGill purchasing process is incredibly slow and bureaucratic. We still hope to have it installed during this term.

Although we have put much effort into 'spreading the word' through communications, the video, Bloomsday, etc..., the most common source of new members is still through friends and personal contacts – as the survey at the recent Orientation meeting showed. This is fine and an effective means of attracting members but we are not acquiring enough new members to maintain our level of activity - study groups, lectures, and other events - and also remain financially viable.

One of the objectives of the Fall Workshop on October 26 was to come up with proposals to attract new members beyond the 'word of mouth' method. One new communications tool we now have and can exploit is the MCLL video, a great three-and-a-half-minute film which gives potential members a real appreciation of who we are and what we do. (There is a link to the video on the MCLL website). When the winter term calendar comes out in November, why not email it, along with the video link, to your friends and other people you think might be interested in joining us?

Colin Hudson

REPORTS

LONG-TERM PLANNING COMMITTEE



MCLL held its biennial workshop on Friday October 26 at Le Nouvel Hôtel. The theme was *Innovation and Involvement*, a reflection on the need for MCLL to innovate in order to continue its long-running success and for the

deep involvement of members in making this happen. The workshop was well-attended by almost 100 members, who valued the guest speaker, discussions and interaction with other participants, and a fine lunch in the hotel restaurant.

Dr. Ron Smith, professor emeritus from Concordia University, gave a presentation titled *Exploring Adult Education*. Drawing extensively on the research that has been performed in this area, he explained adult needs, motivations and learning styles. Many attendees recognized themselves in the descriptions he gave and gained a greater understanding of the various factors that contribute to successful learning in adulthood. It became very clear that there is no single way that suits all of us and that MCLL must maintain a healthy balance in its curriculum.

Meeting participants provided an opportunity to discuss key questions of importance to MCLL in small groups. Among the questions were those relating to better use of new communications technologies, becoming more dynamic and innovative, and reaching out to more diverse communities, all in view of increasing membership. The discussions were very animated and engaging and, in the view of many, were the highlight of the day. Recommendations coming out of these discussions will be synthesized into more detailed proposals which the Long-Range Planning Committee will take to MCLL Council at the end of November.

All in all, it was a productive and enjoyable day.

Robbie Robinson

ON-LINE REGISTRATION:



It's well worth trying!!

Speaking of "trying", many members have found their first attempts to register on-line very "trying".

But there are clearly a number of benefits to using the system:

- You will be getting registered ahead of those whose forms waiting to be processed in the office.
- You will see which study groups are full and make the final choice of 2 available groups yourself.
- You will have the opportunity to change study group choices before classes start.
- You can register even if you are out of town.

And it's not necessary to use on-line banking to pay your fees; you can put your cheque in the mail or bring it in to the office.

Didn't do it yet? Why not get going now?

The biggest hurdle to getting started with on-line registration is activating your e-mail address which is a cumbersome process. The registration process itself is straightforward but **you don't have to wait until registration opens to activate your e-mail address; you can do it at any time.** This is a one-time requirement. Once it is done you will be ready to register on-line for the winter or any future term. Instructions for how to get it activated are available at the office.

Of course, for all of you who still prefer the conventional way, no problem, the office staff will be pleased to provide their usual courteous and helpful registration services.

Fiona Clark

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE



The 2012 fall term is well underway and in general things seem to be proceeding smoothly. Proposals for the 2013 winter term are being received, and the winter calendar will be prepared shortly for distribution before the end of the fall term.

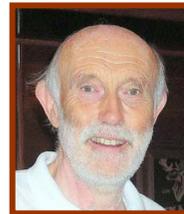
Many fall study groups were over-subscribed as usual, but we also have some under-attended study

groups, which the moderators dealt with in their own way.

The Moderators' Meeting, held on September 13, went very well and good suggestions were made on how to improve the "peer learning" aspect of study groups.

Paul Terni

MODERATOR PROFILES



Anthony Frayne

Tony Frayne, an MCLL moderator for the first time in the spring of 2012, has been a member since 2010. A native of Great Britain, he obtained his

first degree in economics from the London School of Economics and was accepted as certified accountant. After obtaining an MBA from McGill University, Tony was an economist with Hydro-Québec and with the Régie de l'Énergie du Québec. He retired in 2007 and has since done some consulting on electric energy rate setting in South America as well as in Africa.

He has participated in many MCLL study groups. In the spring and fall of 2012, he moderated a study group on world economy, with co-moderator Gaétan Mongrain, asking participants to discuss trends in world economy, after consulting international media. Tony is encouraged with the high level of presentations and discussion where MCLL members show interest and understanding. He is concerned that the consequences of the world economic crisis of 2008-09 may degrade before improving, and that the underlying causes have still not been addressed.

In Tony's view, the use of computers and audiovisual equipment can enhance the understanding of presentations and make them more interesting. He strongly recommends participants and presenters to become familiar with the AV equipment and to use it to enhance their presentations.

In addition, Tony is interested in improving public transport and is a member of the Board of Directors of Transport 2000, devoted to promoting more efficient and less polluting mass transit.

These interests do not deprive him of time for ski vacations; he has skied the US Rockies, the Alps, the Andes in Argentina and Chile and in New Zealand

Roch DesRochers

Margaret Benfield



Maggie Benfield grew up in England and attended London University where she read English. She did her Master's degree at Carlton University in Ottawa where she met, in a classroom of all places, the man who became her husband. She has since lived in Montreal where she raised three now grown-up children while teaching English at Champlain CEGEP for thirty-three years.

She retired fairly recently and it was David Schurman who told her about MCLL and recruited her to moderate the Ulysses Study Group last fall. They went on to do another James Joyce study group last spring, which led to the Bloomsbury celebration last June. The course now being given peruses what else was happening, in terms of literature, at the time Joyce was writing. The course covers the poetry of Yeats and Eliot along with Virginia Woolf's prose. It is hoped this will tie in to the Bloombury fest next June.

Mebbie Aikens

WALLENBERG SAVED HER LIFE



Long-time MCLL member and office volunteer Agnes Lörinczi Kent says simply that she would not be here today, a proud grandmother, if it had not been for Raoul Wallenberg. Among the tributes to the Swedish diplomat credited with saving as many as 100,000 Jews in Hungary during World War II, this 84-year-old Montrealer's eyewitness account was the most affecting. She told her story at a Wallenberg

commemoration held at the square named for him behind the downtown Anglican Christ Church Cathedral to mark what would be the Holocaust hero's 100th birthday.

Agnes recalled how from October 1944 in Budapest, she and her parents were forced by the Nazis and their Hungarian Arrow Cross collaborators to move into a "Jewish house," a four-storey apartment into which hundreds of families were crowded. Soon after that, her father, a doctor, and her uncle were taken away and sent on a forced march to Austria. Frequently, she could hear shots fired, as Jews were being taken to the banks of the Danube to be executed en masse. Somehow her mother obtained for the family four of the 12,000 "schutzpasses" issued by Wallenberg.

Under Swedish diplomatic protection, Agnes and her mother relocated to one of the more than 30 safe houses he set up. Her mother tried to send the coveted passes to her husband and his brother, only to learn it was too late: they had both been shot because they were too exhausted to keep walking. Leaving the safe house, she and her mother were given shelter by a gentile family until the Hungarian capital was liberated by the Red Army in January 1945.

"In the decades since, I have honoured the courage and humanity of Raoul Wallenberg... I thank him from the bottom of my heart," Agnes said. Two years ago, her son, Bruce Kent, said that he, his mother, his wife and their two teenaged daughters visited that apartment and safe house. "It was painful for my mother to remember, it was painful for all of us, but we must remember," he said.

The outdoor event, organized by a committee chaired by former Québec Court of Appeal justice Joseph Nuss, was also addressed by Peter Rona, whose parents also received the Swedish papers and survived. Rona is president of the Canadian Friends of Raoul Wallenberg and was executive director of the Raoul Wallenberg International Movement for Humanity, founded by the late Vera Parnes.

On another occasion, on October 25, 2012, Agnes was again invited to speak at a ceremony held by the Mayor of Montreal at City Hall, a posthumous recognition of Raoul Wallenberg as "Righteous among the Nations". Agnes repeated that she was deeply indebted to Mr. Wallenberg for saving her life.

Charlotte French

(With excerpts from Janice Arnold's article in *The Canadian Jewish News*, June 14, 2012)

AUTHOR: ALLAN SHERWIN



MCLL's Allan Sherwin is a retired physician whose clinical practice included work at a clinic responsible for the health of a First Nations community, which led to an appreciation of indigenous traditions. Allan has recently published a book,

Bridging Two Peoples: Chief Peter E. Jones, 1843–1909 (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2012).

Bridging Two Peoples tells the story of Dr. Peter E. Jones, who in 1866 became one of the first Canadian Status Indians to obtain a medical doctor degree. The Jones family included Native and non-Native members who treated each other equally. His Mississauga-Ojibwe grandmother is now honored for helping to survey Ontario while Jones's mother was a published author whose diaries documented the family's history.

In 1869, returning to his southern Ontario reserve, Dr. Jones opened a clinic in the non-Native community of Hagersville. He was then elected head chief and band doctor of the nearby Mississauga-Ojibwe reserve.

Jones was not just a breaker of barriers, but also a builder of bridges who used his medical skill to heal wounds far deeper than the skin. As secretary to the Grand Indian Council of Ontario, he became a bridge between peoples, conveying the chiefs' concerns to his political mentor Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald, most importantly during consultations on the 1876 Indian Act.

The third son of an Aboriginal missionary and his English wife, Peter E. Jones overcame paralytic polio and racial prejudice to lead his people forward. When Prime Minister Macdonald granted First Nations voting rights, Jones supported his efforts by publishing Canada's first Aboriginal newspaper. Appointed a Federal Indian Agent, a post hitherto reserved for non-Natives, Jones promoted education and enforced public health measures on his reserve.

But there was little he could do to stem the ravages of tuberculosis that cemetery records show claimed upwards of 40 per cent of the band. The virtual epidemic of tuberculosis on Jones's reserve was aggravated by extended families living in single-room, poorly ventilated cabins heated by a wood stove that exposed the inhabitants, especially women and children, to toxic fumes.

The First Nations courageously adjusted their lifestyles to deal with the massive influx of European newcomers who took over their lands. "There is another bridge in the book" says Sherwin, "...the one over which federal government funds are supposed to cross so they can be used to provide adequate housing on reserves. The tragedy is that even today similar appalling housing conditions exist on many northern reserves. The incidence of tuberculosis is nine times higher in First Nations than in the total population, with higher rates for on-reserve as opposed to off-reserve populations. Despite the enormous cost, government officials and Aboriginal leaders must work together to address this problem."

The informative appendix describes how Aboriginal women used herbal medicines and crafted surgical instruments from birch bark. There is a comprehensive bibliography and an index.

During the decade required to complete his book, the author witnessed the continued progress of the First Nations and admired their efforts to encourage students by means of mentoring programs and achievement awards.

Following the release of his book Sherwin speaks with emotion of a recent event in which he participated: "I was honoured by an invitation to present *Bridging Two Peoples* to a cultural conference of the Mississauga's held in the auditorium of their elementary school. When I realized there were students seated in the front rows, it seemed appropriate to speak directly to them rather than the adults. I told them about a little boy named Peter who had weak legs and walked with crutches. He decided to become a doctor and travelled on his own to the big city and attended medical school. The principal called for questions and a seventh-grader rose, asking, "How old was Peter when he decided to become a doctor?" I answered, "I can truthfully say, just about your age."

For more information about *Bridging Two Peoples*, please visit the Wilfrid Laurier Press website: www.wlupress.wlu.ca. You can this book at your local bookstore. Paragraphe Bookstore (McGill College Ave); Bibliophile Books (Queen Mary Rd) and the McGill Bookstore or online at www.chapter's/Indigo.ca or www.amazon.ca.

Charlotte French

(With excerpts from Allan Sherwin's dialogue with Erin Knight, Contributing Editor for *Open Books: Ontario*, July 26, 2012)

STUDY GROUP OUTING

A train ride to Shawinigan in May 2012



The group at Central Station before getting on the train.

On May 25, members of Andrew Macdougall and Robbie Robinson's Canadian railway history study group gathered early in the morning at Central Station to take the VIA train to Shawinigan. The class this year had studied Québec to the north and west of the St. Lawrence River, so a train ride to Canada's birthplace of hydro-electric power would be very appropriate.

We boarded our train, settled into comfortable seats and were soon heading west until, at Lachine, we turned east and passed between CN's Taschereau yard and CP's Saint-Luc yard. After traversing the north of the island we crossed the historic Châteauguay and the Northern bridge at the east end of the island and headed up to Shawinigan on the historic Canadian Great Northern track, on the way passing over the picturesque Sainte-Ursule falls.

At Shawinigan our train was met by a bus and we were transported to the "Cité de l'énergie" where, after our lunch, we were given a tour of an ancient hydro-electric plant. This plant has been converted by Hydro-Québec into a very interesting museum, where we were given demonstrations of super conductivity and molten aluminum.



The back cover of the current issue of Branchline Magazine has a picture of our train crossing the falls at Sainte-Ursule on May 25 - you may see yourself catching the view from a window! Isn't that amazing?

Next year's course will probably be about the Maritimes, which poses an interesting challenge in selecting an appropriate outing - any suggestions?
Andrew Macdougall

THE FRENCH CORNER



La question m'est posée si souvent, j'ai cessé de compter le nombre de fois. Combien comptons-nous de francophones au sein de MCLL ? Question claire et simple en apparence mais réponse assez complexe. Faut-il d'abord définir « francophone » parle-t-on d'un Québécois dit « de souche » donc avec un nom français et des ancêtres français directs au Québec jusqu'en 1608 ? Parle-t-on d'une personne dont la langue maternelle serait le français, langue encore parlée à la maison peu importe ses origines ou, encore, des gens dont le français, loi 101 oblige, devient la langue nécessaire de communication avec ses petits-enfants et ses arrière-petits-enfants inscrits dans les écoles de langue française où l'on apprend, tardivement, l'anglais ?

Étymologiquement, francophone veut dire « parlant français » mais en général, au Québec, le sens est plus restreint et prend un caractère nationaliste. Ainsi, dans ma famille élargie, de plus en plus rétrécie avec les années, j'ai toujours été un Grec, malgré ma mère dont l'ancêtre direct le plus lointain est arrivé de France en 1612. Donc, pour répondre à la question, selon l'angle de prise, devrait-on vérifier notre liste de membres de famille et compter le nombre de patronymes français ? Non, car certaines sont des épouses anglophones de personnes portant un nom français mais ne parlant pas le français. N'oublions pas non plus les femmes francophones de maris anglophones. À l'opposé, certaines personnes avec des noms allophones ou même à consonance anglaise sont francophones. Une chatte y perdrait ses petits.

Depuis 1995, année de ma première participation à MILR, je puis cependant témoigner d'une chose : dans nos corridors et salles de groupes d'études, je croise de plus en plus souvent des personnes capables de s'exprimer couramment en français. Le français est donc plus présent que jamais à MCLL et une forte proportion de nos membres le parle. Si vous voulez un chiffre, amusez-vous et faites le recensement.

Paul Costopoulos

Books for Giving and Receiving



Non-Fiction

The Table Comes First: Family, France and the Meaning of Food by Adam Gopnik (2012) Vintage paperback. A perfect book for this time of the year. Gopnik has been called a philosopher of food.

Scribble, Scribble, Scribble by Simon Schama (2012) paperback.. Something for everyone in this brilliantly readable collection of journalistic essays on a wide range of subjects.

Jerusalem: The Biography by Simon Sebag Montefiore (2012) Vintage paperback. Now out in paperback, this wonderful book is perfect for giving and receiving.

I'm Your Man: The Life of Leonard Cohen by Silvie Simmons (2012) hardback. A wonderfully rich and informative biography. A must read for all Leonard Cohen fans.

Lives of the Novelists: A History of Fiction in 294 Lives by John Sutherland (2012) hardback. Witty, insightful and thoroughly entertaining. The kind of book you might splurge on only at this time of the year.

Fiction

The 100 Year Old Man Who Climbed Out the Window and Disappeared by Jonas Jonasson (2012) paperback. Hilarious international best seller about a centenarian who runs away from an old people's home.

Capital by John Lanchester (2012) hardback. Finance in fiction. A compulsively readable novel about life in London after the financial meltdown.

The Song of Achilles by Madeline Miller (2012) paperback. In the tradition of Mary Renault. A beautifully written retelling of **The Iliad** from the point of view of Petroclus.

Dear Life by Alice Munro (2012) hardback. You probably won't want to give this away. Alice Munro has said "the final four not quite stories are the first and the last—and the closest—things I have to say about my own life".

Ru by Kim Thuy (2012) paperback. This strikingly original and poetic award winning autobiographical novel has now been beautifully translated into English by Sheila Fischman. Both the writer and the translator live in Montreal.

Pamela Sachs

A Tribute to Dorothy Dunkley



"We are all teachers, doers and learners" to paraphrase Richard Bach, author of *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*. This expression pretty well sums up the MCLL philosophy. It also brings thoughts of our dear Dorothy, who

taught me, among others I suspect, many life lessons just by being herself. Here are some of the lessons I learned from Dorothy.

1. Greet everyone with a smile, no matter how you are feeling. As soon as Dorothy set eyes on you, she would smile brightly. Now, who wasn't made to feel better and more cheerful as a result?

2. Keep learning! Dorothy and I first met in John Felvinci's study group on Regency England, and she shared with me her experiences in asking her children and grandchildren for help with her presentation - and splendid it was!

3. We all need help once in a while. Don't be shy or too proud to ask. Dorothy asked if I would lend a hand with the A-V while she presented her topic. That was an honour for me indeed; she inspired me as a role model for cooperative learning and sharing.

4. Join the party! In my mind's eye, I picture Dorothy on so many occasions – volunteering in the office and study groups, as well as at parties, teas and MCLL festivities. Dorothy knew that "life is a party" and she wanted to be there in the midst of all the fun.

Dorothy's positive attitude taught me to "see the flowers, not the fallen leaves; see the smiles, not the teardrops." (anon.) We will miss you, Dorothy, but rest assured that we shall strive to emulate you so that, when people see us, as it was whenever they met you, their hearts are gladdened.

Sharon McDonald

Dorothy was a member of the Newsletter Committee and we all miss her.

Newsletter Committee

Charlotte French, Editor

Lesley Kelley-Régnier, Secretary

George Lapa, Technical Support

Margaret Suttie, *ex-officio*

Francine Adelson, Mebbie Aikens, Paul

Costopoulos, Roch DesRochers, Sandra Duchow,

Eleanor Hynes, Thèa Pawlikowska, Pamela Sachs

View MCLL Newsletters at:

<http://www.mcgill.ca/conted/milr/newsletters>

ART in the LOUNGE



Andrée Lahaise is the Administrative Assistant and Building Manager of the MCLL campus building. Andrée is also a painter whose works have recently been exhibited in MCLL's lounge. Her favourite subjects for her artwork are landscapes that she passes through or even imagines. She paints in oil and acrylic using bright and vibrant colours. Andrée has participated in many solo and group exhibitions and symposiums.



MODERATORS' FORUM and LUNCHEON September 2012



Two former MILR/MCLL presidents, Ethel Kesler (1999-2000) and Anita Fochs Heller (1992-1993), proudly wearing their new MCLL name tags. Ethel has recently donated name tags with lanyards to all MCLL members. "I did it for myself" says she, "I like to know who I am talking to and who I am sitting beside, sometimes people whose name I should remember". Thank you, Ethel, for your attention to detail, allowing for amicable interaction among MCLL members.