

SOCIETY PAGES

NUMBER 45 ■ Summer 2015 ■ \$2.00



- *TEATIME* ACTIVITY RETURNS
- SUMMER READING FOR KIDS WITH BOOK QUEST—H₂O!
- MEET OUR SUMMER GUIDES

The Morrin Centre is managed by the Literary & Historical Society of Quebec.
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SOCIETY PAGES

NUMBER 45 ■ SUMMER 2015

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LIBRARY HOURS

Sunday	12:00PM-4:00PM
Monday	CLOSED
Tuesday	12:00PM-8:00PM
Wednesday	12:00PM-4:00PM
Thursday	12:00PM-8:00PM
Friday	12:00PM-4:00PM
Saturday	10:00AM-4:00PM

Front cover: Plants and Animals in concert on June 12, 2015 at the Morrin Centre

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The mission of the **Morrin Centre** is to share and foster English-language culture in the Quebec City region. The Morrin Centre is administered by the Literary & Historical Society of Quebec.
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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear members,

Over the past three years, the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec has seen our membership grow by 35% and the use of the Morrin Centre more than double, which is far beyond what we had initially hoped. We aim to continue this growth. Why? Because we believe it is important to share our unique cultural offering. No other cultural organization offers this blend of heritage, education, and the arts for both members and the community at large.

Also, growth indicates the relevancy of our organization – we aim to continue being relevant. And finally, an active membership base is important to the vitality of the Society and the Centre: you, our members, represent the audience for events and services; and you are also our volunteers that make our events and services possible.

With this in mind, the Membership Committee is launching a survey. The survey is your opportunity to tell Staff and Council about the events and services you value and enjoy. Tell us about why you renew your membership – or why you might not. We want to hear about what we do well, and what we can improve.

In the coming days, a survey will be emailed to you. For those who did not provide an email address, you will receive a copy of the survey by mail. You can also respond to the survey in person in the library. The survey is designed to be completed in approximately 12 minutes, and your answers will be confidential.

I encourage all members to participate. Your voice is essential in helping us continue to grow.

I hope you have a fantastic summer,

Sovita Chander
President, LHSQ

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear members,

The last time I wrote a Society Pages letter, we were in the midst of planning the ImagiNation Writers' festival. I am happy to say that the 2015 festival was the most successful yet in terms of attendance, number of partners and number of presentations.

I would like to thank all of our sponsors and partners for helping to make ImagiNation a can't-miss cultural happening. Strangely, though, ImagiNation 2015 already seems like a distant memory as we are already busy lining things up for 2016.

We just recently held the ArtsAlive Festival, an initiative spearheaded by the English-language Arts Network (ELAN). There are six festivals taking place across the province between June and October. Ours kicked off with a sold-out concert featuring local favourites The Aurian Haller Band and Montreal indie heavyweights Plants and Animals. On the Saturday, we hosted the Community Arts Fair on the Chaussée des Écossais

which featured tables of many community arts and culture organizations.

Visitors were also treated to live performances by great artists such as Rae Marie Taylor, Charles Mountford, Vibrant Voices and Emilie Clepper. I would like to thank ELAN for all of their support and bringing representatives from all of these regions together. I am optimistic that it will lead to future collaborations.

The arrival of summer means a few things – daily guided tours and Teatime that are sure to delight visitors. The Morrin Centre remains one of the city's top-ranked attractions on TripAdvisor, so if you have guests visiting town, I encourage you to bring them for a visit. These are two perfect activities for all ages. Also, our summer reading program, Book Quest, is back. This year's theme is H₂O and is sure to provide kids with a fun learning experience. There is still time to sign up.

Wishing you a wonderful summer,

Barry McCullough
Executive Director

TRANSACTIONS

PRISONERS, STUDENTS AND THINKERS

The Morrin Centre recently contributed biographies to the Répertoire du patrimoine culturel du Québec, a French-language online database produced by Quebec's Ministère de la Culture et des Communications that seeks to promote Quebec's rich, varied cultural heritage to a wider audience. The following are two biographies which will be a part of a small virtual exhibit to be launched shortly on our website.

John Meehan (1841–1864)

By Donald Fyson

Donald Fyson is a historian and the Honorary Librarian of the LHSQ Library.

Born August 9, 1841, at Sainte-Catherine-de-Fossambault, John Meehan was the son of James Meehan, a farmer, and Catherine Mulcair, both Irish Catholics. After the death of James Meehan, the family sold their land and moved to Quebec City, where John Meehan became a carter.

The Meehan family did not get along well with another Fossambault family, the Pearls, even though they were related. On September 11, 1863, John Meehan met 16-year-old Patrick Pearl at Michael Lawlor's tavern on Saint-Vallier Street, in the Saint-Roch suburb. Pearl had come to town with his father to sell their produce. After exchanging words over a package Meehan wanted Pearl to deliver to Sainte-Catherine, Meehan and Pearl went out into the street. After further exchanges, they began to fight. Meehan was stronger than Pearl, and after knocking him down, began jumping up and down on his chest. At the same time, James Crotty, a carter who was an acquaintance of Meehan's, hit Pearl on the head with his whip handle. Two women bystanders separated them and brought Pearl back into the tavern, but he



Photograph of John Meehan, likely taken shortly before his execution. The clothes he is wearing correspond in large measure to the description of those he wore on the scaffold.

collapsed and died shortly after. Meehan and Crotty fled the scene. Meehan was arrested the same day and imprisoned in the Quebec jail, accused of murder. Crotty was captured four days later.

Meehan went on trial before the Court of Queen's Bench in February 1864, defended by noted Quebec City lawyer and politician John O'Farrell. After five days of testimony, much of it contradictory, the jury, composed of both anglophones and francophones, found Meehan guilty of murder. In this, they were following the directions of the trial judge, Charles Mondelet. After a series of objections by O'Farrell, Mondelet then sentenced Meehan to death.

The jury had strongly recommended Meehan to the mercy of the court, thinking to avoid the death penalty, but legally, it was the only sentence Mondelet could impose. He set the execution for March 22.

There had been no civilian hangings in Quebec City since 1836. Several people had been sentenced to death, but all had had their sentences commuted after petitions to the governor. O'Farrell and others drew up petitions in favour of Meehan, asking that his death sentence be commuted to life in prison, since they felt that at worst he was only

PRISONERS, STUDENTS AND THINKERS (continued) 

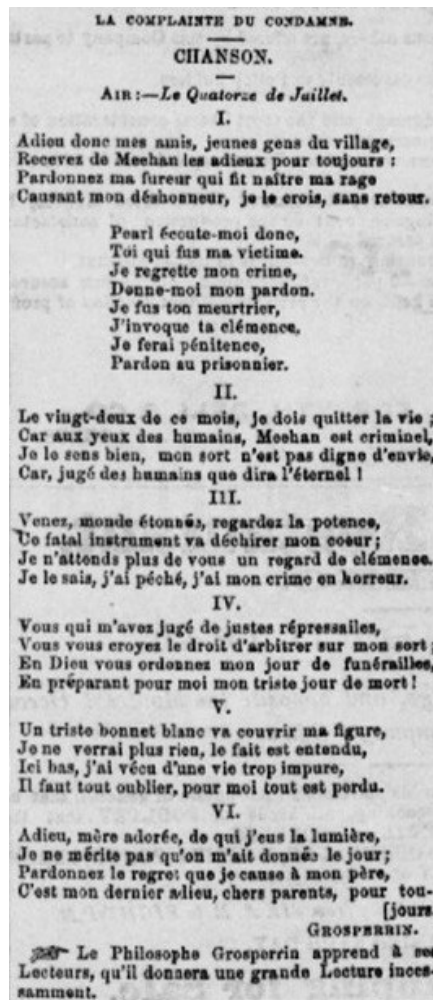
TRANSACTIONS

guilty of manslaughter. The petitions were signed by the mayor and city councillors, local members of parliament, many of the city's lawyers, and thousands of residents of Quebec City and Fossambault. They were sent to the governor, Lord Monck. To the surprise of all, Monck refused to commute the sentence. Many blamed Monck himself, but he was following the recommendation of the Executive Council and in particular of the Attorney General, Antoine-Aimé Dorion, head of the Parti Rouge (successor to the Parti Patriote). Although known to oppose the death penalty, Dorion declared that he saw no reason to commute Meehan's death sentence. The petitioners continued their efforts, even meeting personally with the governor, but to no avail.

While awaiting the fateful day, Meehan was kept alone in a separate cell. Guards watched night and day to prevent him from committing suicide. Meehan was regularly visited by nuns and members of the Catholic clergy, and also by his mother. His co-accused, Crotty, who was still waiting for his own trial, also visited him a week before the execution.

On the morning of March 22, Meehan's family paid him a last visit, in his cell. He was then brought into a small room immediately above the jail's main entrance, which led directly onto the temporary scaffold erected over the entrance. A large crowd, between 5000 and 8000 people according to

newspapers, gathered in the small space in front of the jail. Spectators climbed on trees and on the roofs of surrounding buildings. A fence hid the bottom of the scaffold, so that the public could see Meehan's fall, but not his death struggles.



"La complainte du condamné". *Le Quatorze de Juillet* was a song from the French Revolution, set to the tune of an earlier popular song, *La bonne aventure au gué*.

Journalists looking out from the prison windows above the scaffold, however, could see everything, and reported it in macabre detail in their columns the next day. Meehan was brought out onto the scaffold, and addressed the crowd in English and then in French. As in most speeches by those condemned to die, at least as reported in newspapers, he warned the crowd against following his bad example. At the same time, he denied having intended to kill Patrick Pearl.

When the executioners opened the trap and Meehan fell, the crowd surged forwards to the fence, presumably to see the body, but were held back by the prison guards. Part of the crowd also wanted to rush to the governor's residence, but this movement soon died down. Eager publishers quickly produced pamphlets describing the trial and execution. The well-known Quebec City street poet Groperrin even circulated the "Complainte du condamné", a song with mournful words but set to a tune from the French Revolution.

This was the last public hanging in Quebec City, and for a long time remained vividly imprinted on collective memory in the city. John Meehan was buried two days after his execution, in the Saint-Charles cemetery in Saint-Roch. At his trial a few months later, Crotty was found guilty of manslaughter only, and sent to the provincial penitentiary for 7 years.

TRANSACTIONS

Margaret Ethel Victoria Fraser (1871-1962)

By Patrick Donovan

Patrick Donovan is a historian and former Executive Director of the Morrin Centre.

Born in Quebec City on October 5, 1871, Margaret Ethel Victoria Fraser was the daughter of Donald Fraser, banker, and Elizabeth Jane Brown. Fraser studied at the Girls' High School in Quebec City and obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree at Morrin College in 1894. She then moved to Toronto to pursue medical studies at the Ontario Medical College for Women, which she completed in 1899.

Since it was easier for female doctors to have careers in the United States at that time, Fraser began her medical practice at the New England Hospital for Women in Boston, Massachusetts. In 1905, she moved to Denver, Colorado, where she set up an office with Dr. Elsie S. Pratt. She also worked at the Denver County Hospital and for the

Colorado State Board of Health.

During World War I, Fraser directed the American Women's Hospital in La Ferté-Milon, a war-torn region of France. She was awarded the Médaille de la Reconnaissance française for her efforts in 1919. Back in the United States, Fraser pursued higher studies in gynecology in New York City. She then worked in the health sector at the University of Colorado in Boulder.

In addition to her medical practice, Fraser was involved in women's rights and environmental protection. She was a member of the American Association of University Women, worked on their scholarship program, and participated in meetings of the International Federation of University Women in Geneva, Helsinki and Copenhagen. She was also a co-founder of the Colorado Mountain Club in 1912, and the only woman on its first board of directors; this organization played a leading role in establishing Colorado's Rocky Mountain National Park.

LIBRARY PAGES

Introducing our Book Quest Coordinator



Name: Lindsay Fleetwood
Hometown: Claremont, Ontario
Field of Studies: Mathematical Physics, Music

I have been in Quebec City for a year now and absolutely love watching the spring flowers transform our city with their colour and beauty. I am very excited

to be working with the children in the library this summer with our Book Quest summer reading club, as we explore together the theme of water in many different ways. The possibilities are endless! Crafts, science experiments and, of course, some amazing books are on the menu. I can't wait to share it with you all!

For my undergraduate degree I studied mathematical physics in a co-op program, and explored many different sides of the science world through my internships. This September I will be changing direction as I will be entering a professional master's program in music therapy. I play guitar and piano, and I love to sing, so I am excited about diving further into the field and putting my love of music and people to good use. Please feel free to say 'hello' the next time you pass through the Morrin Centre library. I would love to have the chance to meet you and share this wonderful place with you. ■



June 20 – August 29, 2015

11th annual • 11e édition

BOOK QUEST

H₂O!

English-language
summer reading club

Club de lecture estival
en anglais

Dive into reading!

Sign up today!

Plongez dans la lecture!

Inscrivez-vous aujourd'hui!



Join us to celebrate the launch of Book Quest for children ages 5 to 12 at the Morrin Centre library on Saturday, June 20 at 10 a.m. RSVP before June 18.

Venez fêter le début de Book Quest pour enfants âgés de 5 à 12 ans lors de notre lancement au Morrin Centre le samedi 20 juin à 10 h. RSVP avant le 18 juin.

RSVP

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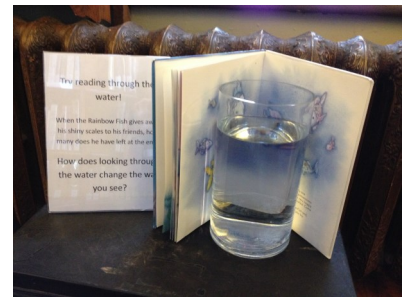
Équipe Marie-France Delisle



LIBRARY PAGES

BOOK QUEST – H₂O!

Book Quest, our English summer reading club for children, celebrates 11th anniversary



Book Quest – H₂O! offers children aged 5 to 12 the opportunity to dive into reading this summer, thanks to many exciting books and engaging activities organized throughout the holidays. Join us in exploring water, aquatic environments, marine animals, weather, and more, for our summer reading club.

The Book Quest Launch Party took place on Saturday, June 20, in the Morrin Centre library. Each participant was given their reading logbook, our Book Quest poster, and instructions about the game we will be playing, which will help them gauge their progress throughout the summer. Lindsay Fleetwood is our new Book Quest coordinator and she is looking forward to all the splashy adventures we will be embarking on together!

Keeping track of children's progress throughout the summer months will be loads of fun, with our underwater-themed craft and some trivia questions that will make you go searching through the books for the answers. At the launch, the children made Japanese koi fish which became the first ocean

creatures in a hanging garland that will grow as the summer goes on. For each book finished, the child will receive a new aquatic shape to decorate and add to their garland. After every set of ten books completed, they will also receive a ballot to be entered into the draw for prizes from our sponsors at the end of the summer.

Bi-monthly Book Quest activities will take place at the Morrin Centre library, on Saturday mornings at 10:30 a.m. Please consult our website for a schedule of all the activities we will be offering (www.morrin.org).

Children can register for free for Book Quest throughout the summer during opening hours at the library. They will receive their package with materials to begin their very own ocean garland, a reading log to keep track of books read, and instructions on this year's summer reading club. For more information on Book Quest - H₂O! please contact Lindsay Fleetwood by email at library@morrin.org. ■

LIBRARY PAGES

INVENTING THE INDIVIDUAL THE ORIGINS OF WESTERN LIBERALISM

by Larry Siedentop

Review by Mike Lawlor

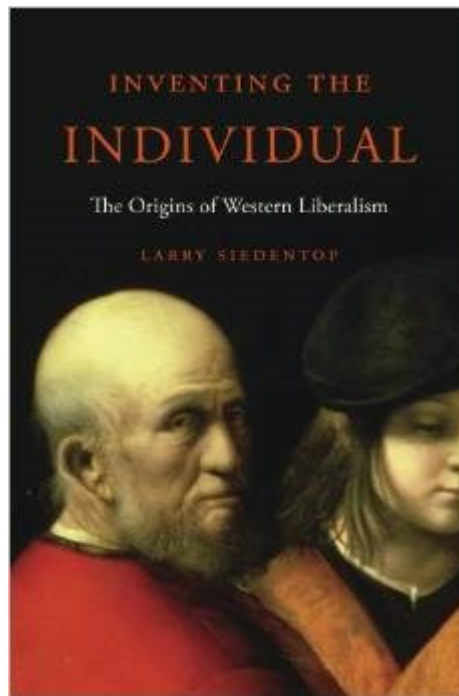
In the ancient world there was no sense of the equal status of all members of society. The Roman *paterfamilias*, for example, was not merely the symbolic head of the family, but its ruler, exercising complete control over all family members. But Christianity, as established by St. Paul, diametrically opposed this hierarchy, insisting that in the eyes of God there was no distinct status of “slave; free; Greek; Jew”, so long as the word of Christ was accepted. This moral concept points to Paul as being perhaps the “greatest revolutionary in human history”.

Paul’s world view was built on the notion that God created humans as equals—and more—that individual humans were rational agents with free will. But the realization of Paul’s world view grew in long, halting, and uneasy stages. First, from Paul to the Carolingian age; second, though the era of papal revolution, papal independence, and papal power; and third, during the rebellions against kingly despotism and the Reformation, or the reform of the broad authority of the Church. Since the state and church were so inextricably linked, the road to democracy and modern freedom was created.

The moral revolution began in the first centuries CE, when notions about equality and human agency were first formulated by Paul. It continued through the concepts of Augustine, Aquinas, the Christian

philosophers, and the canon lawyers of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.

When Thomas Jefferson wrote that “we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights,” he clearly thought that the equality of all men was self-evident. But it was Christianity that made them self-evident.



Western liberal thought is all about liberty. Liberty is derived from the equality of souls, the authority of the individual, and the responsibility of individuals endowed with sovereign consciences and unalienable rights; it is the child of Christianity.

The idea that the Middle Ages, rather than the European enlightenment, saw the discovery of the individual through Christianity encounters plenty of opposition. It flies in the face of the conventional view of liberalism as a product of modernity: a philosophy that was developed through the Renaissance and the Enlightenment primarily in opposition to religion. Siedentop describes how the moral equality among human beings which was established in Medieval Christianity marked out the Christian west from the rest of the world; it provided the seed bed from which sprouted a liberal ideology that marks our modern world. ■

MUSIC REVIEW

COURTNEY BARNETT – NEW ALBUM RELEASE
SOMETIMES I SIT AND THINK, AND SOMETIMES I JUST SIT

By Barry McCullough



Courtney Barnett, a 26-year old from Sydney, Australia, is taking the world by storm. She's a darling of critics, making the talk show rounds and will be hitting a number of festivals

in North America and Europe. (Sadly, though, not the Festival d'été de Québec). And it's all with great merit.

In 2012, she created her own label, Milk! Records on which she released two EPs, *I've Got a Friend Called Emily Harris* in 2012 and *How to Carve a Carrot into a Rose* in 2013, which contains the standout track "Avant Gardener." The two EPs were re-released together internationally as *The Double EP: A Sea of Split Peas* in 2014.

People will inevitably draw comparisons with early 90's rock and they wouldn't be wrong to do so. Leadtrack "Elevator Operator" has a 90s/70s throwback feel, complete with organ. The lyrics are scattered, to be sure, but endearing, with her singing about such diverse objects as soy linseed Vegemite crumbs, Botox and playing Sim City. I think anyone, at one point or another, can get behind the sentiment of "...not going to work today! Gonna count the minutes that the trains run late. Sit on the grass building pyramids out of Coke cans." Yup, we've all been there.

The mid-tempo "An Illustration of Loneliness (Sleepless in New York)," sees her casually claiming "I'm thinking of you too." It certainly doesn't come off as too wistful, but you still believe the sentiment.

"Depreston" is a ballad which examines a couple looking at buying a house in the suburbs, which the narrator coming to the realization it might not be all it's cracked up to be. It closes by repeating the line "If you've got a spare half a million, you could knock it down and start rebuilding."

Side A mixes and matches up-tempo rockers and slower, heartfelt numbers. The second half of the record speeds up the pace, led off with "Aqua Profonda!" And "Dead Fox," which takes an interesting look at the food we eat. ("Jen insists we buy organic vegetables and I must admit that I was a little skeptical at first; a little pesticide can't hurt.") Side B brings things to a slow close with the dirge of "Kim's Caravan" and the acoustic balladry of "Boxing Day Blues."

The album doesn't really break new ground, but it sounds fresh and is immensely enjoyable. Perhaps it's a millennial's take on rock n' roll nonchalance. She never takes herself too seriously, but she's not afraid to briefly put herself on display. Her sincerity is never in doubt and it definitely doesn't hurt that she knows how to pen some great rock n' roll. ■

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GUIDED TOURS

MEET OUR MORRIN CENTRE TOUR GUIDES

New guides



Name: Andrée-Ann Cormier
Hometown: Havre-Saint-Pierre, QC
Field of studies: English Literature

What I enjoy most about giving guided tours is sharing a moment with very curious and passionate visitors who wish to know every detail of the Morrin Centre's history. Furthermore, I am fond of seasoned (older!) travellers who can teach me new things, either about their own family history, or about anything else that interest them. Being the absolute bookworm that I am, it was the exquisite Victorian-style library that first made me want to work here. Every time I bring visitors into that very special room and they marvel at its beauty, I am reminded of the first time I came here six years ago. I am looking forward to taking part in the Teatime activity to be held in the library this summer, as I am a real tea junkie myself!



Name: Vincent St-Pierre
Hometown: Rivière-du-Loup, QC
Field of studies: History

In 2015, I started my master's thesis in history. For the next year, I will be working on the life context of the "lunatics" at the Beauport Asylum during the second part of the 19th century. This is my first year as a guide at the Morrin Centre. I am very happy to be a part of this team, and I hope that I will be able to bring new and interesting content to my guided tours this summer, especially with the Discovery tour. Finally, the thing I like best so far about giving guided tours is the contact with the visitors, who always seem very interested!

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GUIDED TOURS

Returning guides



Name: Philippe Martin
Hometown: Sainte-Foy
Field of studies: History

My favourite tour at the Morrin Centre is the Discovery tour as it allows me to share my knowledge of history in a funny and interactive way. I especially like to show the jail to visitors because I find the history of life in jail during the 19th century very interesting and because it is fun to lock people in the solitary confinement cell. I also enjoy playing the doctor part in the Life of a Convict tour because the script is ironic and it is funny trying to convince people that you are a firm believer in the efficacy of 19th century medicine.



Name: Malena Johnson
Hometown: Quebec City
Field of studies: Creative Arts, Literature and Languages

As I start my second summer as a tour guide at the Morrin Centre, I look forward to the fun moments it will bring. With visitors coming from as close as Montreal or as far as New Zealand, each one with their own stories, it makes every tour I give a unique experience.

morrin centre

a little extra goes a long way...

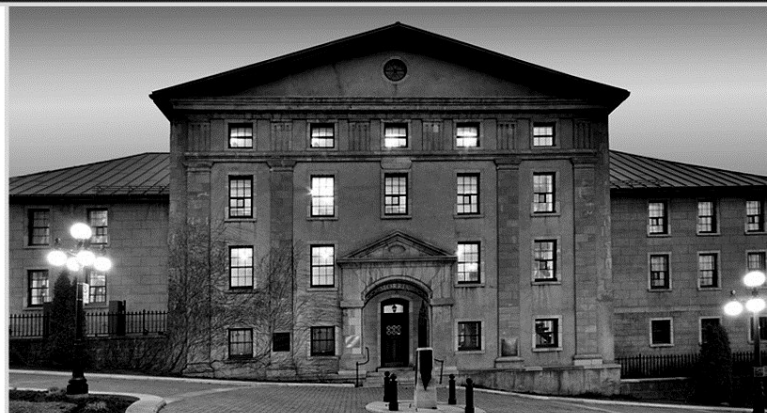
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For more information

Contact Caroline Labrie at 418-694-9147, ext. 224
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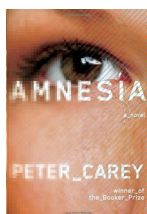
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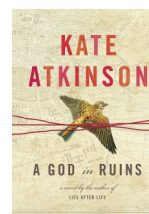
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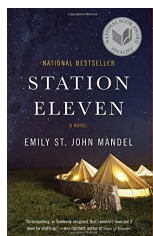
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 Elif Shafak
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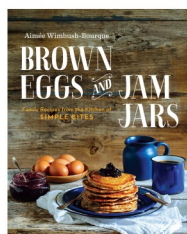
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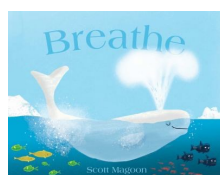
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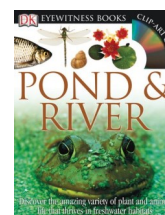
What We See When We Read
 Peter Mendelsund
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Biography
The Right to Be Cold
 Aislinn Hunter
 BIO W344 2015



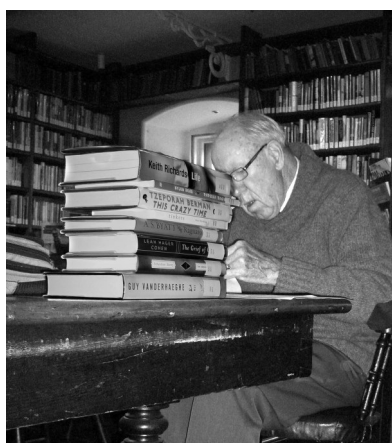
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 Scott Magoon
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Pond and River
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MISCELLANEA

REMEMBERING RONNIE BLAIR



Ronnie Blair working in the Morrin Centre library

We were saddened to learn of Ronnie Blair's passing on May 25, 2015. Ronald Edward Blair was born in 1925 and grew up in Quebec City. He and his family have been active members of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec for years. He regularly volunteered in the library until a few years ago. His wife, Miriam, sits on the

Book Committee, his son David was president of the LHSQ from 1999-2011, his daughter Louisa has been on the Council and occupied the position of Honorary Librarian for a year, and regularly contributes to the Society's activities through her work in translation and

editing, and his daughter Sarah volunteers at the library desk.

Virginia Haustrate was the librarian from 2011 to 2013 and fondly remembers her time spent working with Ronnie.

"Each week, for many years, Ronnie volunteered for a few hours in the library. He mainly helped cover books and was very meticulous in his work. Despite not being able to speak, he communicated a lot. His eyes were very expressive and we could see a great sensitivity in them, as well as a sense of humour and even a little mischievousness.

"His presence in the library seemed natural, for him and for us. He felt like a member of the Morrin Centre family. He was as much attached to the Morrin Centre as we were to him and Ronnie's presence will be missed by us all. I wish that his spirit will remain in the library for a long time yet." ■

RENTALS

RENT A ROOM AT THE MORRIN CENTRE

Are you aware of the many rentals that occur at the Morrin Centre every year? In fact, in 2014, our spaces were rented 105 times! Our rooms were the venue for numerous weddings, cocktail parties, Christmas parties, book launches and business meetings. Last October, we hosted a prestigious and enchanting masked ball organized by Les Jeunes Philanthropes de Québec. This year's rental calendar is filling up fast. If you are interested in renting our spaces, please contact our new rentals coordinator, Caroline Labrie, at 418 694-9147, ext. 224 or by e-mail at carolinelabrie@morrin.org.



Credit: Dylan Page

Wedding in October 2014. The ceremony took place in the library and guests enjoyed a dinner and reception in College Hall.



"There are few hours in life more agreeable than the hour dedicated to the ceremony known as afternoon tea."
 - Henry James

Come sample traditional teas and cookies while boning up on Victorian etiquette and teatime customs in our historic library which boasts a collection of over 20,000 books, a spiral staircase reminiscent of the library in Disney's Beauty and the Beast and artifacts dating back to a time when afternoon tea was in fashion. Teatime at the Morrin will be the opportunity to celebrate special occasions or to simply discover the English heritage that is part of our city's history.

Tea is served in the Morrin Centre library on Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays at 4 p.m.

Cost: (All prices include taxes)

General: \$12.00 - Students: \$10.00 - Children 10 years of age and younger: \$6.00

Tickets available online at morrin.org/teatime.

