



McGill

School of
Continuing Studies
McGill Community
for Lifelong
Learning

The Newsletter

SPRING 2019 Volume 30, No. 2

www.mcgill.ca/mccl

2019 Annual General Meeting – A great success



DR. Henry Mintzberg

Where would you find a lecturer giving a talk that wove between the Berlin Wall, Big Pharma and the survival of democracy to an audience ranging in age from 45 to 90++ at an Annual General Meeting? Well, in Montreal of course, at Le Nouvel Hotel on the afternoon of March 22, where lucky MCLL members had the great pleasure of listening to Dr. Henry Mintzberg, professor in McGill's Desautels Faculty of Management. He believes that capitalism has upset the balance of what used to be democratic society throughout the world. Here in North America, we have become dependent on two sectors, the public and the private, while the third sector, which is needed to preserve a minimum of balance, is regrettably missing. This third sector is the plural element in which associations such as the Red Cross, Doctors Without Borders, World Wildlife, etc. work together to find common cause, to encourage pluralities to provide that third leg to a disturbingly increasingly polarized society. For those who were unable to attend the AGM or those who want to listen again to this riveting address, a videotaped version exists thanks to our own MCLL IT team!

The AGM was well attended and had some new features this year. Although President Irwin Kuzmarov was unable to attend, he gave his report via video and Lorne Huston, vice-president, added a more personal flavor to the proceedings when he introduced the new slate of officers to sit on Council. He had a few personal remarks to say about each one. Thus, although the meeting respected procedure more closely than in previous years, it had a warm feel to it and people lingered afterwards, seemingly having enjoyed an Annual General Meeting!

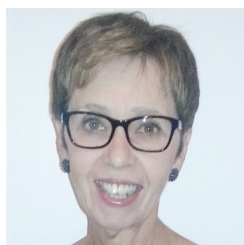


MCLL COMMITTEES – *What They Do*



Volunteers Committee ***Susan Biggs***

MCLL has 12 volunteers who each take a one-half day shift in the office per week plus two “floaters” who help out as required. The volunteers assist Ana, the Office Coordinator, by helping members with registration, for example, answering the telephone and e-mails, filing, and so on. The Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for finding attendance takers for all of the lectures while volunteers help take attendance at special events such as the Holiday Luncheon, the AGM or the Spring Fling. They are a fun and dedicated group whose talents and assistance are worth a fortune!



Curriculum Committee ***Nina Maksymiw***

The Curriculum Committee produces a calendar for each term. Each member of the committee serves as liaison with moderators and lecturers. Study groups and lectures are offered on a wide range of topics in a variety of participation and presentation styles. The Curriculum Committee receives and reviews proposals, supports and recruits moderators. In support of the peer-learning approach of MCLL, we conducted a survey last term and are working to integrate comments received into the Moderators’ Handbook, into the program of the Moderators’ Workshop and into guidance of new moderators.

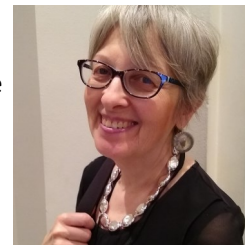
Communications Committee ***Sandra Baine***



The Communications Committee is responsible for keeping you and the community informed about the activities and programs of MCLL. We organize the team of volunteers who distribute the calendars each term announcing our study groups and lectures. The Bulletin that arrives in your inbox at the beginning of each month is written and edited by our team. (Do keep us posted about events that may be of interest to our members.) We are also responsible for the advertising that you see in local community newspapers that are circulated in the English community. For those of you who are active on social media, Ana Milic posts news about lectures and links to stimulating articles and essays on our Facebook page. Soon to come, a more user-friendly website also managed by Ana that will keep you informed about the many offerings of MCLL.

Special Events Committee ***Laura Grunberg***

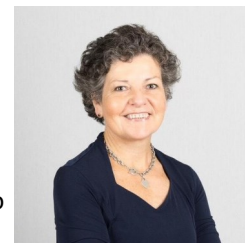
The Special Events Committee title speaks for itself. At MCLL, several events take place during the academic year, namely: the New Members’ Orientation, held in September and January; the Moderators’ Workshop Lunch, also in September; the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in March and the Spring Fling in June. In addition, there are other events such as the Holiday Lunch and special anniversary celebrations. Also, a Members’ Forum takes place every two years.



The position involves a variety of tasks such as scouting for venues in the case of the Spring Fling, selecting menus, seeing that microphones are up and running for the AGM, to name just a few. In essence, the Special Events Coordinator tries to make sure that events unfold as smoothly as possible.

Social Events Committee ***Catherine Main-Oster***

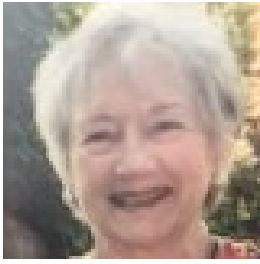
The function of the Social Events Committee at MCLL is two-fold. The first is to provide a platform to embrace study groups or workshops that do not fit within the academic criteria of McGill but provide value to our members. The second is to facilitate social club activities that members request.



IT Committee ***Martin Coles***

The role of the IT Committee is to advise MCLL on the best ways to use information technology. The committee has recently overseen the installation in Room 241 of two high-definition video cameras and a sophisticated microphone that can pick up speech from anyone in the room. MCLL can now web-broadcast both lectures and discussions to members who cannot get to the McGill campus because of medical problems, because of icy roads or sidewalks, or because they are on vacation.





Development Committee

Julie Wait

The goal of the Development Committee is to organize, in collaboration with the developing officer of the School of Continuing Studies (SCS) and Alumni Relations, annual fund-raising opportunities and to promote MCLL programs and activities in the communities around us.



Newsletter Committee

Lesley Régnier

This committee gathers information about the activities and interests of MCLL and its members past and present to produce a printed and an electronic newsletter three times a year.

(Please contact us if you want to submit an article, or would like to become a contributor).



Secretary

Nola Brunelle

Another member of Council, not a committee chair, but by far the busiest member at meetings is the patient secretary, alone in her task. No easy feat with members talking at the same time, people who talk too fast or who mumble, and battles of words sometimes impossible to follow... An important member of Council!

Planning Committee

Leslie Paris

The mandate of the Planning Committee is to provide relevant input to Council about issues that are likely to affect MCLL in the next three to five years. We monitor membership numbers and demographics, including lapsed memberships as well as the satisfaction of new and current members and suggest measures to Council designed to promote membership in light of current trends. We also review and evaluate activities of MCLL, its organization, and financing so that we can make recommendations to Council as appropriate; we also periodically organize discussion forums for members on issues relating to this mandate.



En voyage

Art in the Lounge

Jackie Ctrynbaum

This committee is responsible for the art displays of many varieties in the MCLL lounge. Members are encouraged to share their talents by displaying their work for a number of weeks each session. Current committee members are Jackie Ctrynbaum, Gordon Campey and Ann Pearson, all photographic artists. They receive requests or actively seek out members and help them select and hang their works along with a short bio and artist statement. Often the works are for sale at very reasonable prices.



Helen Forsyth - Volunteer of the Year 2019

If you pick up a South African accent in the office or in a class, you may be hearing Helen Forsyth. Born in Ladysmith, Natal, Helen had plans to see the world. In those days, one of the best jobs when one nurtured such dreams was secretarial (the position no longer exists!). So Helen became a secretary, saved up and went to London. From there, of course, she had Europe at her finger tips and she travelled all over the continent. From there to Canada, on what was to be a first stop on the way to Australia if she didn't like it here. Working first in Montreal then Halifax, she came back to Montreal on retirement. She enrolled in MCLL in 2005, and has been a member ever since. Member of Council as Treasurer for four years, she still does financial work in the office taking care of petty cash, lecture fees and some bank transactions.

No wonder that Helen was chosen to be MCLL's volunteer of the year. "Actually, it's very difficult to choose a volunteer of the year because there are so many who give 125% or 150% to MCLL all the time," said Susan Biggs, Chair of the Volunteers Committee, as she handed an award to Helen Forsyth, this year's recipient, at the Annual General Meeting in March. "But Helen is always willing to go the extra mile," says Susan, "she is a hard worker, very reliable, and tech-

nologically savvy." We couldn't ask for anything more! Congratulations, Helen!

**MCLL
SPRING FLING LUNCHEON**

Wednesday, June 19 at noon

Plaza Garden Inn

380 Sherbrooke West

Charles de Bleury Hall - 11th Floor

Places are limited - first come, first served!

Register and payment \$32
in office by June 7 (12 noon)

(late registrations will not be accepted)

Cheque **must** accompany registration

The Menu

Soup or salad

Choice of beef, fish or vegetarian option

Vegetables and Potatoes

Bread

Dessert of the Day

Soft drinks and mineral water

Coffee or tea

Bloomsday 2019 opens on a

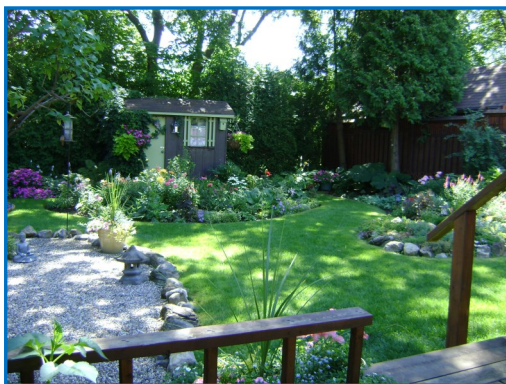
musical note

Atwater Library welcomes Bloomsday 2019's faithful to a lunchtime of the musical favorites of James Joyce's wife, Nora Barnacle on the first of this year's five-day festival, Tuesday, June 12. Both Joyce and Nora loved music: Joyce himself had a very good singing voice while Nora loved opera. So music is the theme of this year's events. Poetry and song appear on Thursday evening's program and next day Irish Studies students at Concordia will present their latest findings from research into the theme of music in James Joyce's works. On Saturday evening at the Loyola campus of Concordia, John Donahue will introduce *Riders to the Sea*, a short one-act opera by Ralph Vaughan Williams with cello and piano accompaniment.



But it isn't all music. On the Saturday morning, Donovan King, actor, teacher and historian, will lead a post-colonial walking tour to reveal some of Montreal's hidden histories, starting out at Milton Gates. For those who have tried once or twice or many times to read *Ulysses*, there is a session that offers tips on how to get into the book and survive the experience. It is very worthwhile. Try it for yourself on the Wednesday evening at 688 Sherbrooke St. W.

In fact, there is something for everyone at Bloomsday 2019. Save some time between June 12 – 16 and come see for yourself! You will find details at <http://bloomsdaymontreal.com/>



Gardeners and Garden Enthusiasts

Don't forget the Annual Ploughman's Breakfast and Perennial Plant Exchange on **Saturday, June 1**, between 11:00 a.m. and 2 p.m. hosted by Sandra Frisby. See the Spring Program, page 24 or contact Sandra at sandrafrisby@gmail.com or at 514-748-0458 for more information and directions.

Outing to the Canadian Railway Museum, St. Constant

Date: Tuesday, June 18, From 10:15 (at the Museum) to 4 PM

Cost: \$16.38

Travel by train from Lucien-Lallier, Vandom or Montreal West

For details please contact Andrew Macdougall:

514-937-5527 or andrewmac@videotron.ca



INTERGENERATIONAL MEETING OF THE MINDS

On Friday, April 5 a good number of our SPEAK* volunteers met with some Mexican students who were here on an internship exchange program within the School of Continuing Studies. We had a chance to exchange ideas and information in a fascinating and lively hour and a half. The students came from all over Mexico and their interests were varied. What didn't vary is their charm, their enthusiasm and their intelligence. It was truly an honour for us to meet with them.

* To learn more about the SPEAK program contact Phyllis Klaiman at: caffeine.fillus@videotron.ca



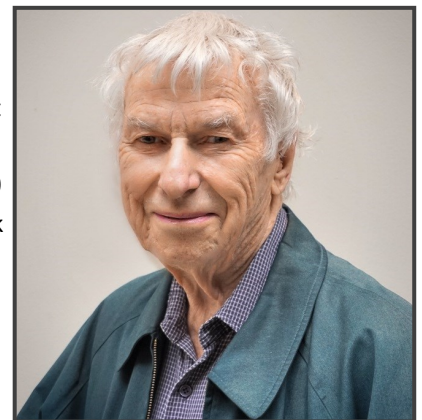
Reminiscences of my days at MILR/MCLL

Near the end of summer 1989, Gerry Roy responded to an ad in The Montreal Gazette and attended a meeting in the Leacock building to launch MILR, the McGill Institute for Learning in Retirement. The guest speaker, from the Harvard ILR, was impressed by the large turnout of some 200 or more. Gerry's first study group, on Ecology, took place that fall. The moderator was Joan Marsden, a biologist who did research in Barbados in summer. There were 10 participants who met in Thompson House on McTavish Street. Actually, MILR meetings took place in rooms scattered all over the campus: on Peel St., in the Bronfman building, in Thompson House and in other venues.

Anne Rosemarin took over as moderator of Gerry's study group for the winter semester and he himself took over for the spring (or fall?!) semester and went on to moderate for 10 years! He also moderated other study groups: The Environment; The History Makers; Footnotes of Montreal History; Events and Issues that shaped Canada. One semester he even took over from the regular moderator, Sal Salvatore, to give him a break. That was on "Events and Trends that Shape our Future". Still not ready to hang up his hat, in fall 2014, he replaced the sick Mike Welham in his study group "Treachery, Treason, Traitors".

Over the years, Gerry has made at least 54 presentations to study groups, and delivered about a dozen Friday lectures. In addition to his 10 years of moderating, he has always participated in Fall and Winter study groups except one semester due to a fractured ankle. And rare it was that he did not make a presentation.

As a member of the first group of study groups at MILR in the fall of 1989, Gerry Roy admits he had no idea what he was getting into. As it turned out, he was exposed to, or involved in, a multitude of subjects, topics and places and he has met many people, some of whom became good friends. "These are all factors that have contributed considerably to the broadening of my horizons. I would have missed all that had I not joined MILR", he says. "After all these years, I must say that MILR was, and now MCLL still is, a very rewarding experience that I would not trade for a fortune!" Aren't we glad!



What the world needs now is ... knowledge

I'm in Jerusalem, and musing on Knowledge is only natural and normal: "Knowledge is joyful light" and "From Zion (Jerusalem) knowledge springs forth" are foundational Judaic dicta.

MCLL members are experienced in the joy attained by augmenting knowledge. It is keenly exuberant, this pulling aside of the curtain that obscures human nature and the world.

Philosopher Roger Scruton maintains that a high culture is manifest in the self-consciousness of a society and contains the works of art, literature, scholarship and philosophy that establish a shared frame of reference among educated people. We call it "knowledge". However, Scruton warns us to be vigilant against fake beliefs, fake opinions, fake kinds of expertise, and also fake emotion, which arises when people debase the forms and the language, so that they are no longer fully aware of the difference between true and false.

We seek knowledge so we may distinguish fact from opinion, truth from falsehood, fantasy from reality. True knowledge is necessary to avoid the distortions of thinking and action that invigorate injustice and suffering. Clarity of expression, verifiability of facts and records, common sense, humility, are some of the means we employ –or need to employ- in order to achieve knowledge.

Albert Camus wrote: "*Malnommer un objet, c'est ajouter au malheur de ce monde*". To misname something, to misrecognize reality, is to amplify the misery in the world. Clear, accurate and prudent use of language can thwart a universal lie from thickening to the point of gaining the appearance of truth. So, language is key! Awareness of our human propensity to accept as true something that merely *feels* true, that sits comfortably among the other furniture that is piled up in our mind, is absolutely essential to minimize the "universal lie". We may get better at identifying a truth – or a reality – if we bear in mind that the opinions and beliefs we cherish are merely our individual psychological attitudes toward some proposition, but do not constitute Knowledge as many thinkers conceived it. We seek to know the world so we can live the good life, namely a wise and righteous life based on true knowledge or, as Socrates insisted, practical wisdom. To bathe in the light of knowledge is blessed joy.



*Prometheus steals the fire
(symbolizing knowledge)*



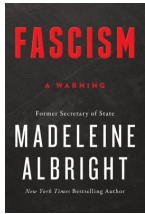
Howard King - New Moderator Profile

Howard King was born in Toronto but spent most of his childhood in Cape Breton Island and in Halifax where his father, Joe King, was one of the first public affairs broadcasters on Canadian television and a cofounder of the CTV station in Halifax (CJCH-TV). Later, his father was transferred to Montréal where the family settled and Howard pursued his studies at Concordia University. After obtaining a Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in Humanities, Howard was employed by the Canadian government, pursuing a public service career he would embrace for the next 28 years. At first, he worked as a front-line officer for the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and, at a later period, was assigned to a joint task force with the RCMP, the Montréal and Québec police force, Interpol.

Before his retirement, Howard held the position of Advanced Passenger Information Analyst. He was awarded the Peace Officer Exemplary Service Medal for protecting the safety and security of the Canadian public with one or more organizations. With such a background in federal law enforcement, Howard will undoubtedly provide his study groups with fascinating stories. Welcome to MCLL!

Pamela's Bookshelf

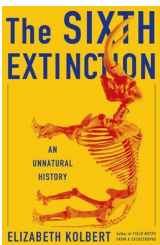
Non – Fiction



Fascism: A Warning by Madeleine Albright

(2019, paperback)

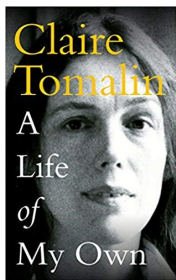
Personal, persuasive and urgent. Madeleine Albright's book is dedicated to victims of fascism and to all who fight fascism in others and in themselves. Albright's impressive achievements during her service as the first woman U.S. secretary of state make her uniquely qualified to fulfill this mission statement. In her new preface she states that she offers both an historical and a global perspective. I find her chapter on the Korean War and on her visit to North Korea particularly illuminating. Perhaps more unexpected are her wit and humour. When asked, as she often is, whether she considers herself an optimist or a pessimist, she replies "I'm an optimist who worries a lot". More than ever relevant.



The Sixth Extinction by Elizabeth Kolbert

(2014, paperback)

Important, informative and entertaining. In the prologue to her bestselling book, Elizabeth Kolbert clearly sets out her trajectory. She has chosen to tell the story of the Sixth Extinction (caused by modern humans) in thirteen chapters. The early chapters are concerned with the five great extinctions of the past, the second part takes place in the present, while the last chapter speculates on the future. Modern humans are causing the massive die-offs of the present just as we are beginning to understand them. It's an "unnatural" history in that humans, the symbol-making species, are able to travel, spread and evolve unrestricted by the constraints of the natural world. Kolbert's great skill as a writer is her ability to synthesize vast amounts of information about a difficult subject in a way that makes you want to keep on reading.

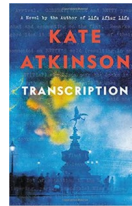


A Life of My Own by Claire Tomalin

(2017, paperback)

Well-known biographer Claire Tomalin writes her own biography at age 84. Unbelievably rich and unbelievably painful. It is inspiring in its insight and honesty and in her ability to overcome multiple personal and family tragedies through her professional work. Starting her career as a publisher's reader, she finished as the literary editor of the London Sunday Times. For those of us old enough to remember, she brings back the intellectual, cultural, social and even sexual life of the sixties and the struggles of a woman to establish a career in a male-dominated field. At age 53, she left the Sunday Times to follow her passion to research and write literary biographies. You may be interested to see Julian Barnes was an important colleague and support. Her second marriage at age 60 brings her a happiness she has never known.

Fiction



Transcription by Kate Atkinson

(2018 paperback)

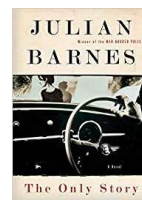
A brilliantly inventive spy thriller and piece of historical fiction centered around Juliet Armstrong who is recruited by MI5 during World War II in London when she is just 18. The book begins with Churchill's epigraph "In war time, truth is so precious that she should always be attended by a body of lies". While first assigned to simply transcribe recorded conversations of an undercover fifth column operation (women's work), Juliet becomes an active part of the operation and the lies and horror it entails. This book explores the devastating consequences of lying. As always, Atkinson's humour mitigates the horror.



The Silence of the Girls by Pat Barker

(2018 paperback)

Pat Barker's project in her important and powerful new novel about the Trojan War is to give a voice to the women who have been silenced by the male-dominated narrative "his story". For most of the novel, the story is told in the first-person narrative voice of Briseis, the Trojan princess given to Achilles for his fighting prowess during the war. She tells us how families are ripped apart, women captured, enslaved and sexually abused. Barker chooses to tell the story of those distant times in contemporary colloquial language, thus bringing it to life. But also we are reminded of how women caught up in conflicts around the world today continue to be brutalized as part of the spoils of war. A page-turner. A must read.



The Only Story by Julian Barnes

(2019 paperback)

A complex, many-layered and carefully crafted novel. Paul, the narrator, is an older man looking back on his life and the decades-long love affair with Susan McLeod, which he feels has "fixed" it forever. Paul meets Susan at the local suburban tennis club where they are paired to be partners in a doubles' tournament. Paul is 19 at the time. Susan is a married woman of 48, has two grown daughters, and is trapped in a sterile marriage. The novel is divided into three parts and told from three different perspectives. It's not a cheerful book but it's entirely gripping and re-counted with Barnes' iconic wit and narrative flair. It's a story about memory that will stay in yours. Julian Barnes has hit an ace with "The Only Story".

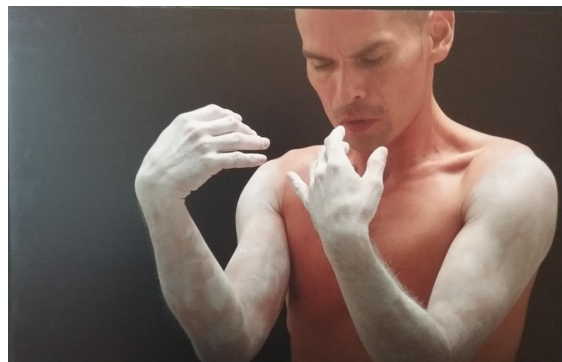


Motherhood by Sheila Heti

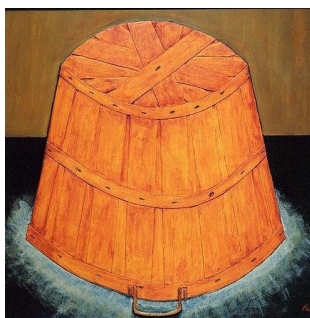
2018 paperback)

Acclaimed as essential reading, rave reviews for Toronto writer Sheila Heti's probing and provocative new novel. The first person narrator, a writer in her late thirties, is deeply ambivalent about having children and angry about the current over validation of motherhood. Being Jewish, she feels an extra burden to repopulate to make up for the losses of the Holocaust. She lives with her boyfriend Miles, with whom she is in love and who already has a child and does not want another one. To help with answers she flips coins. The random answers add to the ambiguity and are a distinctive feature of this brilliantly written work.

Art in the Lounge



José Navas is a dancer and he has danced right onto the walls of our MCLL lounge! Not only that but he is an artist and a choreographer with talent by the ton. He is guest choreographer for prestigious ballet companies, a charismatic solo artist and an architect known for his magical positioning of the dancers in space. He is well known and loved throughout Canada, from B.C. to Québec, for his work with their dance companies. On the walls of the lounge we see the amazing contortions that the human body can achieve – with the correct hard training! Not only are the dancers themselves riveting but the photographs too are vivid – stark black and white or blood red, midnight blue... Unforgettable!
Photographs taken by Jackie Cytrynbaum



Are you hiding your artistic light under a bushel? You may have already been contacted but we fear that some of our newer members have not yet had their artistic talents discovered by our community, and this is the ideal time to shine! This is the 30th Anniversary of MCLL and, in honour of this important milestone, we are establishing an award in the name of Fiona Clark, a founding member of MCLL and a former Financial Director of the School of Continuing Studies. Would you consider donating one of your works, be it a painting, a sculpture or other artistic creation, to be auctioned off at a gala luncheon on Thursday, November 28, the proceeds of which will go towards the scholarship? If you would like to discuss this further, please call Sandra Frisby at 514-748-0458. With very few exceptions, all our artists are talented amateurs, and we are all looking forward to seeing new talent in our midst.

The Greening of MCLL – Phase 2



In view of the colorful tray of coffee mugs arrayed on the kitchen table, it seems that Phase 1 of this project has met with great success. Be prepared for the hard part: elimination of ALL Styrofoam cups and introduction of party plates for end-of-session celebrations (all to be washed after the party!). This will probably start in September when MCLL opens for the Fall session. Anyone with more ideas on how to take measures at MCLL to save the planet are welcome. Contact people in the office.

Editorial Team

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Charlotte French Noga Emanuelle

Sandra Frisby Pamela Sachs

Roger Humphrey — Layout