

FORUM



Volume 9 — Issue 2 — February 2021

President's Message:

Friendship Month



Our first snowfall of the year was the great equalizer, everyone's lawns now look the same. Prior to the storm, I never thought I would see the day when pedestrians out-numbered cars. Weather wise it has been a great winter (except for skiers) to be out walking.

We are still taking our car for our walks. We have found different areas of Milton to discover. Parking our car and walking around town we have found many parks that we did not know existed. Older homes are sitting between the newer and larger tear-down replacements. Many are done very tastefully but they still take away from the old town ambiance. Progress cannot be stopped but at least it can be controlled. Yes, we were part of the change when we moved to a newer Milton development in 1977.

It was nice seeing so many members at our January meeting. Our speaker did not go into detail about the government cutting funding to the horse industry. It was devastating to our community. It affected many ranchers, trainers, suppliers and secondary industries. Horses were sold off, given away or even destroyed. Milton was a rural community then and in many ways it still is.

Preparing for the future of our club, Penny, our membership chair, and Diane, our vice-president, have sent out a membership survey. Please see Penny's comments on the next page regarding why we need this information.

February 14th is Valentine's Day. I think a day is not enough. It should be called Friendship Month so we can all reach out to family, friends and random members of our club. We all need this!

It is sad to see the price we pay to keep everyone safe. If only everyone followed the rules! Continue taking care of yourselves and be safe. Our lives and those we love depend on us.

Hope to see you soon and Happy Valentine's Day to all!

Editor's Note:

This month's Forum is more than double the size of last month's as there is a lot of new information! Numerous clubs are holding virtual meetings, there are several new events coming up, and we have a roster of speakers for the next few months. Plus a number of members have submitted personal articles. Keep it coming folks, let's all work to keep our club viable and fun!

— David Boss

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Membership Survey

Those of you who attended our January Meeting via Zoom on January 20 may recall that the Club planned to send a survey to all members. Vice-President Diane Comstock has now sent the survey to everyone.

The purpose of the survey is to help us plan for our return to face-to-face meetings. When we are able to meet again, perhaps this fall but we can't be sure, we may be required to restrict attendance in some way. To ensure fairness we would like to know how many members intend to continue in the Club. Also we want to ensure that your contact information is current.

As of the deadline date of January 29 we had a 78% response rate to the survey. Thank you to all of you who responded promptly; this really helps with our planning. To ensure that everyone has a voice in the decisions we must make, I am following up with any members who have not responded.

Remember to keep safe and keep in touch. If you have any questions please email me at pennymcilw@gmail.com.

— Penny McIlwaine, Membership Chair

Friendship Club

By Martin Capper

It's hard to believe that it will be a year in February since members of the friendship club last got together at Seasons for coffee, cookies and chat. We plan to restart the club, this time virtually, in February. It won't be at Seasons, you'll have to make your own coffee and cookies but at least the chat shouldn't differ too much.

Judy Krauss developed the formula that worked so well and the plan is to continue her good work until such time as she can take back the club and resume physical meetings. The formula is a little like "speed dating" except we were in groups of four or five and chatted for ten or fifteen minutes and then changed.

The idea of the club resulted from members' comments on one of our early surveys. New members in particular expressed the opinion that the size of the club made it difficult to get to know people and make new friends at the General Meetings. The Management Team at that time created two new groups; the Newcomers Group that Cliff and Liz convened each year to inform new members of club activities and groups; and the Friendship Club for all members, new and old, to meet and get to know each other.

The club meets at 10:00 am on the 4th Wednesday of each month and is open to all. All that is required is you send an email to martin@martincapper.com and ask to be added to the clubs email list. It doesn't require you to do anything else. You will get two emails each month, one a week before the meeting and the second the day before, no replies required. At 10:00 am on the 4th Wednesday of the month if you wish to attend just click on the link in the email and spend an hour making new friends and meeting old!

If you were a member of the club there is no need to do anything else. I will contact you and ask if you wish to remain on the list.

Beer Tasting Revival

By *Pete Shermet, Convenor*

Based on the excellent success of Jim Tschirhart's Zoom Winter Wine Tasting (oops, can't forget Martin Capper), we are going to have a Zoom Beer Tasting event the 4th Thursday of the month starting February 25th at 7:00 pm.



For those interested but currently not in the beer tasting club please email me directly at peteshermet@gmail.com and I will add you to the list.

Once the list is established I will send out a PDF of our evaluation sheet, along with the names of the two beers we will sample. Participants will then go out to the beer/liquor store and purchase the the beers to be sampled (along with their favourite snacks). I will send out a Zoom link in advance of the meeting to all participants.

Each month a new host will provide me the names of the beers they would like to taste (hopefully readily available) and we will repeat the process.

Skip the Dishes Reboot

By *Lorrette Shermet, Convenor*

It is hard to believe but the last time "Skip the Dishes" got together was Feb. 2020, a whole year ago. I have been playing with the idea for a while to restart this group and have decided to give it a try. We will meet the 3rd Thursday of the month at 6 pm on Zoom.



Here are my thoughts: I will select the restaurant for the month and whoever wishes to participate can place their order for the meeting day or another one suitable to their schedule prior to our meeting.

During these unprecedented times it is a great way to support our local restaurants. In order for the restaurant to know that our group is supporting them you might mention that you are part of the Escarpment PROBUS dining group.

For the month of February I have selected "Thai House Cuisine" on Main Street, their phone number is 905-203-0912 and website www.thaihouse.ca.

If you would like to be part of this group, please send me your email address (to lorrette@sympatico.ca) and I will forward the zoom link to you. If anyone has any restaurant suggestions, please do not hesitate to forward them to me.

Zoom@Nite

by *Ellen Crawford, Convenor*

While we continue to meet virtually via Zoom one couple will provide a recipe for an appetizer and each household will make the same appetizer to nosh as we meet.

After our Nosh, the appetizer recipe will be shared in the Forum.



Dinner Club

By Auriel Halliday, Convenor

Welcome back to PROBUS Dinner Club members, as well as all PROBUS members. On February 16th (or night of your choice) let's celebrate Mardi Gras at home!

Mardi Gras, or Fat Tuesday, refers to events of the Carnival celebration, beginning on or after the Christian feasts of the Epiphany (Three Kings Day) and culminating on the day before Ash Wednesday, which is known as Shrove Tuesday. Mardi Gras is now a Christian holiday and a popular cultural phenomenon that dates back thousands of years to pagan spring and fertility rites. Also known as Carnival or Carnaval, it is celebrated in many countries around the world, mainly those with large Roman Catholic populations, on the day before the religious season of Lent begins. Brazil, Venice and New Orleans play host to some of the holiday's most famous public festivities, drawing thousands of tourists and revellers every year.

In February 2020, Dinner Club members shared their last menu, and, yes, it was a Mardi Gras themed night! The entree was, of course, Jambalaya and I am going to feature another version of this famous dish for your own at-home celebration. This time we are going to simplify the procedure and make our Jambalaya on a sheet pan. You may prepare the ingredients during the day and quickly assemble them on the pan to pop in the oven as you make the rice.

Ingredients for the rice:

2 cups chicken stock.

1 cup uncooked white rice.

1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce.

0.5 tsp. hot sauce.

Please note that you may use any rice recipe. This one brings more New Orleans flavour to the dish.

Instructions for cooking the rice:

Using a medium saucepan, add chicken stock and place over medium-high heat.

When boiling, add rice and stir. Cover and reduce heat to medium-low.

Cook for 20 minutes. (Note: Do not remove the lid or stir during this step.)

Remove lid and fluff rice with a fork.

Stir in Worcestershire sauce and hot sauce.

Ingredients for the Jambalaya:

1/2 each green pepper, red pepper and yellow pepper, cubed (or any colour you have).

Medium onion, sliced.

1 stick celery, chopped.

1 cup sliced sausage, should be spicy. 1 cup raw chicken, cubed. Some raw shrimps, if you like them.

2 tbs. olive oil, 2 tbs. creole seasoning, 1/2 tsp. paprika. Garlic, if you like it. You can change the spices to suit your taste.

Splash of hot sauce, splash of Worcestershire sauce, pepper and salt, pinch of dried chili peppers.

Small can of diced tomatoes. Green onions, chopped for garnish.

Remember that this is a versatile recipe and you can add or remove ingredients to suit.

I did not use garlic and added only a small amount of sausage for Don.

Instructions for the Jambalaya:

Preheat oven to 425°F.

In a large mixing bowl, add everything except for diced tomatoes, green onions and shrimp. Mix well.

Spray a rimmed sheet pan with non-stick baking spray. Spread jambalaya mixture onto pan.

Bake for 16-18 minutes, or until chicken and sausage are fully cooked.

Carefully remove sheet pan from oven and add shrimp and drained tomatoes; stir until well combined.

(Note: there will be a fair amount of liquid in the bottom of the pan at this stage.)

Continue baking for 6-8 more minutes, or until the excess liquid in the bottom of the pan has been absorbed.

Sprinkle with green onions and Italian parsley before serving over rice.

To add to the fun, why not add some beads, to yourselves and the table.

ACTIVITIES

Bringing in the New Year!

By Ruth Gagnon, Activities Chair

There was great energy at our January General Meeting with the inauguration of our new PROBUS President – Wayne Herder - on the same day that the US inaugurated their new president! It was also great to see so many members participating in the monthly challenge. For those of you who have not yet been able to find your name badge, good luck! Our **monthly challenge for the February General Meeting** is all about Valentine’s Day. It could be an outfit, something you baked, something you made – use your imagination!! There will be a prize!

Our Zoom Scavenger Hunt@Home held on Thursday, January 28th was a great success! There were 47 members who participated! Members had to find a number of items in their home and there were some interesting findings that they presented to the group! Notable mentions would be Margaret Murphy modeling her nightgown – fancy! Anne Gibbard sharing her gardening skills with her growing eggplant! Also to note that shoe polish does not count as hair dye Ken Green and brown beans may be a musical fruit but they don’t count as an instrument! Stick to your guitar John Flynn!! The “couples” prize was won by Jim and Michelle Tschirhart and the “solo” winner was Gillian Reynolds. Both were given an Ultimate Dining Card – enjoy! Next time maybe we will do a prize for the person who did the most steps!!

A few more activities are being planned! Get the details below...

FEBRUARY ACTIVITY:

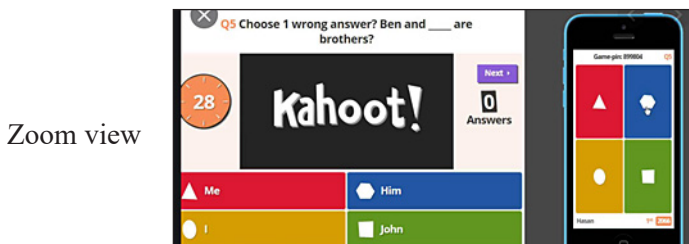
ZOOM - It's Trivia Night!! – Tuesday, February 23rd, 7:00 – 9:00 pm

Convenors: Kelly Ground & Ruth Gagnon

Tired of the same old evening routine? Join us for a Zoom Trivia@Home. Using interactive technology, we have planned some fun you can participate in from the comfort of your home! You can join us for a Trivia Night by yourself and even if you are a “couple” you can play individually. Email kmground@gmail.com to register or if you have any questions.

What you will need: Zoom (on computer or tablet), and a cellphone or tablet to input your answer. **Get the Kahoot! app now at kahoot.it so you're ready to go when you join the Zoom call!** This is a multiple choice game so you have a shot at getting the right answer!!!

Use your computer/tablet to join Zoom and your cellphone (a.k.a. your game device) to play:



Zoom view

Cellphone view

Questions will be shown on the screen and you and/or your team will have 60 seconds to select the correct answer. Points are awarded for the proper answer as well as for the speed with which you answer. For those bashful players all will be given pseudonyms! We will protect your identity!! There will be prizes for those who make it to the Podium. Be a winner!

Activities Committee
Members:
Ruth Gagnon
Anne Gibbard
Kelly Ground
Irene Hiebert
Joanne Millichamp
Ron Millichamp
Dawn Ross

MARCH ACTIVITY:

Zoom “NEVER HAVE I EVER!!!” – Thursday, March 4th, 7:00 – 9:00 pm

Convenors: Kelly Ground & Ruth Gagnon

Join us for a bunch of laughs and an opportunity to get to know your fellow Probians a little better. This is an “E” rated activity!! Random items will be displayed and we will want you to indicate – Never Have I Ever!! Or I Have!! You can register by email to gagnonruth@gmail.com. This is sure to be an activity with loads of laughs and social interaction!

An email will be sent out a few days before the activity with the Zoom invite and additional information. **Please note, you will need to make a trip to Kelly or Ruth’s house to pick up your paddle and score sheet.**

St. Patrick’s Day Celebration! – Wednesday, March 17th, 7:00 – 9:00 pm

Convenors: Kelly Ground & Ruth Gagnon

While we may not be in Ireland, come and kick back with us in **The Suborp Kitchen Bar** to sit around the table and hear some jokes and some good old Irish music. Bring your green beer and whiskey (Jameson’s or Bushmill will do) for good old Irish cheer! Please register with Kelly at kmground@gmail.com or Ruth at gagnonruth@gmail.com. Let’s have a few laughs together. Zoom info will be sent a couple of days before the event. Sláinte!



Zoom Musical B-I-N-G-O – Tuesday, March 23rd, 7:00 – 9:00 pm

Convenor: Kelly Ground & Ruth Gagnon

An old game with a new twist. Try musical bingo! Instead of numbers on the card there will be some of the most recognizable and iconic songs. With only seconds of play, your musical knowledge will be tested. You will need coins or buttons, so your card can be reused for the next game. You will also need a printer to print off your Bingo cards.

This event is limited to 40 members on a first come, first serve basis so email me to register - kmground@gmail.com as soon as you can. An email will be sent in advance of this activity with the Zoom invite as well as your Bingo cards.

Please note that any activity we plan will adhere to any provincial guidelines and restrictions due to COVID.

If you need help with the Zoom program, check out our Zoom page at <https://www.escarpmentprobus.com/zoom>. All the information you need to use Zoom is there.

Zoom meeting tips:

- You can join a Zoom meeting directly from your web browser or using the Zoom app.
- To always enter a meeting quietly (with your microphone muted) select the arrow beside the microphone icon, select Audio Settings, and then add a checkmark to “Mute microphone when joining a meeting”.
- To speak while your microphone is muted, press and hold the spacebar.
- If using a PC or Mac there is a list of useful keyboard shortcuts at Settings > Keyboard Shortcuts.
- If you are having trouble with sound clarity, try turning your video off.

MEETING: FEBRUARY

We will hold our next Zoom General Meeting on February 17th at 9:30 am. This meeting will include a guest speaker (see below). You will receive a link to the registration form in an email in early February.

The First Canadian Helicopter Circumnavigation of the World



C150 Global Odyssey (“C150GO”) was the first Canadian helicopter circumnavigation of the globe — and the first ever father/son helicopter circumnavigation. Departing on July 1, 2017 to celebrate Canada 150 — the 150th anniversary of Canadian confederation — the crew flew a Canadian-made Bell 429 helicopter around the world, visiting every Canadian province and territory, as well as landmarks celebrating remarkable achievements and events from Canada’s rich history.

Along the way C150GO was joined by notable Canadians such as Dave Williams, Guy Lafleur, Peter Bregg, Col Gerald Haddon, and Bronwen Evans. The trip also proudly raised money for Southlake Foundation and True Patriot Love Foundation.

Steven Dengler, our speaker, was one of the three pilots (as was his father Bob). Steve is also a Canadian entrepreneur, Fintech pioneer, and aviator. In 1993 he co-founded XE, now the world’s leading foreign exchange website and app.

MEETING: MARCH



AstroGeoGuy

Chris Vaughan aka “AstroGeoGuy” is an astronomer and earth scientist. Since 1996, Chris has been delivering planetarium experiences, visiting classrooms, hosting science-themed assemblies, running science clubs, and holding stargazing parties for schools and groups in southern Ontario. He writes a weekly astronomy blog for non-astronomers called Astronomy Skylights; stories for SkyNews,

Canada’s astronomy magazine; and columns and a monthly calendar of astro-events for the website Space.com. Chris’s content is used in the popular SkySafari 6 and Star Walk 2 smartphone apps and the Starry Night software package.

Chris is an operator and tour guide for the David Dunlap Observatory’s 74” (1.88 m) Great Telescope, presenter in their Skylab room, and a speaker at their public programs. He also presents The Sky This Month at the monthly Recreational Astronomy Night meetings of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada Toronto Centre, and is an instructor in their public astronomy course. Chris is the recipient of the 2014 Bertram Topham Award for Observing; the 2013, 2014 and 2018 Andrew Elvins Award for Promotion of Astronomy; and the 2019 Ostrander Ramsey Award for Astronomical Writing from the RASC. In 2018, Chris was awarded the Reach for the Stars Award from the City of Markham, in recognition of his promotion of astronomy and fight against light pollution in Thornhill.

MEETING: APRIL



A Glimpse Behind The Curtain

For Nora Polley, 2020 marked 56 seasons with the Stratford Festival. Her father, grandfather and four siblings have all worked at the theatre over the years. A stage manager from 1969 to 2009, Nora now works part-time in the Stratford Festival Archives. She has an insider’s view of how theatre works and sometimes doesn’t.

SOCIAL CLUBS

Club	Date/Time	Convenor	Telephone	Email
Board Games - <i>Bee Gees</i>	2nd Wed. - 1 pm	Stephen Comstock	905-876-4909	scomstoc@sympatico.ca
Board Games - <i>Jokers</i>	2nd Thurs. - 1:30 pm	Auriel Halliday	905-336-2430	aurielh@gmail.com
Board Games - <i>Jokers</i>	4th Wed. - 1 pm	Auriel Halliday	905-336-2430	aurielh@gmail.com
Book Club - <i>First Edition</i>	2nd Mon. - 1 pm	Paul Crawford	289-878-4968	paullelencrawford@gmail.com
Book Club - <i>Happy Bookers</i>	4th Thurs. - 12:30 pm	Judy Wallace	905-878-3374	lollipops@sympatico.ca
Book Club - <i>Ravenous Readers Recycling</i>	3rd Wed. - Probus meeting	Ellen Crawford	289-878-4968	paullelencrawford@gmail.com
Book Club - <i>Sequel</i>	2nd Wed. - 10 am	Carolyn Rumley	905-302-0442	carolynrumley@sympatico.ca
Book Club - <i>Trilogy</i>	2nd Wed. - 10 am	Linda Green	289-851-8655	klgreen@sympatico.ca
Cards - <i>Bid Euchre</i>	3rd Thurs. - 1:15 pm	Lorrette Shermet	905-878-1293	lorrette@sympatico.ca
Cards - <i>Bridge</i>	1st Tues. - 1 pm	Jeanne Reid	289-878-9920	jreid345@cogeco.ca
Cards - <i>Canasta</i>	4th Mon. - 7 pm	Lorrette Shermet	905-878-1293	lorrette@sympatico.ca
Cards - Cribbage - <i>Card Sharps</i>	2nd Mon. - 7 pm	Martin Capper	905-693-0354	martin@martincapper.com
Cards - Cribbage - <i>Card Sharps</i>	Tues. after the 2nd Mon. - 1:30 pm	Martin Capper	905-693-0354	martin@martincapper.com
Cards - <i>Euchre</i>	3rd Tues. - 1 pm	Lorrette Shermet	905-878-1293	lorrette@sympatico.ca
Classical Music - <i>Mozart and Friends</i>	4th Tues. - 1:30 pm	Michael Hooker	905-878-8953	mhooker10@bell.net
Club <i>Français</i>	2nd Wed. - 10 am / 11 am	Anne-Françoise Gibbard	905-854-3781	anne@gibbard.net
Crafts - Knitting - <i>Chicks with Sticks</i>	3rd Thurs. - 10:30 am	Christine Willekes	905-820-0269	chriswillekes@gmail.com
Crafts - Quilting - <i>Piece Makers</i>	1st Tues. - 1 pm	Diane Comstock	905-876-4909	meljenscc@sympatico.ca
Dining - <i>Appy Hour</i>	Last Sat. - 6:30 pm	Mary Cousins	416-628-6275	mlecousins@outlook.com
Dining - <i>Lunch Bunch</i>	3rd Wed. - noon	Bonnie Lennox	416-899-7727	bblennox@live.ca
Dining - <i>Nosh 'N' Natter</i>	1st Fri. - 5:30 pm	Gillian Reynolds	905-878-1636	gilliana@cogeco.ca
Dining - <i>Nosh 'N' Natter</i>	2nd Fri. - 5:30 pm	Gillian Reynolds	905-878-1636	gilliana@cogeco.ca
Dining - <i>Nosh@Nite</i>	4th Fri. - 5:30 pm	Paul & Ellen Crawford	289-878-4968	paullelencrawford@gmail.com
Dining - Saturday Night Lives	1st Sat. - 6 pm	Anna Strachan	905-878-0812	annastrachan1945@gmail.com
Dining - <i>Skip the Dishes</i>	3rd Thurs. - 6 pm	Lorrette Shermet	905-878-1293	lorrette@sympatico.ca
Dining - <i>Supper/Dinner Club</i>	<i>Scheduled by convenor</i>	Auriel Halliday	905-336-2430	aurielh@gmail.com
Friendship Club	4th Wed. - 10 am	Judy Krauss	289-878-8194	judyckrauss@gmail.com
Movie Club - <i>Oscar Nights</i>	2nd Tues. - 7 pm	Theresa Spano	416-618-2955	1tspano@gmail.com
Probus Info Exchange - <i>PIE</i>	Online only - no meetings	Cliff Read	905-864-1565	cliff.read@cogeco.ca
Sports - Bowling - <i>10 Pin</i>	2nd Tues. - 4 pm	Michelle Tschirhart	416-668-9083	mltschirhart55@gmail.com
Sports - Bowling - <i>10 Pin</i>	Last Wed. - 4 pm	Michelle Tschirhart	416-668-9083	mltschirhart55@gmail.com
Sports - Golf - <i>Pin Seekers</i>	TBA	TBA		
Tastings - Beer - <i>Suds and Buds</i>	4th Thurs. - 7 pm	Pete Shermet	905-878-1293	peteshelmet@gmail.com
Tastings - Whisky - <i>D'Stillers</i>	1st Wed. - 7 pm	Chris Strachan	905-878-0812	strachan.chris1944@yahoo.ca
Tastings - Wine - <i>Grapenuts</i>	1st Mon. - 7 pm	Jim Tschirhart	647-648-8231	jim.tschirhart@gmail.com
Tastings - Wine - <i>Grapenuts</i>	1st Thurs. - 7 pm	Jim Tschirhart	647-648-8231	jim.tschirhart@gmail.com
Tastings - Wine - <i>Grapenuts</i>	2nd Wed. - 7 pm	Jim Tschirhart	647-648-8231	jim.tschirhart@gmail.com
Travel - <i>Annual Trip</i>	<i>Scheduled by convenor</i>	Joanne Millichamp	289-878-2969	jmillichamp@hotmail.com
Travel - <i>Wanderlust</i>	2nd Thurs. - 7 pm (bi-monthly)	Gloria Pennycook	905-659-7789	gpennycook@icloud.com
Walkers - <i>Trail Walkers</i>	Every Tues. - 1:30 pm	Ronald Flannagan	905-332-6310	rflannagan@cogeco.ca
New information	Temporary change			

At PROBUS we want to keep in touch, we are all friends. If you know of anyone who is ill, moving away, lost a loved one, etc., or someone with a new grandchild, great grandchild or special anniversary, please let Lorrette Shermet know and she will gladly send a greeting card (contact lorrette@sympatico.ca or 905-878-1293).

Zoom meeting etiquette:

Mute your microphone: To keep background noise to a minimum, mute your microphone when you are not speaking.

Be mindful of background noise: When your microphone is not muted, avoid activities that create noise broadcast to everyone, such as shuffling papers or speaking to the person sitting beside you.

Position your camera properly: Be sure it is in a stable position, at eye level, and fairly close to you. This helps create a sense of engagement for other participants.

Limit distractions: Turning off notifications, closing or minimizing running apps, and muting your smartphone make it easier to focus on the meeting.

RECENT EVENTS

January Meeting

Our January Zoom General Meeting was held on January 20th. Here's the link to the recording of the meeting and guest speaker Anthony MacDonald's presentation on harness racing and fractional horseownership in Canada.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/6BVzZs6oOCHVdn5ZB2eepNMADc7syTMiDVPQrFubCzrOkPrwsSI9qgeJah5jxWKE.tcQRBLrZmkT9SDDB>

Passcode: *C4nS#gZ

Clubs: Food and Drink

Cheddar Bacon Toasts

by Carole Pond

Here's a favourite recipe:

Ingredients:

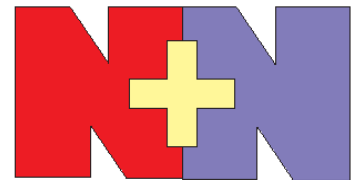
- 2 cups (8 ounces each) finely shredded cheddar cheese
- 3/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1/3 cup crumbled cooked bacon
- 1 loaf unsliced French bread (1 pound)

Directions:

In a large bowl, combine cheese, mayonnaise and bacon. Cut bread into 24 slices, about 1/2" each. Spread cheese mixture on one side of each slice. Place on ungreased baking sheet, Bake at 425 degrees for 8-10 minutes or until golden brown.

Yield: 2 dozen.

Enjoy!



Clubs: Books, Hobbies, Games

We have Always been Here

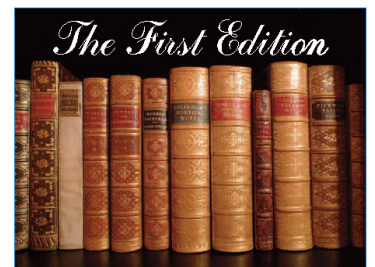
by Lorette Shermet, Correspondent

Twelve of us met via zoom on Monday, January 11th to discuss the book *We have Always been Here, A Queer Muslim Memoir* by Samira Habib.

Samira Habib has spent most of her life searching for the safety to be herself. Samira's family came to Canada as refugees from Pakistan and Samira encountered new challenges: bullies, racism, the threat of poverty, and an arranged marriage. The men in her life wanted to police her, the women in her life had only shown her the example of pious obedience and that her body was a problem to be solved.

The book won Canada Reads 2020, and she was interviewed at Milton Library. A few of us from our club signed up to hear the interview on Zoom.

Unfortunately most of us in the group did not enjoy it much and our rating for the book varied between four and six.



Clara and Mr. Tiffany

by Barbara Alderson, Correspondent



At our December meeting, nine members of the Sequel Book Club gathered via Zoom to discuss Susan Vreeland's novel *Clara and Mr. Tiffany*.

The author was noted for her historical novels with artistic themes, and this work is no exception. It begins as the newly widowed Clara Driscoll begins working for Louis Comfort Tiffany at his glass studio in New York City during the hurried preparations for Tiffany's debut exhibit at the Chicago World's Fair of 1893, and traces her career and personal life until her departure from the company in 1908. New York City during the "Gilded Age", a time of great social change, is the backdrop for this complex and ambitious novel. Details abound on the daily activities and personalities of the era, yet the focus of the novel remains Clara's working relationship with Mr. Tiffany and her contribution to the development of the spectacular lamps so admired by collectors.

Vreeland's inspiration for this novel came during a 2007 trip to New York City. She visited both an exhibit of Tiffany's panels and the New York Historical Society's exhibition *A New Light on Tiffany: Clara Driscoll and the Tiffany Girls*. That exhibit revealed for the first time Clara's part in the creation of the famous Tiffany lamps and, equally significant, the important role played by the women dubbed "the Tiffany girls" in the work done at the Tiffany studios.

For anyone wishing to read this novel, Vreeland's official website is instructive. In addition to a detailed description of the author's "discovery" of Clara Driscoll, there are examples of Tiffany lamps and panels, images and descriptions of the Tiffany girls and the times in which they lived, and contemporary photographs of New York City. It is a useful point of reference for those not familiar with Tiffany or New York during the "Gilded Age", and might help in the understanding and enjoyment of the novel.

Many in our group said elements of the story were interesting, but most found the novel difficult to read, in particular the lengthy descriptions of the production of the stained glass panels and lamps. It was suggested that the author had attempted to cover too many topics, but many wished for more details on the difficulties experienced by the women in their work environment. Our club gave the novel an average rating.

The Perfume Collector

by Catherine Parr, Correspondent



A novel set in the 1950's with flashbacks to an earlier time, *The Perfume Collector* by Kathleen Tessaro proved to be a compelling story of two women struggling in different times and different circumstances toward common goals of purpose and self-determination.

When a mysterious inheritance is bequeathed to a British socialite from an unknown Paris benefactor, Grace Monroe sets out on a journey of self-discovery and liberation. Grace's quest to untangle the past and learn truths about Eva d'Orsey and the curious woman, Madame Zed, immersed her into the exotic world of perfumery. The history and science of perfume creation gave depth to the story as the fiction intertwined with fact and learning. With an added splash (I couldn't help myself) of romance, *The Perfume Collector* is a well rounded, enjoyable novel.

The members' reviews of the book concluded that it was an "easy read" that was welcome in January after a busy December and in the trying times of our pandemic dominated lives. Some found it predictable, others found the world and creation of perfume to be remarkable. We averaged a rating of 6.5 but because of the welcomed light read and interesting subject, all agreed to two thumbs up. We then had some fun with a lively discussion of our own history and use (signature scent, anyone?) of perfume.

Our January Zoomers

by Michael Hooker, Convenor

Asoka Yapa led us on “An American Journey” in music – all sorts, heavy in pop, light in classics. As examples, we heard: Patti Page, The Kingston Trio, Paul Simon, The Supremes, and Pat Boone.



As an introduction, Asoka wrote: “This appears in the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty: ‘Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door’. How much America has drifted from these ideals! I will dedicate this American journey to that lost ideal, the promise that should have drawn the masses to the ‘Shining City on the Hill’ that President Reagan rhapsodised. There is always hope.”

With my Zoom on the subject “Beethoven at the Theatre”, I couldn’t top Asoka’s searching and fascinating tour of America. However, to keep us on what is supposed to be a somewhat “classical” orientation, and also to celebrate the 250th anniversary of Beethoven’s birth (on 16th December 1770), I played the incidental music Beethoven wrote for two plays, *Egmont* and *The Ruins of Athens*.

Egmont is a set of incidental music pieces for the 1787 play of the same name by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (the German Shakespeare). The subject of the music and dramatic narrative is the (true) life and heroism of 16th-century nobleman Lamoral, Count of Egmont from the Low Countries.

The Ruins of Athens was written to accompany the play of the same name by August von Kotzebue, for the dedication of a new theatre at Pest (Hungary).

In 1923, who was:

1. President of the largest steel company?
2. President of the largest gas company?
3. President of the New York Stock Exchange?
4. Greatest wheat speculator?
5. President of the Bank of International Settlement?
6. Great Bear of Wall Street?

These men were considered some of the world’s most successful of their days. Now, about 100 years later, the history books tell us what ultimately became of them.

The Answers:

1. The president of the largest steel company. Charles Schwab, died a pauper.
2. The president of the largest gas company, Edward Hopson, went insane.
3. The president of the NYSE, Richard Whitney, was released from prison to die at home.
4. The greatest wheat speculator, Arthur Cooger, died abroad, penniless.
5. The president of the Bank of International Settlement, shot himself.
6. The Great Bear of Wall Street, Cosabee Livermore, also committed suicide.

However, in that same year, 1923, the PGA Champion and the winner of the most important golf tournament, the US Open, was Gene Sarazen. What became of him? He played golf until he was 92, and died in 1999 at the age of 95. He was financially secure at the time of his death.

The Moral: Screw work. Play golf.

— Submitted by Fred Ground

Disappearing Nine Patch

by Diane Comstock, Convenor

Wendy, Carol Anne, Louise, and Diane gathered together on Zoom for their monthly quilting meeting on Tuesday, January 5th. During December, Wendy finished a bag using cute bicycle and wheel fabrics. She also reworked a log cabin pillow switching up the initial square patch, and adding piping around the pillow edge using the same centre fabric. Carol Anne completed her tablecloth made from all nine Ice Crystal blocks. She then went back to working on her water-inspired Row by Row quilt, piecing the “Ducks in a Pond” and “Shining in the Rain” kits. Diane shared that she is taking a break from her Grandson’s temperature quilt, as she snipped a hole in the backing (ouch). She did however manage to repair it. She also pieced and quilted her Ice Crystal Block 3 placemat, now it just needs the binding.



The group then watched the YouTube video Deb and the Disappearing Nine Patch (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6lD_4zuLDI). She had several tips and tricks for making half-square triangle



blocks with no bias edges. After sewing four half-square triangle blocks together, she cut it into nine blocks and then proceeded to turn and swap the blocks to make several different arrangements. Very interesting!



Quilting Terms of the Month:

Disappearing Nine Patch – A beginner’s quilt, which is made by cutting up a nine patch into four quarters or a four patch into nine equal blocks, putting them into different positions, and piecing the blocks over again. You have many layout options in this quilt pattern.

Four-Patch – A block with four squares of the same size sewn together to make one large square. It is one of easiest quilt blocks to make.



Nine-Patch – A quilt block consisting of nine squares arranged in three rows horizontally. They are perfect blocks for beginners to make.

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, February 2nd at 1 pm on Zoom.

Anyone interested in quilting, consider joining the group.

Lying Through The Ages

By Wayne Herder

When did you start lying about your age? My first lie was when I was eleven. I wanted to go to a movie but had to be at least twelve to get in. That's when it all started. No ID needed and I was now twelve.

Sixteen was a very troubling age. Sixteen years old allowed you into the movie theatre to see "adult movies" (Gone with the Wind?). That presented a very difficult choice as I then had to pay the adult admission. This became the hardest choice of my life. Is that what they call the in between years?

Drinking was a major problem as in Quebec, at that time, you had to be twenty-one. In most cases, it was easy to lie to get into bars because I was with my older brothers. Like many others I broke the law. Some IDs were easy to fake. Eventually I paid \$10 for the "Real McCoy", a college student card. Not only was I of age but also well educated. Crossing the border back into Canada from the USA I was now able to bring back duty-free. This counted as a little white lie, but yes I did lie.

Many people tend to have a favourite age and keep it. The "nines" represent "forever young", 39, 49, 59, 69...

Discounts? Shoppers Drug Mart thought you became a senior at age fifty-five. A little lie for 10% off was an easy one. No ID required. Who wants to be sixty-five? The biggest discount age of all. Regretfully most places require ID now and they no longer accept my fake student one.

Now I claim to be 100 years old and looking to get to the front of the COVID vaccination line. To be truthful, I awake each morning not sure what age I want to be that day.

I welcome any one who claims they have never age lied to send me an email with their age.

Solar Eclipse

By Megs Shellard

I have been on many cruises both in the Caribbean and the Mediterranean, but the one that comes to mind as one of the most memorable is the one that my late husband, Chris, and I took in February, 1998. The ship we traveled on was the Flamenço. The islands we visited were St Thomas, Antigua, Dominica and St. Lucia. Of these places, Dominica and Antigua were the most interesting.

When we arrived in Dominica one of the first buildings we saw was the Bank of Nova Scotia. Later on a trip inland we saw what remained of an abandoned Canadian yellow school bus with trees and other vegetation growing out of it. We learned later that Canada used to send a lot of aid to Dominica, hence the school bus and the bank.

Our visit to Antigua was extra special as we were there during the total solar eclipse. I think we can sometimes see partial eclipses here in Canada but to see a total eclipse is something else.

It is a strange and fascinating experience. The sky begins to darken, as if there is a storm coming. It then gets darker and darker as the sun begins to disappear. The street lights appear. The birds stop singing so everything is quiet. We were sitting on the deck of our ship and were able to see all this, taking care to using protective eye wear, of course.

As it is getting dark portions of the sun disappear as the shadow of the moon passes over it. Just at the last minute, before the total eclipse we saw the "diamond ring" effect and that in itself is spectacular. Then the sun totally disappears. Finally the sun starts to appear again on the other side of the moon with the diamond ring effect again.

All of this happens over a period of several hours. This experience is a wonderful memory and something I will never forget. Unfortunately, I do not have any photos, but you should be able to find some on the Internet.

Horse Racing

By Beth Barnes

Anthony MacDonald's talk on horseracing last week reminded me of some my family history involving horseracing. In Ireland, horse racing is intricately linked with Irish culture and society. My great-uncle Rice Meredith, born in Queens County, Ireland, was a well-known horse breeder and trainer plus the winner of the Irish Derby three times. His career is summarized in the book *The Irish Derby 1866-1979* by Guy St. John Williams and Francis P.M. Hyland.

Rice Meredith's brother William, my great-grandfather, owned a stud farm of 21 horses including thoroughbred race horses in Kilsallaghan, County Dublin. He is astride one of his show horses in this image and if you look closely at the inscription, it reads "Verulam" Property of William Meredith Esq. This painting was brought from Ireland to Canada in 1919 and now adorns my house. Tragically, William and Camille, my great-grandmother, lost their youngest son in the Battle of Vimy Ridge. With this tragedy, they decided to sell their horse farm and emigrate to Canada following their only remaining son Eric and his Welsh bride Edith, my grandparents, who emigrated a few years earlier. They chose to leave their horses and their birth country behind in order to be with their only grandchildren, Camille, my mother, and William, my uncle, and the rest is history!



Escarpment Photo of the Month

This month's featured photo of the Mill Pond was taken by Kelly Ground.

Send your photos to david@bosscommunications.com and I will select one for inclusion each month.





Yet another hair-brained idea

By Alan Jordan - Occasional Tonsorialist

I've laughed at the wit and cleverness of ladies salons and gentlemen's barber shops' names all around the world, and as close as Milton.

If you are in the process of opening a hair salon, (which I am sure most of you are), you must have an appealing name to go with it.

Obviously, there are hair salons all over the place and competition is tough. Having a great moniker might just be the deciding factor for a customer to choose your salon or barber.

When brainstorming hair salon names for your new and exciting adventure, take a look at these pictures of tonsorialists who have excelled in the wit and cleverness department.



MANAGEMENT TEAM



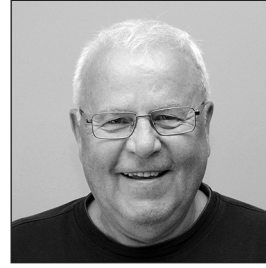
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