**Another Great Year for the Lifelong Learning program at Quebec City Reading Council.**

Submitted by Laine LePage

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When I was hired by City Reading Council, I was so happy to be working for such a great organization, what I didn’t know was how much I was going to love working with our Lifelong Learning members.

Over the course of the last year, Lifelong Learning presenters have equally educated and captivated us with their knowledgeable presentations.

The spring season started with hosts Katherine Burgess, Heather McRae and Meb Reisner taking us on a journey through the works of someone widely regarded as the greatest writer in the English language and the world’s pre-eminent dramatist. Of course we are talking about William Shakespeare, England’s national poet and the Bard of Avon. The group of 15 regular participants tackled the play ***King Lear***. In this well-known tragedy the titular character descends into madness after disposing of his estate between two of his three daughters. The tragedy is particularly noted for its probing observations on the nature of human suffering and kinship.

We’ve ***“travelled”*** to Scotland, Turkey and Newfoundland; a particular highlight of the Scottish series was listening to Pipe Major Alain Stairs play bagpipes accompanied by Don Neilson on drums. Ted and Louise Gunn displayed a colourful array of tartans and enraptured us with tails of Scotland’s historical connection to Quebec City while Jim Eames, Gill Ayre and Frances Farquhar gave us a traditional tasting menu of whisky and homemade shortbread. Scottish natives Gill and Frances spoke passionately about their upbringing in Scotland indulging us with tales of*Ye Bonnie Banks and* *Braes!*

Newfoundlanders are renowned for their charm, hospitality and somewhat quirky sense of humour, have you heard of the Newfie Screech or Lassy Mogs? Katherine and Keith Burgess ensured we were given a thorough induction into Newfoundland’s traditional culture and cuisine, which left many of us making plans to visit in the near future.

Unal **Izmiroglu brought us east to Turkey. Unal enthralled the audience talking about Turkey’s immense diversity, from the crowded cosmopolitan cities, such as Istanbul and Izmir to the forested mountains and Mediterranean beaches.  He talked about the equally diverse climate and ecology that ranges from temperate rain forests on the eastern Black Sea coast to the semi-desert areas in the southeast.**

A passion for jazz music led Léon Samuel to inject a little musical interlude into the programme. The music and stories inspired many people to perform a few impromptu dance moves jazzing things up a couple of notches!

Award winning photojournalist Francis Vachon brought us on a tour of his career in both photography and journalism. He provided a stunning array of photographs and of course no session would be complete without those insightful tips on getting the perfect shot.

Lifelong Learning is passionate about interactive, interpretive learning therefore we took things out into the city and country on a few occasions. A visit to Le Soleil gave participants a snapshot of a typical day in the life of a daily newspaper. Each visitor was thrilled to receive a signed cartoon from Le Soleil’s celebrated cartoonist Andre-Philip Côté, a copy of which takes pride of place in the LLL office.

Visiting the Île d’Orléans got folks doing what they love, wine tasting, eating and chatting to locals, whilst a visit to The Cathedral of The Holy Trinity saw local historian Meb Resiner facilitating an incredible visit as she delved into the history of the **souvenirs of the battlefield, the exquisitely crafted silver, (the King’s Gift) the wood carvings, priceless altar cloths and traditional box pews.** The visit culminated with a fascinating tour of the Bell Tower given by Douglas Kitson.

The recent fire at the Musée de la Civilization did not interfere with our planned guided tour of ***The Masters of The Olympus***. Guiding participants around the exhibition our tour guide introduced Zeus**, Aphrodite, Poseidon, Hera, Demeter, Athena, Apollo, Artemis, Dionysus, Hermes, Hades and Asclepius. The discovery tour detailed *The Masters* influence as the driving force for the transmission of knowledge through writing, the creation of schools, and additionally paving the way towards knowledge and democracy.**

Will we be wrapping up a wonderful year with the final series entitled ***Just the right Season.*** November 19thunder the artful guidance of QCRC intern and Japanese native Tommi Harada, participants will have an introduction into the exquisite art of Origami. Tomomi will be showing us how to create intriguing holiday decorations using a few strategically placed paper folds.

The following week on November 25th we get an introduction to **Preserving and Pickling:  Frances Farquhar and Maime Stewart will get your taste buds jumping with their mouthwatering recipes and produce. Frances and Maime will show you ways to celebrate summer flavors all year round by preserving or pickling the harvest from your garden or local market.**

**Do you have a favourite seasonal recipe?  If so, December 3rd is definitely a date for your calendar. This is the ideal time to share your seasonal culinary masterpiece with the LLL membership.  In the spirit of "each one bring one" this workshop is all about the sentiments of the festive season through swapping and sharing traditional culinary delights.  Feel free to make your dish/cookie etc. and share on the day.  Facilitator Laine LePage will ensure participants depart with an abundance of treats including a beautiful box in which to store those precious recipes.**

I would like to extend sincere and warm thanks to each person who has helped ensure the continued success of the Lifelong Learning programme. A generous donation from Citadel Foundation is used to offset some administrative costs of this programme, additional support comes from our community partners Valcartier Family Centre (Heather Croft) and Voice of English-speaking Quebec (Heather McRae) who donate time, energy and an abundance of other items integral to successful programme delivery.

Finally no successful programme is without people who are passionate about what they do therefore, to our incredible Steering Committee, Gill Ayre, Katherine Burgess, Bill Donnelly, Jim Eames, Frances Farquhar, Meb Reisner and Léon Samuel; we appreciate your time, effort and commitment in helping bring ideas to life.

Lifelong Learning actively welcomes new members, for more information or to register for any of the upcoming events, please contact the QCRC office on

418-681-1258

or by email to info@lifelonglearningquebec.org

or visit our website

 [www.lifelonglearningquebec.org](http://www.lifelonglearningquebec.org)

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