

SOCIETY PAGES

NUMBER 35 ■ Summer 2012 ■ \$2.00



- FAREWELL TO DAVID F. BLAIR
- THE ADULTEROUS PASTOR
- MONTHLY GIVING

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GUIDED TOURS



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members and Friends,



When our past president, David Blair, left office in March 2012, he left us with a legacy we can be proud of: a beautifully restored historical building and a thriving Society with a growing membership. It's been a few short months since I was elected

as your president, and I'm happy to say that the Morrin Centre has been bustling with activity: the ImagiNation literary festival, the Book Quest for young readers, Seniors at the Centre activities, guided tours, and a lot more.

This is a solid foundation to build on. I encourage you to join staff, Council and myself in continuing to bring the Morrin Centre to life. Let's fill it with people and activity. If you have out-of-town guests visiting this

summer, I can tell you from experience that a tour of the prison cells is a memorable activity to include on their itinerary. And don't forget the Celtic Festival at the end of the summer.

As you know, all of this terrific, enriching activity takes funding. While our donors and funding partners have been generous, we also count on the support of our members and individual donors to sustain our cultural activities, the library, and the building. With that in mind, we've just added a new way to donate: a monthly giving program. Members of Council, including myself, have begun moving our annual donations to the monthly program. Won't you join us?

Yours sincerely,

Sovita Chander, President

FAREWELL TO DAVID F. BLAIR

By Barry McCullough

On May 24, a large crowd gathered at the Morrin Centre for a cocktail in honour of former president David F. Blair. David was instrumental in leading the charge to have our 200 year-old building restored. The event was a fitting tribute, achieving a perfect balance of humour, sincerity and emotion.

Long-time Council member Peter Black was master of ceremonies, reminding everyone they were there "to honour one of the most remarkable people in the 188-year history of the Lit and His."

Disguised as former LHSQ president James MacPherson Lemoine, Curator Maxime Chouinard gave a humorous account of what it was like to be a president in his time, enumerating all of the accomplishments of the Society in recent years. Interim Executive Director Marie Rubsteck imagined the phone call that David must have received from the City of Quebec when he approached it about taking over the Morrin College building, which included, amongst other things, "tons of dust and a collection of artifacts badly in need of restoration." The skit finished with a re-enactment of Blair signing the 99-year emphyteutic lease between the LHSQ and the city for the operation of the building.

President Sovita Chander lauded David for all that was accomplished during his time as president, concluding

that "his tireless work and diplomacy behind the scenes with government officials, donors and many others, made it all possible."

Deputy Mayor Michelle Morin-Doyle, accompanied by members of the LHSQ's Council, unveiled an official portrait of David, now prominently displayed in the Presidents' Hall. He was also presented with a photo album showing before and after pictures of the restoration project.

Perhaps the most touching moment of the evening was when David's parents, Miriam and Ronald Blair, were invited on stage. Mr. & Mrs. Blair, long-time active members and supporters of the Society, were presented with a smaller version of the official presidential portrait. The three shared a warm embrace, deeply moving the attendees.

The evening concluded when David Blair himself spoke of the progress made during his tenure as president. "Fifteen odd years ago, the Society was looking back on its past glory. I think that today, the physical achievements are extraordinary, but even more extraordinary are the people who are involved in taking it into the future." He went on, "I want to thank all of you who have supported me and this institution. Please keep on supporting it." ■

TRANSACTIONS

THE ADULTEROUS PASTOR AND THE FEISTY PROFESSOR

By Patrick Donovan

With all the banging casseroles and overheated political rhetoric in Quebec these days, it would be understandable if you'd forgotten the 150th anniversary of another important event in our educational history: the inauguration of Morrin College in 1862. Although this story may not seem as dramatic as current education-related struggles, the founders of the College were also mired in years of riot and confusion. These struggles involved protesting students and teachers, an adulterous pastor who clashed with a feisty professor, not to mention death threats and an illegitimate child. The protests did not take place in Quebec City but over 500 km downriver, in Kingston, Ontario. Who knew that Morrin College had such stormy origins?

The pillars of Morrin College

The feisty professor in question was the Reverend George Weir. Educated at the University of Aberdeen, Weir was a brilliant classical scholar who mastered Greek, Latin, and Hebrew by the age of 20. He taught these core disciplines, along with logic and philosophy, at Morrin College.

Weir was one of the two pillars of the College, along with Principal John Cook. Many came and went in the College's early years, but Cook and Weir remained. As Cook grew older, Weir took on a greater role in the management of College affairs, acting as *de facto* principal and seeking out funds to keep the school alive.

Students remembered Weir as a passionate teacher with a strong temper. George Pidgeon, who studied at Morrin College in 1887 and later played an important role in founding the United Church of Canada, described Weir as

a perfectionist who drilled his classes in paradigms and would almost leap over his desk in anger when a mistake was made. He was also a warm-hearted teacher who succeeded in conveying to students his own enthusiasm for his subject.

Pidgeon considered Weir the best teacher he'd ever had. He thought the other professors at Morrin College were lacklustre, and transferred to McGill as a result,

but he never found another professor that equalled Weir. Ethel Gale, one of the first full-time female students at Morrin College, also had fond memories:

One recalls with delight the hours in his lecture room, how, after our halting recitations were over, Dr. Weir would take the period in hand. First there would come his sonorous reading of the Greek or Latin text, then the rendering of the lesson in his own incomparable English. Sometimes there would be a sudden descent from the platform and the perplexed student would find himself overshadowed by a gowned form, his work scrutinized by a compassionate, if critical, eye, and his violations of style indicated by an infallible forefinger.

Weir VS. George

Before settling into a relatively sedate life as the best-loved professor at Morrin College, Weir spent a decade clashing with the authorities at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario.

Weir was 23 years old when he was recruited in Scotland by Queen's. He was considered able and passionate, if impatient and ambitious. He arrived in Kingston in 1853 with his sister, who worked briefly as his housekeeper before returning to Scotland. Both of them initially got along well with Presbyterian minister James George, the school's acting principal and professor of moral philosophy.

Unfortunately, bitter rivalries often occur in the close quarters and among the big egos of academia, and the two men developed an intense mutual hostility. Their feud began in 1857 when the university board received a letter attacking the acting principal for mismanaging Queen's preparatory High School. Weir stood up for author of the letter, and some believed he had helped to write it. George resigned as acting principal, but later tried to get reappointed. Weir did everything he could to stop this from happening. By this point, the two men were no longer speaking to each other.

The feud rose from a simmer to a boil. When Weir

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returned to Scotland in 1861, he found his sister raising a six-year-old son who bore an uncanny resemblance to his archenemy. His sister admitted that George was the father. Weir was furious. He talked about killing George, but later cooled down and decided to disgrace him before the board instead. Weir addressed George in front of the board, stating that his “sister bore a child in March 1855 – a son – at this moment a living likeness of yourself, and known from the hour of its birth only by your name – of which child she has uniformly and solemnly affirmed that you are the father.” George called the accusations “a hellish plot.” When the board ordered an investigation, George resigned due to ill-health, putting an end to the questioning.



Kingston, Ontario c1860

The allegations were never proven but had become the talk of the town, and Weir encouraged this talk. Frustrated that the board had given up the investigation, he wrote a mock-heroic poem of 16 cantos that dragged the “immoral professor” of moral philosophy through mud. School authorities accused Weir of reading to his students “the most indelicate and licentious details” from letters detailing the minister’s affair with his sister. They tried to silence him for letting “personal feeling prevail over university discipline,” but despite these admonishments, Weir succeeded in driving George and his humiliated wife out of town.

After George left Kingston in shame, Weir’s crusade continued. He soon found a new enemy in the principal of Queen’s, another Presbyterian minister named William Leitch. Weir clashed with him over the management of school affairs, and Leitch accused him of “a monomania expressed in singling out certain parties as the object of persecution, while to all others he may have the strongest feelings of kindness and good will.” Weir was not the only professor to have issues with Leitch. Many resigned or were dismissed. Students tended to be on Weir’s side, and willing to help in his resistance efforts. However, Weir was finally fired after being accused of turning a farewell party for one professor into “a scene of riot and confusion.” He sued the school for wrongful dismissal, won the first round, but lost the appeal.

The moderate Moderator

Meanwhile, Dr. John Cook, yet another Presbyterian minister, had been a party to most of this quarrelling. As a founding trustee of Queen’s, he was asked to fill in as principal between the terms of the disgraced Reverend George and the unpopular Reverend Leitch. Cook reluctantly agreed, but insisted on keeping his ministry at St. Andrew’s Church in Quebec City.

After each visit to Kingston, Cook couldn’t wait to get back to Quebec, where he found the people more congenial. It wasn’t just the quarrelling that took place within the university; Kingston was an Orange Order stronghold at the time and was known as “the Derry of Canada.” The racial and religious tensions were palpable. Even the

Prince of Wales refused to disembark there during his 1860 visit, preferring to avoid the throng of 15,000 anti-Catholic Orangemen in full regalia gathered on the docks to welcome him.

A completely different atmosphere prevailed in Quebec City. Owing to its overwhelmingly Catholic majority, it was not favoured by Protestant extremists. Cook himself was a moderate, praised by the French-language press as an enemy of fanaticism who worked “to maintain between the two nationalities that spirit of good will.” His preaching was also moderate, being “neither feverishly evangelical nor laxly liberal.” In other words, he was the polar opposite of the fiery Weir.

Despite these differences in temperament, Cook was firmly on Weir’s side. He believed that Weir’s “removal from Queen’s was utterly without just cause or reason.” He was angry that the investigation over the affair with Weir’s sister had been dropped, and was critical of Leitch’s management. Cook was confident in Weir’s abilities and hired him soon after his dismissal.

Coda

Cook and Weir both died during the 1891-92 school year. Their loss signalled the beginning of a decade of change and uncertainty. The new board, whose commitment did not go back to the days of Dr. Morrin, were less likely to maintain the stubborn struggle of the small institution in the face of a declining anglophone

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population. When McGill reviewed its terms of affiliation in the late 1890s, many smaller institutions could not meet the new demands and had to close. This put an end to the ideal of an anglo-protestant College in a city that did not have the population or resources to support it. In 1902, the College redefined itself as a charitable organization and continues to fulfill this role today.

Despite its stormy prelude in the quarrelsome academic circles of Kingston, Morrin College went on to have an impact that far exceeded its small student numbers. Many of its professors and graduates later achieved renown in places as diverse as Oxford University, the Klondike goldfields and the deserts of Arizona. It produced leftist theologians who pioneered Canada's

Social Gospel movement and founded the United Church of Canada. It was the first college to grant B.A. degrees to women in Quebec City, some of whom later earned medals as medical doctors on the battlefields of France, published volumes of poetry, or helped create Colorado's Rocky Mountain National Park. Who are these people? Find out more in the fully-illustrated history of the Morrin Centre to be published in 2013 by Les Editions Septentrion. ■

Patrick Donovan is a PhD candidate in History at Université Laval. He worked at the Morrin Centre for five years, including a brief period as Executive Director, and is currently working on a book on the history of the building with Dr. Donald Fyson and Louisa Blair.

ALEX AND RUTH DWORKIN 2012 PRIZE-WINNING SHORT STORY

THE PRICE OF PEACE

By Alyson Mace-Reardon

Mornings such as the one to which I woke up are always different. It is palpable even in the air I breathe. Although I cannot clearly define what I feel at this precise moment, I know exactly the cause of my emotional confusion.

Today is the Improvement.

Uneasiness. That is what I feel. I lie on my back contemplating the very first rays of sun breaking through the window. Although I have only slept four short hours, I feel perfectly rested. The light becomes brighter and brighter as I risk a glance at the alarm clock. It shows 5:18. I know I should be appreciating the last twelve minutes of peace and quiet that I will be granted for the day, but I cannot. I have to get up, to do something, because if I stay in bed thinking of what is ahead, I might start to cry again.

Charlotte is already up and preparing breakfast when I enter the kitchen. It smells delicious. It reminds me of Sunday mornings when my father was still alive. But that was a long time ago.

"Good morning," she greets me with a genuine smile that shows all her perfect white teeth.

"Morning. What are you doing up so early? It's Saturday."

"I know. But it's also a big day for you, Billy. Thought you'd like a good meal and company this morning."

I smile at the mention of my nickname and at her kindness. My name is not Billy, it is Arabilla. I know, I hate it too. But at least I will get a new one today.

I had never really thought about how losing my name makes me feel. But now that the thing is so close, so tangible, it scares me more than I would ever have imagined.

I look down at my bare, black feet. In a few hours, they will be changed, too. They will be as white as snow, just like the rest of my body. My eyes will be pale, so will my hair. I will have a new name, one that the Diligent will pick. I will have the right to work, to get married and to buy alcohol. I will be prettier and happier, as they put it. I will be a full citizen, with everything that implies.

It is known that there was a time when humans were accepted as different. When you would die with the same face as when you were born. When there were many different languages that were tolerated. When it was okay to love somebody of the same sex. When there was no such thing as the Improvement. When individuality and uniqueness were coveted things. For me, such a time is barely possible to imagine. It must

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have been a long, long time ago, in the very early centuries. Now, in 2376, none of this is even conceivable. To those of us who seemed to think that it was a happier time than right now, the Diligent have a very clever answer. They say that those differences were not possible amongst a race such as humans. That those differences created wars of all sorts, so violent that one day it was established that humans should all be the same, physically, mentally and culturally. Nobody exactly knows when or how this occurred.

The leaders of that time designed a Model that every single human being should resemble. Pale hair. Pale eyes. White body. Familiar name. English speaking. Christian. Heterosexual. The cultural and mental aspects were not so difficult to modify over the generations. However, the physical transformation was considered impossible to achieve. Until one day, they did. With revolutionary aesthetic surgery techniques.

All of this eventually led to what is known today as the Improvement. A very “special and important day” when boys and girls of eighteen years of age would receive their transformation and finally become true citizens, leaving their “stained and unreal” self behind.

I am pulled away from my reverie by the metallic sound of a hot plate being put down in front of me. The food is hot and looks delicious. I thank Charlotte, who sits in front of me, and put a forkful of scrambled eggs in my mouth. Neither of us says anything for a few minutes.

“Are you okay, Billy?” Charlotte asks. “You are awfully silent this morning.”

I put my fork down and stare into her blue eyes. Charlotte is pretty. She is very kind, too. I see why my father fell for her after my mother passed away. Charlotte was very lucky in the sense that she was born with the traits established by the Diligent. No improvement was needed for her.

“I can’t help feeling that this whole thing is wrong. That we shouldn’t have to change what we are. Don’t you feel that way, too?” I ask her.

She smiles tenderly and places her hand on my own. Then she looks at me with exactly the same look you give kids when they ask a silly question.

“Darling, I know you’re scared. But really Arabilla, would you want to live in a world where everyone is different?” ■

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ONCE UPON A PRESIDENT

By Maxime Chouinard

Visitors to the Morrin Centre are immediately struck as they step into the entrance hall, officially known as the Presidents' Hall, by the multitude of past presidents gazing down soberly from its walls. Whether one is struck by their air of dignified austerity or tempted to ridicule the excesses of their Victorian grooming, to most of us their names and stories are unknown. As one President now leaves his position and another portrait goes up on the wall, it is the goal of this new column to explore the stories of these sometimes colourful characters and in so doing shed some light on the history of the Society that they helped create.

Sir James MacPherson Le Moine

Sir James MacPherson Le Moine was born in Quebec in 1825 to a Scottish Canadian mother, Julia Anne MacPherson, and a French Canadian father, Benjamin Le Moine, a descendant of the noble Le Moine Des Pins family from Normandy who established themselves near Trois-Rivières in 1669. After his mother's death, Le Moine was raised by his anglophone maternal grandparents in Montmagny. He married Harriet Atkinson in 1856 in St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, opposite the Morrin Centre, and they moved to St. Ursule Street, just around the corner. He started his career as a lawyer in 1850 and later became a collector for Inland Revenue in the district of Quebec, a position he held until his 75th birthday. Le Moine is not remembered for his lengthy career in the tax office, however, but rather for his many other passions.

Spending his summers in Spencer Grange, Sillery, he developed his interest in ornithology, botany and

history, held salons where the great journalists and academics of his day met, and established an annual wine festival that lasted 40 years. He published 40 books and over 400 articles in French and English in a variety of periodicals both in Canada and abroad.



Sir James MacPherson Lemoine, c1900
(BAnQ)

He became librarian of the LHSQ in 1865, encouraging an increase in French literature but staunchly opposing the introduction of novels and other "light reading." He then spent nine years as curator of the Society's museum, to which he gave his magnificent collection of 250 stuffed birds. He also held the position of president many times between 1871 and 1903.

Le Moine always believed that the Society should be as welcoming to French speakers as it was to English-speakers, and made sure to underline the positive links between the two communities. He organized a dramatic anniversary commemoration of the 1775 battle of Quebec, making sure to stress that English and French

-Canadians collaborated closely in defending their beloved city from the American invaders.

He not only co-founded several societies, including the Institut Canadien (1848), but was named honorary member of many learned societies in Canada, the United States and Europe, received an LLD *honoris causa* from Bishop's College University and was finally knighted by Queen Victoria in 1897. He died in 1912 in Sillery, his funeral took place in the Catholic church of St. Columba and he was buried alongside his wife in Mount Hermon Protestant cemetery – multiconfessional to the very end. ■

TRANSACTIONS

CRAIG'S ROAD RECOGNIZED AS HISTORIC SITE

By Steve Cameron

In the early 1800s, Governor General of Lower Canada, James Craig, pushed hard for the opening up of the Eastern Townships to allow for future immigration. His objective was to both settle the area with British immigrants and to connect Quebec City with Boston. He ordered the survey of a route between St. Nicolas (12 miles southwest of Quebec City) and Richmond, from whence a road already led to Sherbrooke and beyond to Boston. The route was duly surveyed, and between October 1810 and January 1811, 180 soldiers from the Garrison of Quebec built a 75-km road from St. Gilles to Richmond. Although settlers were slow to get established, Craig's Road became the entry point to the Townships from Quebec, as well as its developmental heart.



Over the years, the road has been altered, straightened, re-routed, paved over, and literally 'put out to pasture' and almost forgotten. One piece of the original road, however, remains in almost pristine condition. This is a stretch of 2/10 km in St. Sylvestre municipality, some 40 miles southwest of Quebec City. St. Sylvestre became a major

settlement area for the early Irish arrivals (1820-1845) well before the wave of immigrants who arrived with the famine.

In May 2012, Coirneal Cealteach (an Irish history and heritage group in Ste Agathe-de-Lotbinière)* convinced the municipality of St. Sylvestre to recognize this section of road as an Historic Site. "Our ancestors all travelled over this piece of the road when they settled," said Steve Cameron, cofounder of Coirneal Cealteach. The municipal council voted unanimously in agreement. Information panels explaining the historical context of the road and its importance will be on site by the end of June. A drive down Craig's Road also carries travellers to several other historic attractions, including the St. Sylvestre West Anglican/Presbyterian Historic Cemetery, established in the mid

1850s, whose headstones are poignant testimony to the lives and deaths of the early settlers. ■

*For further information, please contact S. Cameron at 418-599-2814 or tirnanog@oricom.ca

THE NEW DROP BOX



LHSQ library users can now **return their books any time, even when the library is closed.** The **NEW DROPBOX** is located on the corner of *rue Sainte-Anne* and *chaussée des Écossais*, just inside the gate leading to the ramp, on the left. We share the dropbox with the public library in the Institut canadien next door.



LIBRARY PAGES

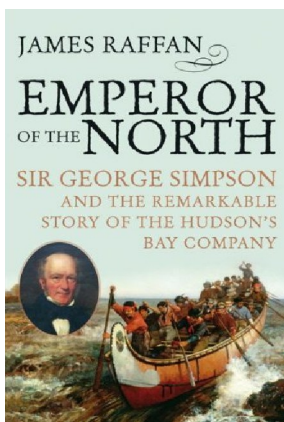
ON THE SHELF

A THEMATIC REVIEW OF SOME INTERESTING, IMPORTANT OR JUST ENTERTAINING BOOKS IN THE LIBRARY OF THE LITERARY AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

By Britta Gundersen-Bryden

Furs, Fabrics, Fashion – and Fortunes

Over the centuries, fashion trends have not only depended on creative designers and cultural inspiration but also on the available materials, such as beaver pelts, bales of cotton, bolts of silk and today's ubiquitous polyesters. Providing fur, fibre and fabric not only feeds the demand for fashions of the day, it builds financial empires.

The Simpson empire

The fur trade is central to the history of Quebec City and the rest of Canada. No enterprise is more closely associated with the Canadian fur trade than the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), founded in 1670. Sir George Simpson was the driving force behind HBC from the 1830s until 1860, when he died in Lachine, Quebec. James Raffan tells Simpson's story in *Emperor of the North: Sir George Simpson and the Remarkable*

Story of the Hudson's Bay Company. Simpson was born in Scotland and joined HBC in 1820 as a young man after cutting his teeth in London's sugar warehouses. In canoes paddled by voyageurs, he covered a territory that stretched from Montreal in the east to the Columbia River in the west and from Hudson Bay in the north to the Mississippi Basin in the south. He oversaw the merger of HBC with its rival, the Northwest Company, he managed 137 far-flung forts and fur-trading posts, he fathered numerous children and he engaged in a battle of wills with Dr. John McLoughlin, HBC's chief factor in Fort Vancouver (McLoughlin himself is closely identified with Quebec; he was born in Riviere du Loup and educated at Laval, and one of his sisters was mother superior of Quebec's Ursuline Convent). Raffan states that Simpson was at one point "in charge of one-twelfth of the world's land surface." No wonder he bore the nickname of "Little Emperor."

The Sassoon empire

Fashion may not have been at the top of his mind when Stanley Jackson wrote *The Sassoons* (1968), but fibre and fabrics are at the heart of this chronicle of a family of Sephardic Jews. Their story begins in Baghdad in 1750 with the birth of Sheikh Sason Ben Saleh and spans nearly two hundred years and five generations of financial struggle

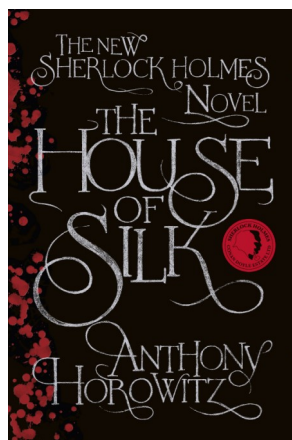
and success. It was the Sheikh's son David who took the family from the Middle East to Bombay in 1832 to escape religious persecution. The Sassoon's fortunes were generated first by shipping and warehousing the goods that moved between Europe (wool, for example) and the Far East (home of silk exporters). During the US Civil War, from 1861 until 1865, the Sassoons moved into the cotton industry, acquiring and then upgrading cotton mills. Their years in India brought major changes to the family and its enterprises. Branch offices were opened in London, Hong Kong, Shanghai and Japan; David's eldest son, Abdullah (later known as Albert) gradually took over the company and assumed total control upon his father's death, while Albert's brother, Elias, went his own way, forming E.D. Sassoon & Company. By 1927 he was Bombay's leading mill owner, running more than 6,500 looms and 250,000 spindles, in addition to dye-works and mills in other parts of India. The two branches of the family re-united in the twentieth century, and the Sassoons became devoted anglophiles. After the 1880s, most made their permanent homes in England, and David's descendants became lords and ladies, members of Parliament, the confidants of kings and prime ministers, captains of industry, philanthropists, rabbis, poets and horse breeders. Jackson's family trees at the beginning of each chapter help readers keep track of who's who in this powerful dynasty; a few more dates in the text would have helped readers navigate the various escapes, escapades, achievements and intrigues.

LIBRARY PAGES

New York

With its many photos, Kate Simon's *Fifth Avenue: A Very Social History* (1978), explains how a single street defined New York City as a centre of fashion, home of the rich and famous (think of names like Vanderbilt, Astor, Frick, Guggenheim) more than a hundred years ago. Slums and sweatshops also jostled up against Central Park, the jewel of Fifth Avenue, and there were squatters' shacks inside Central Park during the Great Depression. Simon describes the people, their homes, their fashions, their financial schemes, their friendships and their failings.

New Sherlock



The Library's collection contains a treasure trove of mystery and suspense fiction. One of the newest additions is *House of Silk; A Sherlock Holmes Novel* by Anthony Horowitz (2011). Horowitz received permission from the Arthur Conan Doyle Estate to write the first Sherlock Holmes tale in 125 years. The famous detective and his erstwhile colleague and "biographer," Dr. Watson

uncover utter depravity in London's most fashionable and influential circles: murder, marital deceit, conspiracy and collusion by powerful people, poisoning, opium dens, and the worst forms of child abuse. The novel's strength lies in its fast-moving plot. The detailed description of life in various social strata of London society near the end of the nineteenth century paints an interesting parallel picture to Kate Simon's portrait of life in New York in *Fifth Avenue*. And by the way, this year PBS is airing three new episodes of *Sherlock* in its Masterpiece Mystery series.

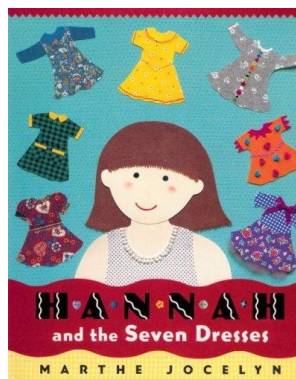
Wardrobe ethics

Animals killed for their furs, "mad hatters" poisoned by mercury, entire villages in India polluted by fabric dye – such practices are not confined to centuries past, contends Lucy Siegle, author of *Is Fashion Wearing Out the World?* (2011). Although most of her figures refer to the UK, Siegle cites enough global statistics to boggle any mind: in 1997, for example, humankind turned 31 billion kilos of fibre into clothing, by 2007 it was 80

billion kilos. She promises she'll guide readers in wardrobe ethics, and although the advice only covers only two pages near the end she does offer some common-sense suggestions such as: read the labels to see where clothing is made and of what; buy fewer – but higher-quality items (and quality does not always correspond to price); think about the people who harvest the cotton, who dye the fabrics, who work in unsafe factories; consider environmental impact and animal welfare. Siegle does not contend that people should eschew all notions of fashion; instead, she says, we should be wary of "fast fashion." We can still dress well while paying attention to what (and not how much) is in our closets.

For children

The Library also has a number of children's books on the theme of furs and fashion. Board books, with their sturdy pages designed for small hands, appeal to the very youngest readers. Ruth Ohi's board book *Pants Off First* introduces little ones to clothing vocabulary and to the names of different kinds of family pets in the story of a little boy who gets ready for bed.



Hannah and the Seven Dresses by Marthe Jocelyn introduces slightly older readers not only to colours but also to words for textile patterns. The illustrations will remind parents and grandparents of their own paper doll cut-outs.

Older elementary children who enjoy stories about exploration or those working on a school project related to Canada's history may be interested in *The Fur Traders* by Robert Livesey and A. G. Smith, published in 1989. The authors balance information on the exploits of Simon Fraser, David Thompson, the HBC and the Nor-westers with details about various fur-bearing animals and the many First Nations involved in the trade. The black-and-white illustrations add to the text, as do the suggestions for activities such as a Voyageur Adventure Game, Make a Teepee and a cross-word puzzle; these activities should be adapted without resorting to writing in, or dismantling, the book itself!

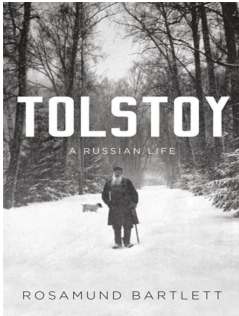
Dress up and come hunting at the Lit & His! ■

LIBRARY PAGES

BOOK REVIEWS

TOLSTOY—A RUSSIAN LIFE
MRS. ADAMS IN WINTER

By Miriam Blair

***Tolstoy - A Russian Life* by Rosamund Bartlett**

Rosamund Bartlett's new biography of Tolstoy is fascinating and very readable. This is the first biography of Tolstoy in 20 years, and includes much material made available since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

When Tolstoy was born in 1828, the Russian population consisted of a small number of wealthy aristocrats and an enormous population of fettered serfs who were made to live in degrading poverty. His family was part of the tiny minority of westernized nobility who ruled over the peasant population. He was orphaned at a very young age, and had a unsettled childhood. He came into his inheritance of the estate of Yasnaya Polyana, complete with 300 serfs, when he was only 19 years old. His youth was characterized by periods of wild living, and he sometimes paid off accumulated gambling debts by selling whole villages from his estate. He spent an obligatory period in the army and some time at university, all this interspersed with severe self castigation, remorse and heartfelt resolutions to discipline himself and improve his behaviour.

Over the years which followed, he became very sympathetic to the serfs and offered them their freedom long before it was official policy. He set up schools in which he and his children taught and for which he wrote simple ABC reading manuals. He eventually lived the life of a simple peasant, wearing homespun clothes and homemade shoes which he had learned to make himself.

We know Tolstoy for his masterpieces, *War and Peace*, *Anna Karenina* and *Resurrection*, all of which he claimed were based on events and people, often from his family, that he had known first hand. But he also wrote many books and treatises of a religious and political nature which he esteemed more than his novels. He became a fierce critic of the Tzarist

regime for its autocratic nature and of the Russian Orthodox church for its self indulgence and for failing to follow basic Christian principles as set out in the Gospels.

Many of his books were circulated in Samidzat (censored works that were reproduced by hand and passed from reader to reader) if reproduced at all. He was excommunicated by the church, and would certainly have been sent to Siberia for his liberal political views if he had not been such a hero to most Russians and widely admired for his writing worldwide.

It is ironic that his writings were attacked and censored first by the Tzar, then by the Bolsheviks and finally by the Communists. We remember him mostly for his wonderful novels, but these were just a small manifestation of his genius.

Early in 1815 Louisa Quincy Adams and her young son left St. Petersburg in a heavy Russian carriage with only a young adolescent attendant, and set out on a difficult journey to meet her husband, John Quincy Adams, in Paris.

***Mrs. Adams in Winter* by Michael O' Brien**

The future president of the US had been called back to the US while a plenipotentiary at the court of Czar Nicholas I (in those days the message would have taken the best part of a year to get through), and his young wife, with few sympathetic friends and a young child, had to make arrangements to pack up and follow her husband during the winter, the only feasible time to travel on bad or non-existent roads. When it snowed, the carriage, drawn by six horses, was fastened onto runners which were taken off when the snow ran out.

The 2000-mile journey was hair raising. She travelled through Eastern Europe and wartorn Germany, sometimes crossing still-bloody battlefields in the wake of Napoleon's army and entering Paris surrounded by his drunken soldiers. The details of her travels, accomodation, language and money worries (each small principality had its own currency) among locals who were all suspicious after a war, make fascinating reading. ! ■

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

SPACE QUEST

UNPLUG THE IPOD, GET OUT THE BINOS

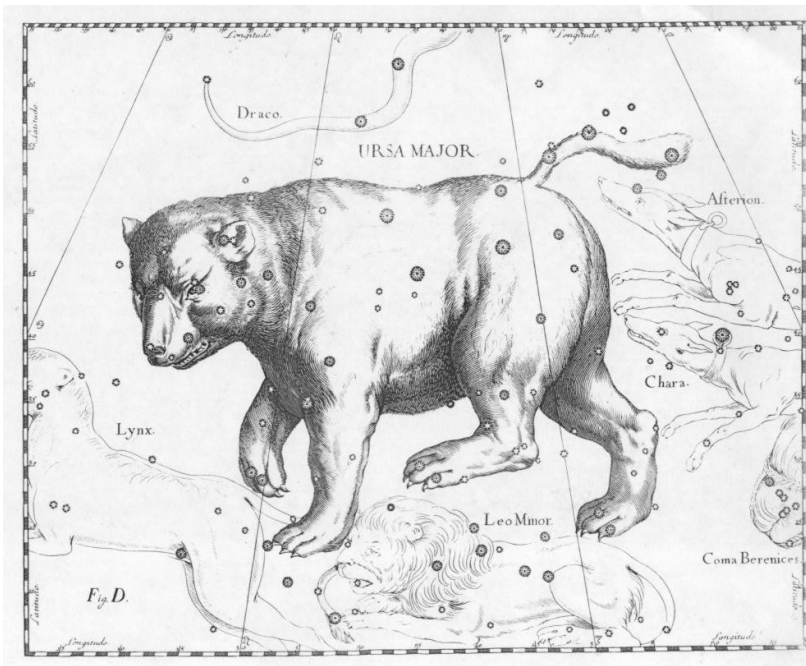
By Sarah Blair

An evening of scientific learning and sharing at the Lit and His on the 14th June fell squarely into the most ancient of the Society's traditional activities. The library changed into an astronomer's observatory as Eddy Sczzerbinski, President of the Mont Cosmos Observatory in Saint-Elzéar-de-Beauce, enlightened and entertained children and adults alike from age 3 to 53. He expounded on the hidden mysteries of the night sky, referring amongst other things to Greek legends, black holes, shooting stars and the *aurora borealis*. Our own solar system became an interesting ball game, especially when the moon temporarily disappeared. Fortunately it was later recovered under a chair amidst much hilarity.

There was enthusiastic participation from the smallest member to the eldest and much discussion involving the renaming of constellations. Orion will henceforth be known as the Coffee Percolator and Ursus Major (or the Big Dipper) has become a political figure representing the *casseroles*, our latest brand of Quebec protestors. By the end of Mr Sczchbinski's presentation I was beginning to sway with the planetary dance and hold onto the table for dear life as he described the unceasing movement of Spaceship Earth through our galaxy.

The theme for the children's summer reading program this year is Space Quest, a topic that thrills children today as much as it did in 1957 when the Russians sent out their dog Laika to circumnavigate the earth, or in

1969 when Neil Armstrong strode purposefully across the moon's surface to post the American flag on that virgin terrain. The library has acquired a new collection of fiction and non-fiction books on this topic which has already been well investigated by the 27 summer members. Board books to encyclopaedias to *The Hunger Games*, there is something for everyone's taste and style.



It's a bear! It's a casserole! It's Ursus Major!

to their pleasures as a novel (excuse the pun) outlet for our technologically-minded, plugged-in offspring.

Throughout the month of July there will be several interesting Saturday visitors introducing the children to the creation of sci-fi cartoon animation, writing skills and other artistic media. Check the online Morrin calendar for dates and times. For those older library members who remain young at heart, remember the library is open to all, and you too can sneak in and listen.

■

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

LITERARY LIGHTS

THE IMAGINATION 2012 WRITERS' FESTIVAL

By Elizabeth Perreault

Québec 2012



Longtime Canadian literary stars Paul Almond, Neil Bissoondath, David Homel and Rick Salutin were part of the lineup this year at the Morrin Centre. The

festival also gave emerging artists, such as Miguel Syjuco, Julie Wilson and singer and musician Mary Beth Carty a platform on which to further their careers by connecting with new audiences.

Through a more targeted media campaign and a broader spectrum of partnerships and collaborations in 2012, we drew a large audience and reached out further into the community at large. We have also been successful in encouraging teachers to integrate ImagiNation into their curriculum, since CEGEP students made up the majority of the festival's audience this year.

ImagiNation 2012 Writing Contest winners

The Writing Contest was held for a third year in a row thanks to the generous support of the Alex and Ruth Dworkin Fund at the Jewish Community Foundation. Open to CEGEP students, the contest received 30 submissions on issues such as intercultural dialogue, diversity and various aspects of discrimination. Honorary president, Paul Almond, and authors and judges David Homel and Rick Salutin presented the winners with \$1,000 worth of prizes during a VIP cocktail held in College Hall.

The first prize, a \$500 bursary, was won by Alyson Mace-Reardon from CEGEP Champlain St. Lawrence for her short story *The Price of Peace* (see page 7). Kevin Jetté from CEGEP Limoilou won 2nd prize for his short story *Dream* (\$350) and Arnaud Hamelin from CEGEP Champlain St. Lawrence won 3rd prize for his essay *Tolerance Must End* (\$150). ■

Thank you to our partners, sponsors, collaborators and volunteers! ImagiNation would not have been possible without the generous financial support of the following organizations:

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Our partnerships with the following organizations also helped guarantee the success of ImagiNation 2012:



Hotel Clarendon

For the second year in a row, an advisory council met regularly with the Executive Director and the festival coordinator to help plan and organize the festival. The members included:

Neil Bissoondath, local author and Creative Writing Professor at Laval University
Guy Dubois, owner of La Maison Anglaise et Internationale
Elspeth Tulloch, Associate Professor at Laval University

The Morrin Centre relies on volunteers to ensure that our events run smoothly. Thanks to:

Cristobal Armero	Lorna Gaillis
Diane Bird	France Guay
Lucie Bouchard	Britta Gundersen-Bryden
Jack Bryden	Sophia D. Hobohm
Diana Cline	Quincy Minichiello
Elizabeth Davies	Nancy Ouei
Michel Desève	Barbara Salomon De Friedberg

Thanks also to all the Morrin Centre staff, who went above and beyond their job duties to ensure that the events ran smoothly.

FUNDRAISING

MAKING GENEROSITY EASIER A MONTHLY GIVING PROGRAM

By Marie Rubsteck

Did you know that we spend nearly \$8,000 per month on building upkeep and that more than 75% of this is not covered by government or private funding? Did you also know that the funding we receive for the majority of our cultural programs doesn't cover their costs?

In addition to holding our own activities in the Library, College Hall and the Jail, the Morrin Centre has become a leader for the promotion of English-language culture in Quebec City. We are playing an ever larger role within different networks, including the English-speaking community, cultural, heritage and tourism organizations, the anglophone and francophone schools, and the business community.

Events, such as the ImagiNation: Writers' Festival, allow hundreds of students every year to meet world-renowned and local English-language authors. It also allows them to express themselves creatively through our Writing Contest. Our summer Book Quest activities also encourage those who have difficulty reading to pick up a book. One boy was so excited by the astronomy activity that took place during the launch party that he actually left the library with a book in his hand. His mother was simply thrilled. Seniors enjoy afternoon conferences and readings, and visitors learn about the history of our heritage building and Quebec City's English-speaking community.

If we want to continue offering innovative programs and assuring stewardship of our heritage building, we need your support. This is why we are asking you to sign up today for our new giving initiative – **Monthly Giving**.

Why monthly? Well, maybe you drink a cup of tea every day, take out the garbage once a week and pay your bills monthly. Perhaps you review your personal budget monthly, or even by paycheck cycle. The only thing you probably do annually is holidays, birthdays and putting winter tires on your car. So why give annually? The Morrin Centre's expenses happen at the same time yours do – monthly.

A monthly giving program will give the Morrin Centre a regular income. For less than 85¢ per day you can make a huge difference. Please sign up today and join our President Sovita Chander,, members of Council and staff in the Morrin Centre Monthly Giving Program.

To set up your monthly gift please fill out the enclosed form. You will receive a tax receipt for your cumulative annual contributions at the end of each fiscal year. You can increase, decrease, or suspend your gift amount at any time by calling us.

For information, please contact Marie Rubsteck, Interim Executive Director, at: 418-694-9147 or marierubsteck@morrin.org. ■



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