

SOCIETY PAGES



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NEW! The Morrin Centre website is being launched October 1st at www.morrin.org

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LIBRARY HOURS

THE LIBRARY AT KIRK HALL
 45, CHAUSSÉE DES ÉCOSSAIS

SUN	1:00PM-4:00PM
MON	CLOSED
TUES	12:00PM-9:00PM
WED	12:00PM-4:00PM
THURS	12:00PM-4:00PM
FRI	12:00PM-4:00PM
SAT	10:00AM-4:00PM

MEMBERSHIP

\$60 PER ANNUM

STUDENT PRICE

\$30 PER ANNUM

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear members and friends,

As the beautiful Quebec summer gradually begins into fall, and the children return to the new challenges of another school year, the Society continues to forge ahead with the restoration of the Morrin College building, and the establishment of Morrin Centre, Quebec's English-language cultural centre. The proverbial jack-hammer has been hard at work in the building and the construction schedule for this first phase of the restoration project is on track for the opening of the building by June 2006.

The library is operating very nicely from its temporary headquarters in Kirk Hall thanks to the generosity of the members of St. Andrew's Church. The remainder of the staff is working hard from temporary digs underneath the *chapelle Bon-Pasteur*.

Council and staff are now preparing the ground work for the launch of a major fundraising and capital-endowment campaign, the first time since 1897 that the Society has undertaken the task. The product of this campaign will provide a secure financial footing for the Society to continue to provide the current services as well as develop the activities of the Morrin Centre and so enrich and enhance our wonderful city as it embarks upon its fifth century.

Starting this autumn, the Society also embarks on its first annual campaign with the theme "New Beginnings". This will enable us to secure short-term funding for the additional costs involved with operations, the restoration project, and programme development. I encourage all members to donate generously to be part of these new beginnings. Additional information on the "New Beginnings" annual campaign are enclosed in the present mailing.

I trust you all had a wonderful summer and I thank you sincerely for your continued support of the Society.

Yours sincerely,
David F. Blair, President

EDITOR:
 PATRICK DONOVAN
patrickdonovan@morrin.org

New Bookmarks!

LHSQ staff have donated some of their leisure time to create handmade bookmarks to raise funds for the building project. These original creations, created under the collective theme of **construction**, will be launched for sale on September 10.



UPDATE FROM THE MORRIN CENTRE PROJECT TEAM

A PAGE DEVOTED TO INFORMING MEMBERS AND THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE PROJECT AND OUR PROGRESS

Staff have settled into our new temporary offices on 1080, de la Chevrotière, where we have been busily working throughout the summer.

The building project continues to move forward. **Menuiserie Pouliot** was hired to do selective demolition work. This work took place in August. It revealed many surprises hidden beneath the planks, including some intriguing bones! The archaeologists have been called in and are on the case. The pink carpeting was removed from the library floor, exposing a beautiful red oak floor that will enhance the reading room's warmth with a little sanding and varnishing. The work completed this summer gives us important information about the building's condition, enabling the engineers and architects to better plan their interventions on the site. The final plans and specifications will be deposited soon, and a major restoration phase will take place this autumn.

We continue to work hard at fundraising for this project. We have sent out requests to over a dozen private foundations in the last few months and are preparing for our annual capital campaign, which will take place from September to December. Furthermore, the LHSQ business plan has been completed with the help of volunteer **Anne Martineau**. The plan will enable us to seek out additional funding and to organize strategies that will ensure the long-term financial viability of the Morrin Centre.

Three students hired this summer worked hard on a variety of projects. **Stephanie Laperrière** went through over 14 boxes of unclassified Society material from the past 40 years. She also researched the lives and crimes of prisoners who were hanged outside the gaol. **Tom Welham** worked hard on content for the virtual exhibit, researching the history of learned societies and seeking to create material compelling for both students and the general public. Last but not least, **Jennifer Simard** put together our new corporate website, which will be launched this fall.

Work on library collections continues to take place from our temporary location. Nearly 300 boxes of books have been sifted through and sorted with the help of volunteers. We are also seeking to establish the value of some of our older books. Important recataloguing will take place to consolidate our fiction and literature collections and to group our travel and history books more effectively.

Attendance at our activities continues to be strong. This summer's candlelight events, such as Jean Pouliot's Piloting the Saint-Lawrence attracted 18 people and our tribute to Don Quijote attracted 20 people. We would like to thank all who attended the garden party in June, as well as our president and his wife for hosting this event in his lovely garden.

We will continue to need your help and support to make this project a resounding success. Please contact us if you can offer financial support, expertise, or stories about the building and the Society. ■

A BIG THANK YOU

\$500 TO \$4,999

Heritage Charlevoix

\$100 TO 499

R.E. Blair

Christian Jobin—*in*

memoriam Robert S. Kameen

\$10 TO \$99

Dennis Apedaile

David Blinco

Guy Lachance

Aileen Kameen—*in*

memoriam Robert S. Kameen

Wallace Rooney

GRANTS RECEIVED

\$53,445 from **Canadian Heritage**, for the creation of a virtual exhibit and school programs;

\$17,200 from the **Centre local de développement**, for the development of our major fundraising strategy;

\$1,500 from the **Ville de Québec**, for operations.

NEW MEMBERS

SINCE JUNE 2005

Bonnie Wenstob
Laurie Thatcher
Stephen Gay
Stacey Paton
Paul Bélanger

Jean Pouliot
John Odgers
Sandra Thériault
Michèle Bourbeau

*Welcome
to the LHSQ!*

LEARNED SOCIETIES, CABINETS OF CURIOSITY AND ASSORTED ECLECTICA

A VIRTUAL EXHIBIT ON THE HISTORY OF LEARNED SOCIETIES IN CANADA, by Tom Welham

The cabinet seems to groan under the weight of the artefacts. Everything appears to be covered with a thick layer of dust; at first, it is hard to take it all in, especially as there is no apparent order – a somewhat pensive stuffed lynx stands between an antique barometer and a top hat that has seen better days. At least the yellowing hand written labels give some clue as to the exact nature of some of the more unusual objects:

Many of the artefacts on display come from the LHSQ's own collection, supported by papers published in our Transactions. For example, the Phrenology Head will lead you to a discussion of this bizarre pseudo-science popular mid-century, complimented by a paper published in the Transactions (1867) entitled 'On the measurement of heads in ethnological investigations.'



The mummy is the most arresting. The voice of the bearded Dr. James Douglas can be heard from the adjacent room, as he speaks of dissecting his Egyptian find from the 1860s :

"It was not a mummy of the first quality, nor yet of the most inferior preparation. The brain had not been extracted. Upon removing the calvaria we found it lying on the occiput in a compact mass, shrivelled to about three and a half inches in its longitudinal diameter, and two inches in thickness."

Our upcoming virtual exhibit is presented as a 'Cabinet of Curiosities' so typical of many 19th-century museums, including those of the Canadian learned societies. On the shelves, you can see a variety of artefacts – from the familiar and ephemeral, to the ancient and unusual. These provide access to two complementary exhibitions. Firstly, you can follow the evolution of the Canadian learned societies, from their origins through to the present day. Secondly, the objects help contextualise this evolution by giving a real flavour of 19th-century life. Each artefact is linked to an important contemporary theme, from invention and exploration, to the First Nations and immigration – all of which were of interest to gentlemen of learning and taste.

The virtual exhibit will have an important educative role. It will be a useful resource for Elementary and High school teachers as the themes chosen complement the school curriculum.

The project is being funded by the **Department of Canadian Heritage** through its Partnerships Fund program. The LHSQ is the main instigator of this project, but many partners are providing us with in-kind contributions, namely: **the Royal Society of Canada, Institut Canadien, Université Laval, Canadiana.org, Musée de la civilisation, Musée national des beaux-arts, Central Quebec School Board and Champlain/St.Lawrence.** Thank you to all our partners for helping us in this endeavour.

The website will allow us to develop school programs for elementary, high school and CEGEP levels that will meet specific curriculum needs. This will prepare students for eventual visits to our site once the cultural centre is fully restored and in operation. Our cabinet will be launched in March 2006 ■

Tom Welham worked with Patrick Donovan on the virtual exhibit project in the summer of 2005 thanks to a grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage's Young Canada Works program. He is considering using many of the old travelogues in the LHSQ's collection as a basis for his second Masters degree.



A SECTION DEVOTED TO
THE WRITERS' CIRCLE

THANKS

Though I just woke up, and my eyes,
half-open, still half-filled with dream,
have not yet had a chance to examine the color
of the freshly painted skies
I believe already in their beauty,
and I thank God for today.

I prop up the bedroom windows,
stretch them out wide;
let the slim morning rays take their time
remembering the best way to get inside.

Timidly or boldly, sliding or tumbling, they enter;
discover, rediscover, the mysteries of this room.
some even begin, impertinently,
to play tag on my face,
not recognizing its shape.
(For, last time how different it seemed,
soaked-through with a rain all its own, ungroomed.)

—Quick, and with sudden authority,
my hand falls upon the irreverent brightness,
taking a fistful captive.
The shining string wriggles, tries to escape,
but I hold fast, whispering —Look, it's still me!
God bless and thank Yesterday
That lived to set Today free.

Laura Scribner, August 2005

*Laura Scribner divides her time
between her homes in Quebec City
and New York City. She has been
an active member of the Writer's
Circle since its earliest days.*



Wish List

FALL 2005 PRIORITY:
BOOKER PRIZE WINNERS

Only 6 books are lacking in order to have a complete collection of **Governor General's Literary Award** prize winners for English-language fiction written over the past 50 years. A list of these is posted in the library. A donation of \$100 would enable us to purchase these works.

This fall, we want to acquire works by writers who were awarded the **Booker Prize**. This is one of the most prestigious literary prizes awarded for works written in English, awarded yearly since 1969 to the best novel written by a citizen of the Commonwealth or the Republic of Ireland. 47% of the writers in this category are present in our collection. The remainder are listed below.

The Society would be grateful for any help on your behalf that will enable us to meet this objective. Donations of hardcover editions are preferred, though quality softcover editions in good condition will also be graciously accepted. Pocket book versions are not appropriate for our lending activities, as bindings tend to break after a few readings. We also accept donations in cash, which will be spent immediately to meet current wish list priorities.

- 2003 *Vernon God Little* by DBC Pierre
- 1995 *The Ghost Road* by Pat Barker
- 1994 *How Late it Was, How Late* by James Kelman
- 1989 *The Remains of the Day* by Kazuo Ishiguro
- 1988 *Oscar and Lucinda* by Peter Carey
- 1987 *Moon Tiger* by Penelope Lively
- 1985 *The Bone People* by Keri Hulme
- 1983 *Life and Times of Michael K.* by J.M. Coetzee
- 1982 *Schindler's Ark* by Thomas Keneally
- 1980 *Rites of Passage* by William Golding
- 1979 *Offshore* by Penelope Fitzgerald
- 1977 *Staying On* by Paul Scott
- 1976 *Saville* by David Storey
- 1975 *Heat and Dust* by Ruth Praver Jhabvala
- 1974 *The Conservationist* by Nadine Gordimer
- 1974 *Holiday* by Stanley Middleton
- 1973 *The Siege of Krishnapur* by J.G. Farrell
- 1972 *G* by John Berger
- 1970 *The Elected Member* by Bernice Rubens
- 1969 *Something to Answer For* by P.H. Newby

A NEW WORLD FULL OF DISCOVERERS

by Louise Gunn

According to the ancient mariners, discovering is going to a place known to exist but not well charted. It is therefore appropriate to say that there were many discoverers of America.

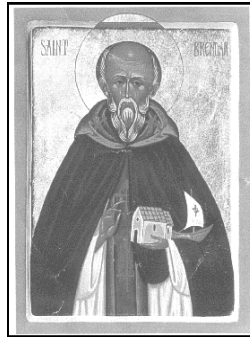
We generally accept the fact that immigration came from Asia via the Bering Strait at the end of the last Ice Age, or about 12,000 years ago. Until recently, they were believed to be the first ones to set foot on this continent.

However, in 1958, the almost intact skeleton of a 26-year old woman was found near Lake Texcoco in Mexico and taken to the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City for safekeeping. Every time the Mexican born archeologist Sylvia Gonzalez visited the museum, she was convinced that the well preserved skull, long and narrow, should be tested because it looked more like the Caucasian type found in Europe than the usual Asiatic one found in America. In 2002, a team from Oxford University was asked to carbon-date the skull and it concluded that it predated the Asiatic group by at least 1,000 years.

Other sources suggest that Europeans visited North America over two millennia before the so-called “age of discoveries.” Diodorus of Sicily, who lived around 56 B.C., mentioned that there was an island of considerable size situated in the ocean at a distance of many days from Libya. He claims that, around 1020 B.C., the Phoenicians crossed the Atlantic and colonized the northeastern part of Brazil. According to this writer, the Phoenicians publicized their discovery, but it seems that they kept the exact location secret probably because they wanted to benefit from the great wealth derived from their trade with this continent. Their presence played a major role in the area for nearly 800 years and may even have influenced civilizations such as the Aztec and the Maya. The pyramids, the temples and many sculptures in Mexico and Central America may be vivid reminders of their encounter with the Old World. Their knowledge of astronomy is surprising, especially the 365-day solar calendar like the Egyptians’ and the 260-day lunar calendar similar to the Mesopotamians’. Herodotus, the famous Greek historian, tells us that “the Carthaginian Senate published a decree in order to forbid – under penalty of death – to organize or to take trips to the other side of the Atlantic ocean because it would drain off the resources of the capital and leave it in danger of attack from its enemies.”

In spite of the chaos caused by the fall of Rome in 476 A.D., Christianity quickly spread in Europe, and Ireland became an important monastic center. Some monks lived in the confines of their cells but others were sent out as

missionaries to spread the word of God. Through their contacts, these wandering monks heard of the fabulous lands across the sea. In their zeal to convert the world, they made plans to go there. The Irish were among the first to record their voyages to the New World and their monks, called Culdees, took to the sea regularly.



Saint Brendan, 6th century AD

The monk Brendan was one of these. Around 525, he went to Iceland in a “currach”, a type of round-bottom boat covered with leather. Oral tradition transmitted the details of his voyages until the ninth or tenth century when a poem was written by an Irish monk. It was entitled “Navigatio Sancti Brendani Abatis” and it said that Brendan “passed by crystals that rose up to the sky” and that he was “pelted with flaming, foul smelling rocks”. Another one of Brendan’s voyages took him to the port of Alet in Brittany and from there he sailed for the Canary Islands in a wooden “ponto”. Witnessing the “Canary Current”, the fast running current going west across the Atlantic, he took the decision to go searching for the “Promised Land of the Saints” that, according to the legend, lay somewhere in that direction.

But did he take that route to cross the Atlantic? No one knows for sure but, according to Tim Severin, a navigation expert, Saint Brendan may have traveled via the northern route. Severin based his theory on the account of Brendan’s journey and on other points indicated in the poem such as the Faroe Islands (island of sheep) and Newfoundland, which he believed was the “Land promised to the Saints”. In 1977, Severin successfully crossed the Atlantic via the northern route in a currach, proving that the trip was possible.

Another proof of Brendan’s voyage is the fact that an island called “St. Brendan’s Isle” is found on maps predating Columbus’ voyage. What we know of Brendan’s expedition is that, around 545, he set off in a coracle with his monks and probably traveled as far south as the Caribbeans. For seven years, they sailed from one fantastic island after another. Upon his return, he founded a monastery at Clonfert in County Galway. Brendan died in 577 at the age of 93. ■

*Louise Gunn is a Society member since spring 2005. She is involved with various activities showcasing Scottish and Celtic heritage throughout the province. **Next Issue the article continues as we go from the Irish to the Vikings, the Welsh and the Scots***

TOP FIVE REASONS TO VOLUNTEER by Virginia Roe

In recent months, the question France Cliche, our Executive Director, is *not* asking is “does everyone have something to do?” She knows our schedules are filled to the brim, even overflowing some days. From creating our new website to researching learned societies and planning a fundraising campaign, the LHSQ team has had a fulfilling and complete summer.

Before moving back to the Morrin Centre in spring 2006, many started projects must be completed in order to make our centre user-friendly. Below is a list of volunteer projects and ways you can contribute to making this project a success. There is something for everyone. Whether you like to socialize or work behind the scenes, work with your hands or use a computer, sit down or stand up, we have a task for you.

VOLUNTEER PROJECTS

Database Entry

An essential, independent task for a computer-friendly volunteer like **Joy Simpson**. The information you would be entering using our new membership and library management software will allow us to better manage information, reducing time spent on administrative tasks and increasing access to information. A volunteer is needed on a regular basis from September 2005 through till May 2006.

Book Sorting

Working in pairs or individually, the task requires sorting books into three groups. Volunteers, like **Barbara Salomon de Friedberg** and **Jonah Marek** are needed from September 2005 till March 2006.

Book Assessing

On the computer, volunteers like **Katie Winkless** with basic computer and Internet skills are required to research and classify books from the collection. This classification process is important in assessing the value of books and can be done partly from the comfort of your home. Volunteers are needed from September 2005 to March 2006.

Event Volunteering

For socialite volunteers like **Loubna Benyahya**, **Mabel Chong**, **Louis Campagna** and **Laura Scribner**, several tasks are required to allow the events to run smoothly. Volunteers may be asked to help set up chairs and tables, serve food and drink, greet participants and handle the cash box. When you volunteer for an event you attend the event free! Volunteers are needed indefinitely.

Library Book Sorting

At the library, the task requires sorting books and placing them in the correct order, especially in the children’s section. Volunteers are needed indefinitely.

Lecturers and Leaders

We are always on the look out for volunteers with interests or specialties who would be willing to discuss their topic in public. Volunteers like **Meb and Tom Reisner** are needed on a continual basis.

Writing

Submit an article, or talk to Patrick about how you can contribute to the *Society Pages*, as **Louise Gunn** has done in this issue with her article.

AND NOW FOR THE TOP FIVE...

So, what are the top five reasons why you should become a volunteer for the LHSQ?

1. Great people hang out here.

Make new friends and network.

2. Learn new skills.

From “hard” skills like computer and library skills to “soft” skills, the Society helps volunteers learn, grow and prepare for future careers.

3. It’s a win/win situation.

Giving back to your community feels good and lending a helping hand to the Society allows us to move forward with our exciting project.

4. Have your say.

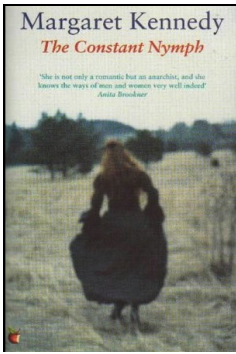
Getting involved means you get to influence all the important decisions being made in the upcoming months.

5. Volunteer Parties.

Last years Bollywood Christmas Party for volunteers was a blast and this years will be only better. All volunteers who have volunteered in 2005 will be invited. This year’s theme? Sorry, that’s a secret.

To become a volunteer or find out more about volunteering, contact Virginia at (418) 694-9147. ■

Virginia Roe has worked as Public Relations Advisor for the Society since March 2005. She is one of the many smiling faces of Morrin Centre.



BANNED BOOKS: *THE CONSTANT NYMPH* by Patrick Donovan

Did you know that the LHSQ once had a censorship committee that destroyed books? In 1926, Major W.H. Petry instigated a group to “check the flow of unsuitable books” and “sex stories” in the library. At least 16 books were discarded. Among these was a literary classic: *The Constant Nymph* by Margaret Kennedy.

The Constant Nymph was a bestseller in its day and is considered a precursor and major inspiration for Vladimir Nabokov’s *Lolita*. It is the tale of 14-year-old Teresa Sanger who falls in love with Lewis Dodd, a gifted composer married to Teresa’s cousin. The novel plays on the tension between the two cousins and the feelings of Dodd towards the adolescent. It was made into three Hollywood movies, including one nominated for an Oscar. The novel’s fame faded over the years, with the theme of illicit adolescent love rehashed in all matter of pulp fiction. Nevertheless, Kennedy’s novel stands above this smut as a serious work of literary merit.

The destruction of *The Constant Nymph* aroused debate at an LHSQ council meeting in 1926. Some argued that immoral themes did not necessarily result in an immoral

book, such as former president J.C. Sutherland: “the powers being exercised by the censorship committee are extensive and might be misused so as to exclude books which should remain . . . Shakespeare himself might be threatened and many others be in greater danger, . . . such as Lawrence Sterne.” More importantly, a group of ladies presented a petition with 55 signatures against the censorship committee. However, this pioneering action by the women of the LHSQ was an annoyance to the likes of Major Petry, who later argued against letting women join the board because “the Society had been in existence for 115 years and had got along well without a lady member of council.”

Censorship may seem a thing of the past, but books are still being challenged by libraries and school boards nationwide. In response to censorship, the Canadian Library Association is outright in claiming that it is “the responsibility of libraries to facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity, including those that some elements of society may consider to be unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable.” In accordance with this, *The Constant Nymph* was repurchased by the Society in 2005 and now graces our shelves. Read and enjoy a banned book today! ■

Patrick Donovan has worked as Heritage and Interpretation Advisor for the Society since May 2004

THE GILLER PRIZE

GUESS THE GILLER

The Giller Prize has been awarded annually since

1994 to the best Canadian novel or short story collection published during the year. This year, the LHSQ joins nearly a dozen Canadian libraries nationwide in the Guess the Giller contest. The shortlist for this year’s prize will be announced September 28 and the winner on November 8. You have a little over a week to deposit your vote at the library for the 2005 winner. The first winning entry will receive all shortlisted books.

GOOD LUCK!
...and enjoy reading Canada’s finest writers

BOOK REVIEW by Hugh Bignell

The Return of the Dancing Master by Henning Mankell

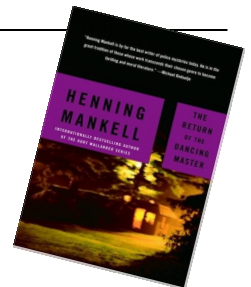
The author is internationally acclaimed as a writer of police mysteries.

The tale is set in Sweden; the time 1999. One of the principal characters is Stefan Lindman, age 37, who is a police officer from a different area on leave near the crime scene awaiting the start of treatment for cancer. Officially, he has no authority in the handling of 2 cases that seem intertwined, but he forms a bond with Giuseppe Larsson, the officer in charge.

The story is superbly told as these two (Lindman unofficially at the outset, but eventually by invitation) wrestle with 2 murders that might be linked together. Lindman’s interest is originally piqued when he notes that victim no.1 is a former police officer with whom he had previously worked in another part of Sweden! Lindman and Larsson, along with a full complement of local and some Stockholm staff, deal with these 2 cases as new pieces of information unfold.

This is a bit unusual as a mystery! I liked it and some of my out-of-town friends have told me they liked it too. ■

Hugh Bignell has been a member of the Book Committee since Spring 2005.



LIBRARY BULLETIN BOARD



The Îlot des Écossais comes to life

Join us on **Saturday October 1** as the buildings on the Îlot des Écossais come to life with **characters from the past** and the kiosks of **various cultural groups**. This is your chance to see the work being done on the Morrin Centre site, listen to music at Saint Andrew's or join us for tea in the Kirk Hall. **All activities are FREE.**

Partners: Saint-Andrew's Church, Quebec Art Company, Voice of English-speaking Quebec, Irish Heritage Quebec, Scottish Heritage Group, 78th Fraser Highlanders, Bon Pasteur Sisters.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS
We encourage all to send their letters or questions to 44, chaussée des Écossais, Québec (Québec), G1R 4H3, or info@morrin.org

The Literary and Historical Society of Quebec is pleased to announce two wonderful new workshops being offered this September by **Tom and Meb Reisner**. The **Poetry Workshop**, entitled *The Rainbow's Glory*, will take place on Wednesday evenings at Champlain-St. Lawrence College from September 7 to 28. The **Social History Workshop**, entitled *Nature's Social Union*, will take place on Sunday afternoons at Kirk Hall from September 11 to October 2. The experienced couple have been giving their time to the Society for many years, each year attracting more and more participants. Call Virginia at 694-9147 and come see what the fuss is all about!

Thank you to Ms. **Teresa Delli-Colli** for donating Lionel Shapiro's *The Sixth of June*, the first book on our Governor General's Literary Award Wish List. Unfortunately, this book made its way to the "free" shelves and was probably taken away by one of our members. We would appreciate if the book was returned.



Join the **Haiku Group** for its second meeting to take place on Tuesday, September 27 at the CENTRE COMMUNAUTAIRE LUCIEN-BORNE, room 405 at 7:30pm. (100 chemin Ste-Foy, at the intersection of avenue de Salaberry and the chemin Ste-Foy. Free parking: west rear entrance.) Meetings will resume at the Kirk Hall in November. Check with Virginia at 694-9147.



We are looking for donations of one or two computers (Pentium 3, 512 M memory) to manage research into the library collection. Minimum requirements. Call Caroline Lamothe at 694-9147 for details.

LORENA LEIJA TO THE RESCUE!

When **Amelia Deffis'** plane was held over in Argentina, her student **Lorena Leija** came to the rescue. She gave a wonderful presentation on Don Quijote that wooed the crowd. Thanks to Lorena for filling it at the last minute!

NEW

TOTE BAGS

The new LHSQ tote bags look great strapped over your shoulder or worn sherpa-style across your forehead. They are large and sturdy enough to contain your books, grocery or other items. **Get one today while supplies last!**

\$18 members

... or \$20 for non-members.