



Academy News

February 2008

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New Registration Process for 2008-09 by Debrah Weiss

Our registration process has been in place for many years. As the number of classes has grown so has the complexity of registration. This past year some questions arose about this process and whether it was fair to all members. As a result, the Board has approved some changes for the 2008-09 academic year.

This year, all registrations received up to May 29 will be put into a pool and opened randomly. Registration numbers will be allocated accordingly. This differs from past procedure when registration envelopes were dated upon receipt and numbered in that order.

Forms from continuing and new members will then be separated. Workshop selections from continuing members will

Evaluations by Don Nicol

About half the members of the Academy completed the workshop evaluation. We will incorporate the responses from the evaluations received. On the whole there were very positive comments, few recommended changes, and a high level of satisfaction among both participants and facilitators. Two repeated complaints were that the room temperature was too high and voices were often too low.

be entered first into the database, followed by those of new members.

As in the past, three spots in each workshop will be reserved for new members. At the end of August, any available spaces will be allocated to those on waiting lists or those who wish to enrol in additional workshops.

Workshop size is usually limited to 20 members. With the permission of the facilitator, this may be increased to 23.

Guest Speaker at the Academy's AGM

The Board is pleased to announce that **Marilynn Booth**, Director of the University of Toronto School of Continuing Studies, will be our guest speaker at the Academy AGM in June. Further details will be available in the May *Academy News*.



Transplanting The City Robbie Robinson, long-time Academician and amateur photographer, looks at Toronto in a new light in this thought-provoking photomontage.

Spring Talks Have a New Home by Betty Ann Crosbie

The Academy's annual Spring Talks series returns starting April 16, for six Wednesday mornings as before (see enclosed brochure) but this year with a difference: a new location.

While Emmanuel College has served us well, there were problems: sometimes more people than seats (165), and always too little space for coffee and socializing. The Committee decided to seek alternatives, which involved research both online and on foot, and it was soon clear that the prime choice was Innis College Town Hall which may already be familiar to many members. Its main-floor auditorium holds 200, more if necessary,

and the area for registration and coffee is large and inviting. Located on St. George Street at Sussex Avenue, just north of the Robarts Library, Innis College is but a short walk south from the St. George subway station. There are numerous locations for lunch close by as well.

The Spring Talks are again free to members, and the increased capacity has allowed us to lower the cost for a non-member/guest to \$6 from \$8 last year. It is well known that the Talks attract new people to the Academy, so this year is an ideal time to invite some friends or acquaintances along who might enjoy becoming Academy members.

Coming Events

Mar. 7	Spring Luncheon
Mar. 20	Board Meeting
Mar. 28	Facilitators' Forum 9:30 -11:00 am, Vic 213
Mar. 28	Volunteers' Luncheon 11:00 - 2:30 pm, Alumni Hall
April 7	Last Day of Workshops
April 16	Spring Talks Begin
April 18	Board Meeting
May 9	2008-09 Program Mailing
May 16	Board Meeting
May 21	Spring Talks End

Academy@Work Some of the People Who Help Bring You the Newsletter

Many hands make light work, an adage that applies especially to the Academy where one out of every 2.5 Academicians actively participates as a Board member, committee volunteer or facilitator. Consider becoming a volunteer.

A Mailing Brigade from L:
Madeline Grant, Debrah Weiss (back to camera), **Doris Calvery, Helena Hallett** (Asst. Secretary), **Joan McCordic**, and **Sandra Hoshoooley**.



The Communications Committee

from L:
Elaine Rodgers (back to camera, Past Chair), **Joan McCordic, Julia Matthews** (Asst. Chair), **Margaret Robertson** (webmaster), **Josie Szczasiuk** (newsletter Production Manager).

Photos: **Karen Melville**
(Communications Chair)

Beyond Talk

Academy members often comment on their favourite workshops and the factors that make these intriguing. We asked facilitators to describe particular presentations or activities that had enriched their workshops. Here's a sample:

Mary Louise Gaby writes:

In 2006 when **Leah Lambert** was the facilitator of the **Toronto Workshop**, the group decided to celebrate the end of the year by touring Osgoode Hall. This idea fit well with our program as we had been looking at the early history of Toronto.

We began with lunch in the historic dining room used by the judges and lawyers as they hurry through their food to get back to the afternoon Court session. The high ceilings, the stained glass windows and the glowing panelling provided a suitable beginning for a tour which followed, led by Mr. John Honsberger, the author of *Osgoode Hall: An Illustrated History*.

During the visit he imparted his love of the building and gave us all a sense of one

of the most important historical treasures in Canada. The visit is still remembered fondly by all who went. Osgoode Hall is open to visitors without appointment to come in and look around. The restaurant welcomes people for lunch while the courts are in session.

Carolyn Murray writes:

If you came into our **Hinduism and Buddhism Workshop** on Wednesday, Nov. 14th, you would have been met by a very unusual sight.

On one of the tables at the front of the classroom, presenter, **Pat Keith**, had set up a little puja (worship) altar. Atop multi-coloured cloths she had placed a 15 inch bronze representation of the Dancing Siva in a ring of fire. In front of the statue were a number of little bowls containing offerings of fruits and sweets along with a stick of incense. Pat had enlisted her husband, **Tony**, to act as an interviewer and he posed a number of questions to Pat about the significance of the altar and the nature of the puja ceremony which takes place in a Hindu home or temple. Since I

brought in the statue of the Dancing Siva (which I brought back from India some 20 years ago), I offered a few comments about the symbolism of the four arms of this fierce god and the dwarf cowering under one of his feet.

A lively discussion about Hindu gods and goddesses followed this presentation. (What would John Knox have said about all that?) To complete our introduction to Hinduism I booked a tour of the new Hindu Temple north of Hwy 401 at Hwy 427 for Jan. 9th.

Chris Clemence writes:

As a member of the group **Novels: Fact and Fiction Workshop** last year, I was asked to make a presentation on the 'Facts' portion of Camilla Gibb's novel *Sweetness in the Belly* which is set in Ethiopia and in "Thatcher era" London. I did not think I could speak knowledgeably about either of these settings but I had met Camilla very briefly and knew she loved to talk. Accordingly I sent her an email describing our group and inviting her to

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Holiday Luncheon by Audrey Swail

The Holiday Luncheon was a happy affair with lots of refreshments and chatter.

Tony Barclay, our quizmaster, challenged our knowledge of the history of Toronto. The Cumberland Theatre generously donated eight theatre passes for our winners.

Many thanks to the team that developed the quiz: **Lyla Barclay, Mary Louise Gaby** and **Sandy Macpherson**, and to the Special Events team of volunteers who worked to make this event a success.

This year, fire restrictions reduced the number of people that Alumni Hall could accommodate, and we offer our sincere regrets to those who were unable to attend.

Please note that there will be similar limitations on attendance at the Spring Lunch on March 7th, at the Faculty Club, so please get your registrations in as soon as possible.

While the success of the Academy has resulted in a continuing increase in membership, it has also challenged our

needs for space. In the future we may need to find larger banquet facilities to accommodate our special events. Suggestions of private clubs and banquet halls would be welcome. Call **Audrey Swail** at 416-962-3358.

Holiday Lunchers from L:

1. **Bill and Nancy Hall** and Academy founding member, **Eileen Ward**
2. President, **Dugal Campbell** and former Secretary, **Jean Iverson**
3. **Elaine Rodgers, Betty Ann Crosbie** (in background) and **Ann Mummenhoff**
4. **Oliver Long, Garth Wilby, John** and **Ann Liphardt**
5. **Shirley Wigmore** and **Carol Farkas** distributing name tags.
6. **Leslie Spence**, new member **Miriam Kalushner** and **Ann Sargent**.
7. **Liz Lewis** and **Pat Sibbald**

Photos: Sheilagh Hickie, Norah Smith

Facilitator News by Don Nicol

The Facilitators' Forum will be held on Friday March 28, starting at 9:30 a.m, and will be followed by the appreciation Luncheon for Volunteers.

This year the Forum will involve role-playing by some of the thespian members of the Academy, to dramatize occasional problems faced by facilitators and illustrate methods for coping with them. This should result in an entertaining and enlightening Facilitators' Forum and stimulate discussion, after the mini-dramas, on such issues as: WHY is the format of a workshop important? HOW

MUCH preparation or prior knowledge is required of a facilitator? HOW to encourage the quiet member to participate? WHAT to do about the overly enthusiastic member who talks too much? WHEN to curtail an overly long presentation? WHERE to seat presenters to ensure that they can be heard even by those with somewhat reduced hearing? IS IT possible to insist that every member make a presentation?

And finally, HOW could the Academy possibly function without our loyal facilitators?



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Introduce your
friends and family to
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Academy techies-in-training from L: **Audrey Swail, David Shaul, Jeannette Clark, Linda Tu and Lisa Avedon.** Photo: **Sheilagh Hickie**

▶▶ *Continued from Page 2.* come along and talk about her book. After a bit of back and forth as to suitable times, she agreed and made a wonderful presentation and answered questions about it, about planned books and the writer's life. I feel that it added significantly to our understanding and certainly generated a full house.

Madeline Grant writes:

In January 2001, **The Lost Generation Workshop** (Paris in the 1920s, round one) members were treated to a splendid, illustrated presentation by **Bill Hall** on Art Deco furniture. It happened that the ROM was featuring an exhibit on the very same topic at that time and so after Bill's presentation we all walked over to the museum to see the exhibit. A show and tell workshop par excellence.

Josie Szczasiuk writes:

Members of the **Human Nature Workshop** were challenged on their first day last fall. In order to learn about the behaviour of our biological cousins, the great apes, each member was randomly assigned a status and a gender of a great ape specie, e.g. an alpha male gorilla, a beta female chimp. As well, each was given a number of pennies based on their specie and power within the group; thus a male gorilla got five pennies and a beta female chimp one.

The class then grouped into their specie and the negotiations began. Each primate's goal was to get more pennies by forming alliances, toppling the alpha, and redistributing the resulting loot. Some species, such as the orangutans, were quite stable, as orangutan

Technical Know How

Peter Blathwayt is obviously doing something right as these happy faces show. In response to member interest, three computer-training sessions were offered in January. Attendees were given tips on using projectors and lap tops by Peter. Then it was up to the members to explore further by experimenting themselves with their own CDs, memory sticks or lap tops.

societies are in real life. Some species though, went through several regime-changes, such as chimps, again as in real life.

The workshop finished with the alphas summarizing their final societal structures on the blackboard showing the whole workshop the comparison among species. And in the end, pennies were traded for Hersey Kisses.

We'd love to hear more about what interests you in your workshops so keep your stories coming.

We Get Letters

Want to comment on an article or submit one of your own? Have a great picture of Academy events or workshops?

*Send your suggestions/images to
Julia Matthews, juliamatt@gmail.com.*

After our feature on Good Local Eateries, **Norah Smith** wrote:

Here are a few more eateries near Knox:
(1) Thai Paradise Restaurant at 35 Baldwin St.
(2) the new Swiss Chalet opened under Hydro Building, at University and College Sts.
(3) The Buttery in Larkin Hall at Trinity College on Devonshire Road - similar to Wymilwood but quieter, bigger, and with big windows on a garden and a lounge.

In the November issue, the participants in the picture of the Fall Colour Walk were, L to R: **Diana Chastain, Isabel Rose, Anne Marie Williams, Sandra Walsh and Will Kortenaar.** Incorrect information appeared in the last issue.