



# McGill

School of  
Continuing Studies

McGill Community  
for Lifelong  
Learning

## The Newsletter

Fall 2018 Volume 29, No. 3

[www.mcgill.ca/mcll](http://www.mcgill.ca/mcll)

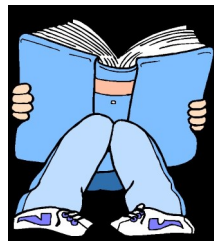
### MCLL - are we truly a community?

We call ourselves a community but what exactly does this mean? The word is derived from the Classical Latin term *communitas*, meaning community, fellowship, and is used to describe a group of people forming a smaller social unit within a larger one, and sharing common interests, work, identity, political opinions, etc. (e.g. a college *community*, the labor *community*). It inspires loyalty, a sense of belonging, a feeling of solidarity. It is also a place where people who do not know each other come together to share not only ideas but often life experiences and feelings and who, in this way, come to care about each other. This is what MCLL comes to mean to us after a few years.



Our members also interact with people outside the institution. Take the Symposium last Fall which brought in participants from across the city, from other provinces and even from abroad (Dublin). Then there is the lecturers' outreach program whereby members of MCLL visit seniors' residences to give a talk about topics of interest – travel, art history, etc. We have started web broadcasting too, reaching out to members at home or on vacation, or to outsiders interested in our program.

We also have communities within our Community. For example, a study group discussing the works of Alice Munro enjoyed the experience so much that they launched a book club, which meets once a month at members' homes to discuss their chosen "book of the month". Another small group goes to art exhibitions, three or four to a car, sharing the gas and the driving, and off they go, a community within a community.



If you and friends have formed any such group, let us know and we will feature you in our next edition.



But there are also responsibilities tied to a community. The pioneers back in 1984 introduced the learning principles and mode of operation and assumed the various roles

needed to ensure the smooth running and the future of the new community. But those days are long gone and a new generation of members now fills our classrooms while new technologies have changed the way we acquire knowledge. It is important now, as the 2018 Forum approaches, to express your ideas about the way you see MCLL and its future. More information can be found in the following pages about Council and the role of the Curriculum Committee in particular to show you the different areas you can become involved in. Our Community was built by its first members. It is up to us, now, to keep on building.

#### A REMINDER

The 2018 MCLL Members' Forum will take place on Friday, October 26 at Le Nouvel Hotel, 1740 René-Lévesque, Ouest (Guy Metro).

This is your opportunity to learn about MCLL and to have an influence on the way it works.

We are lucky to have the new Dean of the School of Continuing Studies, Dr. Carola Weil, giving the keynote address. Her talk is entitled: *The Future of Learning is Lifelong: Active and Personalized Learning in the 21st Century*.

If you haven't already done so, register now as places are limited. Registration closes on October 18. For more information and to register please go to:

[www.mcgill.ca/mcll](http://www.mcgill.ca/mcll) or check out MCLL's Facebook page.

## *President's Message*

*Fall 2018*



As we begin our fall term at MCLL, I have had time to reflect on my initial term as President. It has been a very busy time for me as I took up my role early, replacing Paul Howell. I had many things to learn about MCLL, from the budget and the operational aspects to the various committees, the plethora of

volunteers, the various committees themselves, the members, the mandates, and our place in the School of Continuing Studies.

I had to understand the difference between the mandates of the committees, and the relationship between the chair people. I also had to understand the efforts required to produce the study group program, and to provide the moderators, lecturers, support staff and publicity necessary to fill the rooms with participants. Just as important, I needed to learn all about how we ran the day-to-day operation - planning, communication, curriculum - and how Ana Milic works with dedicated volunteers to run the office and with the committees to get the program out to the membership on time. All that, not to mention the efforts needed to plan events such as the Spring Fling, the Christmas party, the Symposium...

I learnt that I was blessed to have the support of such a large number of volunteers and permanent staff, from office staff to committee members to the Dean, Carola Weil, and to the technical support staff. This sense of teamwork, camaraderie and dedication makes MCLL what it has grown to be: it is a real community and functions like one. People are there to help the members.

I have been blessed, as I say, and really look forward to the new term. I know that the volunteer team will continue its efforts for excellence, and together we will pave the way for a strong, growing MCLL.

***Irwin Kuzmarov***, President

## *MCLL Moderators' Workshop*

An important meeting takes place just before the fall term begins, namely the moderators' workshop. Attendance is not compulsory of course but all current and prospective study group moderators are invited. New moderators in particular are encouraged to go along. Also welcomed are any interested lecturers, Tech savvy workshop leaders and outing coordinators.

September 13 last, the morning session opened with a warm welcome from the new dean, Dr. Carola Weil, who seems very impressed by MCLL and what we represent. The first theme was "Diverse forms of study group participation for peer learning", with a panel chaired by

Tony Frayne comprised of three active moderators, Catherine Main-Oster, Clare MacFarlane and François Labonté. Their presentations were followed by interesting discussions between the panel and workshop attendees.



The second theme consisted of presentations by Ruth Allan Rigby and Irwin Kuzmarov on initiatives involving institutions similar to our own: the MCLL Symposium on new aspects of Lifelong Learning and Living (November 2017), the Dublin Symposium of the Age-Friendly Universities Global Network (March 2018), and the recent Toronto meeting of the International Federation on Ageing (August 2018).

There were also sessions describing various tools available to moderators such as the modules for moderators in the Athena software, the various resources of the McGill library system and the Zoom software. And throughout the day, a number of experienced moderators were on hand for informal discussions about their moderating techniques. It was an informative and interesting day for all.



## Curriculum Committee Activities

Few people realize how strategic a role the Curriculum Committee plays in the functioning of MCLL. We choose our study groups and lectures, attend the classes and go for a coffee and “See you next week”. But without this committee, there would be no courses or lectures. Tony Frayne currently chairs this committee and we asked him to lay out the bare bones of his committee’s task.

“The Curriculum Committee is responsible for developing seasonal programs based on proposals submitted by MCLL members. There are currently 12 committee members with a variety of backgrounds and interests.



The principal role of the committee is to prepare the calendars for the three terms and the summer Wonderful Wednesday lecture program.

It starts by issuing a Call for Proposals to all members about three months before the next term begins and following up by personally approaching potential candidates. After the deadline, the Committee meets to review each proposal received. Does it meet the criteria, such as (for moderators) prior participation in a study group? Is it free of commercial or ideological motives? Is it best presented as a study group, a lecture or a workshop? Should the proposal be edited or shortened? Then comes the preparation of the familiar calendar which has to be drafted, edited and proofread before it is sent to the printers.

We also seek out and recruit new moderators from among other MCLL members in an attempt to inject ‘new blood’. We work to support moderators through the annual Moderators’ Workshop, the publication and updating of a Moderators’ Handbook, and the operation of a liaison system. Here, Curriculum Committee members are assigned moderators and lecturers with whom they have followed up on the Call for Proposals,

assisting in developing proposals, and with other moderator issues.

Our work is very interesting on account of the opportunities provided for meaningful interaction with other MCLL members. As moderators are volunteers and the committee has no power other than persuasion to influence their choice of subjects, it does not as such determine the curriculum.

However, it has powers of influence in guiding prospective moderators on content and form when consulted and in defining the limits as prescribed by our mission. We aim to maintain a balanced, challenging and enjoyable program. Our responsibilities include the review of moderator and group performance. Curriculum Committee members are encouraged to seek recommendations from participants in MCLL study groups to constantly improve our “peer learning” experience. We eagerly welcome volunteers who would like to join us.”



### **THE BRAINY BAR**

*We also set the parameters of the Brainy Bar. This program, administered with the Intensive English Language and Culture program of the McGill School of Continuing Studies, provides assistance in information technology to our members from visiting students. This has been in the form of group workshops and, recently, in pairing individual students with MCLL participants for personalized instruction over several weeks. A new challenge we are exploring, with Communications and Technology Committees, is web broadcasting of lectures and, potentially, study groups. The advantages of broadcasting are permitting members to hear lectures from home in the case of sickness or bad weather and widening our geographical reach. Results with trials so far have been encouraging. We will eagerly welcome volunteers who are ready to learn the Zoom software and attend lectures and study groups.*





## Is it Athena or Minerva?

*It's all double Greek to me!*



Having registered on-line for the Spring 2018 term, I was sure I could do it for the Fall session. Well, first I did not know which goddess was the right one and the registration form did not enlighten me. That was the first blunder. Then I did not know what my user name was as I do not have a McGill user name so I was stumped. That is when I gave up and went along to one of the training sessions. What a teacher! Susan Van Gelder patiently explained every step, walked me thorough the entire process it and made me do it again so that next time I will be able to register alone (in theory!).

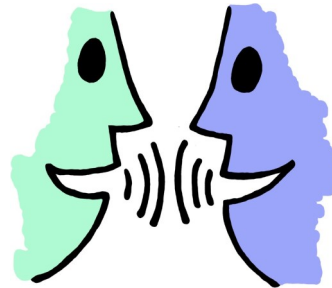
We need to raise our hats to those dedicated volunteers who gave their time to help members register. They themselves admit that the system is not user-friendly and causes an undeniable amount of confusion. For MCLL people who are not computer-savvy (and Claire Booth of the Planning Committee, who also gave hours and hours of her time, admits there are still quite a few), the challenge was overwhelming. In fact, even with the offer of help, some quietly took the paper form from the office and did it the old way, paying by cheque ("what's that?" asked my 12-year-old grandson!).

The training sessions certainly made a difference to the successful on-line registration. Compared to the 30 or so percent in Spring, over 56 percent of members succeeded this Fall. Congratulations all round but especially to Susan, Claire, Norman Nault, Marie Claire Zirpji and all other trainers for their commitment to helping others. Their share of the load meant that all manual registrations and related telephone inquiries could be handled in time for the start of the new term. Oof!



## Calling New-ish Members

Hi there! If you are fairly new to MCLL (one, two, three years) you may not have heard of our wonderful volunteer program called **SPEAK**. Within the School of Continuing Studies, of which MCLL is a part, there is a program called IELC, which stands for Intensive English Language and Culture. Students come from all over the world to learn and improve their English skills and to learn something about our culture as well. When you volunteer for



the SPEAK program, you will be paired with a foreign student for an hour each week of conversation practice. You can usually find a room on the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> floor, the floors on which the program is

run, for your meetings. Some volunteers prefer to meet in a coffee shop or some other external venue – it's entirely up to you and your student. You will soon discover that you are enjoying and benefitting from the program at least as much as your student. Students are available at noon or after 3:30, so if you have a study group from 2-4, you could meet your student after that group. To volunteer, please contact Phyllis Klaiman at [caffeine.fillus@videotron.ca](mailto:caffeine.fillus@videotron.ca) or at 514-281-5178.



## Socks for the Homeless

This year, as last, I shall be collecting new socks for the homeless and delivering them in late October, and again in December,



to one of the missions. Please give as generously as you can. You can leave your contribution in a box in the office. For more information, call me at 514-748-0458. Thanks so much in advance!

Sandra Frisby

## The “Good Company”: modest advice to Lifelong Learners

Noga Emanuel



Once over a certain age, people become set in their ways and thinking. As we age, we become more sedentary and sluggish in mind and body. We adhere to what we know and resist over-exerting ourselves physically. The challenge is to work against these inclinations. Minds need to be provoked no less than rigid joints and sagging muscles must be worked. Both benefit from rigorous opposition: muscles become stronger and more agile when exercised against resistance. The mind can be coaxed towards flexibility and openness by having its universally acknowledged truths robustly defied. Mind you, this is not unique to seniors. But



the manner of challenging differs with age.

Bertrand Russell famously wrote that “The essence of the liberal outlook lies not in what opinions are held, but in how they are held: instead of being viewed dogmatically, they are held tentatively, with a consciousness that new evidence may at any moment lead to their abandonment.” Yes. Sadly, our attitudes tend to calcify over time.

Prof. Judy J. Johnson of Mount Royal University, identified five characteristics of **dogmatic demeanor**:

1. We look at the power and status of the messenger, rather than the message;
2. We give extra credit and credibility to arguments given by an “in-group” speaker, over an “out-group” one;
3. We tend to rationalize authoritarian and institutional overreach;
4. We defer to those we regard as authoritative for no apparently good reason;
5. We respond to opinions and facts we disagree with in an arrogant, dismissive communication style.

But how can we recognize in ourselves the indices of such dogmatic thinking?

One very obvious clue is this: When confronted with something that collides with our perception of “correct thinking”, we react by anger, fear, sometimes even despair. These negative emotions render us stupider and keep us from unfettering our minds to think more freely. How to move from stultified thinking to one that frees us to say: “I don’t know.” Or: “I made a mistake.” Or: “I’ve changed my mind.” without feeling existentially injured in the process? This is where competent moderators can help.

According to Spinoza, “each thing, as far as it lies in itself, strives to persevere in its being”. The statement is clearly connected to Newton’s First Law of Motion that every object in a state of uniform motion tends to remain in that state of motion unless an external force is applied to it. Dogmatic thinking acts just like that and strives to persevere in the same track and direction but a competent moderator can apply Newton’s “external force” by inserting into the conversation a stimulus that will throw the rolling ball off course and get it to move in a different direction. This stimulus can be anything. For example, citing a view (not necessarily the moderator’s) that affronts the group’s smug consensus; asking strange or annoying questions that make people either sit up or squirm in exasperation.

But here is the thing: weight-lifting is just a portion of an efficient workout; warming up and running, walking, stretching, dancing, joy, etc. take up most of the time spent in the gym. Same with my recommended mental calisthenics: they can only work if applied sparingly, relevantly, and cautiously, so that discussions do not turn into battlegrounds but rather evolve into Jane Austen’s “idea of good company... the company of clever, well-informed people, who have a great deal of conversation”.

# New Moderator and Lecturer Profiles



## Scott Cooper

Scott Cooper retired ten years ago after a long career in human resources management with the Canadian federal public service. His career included a two-year stint with the United Nations in New York, two years working with indigenous groups in the Arctic, and a year in Brussels.

His commitment to lifelong learning is strong: learning French with the federal government, obtaining his Master's at Queen's in mid-career, learning Italian at University of Ottawa after that, and then obtaining a Master's Certificate in Program Evaluation just prior to retiring! After retiring, he attended a number of courses at Carleton University's Learning in Retirement Program. Talk about continuing education!

In addition to his administrative career, Scott has worked as a trainer and instructor at Arctic College in Inuvik, Queen's University School of Business, the Open University UK and United Business Institutes in Brussels. He is also an avid sailor, cyclist and traveler having most notably cycled around Lac St Jean and from Pittsburg to Washington DC in the past year while the Erie Canal waits for another season (Note that he avoids cycling hills!).

After recently moving here from Ottawa, he joined the Montreal Branch of the World Federalist Movement-Canada but realized he needed to learn more about the United Nations to be an effective member so he organized the Fall 2018 discussion group on the book "Parliament of Man", after attending three MCLL discussion groups in the previous year. It should be a learning experience for all involved.



## Chris Herten-Greaven

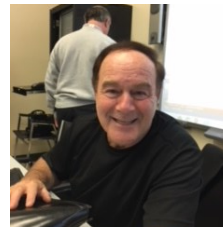
Prior to his recent retirement, Chris Herten-Greaven worked for almost 50 years as a dentist, both in Montreal and the Eastern Townships. However, ever since his years in secondary school he was always interested

in historical events, doubtless influenced by the example of his history teachers. He was lucky enough to learn history from two points of view, the English and the Spanish, as his schooling was totally bilingual in both languages at an institution founded in 1838 by the Scots in Buenos Aires, Argentina, still extant and even enlarged.

The topic Chris chose for his study group is still an ongoing work of investigation: the discovery of hidden "lost" documents, photos and verbal anecdotes, whose revelation and discussion were strictly forbidden during the war, the Franco years and for many years thereafter.

Chris's wife and her family are Spanish in origin and, having had several discussions with most members of that family, he realized that there was a wealth of undisclosed information available but very likely not given extensive coverage to date although sufficient to be built into a course. Whence this new moderator's decision to launch a study group at MCLL in the hope that it will tweak the interest of potential attendees.

## Allan J. Levine



A native Montrealer, Allan J. Levine earned a BSc, an MA and a teaching degree from McGill University as well as a Master of Fine Arts degree in Film Production from Concordia University. However, he started his career as an A

-Level mathematics and physics teacher in 1967, and became actively involved in his community in part from his 35-year teaching career at Wagar High School and at other schools in Montreal and serving on the board of the Batshaw Youth and Family Services, regarding the adoption of Jewish children. In 1986, Allan was elected Councillor to the City of Côte Saint-Luc, advocating for an anti-smoking law in commercial areas and parks, which he helped achieve. He was also behind the establishment of a by-law that required children to wear helmets. In office, he served as chairperson and member of the city planning committee for more than 20 years and was a member of the Audit Committee. Through the years, his portfolios included



*continued from page 6*

responsibilities regarding an active lifestyle for youths, adults and seniors and the promotion of sports and recreation activities for children.

The Allan J. Levine Playground for children was named in his honor and in 2017 the City of Côte Saint-Luc honored him as he celebrated the 30th anniversary of his first election, becoming as such, the longest serving member of the current Côte Saint-Luc city council.

Aside from his work in civic participation as an elected public officer, Allan, keen on organizations that are active in philanthropy and service to the community, has given such causes much additional volunteering time and support. In 2004, he was one of the original organizers of the Sports Celebrity Breakfast in support of the Cummings Center, where each year since, current and past professional athletes donate their time and celebrity status to join in the breakfast, recognizing that their presence helps to sell tickets. Allan also promotes the Cummings Centre's Adapted Exercise Clinic for post-stroke patients after hospital discharge and where, through follow-up visits, participants are encouraged to practice at home what they learn in class.

New to MCLL, Allan was recommended to the Curriculum Committee by Dr. Irwin Kuzmarov who recognized his potential and encouraged him to moderate a class on local politics.



**Sidney Rosen**

Sidney is a retired chartered accountant and has been a member of MCLL for many years. Urged by a couple of experienced moderators, he decided to take the plunge and moderate his own study group titled *Our World*, an experience he enjoys and finds satisfying. Last summer he presented his first lecture, *Living with Cancer*, describing the six-year difficult journey dealing with his wife's pancreatic cancer. Sidney finds that MCLL provides a platform that enables constructive learning in an enjoyable manner.

Currently, and in keeping with the spirit of the time, Sidney is reading Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* and Michael Wolf's *Fire and Fury*. His thinking about the world was greatly impacted by Nassim Nicholas Taleb's 2007 book *The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable*.

The book focuses on the extreme impact of rare and unpredictable events and the human tendency to find simplistic explanations for these events, retrospectively.

Sidney's favorite comedian is Bill Watterson, creator of Calvin and Hobbes. He says that, if he ever wrote an autobiography, it would be called *Missed Opportunities*.

If he has one piece of wisdom to impart to humanity, it is this: Do what you can in life but realize that sometimes you can't control what happens.



**Susan van Gelder**

I first met Susan in a study group on Indigenous Art, and we reconnected in a follow-up group on Indigenous Literature. In both groups, Susan played a very active role, not only contributing a lot of information in class, but also setting up web sites for

each of the groups so that we could share research, presentations and other pertinent information. Her twitter profile can be found at @susanvg.

As an educator, she worked in educational technology. Her most recent work was with an organization that supported all the English schools (public and private), giving workshops for teachers on the use of educational technology and on project-based learning as well as providing online support through the organization's web site and through webinars.

As a lifelong learner, it was a natural that she would join MCLL. She is familiar with many educational technology tools that she would love to see other moderators using. (We must pick her brain!)

She has been very involved in music, playing the recorder and, very recently, taking up the harpsichord. Her interest is in early music (medieval to baroque). and she plays in a recorder orchestra, Flutissimo: <http://bit.ly/Flutissimo> She also plays duets with her spouse and trio sonatas with a harpsichordist and violinist. She is a reader, blogger <https://susanvg2009.blogspot.com/>, photographer and self-proclaimed geek. In other words, she's Susan!





**Brian Webber**

Brian graduated from McGill in Civil Engineering in 1966, later earning an MSc at Cornell. From his base in Montreal, his work in economic development has taken him to Europe, Asia, Africa and the Caribbean. In all, he visited 53 countries! He attributes the traces

of an English accent to nine years at boarding school in England.

Brian is now a semi-retired consultant and, looking for a stimulating pastime, joined MCLL in the fall of 2016. He was attracted to a study group on Turkey and the Ottoman Empire, in part because he and his wife had lived in Turkey from 2009 to 2011. He developed his knowledge into a Friday lecture, in the spring of 2017.

He and Bob McDonald met in a study group on minimum income and decided that they would like to co-moderate a study group on *What on Earth is a Sustainable Community?* Brian felt that this topic was especially à propos after seeing small, once-thriving towns in Ontario and Québec going into decline. This should be a lively group, given Brian’s exuberant personality, and we welcome him whole-heartedly into the ever-expanding group of moderators.



**The Luncheon for MCLL Volunteers  
for the SPEAK Program**

**Join the Granny Cloud**

**Men Welcome!**

**What is the Granny Cloud?**

The Granny Cloud is an independent team of volunteers that reaches out via Skype to children with limited educational resources around the globe, in a variety of settings, and provides them with the opportunity to experience worlds far removed from their own. The idea was initiated by Sugata Mitra and is connected to the SOLE approach to learning (self-organized learning environment.) Members of the Granny Cloud interact with groups of children, engaging them in conversation and in activities of various kinds, such as reading and telling stories, craft activities, solving puzzles and exploring big questions. The role of the Granny includes provoking curiosity, asking questions, listening attentively and providing warm encouragement.



**Sugata Mitra**



Don’t be fooled by the name – you don’t need to be an actual granny to be a part of the Granny Cloud. Grannies currently range in age from 24 to 78, and are both male and female.



To learn more or to apply, visit [thegrannycloud.org](http://thegrannycloud.org). If you’d like to talk to a member of the team, call **Sandra Frisby at 514-748-0458**



# The MCLL SPRING FLING



It was not an obvious choice of venue for MCLL’s annual Spring Fling. Restaurant Ferrari on Bishop at the corner of Ste-Catherine Street has been virtually hidden from view for four years, quietly serving great food and tasty wines despite ongoing construction work by the City of Montreal for a ventilation system for the Guy-Concordia metro station. Despite this forbidding access, over 50 MCLL members made their way down Bishop Street past colorful posters and through a flowery “terrace” to the cool, comfortable (it was over 30 C outside!) interior. The setting is cozy and the service is both friendly and efficient. “I particularly remember a good-humored waiter who fielded a lot of probing questions about the provenance of the salmon without showing a sign of

impatience”, remembers one participant. Admittedly the tables were small and close together but that made for a friendly atmosphere and a lively exchange of conversations. It also meant that all could hear President Irwin Kuzmarov’s short address. The final verdict was that the event had gone very well indeed.



## Bloomsday thanks MCLL

Not only did Council approve a contribution to the 2018 edition of Bloomsday Montreal, many of its members attended the different activities forming part of this year’s program. Two in particular were outstanding successes with audiences overflowing. The first was the opening night – a cabaret in a small, ultra-friendly Verdun restaurant with Irish songs and tunes all evening long as attendees helped themselves to a free spread that seemed to be replenished every 10 minutes! The musicians were outstanding and most grateful for contributions from an enthusiastic audience for the refrains.

Also of note was the story of the Irish in Canada before and after the famine as told by historian Sam Alison, whose familiarity with the lives of some of the men and women of Irish descent who contributed to the history of Montreal and Quebec left the audience in stitches! His humor might have led him to exaggerate a bit but it was all in good faith and few will forget the anecdotes he regaled us with.



The Bloomsday Montreal executive committee is thrilled to inform MCLL fans that Heritage Canada seems so pleased with what this annual festival has achieved culturally that it has generously seen fit to award a larger grant than that received last year. “A most unusual gesture, but most welcome,” according to a former Heritage Canada employee.

Incidentally, if you are looking for a “job”, Bloomsday Montreal is seeking a manager/IT person (a contract position) as well as volunteers to run different committees. If you are interested or know of anyone who would be, please contact [Bloomsdaymontreal.com](http://Bloomsdaymontreal.com).



# Remembering

## Ann Weinstein: Theatre Alive at MCLL

Ann Weinstein's teaching career at Dawson, and her literary love affair with Saul Bellow all featured in her play-reading courses at MCLL. According to Amy Shulman, "Her passion for theatre made it happen." Although Ann died recently, her dedication continues to inspire; she made a big difference in so many of our lives.

In 2006, Ann encouraged a few would-be thespians in her class to participate in a play reading for a MCLL Friday Lecture, and the Golden Stagers were born! Their first "public" performance of *Doubt* by John Patrick Shanley took place at Manoir Westmount. The players acted but with scripts in their hands. The play was so well received that they performed it several times, at residences and libraries as part of MCLL's Outreach program.

From 2006 to 2012, Evelyn Seligman estimates the Golden Stagers gave sixty performances of a variety of plays in many venues in the Montreal area. For Bloomsday Montreal's first festival Ann picked the perfect play: *Molly and James*, by Sheila Walsh.

Jean Carrière remembers: "When I expressed interest in her troupe she suggested that I play a waiter. I decided that the waiter would gradually get drunk when he imbibed the wine as the dinner progressed, and the few words he had to say would be slurred. My place with the Golden Stagers was assured. During MCLL's 20th anniversary, I shared the stage with Ann at Stewart Hall, in her own play *Miami Book Fair*."

Evelyn Seligman describes how "we rehearsed at each others' homes. Ann very often made the suggestions for costumes and props. She also contacted the person at the libraries or seniors' residences. Ann had so many great ideas with which to produce the plays. She often attended the rehearsals and was a sublime director." When they performed, Ann introduced the players and the play; at the end she'd lead a discussion with the audience asking good questions to get people to speak up.

According to Andrew Macdougall: "Ann did so much so well that it was impossible to replace her when she stopped. I'll always be very grateful to Ann - she rekindled my interest in the theatre, and helped me discover talents I didn't know I possessed; I would not be doing my Dickens readings today if it were not for her."

And Jean Carrière believes reading the plays aloud gave him the idea for a series of study groups that he and Richard Lock moderate to this day. "We have Ann's Golden Stagers to thank for it."

Evelyn Seligman gets the last word: "It was a wonderful time in our lives. Memories of Ann's indomitable spirit and the Golden Stagers live on."

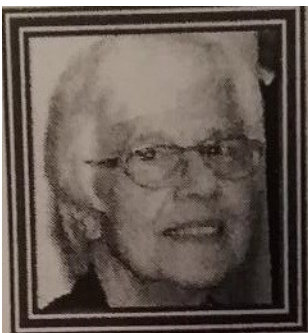
Judith Schurman



His Majesty's Theatre

Circa 1910

## Farewell to Anita Heller (1926-2018), a pioneer of our institution



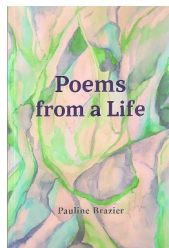
Anita Heller was not just an early member of MILR, as it was known back then in 1984, she was one of the attendees at the founding workshop. In those early days, she was involved with recruiting and in charge of setting up a curriculum. Both she and her neurologist husband participated in study groups and Anita even took on the role of president in 1993-94. It was sad to read that Anita Heller passed away last May.



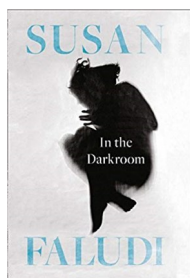
# Pamela's Bookshelf

## Non-Fiction

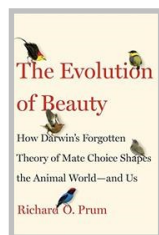
## Fiction



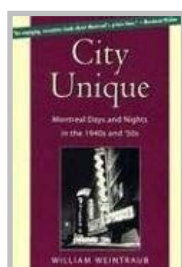
***Poems from a Life*** by Pauline Brazier (Bentham) 2018 paperback. Pauline's autobiographical book of poetry is an extraordinary assemblage of exquisitely personal, masterfully rendered poetry that grips the reader from the first poem, and creates a sense of urgency: one does not want to put the volume down. It is not just a series of poems, it is about a life and thus should be read chronologically. While deeply personal, the poems convey universal feelings and universal truths. Pauline is a moderator and lecturer at MCLL and is one of our unsung treasures. Copies are available at \$9.50. Please contact Sandra Frisby at [sandrafrisby@gmail.com](mailto:sandrafrisby@gmail.com) or at 514-748-0458 to reserve your copy.



***In the Darkroom*** by Susan Faludi (2017) paperback. A probing, moving, and compassionate exploration of identity politics. After 24 years of estrangement from her photographer father, feminist writer Susan Faludi received an e-mail informing her that at age 76 he had decided to have a sex change operation and moved back to his native Hungary. Faludi's investigation of her father is beautifully written and meticulously researched. Faludi interrogates whether identity is what you choose or what you can't escape. More than ever relevant today. A must read.



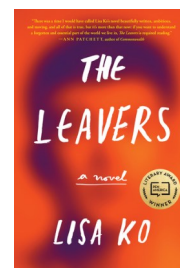
***The Evolution of Beauty*** by Richard O. Prum. Yale ornithologist Richard Prum wants to bring beauty back to the sciences. A self-avowed feminist, he argues that female preference is a powerful agent in biological diversity and the evolution of beauty. Witty, charming, and informative. A seductive read.



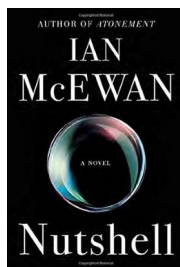
***City Unique*** by William Weintraub (2015) paperback. A wonderfully written, informative and entertaining book which continues to fly off the shelves. The history of the Montreal that is gone does much to explain the unique city of our time. Don't miss out on this book.



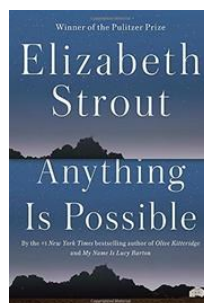
***Sophie and Cecilia*** by Katherine Ashenburg (2017) hardback. Well known non-fiction writer Katherine Ashenburg's critically acclaimed debut novel. Set in the fascinating art world of Sweden at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Loosely based on the lives of Sweden's two most celebrated artists, it highlights the importance of a lifelong friendship between them. Nuanced and richly textured—a deeply satisfying read. You'll love this novel.



***The Leavers*** by Lisa Ko (2017) paperback. A prize-winning debut novel about the immigrant experience in America. Wrenchingly topical, it features two central characters: an 11-year-old American-born Chinese boy and his undocumented Chinese immigrant mother who unexpectedly leaves him. Poignant and beautifully written. Essential reading.



***Nutshell*** by Ian McEwan (2016) paperback. Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is brought into the 21<sup>st</sup> century—Gertrude becomes Trudy and Claudius is Claude. Narrated by a precocious fully inverted fetus who is privy to their plot to murder his father John. Vintage McEwan, it succeeds on its own terms with lucid insights into our times. Brilliant, original and compulsively readable.

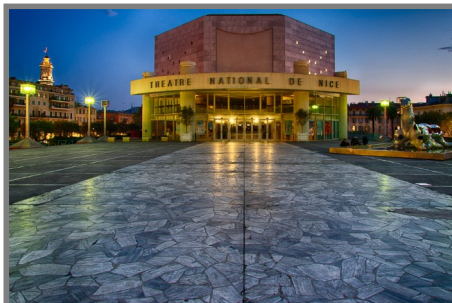
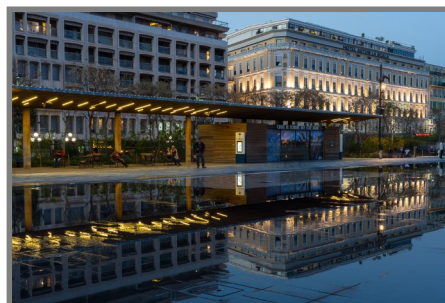
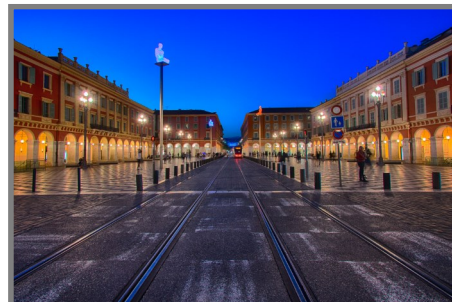
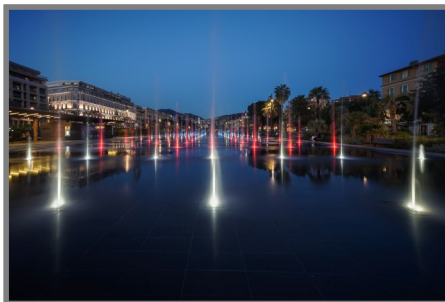


***Anything is Possible*** by Elizabeth Strout (2018) paperback. Just when we thought she couldn't get any better, this latest collection of linked short stories proves us wrong. With Elizabeth Strout anything is indeed possible. Superlatively good.



## Gordon Campey

We wondered if we dared to take photographs of Gordon Campey's photographs for our Newsletter. We didn't. But for those who have not been able to visit the current exhibition in the lounge, we asked Gordon if he would send us a few of his own. What an eye for beauty and what mastery of the camera he possesses to capture the world around us! Whether it is the landscapes or people of Cuba, French monuments or portraits of MCLL members, Gordon's technique is SO professional.



**Top Left**— Fontaine de la Promenade du Paillon

**Top Right**—Théâtre National de Nice

**Bottom Left**—Place Masséna

**Bottom Right**— Promenade du Paillon

Before joining MCLL, he says he was a businessman despite his earlier training as a chemist. He joined MCLL almost 20 years ago and has had an active role here. He has acted as a computer and photography workshop leader, a study group moderator and a lecturer, and has been a member of different committees as well as an active participant in many study groups.

## All Aboard!

An outing in June, by train, to somewhere of interest to railway buffs, has become a tradition for Andrew and Robbie's springtime railway history study group. This year was no exception. On June 19 twelve MCLL members boarded the VIA train for Toronto at Central Station and Dorval station, and two and a half hours later we arrived at Kingston. There we were met by four members of the Kingston chapter of the Canadian Railroad Historical Association (CRHA) who had rented minivans to drive us around and show us the sights. They drove us first to Kingston Mills, the first locks on the Rideau Canal and the site of a historic railway bridge. After that we traced the remains of the two railways which served downtown Kingston: the Grand Trunk (now CN) and the Kingston and Pembroke (later CP, but now abandoned) – this included various stations, a steam locomotive, and abandoned facilities – one of which featured a wall-painting executed by one of our hosts. Other sites visited included the very impressive Pumphouse Steam Museum. Kingston is steeped in history, and we were able to see many of its important sites, including City Hall (Canada's first parliament), its forts and Martello Towers, and its prisons. Our hosts returned us to the VIA station in time for our train back to Montreal.



## Editorial Team:

Lesley Régner—Editor

Noga Emanuel

Charlotte French

Pamela Sachs

Sandra Frisby

Roger Humphrey—Layout