

Minutes of the Literary Club for September

Minutes of the Literary Club for September 21, 2009.

President David Edmonson presided over 73 members and four guests.

In “Nunc committis” James Murray admirably upheld the clubs tradition of misleading titles with not one but two false titles. Although we could have been recommitting ourselves to the clubs ideals Jim’s paper in not about that. Nor is about “Nunc dimittis” or dismissal. And yet it is in a sense since this phrase comes from the “*Songs of Simeon*”. Jim claims his paper should really be titled “Nunc dimittal” which he admits is not really a word. But it describes the spirit of Simeon, judging a worth of a life as it ends.

Jim is fan of obituaries, other people’s obituaries. But only obituaries with literary merit and these are scarce. Most obituaries in American have sunk to the level of “obitainment”, the most recent example being the outpouring over Michael Jackson. In general Jim claims obituary writing is better in Britain. Due to strict libel laws the British press cannot say bad things about you when you are alive so they save it up for when you die. Jim admits that the *New York Times* does a fine job but objects to the selection criteria, newsworthiness.

No, for good obits you must look to the *Economist*. Unlike the *Times* the *Economist* does not have a large staff, the obits are written by one person, the obituary editor and there have been only two in the 14 years the *Economist* has been publishing obits. The current one, Ann Wroe has a Ph.D. in Medieval history from Oxford. The advice she received from the previous editor was to “keep down the number of Americans, and try to include more Asians and women.” Wroe has published a selection of obits called the *Book of Obituaries* in which she explains that she tries to avoid “eulogies or appreciations and instead select “interesting and thought-provoking lives.” She admits, “the bad, the immoral, or the flighty sometimes make the best copy.” The obits are well written and quirky with Pamela Harriman being noted for her expertise “between the sheets”. Jims is bothered by the fact the only two historians make the cut, barely beating out parrots and carp (one each). I and I expect others in the club am bothered by the absents of bow tie wearers. Only two make the book.

Why is Jim so enamored with obituaries? Perhaps it because as Jim says “Remembering is the one duty the living owe the dead”.

At the business meeting Bill Sena reported that the club is in the black and in good shape financially. Ed Burdell assured us that the clubhouse is also in good shape. Bob Dorsey continues to work on restoring the club art collection and Mike Kremzar

has improved the sound system. Gibby made his customary beginning of the season pitch for club ties.

Minutes of the Literary Club for September 28, 2009.

President David Edmonson presided over 58 members and four guests.

Vince Aug came with a budget. In a break with tradition there were four papers rather than the usual three. In "The Sporting Life" Paul Franz tells the story of four friends who take a road trip to Owenton, Kentucky to shoot sporting clays. Sporting clays evolved as a sport to sharpen hunting skills in the off season and has been compared to golf, but Paul assures us that the only similarity is that the shooters go from station to station and face new challenges at each station. That's probably just as well given that the participants are armed.

Paul and his friends set off to Owenton on a particularly cold morning after one of them scared both Paul's wife and the patrons at Awakenings by showing up dressed head to toe in camouflage gear with a black baseball cap emblazoned with the word "Survivor". By the time they got to Owenton, after some complaints about Paul's driving, it had started to snow.

It was so cold that many of the clays broke as they were thrown but in the cold they were not picky. Any piece big enough to shoot at was good enough. Freezing they rushed through the course until the last station when Paul decided to put on a newly purchased balaclava. It didn't fit and in the course of trying to get it on, Paul had a lens pop out of his glasses. The others wanting to get off the cold windy ridge held this against him and judging from the comments of his guests still do.

It all started with the pizza guy. Ohio's concealed carry law that is. In "Packing" Vince Aug explains how Patrick Feely, a pizza delivery guy ended up changing Ohio's concealed carry law. Freely carrying a .50 caliber Smith and Wesson was pulled over for expired tags and then cited for carrying a concealed weapon. He fought the charge and was acquitted by Judge Tomas "the Crusher" Crush. He and his lawyer then embarked on a crusade to get the concealed carry ban struck down. They failed but the Ohio General Assembly took note and passed the Concealed Carry law in 2004. Vince is in favor of concealed carry but I assure the members that the fact that Vince maybe packing has not influenced these minutes. Vince took the required concealed carry course, enjoyed it, learned something and even passed the exam. The overriding point stressed in the course was "don't ever shoot anybody".

In his quest to learn if concealed carry laws reduce crime Vince has been stymied. The research is sparse, contradictory and under attack. Vince just hopes for the day when it is safe for a gun enthusiast to go to a cocktail party.

Shooting plantations were a fixture of the old south and some exist to this day. In "Thomasville, Georgia, The Quail Hunting Capital" Joe Moran explain the rules and rituals of the sporting plantations. The Thomasville-Tallahassee region contains over a hundred working plantations and is known as the "quail hunting capital of

the world” The traditions of these plantations have changed little over the years and they date back to the 1880’s. They strike me as deeply anachronistic and reminiscent of the literary club. Although younger.

This is a men’s club and we have all, when boys, done stupid things. In “The Swimming Pool” Gibby Carey tells a tale that every male can identify with. Gibby’s father was in his younger years a professional big game hunter and thus Gibby grew up with guns. When his sons reached 12 Gibby’s father allowed them to take the guns out on the farm by themselves and shoot them. All but one that is, the elephant gun. This was strictly off limits. Which of course made the elephant gun all the more attractive. And so one summer morning Gibby found his older brother John on the porch with the elephant gun. Gibby in the manner of younger brothers threatened to tell on John. “Shut up” John said, “Watch this”. There was a swimming pool in the back yard and John promised to skip a bullet of the surface of the water and into the woods. Phrases that begin with “Watch this” rarely end well. John fired, but instead of skipping the bullet shattered the end of the pool. John did what any boy would do; cover it up. Or a least try. Time was of the essence. Their father was in Washington but he would be back in 48 hours. The pool had to be drained by siphoning the water with all available hoses. Even those from the hog pens. Then the damage had to be patched with Sakrete. Additional boy power has called in but things did not go well. The mixture was not stiff enough and slide away. Finally they got the consistency right and the patch held. But now it had to dry, be painted and the pool refilled. Under the gun they had to start painting while the patch was still damp. Then the pool had to be filled. This was a slow process and at 4:30 only a half hour before they expected their father they pulled hoses. The pool wasn’t quite full but they figured it was good enough.

At 5:00 their father arrived. As was his custom he toured the property before coming inside. He came in and said, “The God damndest thing just happen! I was walking around the swimming pool and the whole end of the thing just slide into the water” No one told, ever and Gibby’s father went to his grave without knowing the truth.

Minutes of the Literary Club for October 2009

Minutes of the Literary Club for October 5, 2009.

President David Edmonson presided over 68 members and one guest. David announced that Jim Myers has taken over the web site.

“Dowdy and old fashioned”, that was what *Time* called Cincinnati on July 19, 1948. The magazine went on to describe the new Terrace Plaza Hotel as revolutionary but most Cincinnati’s only heard “dowdy and old fashioned”. In “On The Terrace” Steward Shillito Maxwell details the history of the Terrace Plaza and the man who owned it “John J. Emery. The Emery family had been responsible in 1877 for the “Hotel Emery” which Steward credits with leading to the concept of shopping centers. A dubious distinction. In 1882 they built the “Palace” which exists to this day.

In 1926 John Emery began planning for the Carew Tower/ Netherland Plaza complex, which was finished in 1931 despite the depression. Jack Emery always regretted not having giving the Netherland four hundred more rooms for a total of 1200 and he began planning another hotel. World War II put his plans on hold but in 1946 he commissioned Skidmore, Owings and Merrill or S. O. M. to design a hotel. S. O. M. had no previous experience in hotel design. In spite or more likely because of this they produced a revolutionary design. The Terrace Plaza was an ultramodern international style hotel with such innovations as a sky lobby. It also featured a first class French restaurant, The Gourmet Room. The Gourmet Room is long closed and in October 2008 the Terrace Plaza now dowdy and old- fashioned was closed and put up for sale. Its fate is uncertain.

Minutes of the Literary Club for October 12, 2009

President David Edmonson presided over 66 members and six guests.

The civil war was America’s bloodiest conflict by far, yet at the start of the war both sides held each other in the greatest respect. In “The Anderson Papers” John Campbell uses letters written by Anderson and General Beauregard to tell the story of the battle of Fort Sumter and of the dilemma that Major Robert Anderson found himself in. Short of supplies and surrounded by Confederate forces he had repeatedly advised his superiors in Washington of his predicament but to no avail. His orders were clear. Hold the fort but do not initiate any action that could be construed as hostile.

Anderson’s counterpart, the commander of the Confederate forces in Charleston was General Beauregard. They knew each other well. Beauregard had been Anderson’s student at the U.S. Military Academy and had been asked by Anderson to stay on as an artillery instructor after graduation.

John argues that Anderson and Beauregard conducted an elaborately choreographed dance to avoid unnecessary bloodshed while preserving their honor. Certainly their letters to each other show a great deal of respect for one another. After being called upon to evacuate Anderson responds "General: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication demanding the evacuation of this fort, and to say, in reply thereto, that it is a demand with which I regret that my sense of honor, and my obligations to my Government, prevent my compliance. Thanks you for the fair, manly, and courteous terms proposed, and for the high compliment paid me."

The outcome was never in doubt since by that time Anderson had only a few days supplies left. Nevertheless on April 12 Confederate forces opened fire on Fort Sumter. After a 34 hour battle the fort was in flames and Anderson was forced to evacuate.

John points out that both Anderson and Beauregard were artillery professions and knew how to conduct a devastating artillery barrage. And yet no one on either side was killed. It was a courtesy that would soon disappear.

Minutes of the Literary Club for October 19, 2009

President David Edmonson presided over 58 members and 6 guests.

Many places claim to be the eighth wonder of the world. The claim is so common that last week I saw a fireworks store claiming it was the eighth wonder of the world. Standards have slipped.

On a trip to French Lick Indiana Nancy and Bill Keating went to the West Baden Springs Hotel, which claimed its dome was the eighth wonder of the world. This set Bill to thinking about the true wonders of the world. In the "Seven Wonders" Bill took us on a tour of the Seven Wonders of the World and it turns out there are many.

All of us learned in school about the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. One the, Hanging Gardens of Babylon may never have existed and of the others, only the great pyramid of Giza still exists. It seems that making lists of the seven wonders is a popular exercise and many have been made. To name a few: a new list of the wonders of the world compiled by popular vote with the pyramid of Giza grandfathered in, wonders of the medieval world, wonders of the natural world, wonders of the underwater world and many others.

Bill closes by giving us his personal list. The dome on the West Baden hotel did not make the list.

Minutes of the Literary Club for October 26 2009

President David Edmonson presided the 160th anniversary of the literary club. Sixty-Five members and two guests attended. David reminded us that October 25th is Henry Winkler's 93rd birthday. The club sang happy birthday to Henry. The food, drink and service were outstanding as always. The banquet was underwritten by a generous bequest from George Rieveschl and Bill Friedlander provided the wine.

All of us, I am sure, have wondered what it would have been like to attend a meeting of the literary club in the old days. In "Henry Farny And The Literary Club" John Dielh takes us there. It's 1887 and the literary club is meeting at 24 West Fourth St. The tables are set with bottles of wine and beer. It's a different era and each table has an ashtray and a box of cigars on it. Cuspidors sit by each table. There are nine short papers on the agenda, which may explain the wine and beer. Henry Farny wrote the ninth and last paper. Farny was born in France and rose to fame as an artist in Cincinnati even though Farny originally called Cincinnati "the worst place in a large city that a young artist could choose to make his debut in".

Farny was one of the first artists to paint American Indians with historical accuracy rather than as savages. Not only could Farny paint, he could write and John reproduces Farny's paper for that night. In "Sorrel Horse And The Thunder God" Farny chronicles the raise, fall and raise of Sorrel Horse a Sioux medicine man.

Sorrel Horse got his start with a lucky guess about the location of a buffalo herd and then astutely bolstered his reputation by secretly taking medical advice from a nearby army surgeon. Shown a picture of an early train by the surgeon Sorrel Horse prophesied the arrival of a fiery horse.

The fiery horse failed to arrive and Sorrel Horse, fat, poor at fighting and no longer believed, lost power and influence. Disconsolate he rode aimlessly through the sagebrush when out of the distance came the thunder horse. Vindicated, Sorrel Horse made up a story about how he, Sorrel Horse, had despite his mistreatment, been overcome with pity for the tribe and thus prevented the fiery horse from destroying them. And with that the meeting was adjourned.

Traditions are important to the literary club; in a very real sense they make us what we are. They make us who we are. In "Blessed Be The Ties That Bind" David Edmondson used his presidential address to discuss the traditions of the literary club and to ruminate on which traditions lie at the heart of the club. David notes that we would not have fit easily with the "youthful strivers of the 1850" whom Gordon Christenson called "young men in a hurry who wanted to change the way things were done..." David seems to imply that we are neither. Nor do we drink and sing into the wee hours of the night and spend more on cigars than on drink, and passionate debate has been replaced by reasoned argument. But David believes that the essential qualities of the literary club have remained unchanged thru the years. A commitment to self-improvement and to a liberal education in the old fashioned

sense. And most importantly Love. “Love of the subjects we share from the podium, love of our club and its traditions, love of learning for its own sake, love of the comradeship we share on Monday nights, love of one another”. Those David believes are our important traditions, the things that make us what we are. We benefit from the wisdom and papers of our predecessors and David suggest that we should make their papers available on our web site, not as a break with tradition but in keeping with our traditions.

Minutes of the Literary Club for November 2009

Minutes of the Literary Club for November 2, 2009.

President David Edmonson presided over 56 members and two guests. Gibby Carey announced that the second annual new readers seminar will be held December seventh at the University Club. Those wishing to attend should contact Gibby.

No subject in America is more complex or emotionally charged than race relations. In his inaugural paper "The Divergence & Convergence of Parallel Paths: A Personal Story" Craig Joffe explored the paths taken by the United States and South Africa. Craig was born in Cape Town of South African parents and thus has unusual insight into the different and not so different paths taken by the United States and South Africa in their continuing struggle to come to grips with racism.

As a college student Craig came across the work of John Cell a historian at Duke. Cell's book "The Highest Stage of White Supremacy" examines the state of race relations in the United States and South Africa and was an inspiration to Craig.

Craig argues that although there was a pervasive assumption of white supremacy neither the South nor South Africa was particularly segregated initially. However as both societies become more industrialized, racism changed from the paternalist to the competitive and segregation become the norm with South Africa actually lagging the US by a couple of decades.

However in South Africa segregation became the law and became apartheid. In the South segregation was the norm but the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments were that law of the land. Thus, the NAACP could and did sue. And so in the sixties the US experienced the Civil Right Movement and South Africa Sharpeville.

But Craig worries that what his grandmother sees when she drives through Madisonville or downtown Cincinnati, on her increasingly infrequent trips is more familiar to her eyes than one would care to imagine.

Minutes of the Literary Club for November 9, 2009.

David Edmonson presided over 63 members and seven guests. Chris Miller made a plea for singers for the holiday celebration. Rehearsals start November 16th at 6:30. Gibby reminded members of the new readers seminar on December 7th at 5:00pm at the University Club.

Serial killers are rare, fortunately, and women serial killers are rarer still. But they occur, even in Cincinnati. In "It Could Happen to Any Man Here" Stephen Strauss entertained us with the tale of Anna Marie Hahn who in the span of a little more than four years poisoned at least seven men and three women. These are the ones

that we know of; there may have been others. Of the unlucky 10, six of the men and one of women died. Like most female serial killers Anna Marie killed victims she knew and she killed for money. Afflicted with a bad gambling habit Anna Marie was constantly in need of money. Her M.O. at least with the men was unvarying. A cute young blond she would cozy up to men of a certain age who lived alone. Delighted to suddenly have a young girl friend they were easy prey. Anna Marie would bilk them out of their money and when the time came, poison them and attempt to claim their estate, if they still had any thing left. Her poison of choice was arsenic although he was versatile and used morphine on at least one occasion.

She was brutally efficient, at least six men in four years and got away with it for a while. And why not, old men get sick and die. She got a break when George Heis who suspected Anna Marie was poisoning him did not report his suspicions to the police. Heis who threw Anna Marie out was the only male victim to survive.

In the end it was theft that did Anna Maria in. While poisoning Obendoerfer in Colorado Springs Anna Marie stole two diamond rings. At the request of the Colorado Springs police Anna Maria was picked up for questioning by the Cincinnati Police. Her story unraveled and she was indicted for murder in Hamilton County.

The trial was a sensation. There was a rumor that she had spread the arsenic on her breasts, which her male admirers then sucked. The truth alas was more prosaic. She merely cooked for them and put the arsenic in their food. After only two hours of deliberation Anna Maria was convicted of murder and subsequently became the first women to die in Ohio's electric chair.

Stephen says that the inspiration for his paper came from Muff Gale's last paper, a fortunately fictional account of a young, pretty German maid who took all of Muff's money. It could Stephen says happen to any man here.

Minutes of the Literary Club for the evening of November 16, 2009. (Written by Bob Vitz) Sixty-three members and six guests.

Joseph P. Tomain, in his paper titled "The Cardinal and the Casino," introduced us to Rome's Casino Nobile—now the Borghese Gallery— and to its original owner, Scipione Caffarelli, later given the name Borghese by his uncle Camillo Borghese, better known as Pope Paul V. Pope Paul also conferred upon his nephew a cardinal's hat, the position of papal secretary, and a variety of other titles and offices. It is never a bad thing to have relatives in high places. Scipione used his

new offices and powers to accumulate a fortune, amass a magnificent collection of art, and plant the Borghese name throughout 17th century Rome. In collaboration with his uncle, Scipione Caffarelli helped bring about the re-birth of Rome.

His collection is best known for the sculptures and oil paintings that reflected his personal taste, and they spanned both the religious and the secular in their themes. Although he acquired works from various sources, his commissioned works, most notably works by Gian Lorenzo Bernini and Michelangelo Merisi, known to us as Caravaggio, are the real gems of the collection. Central to this paper are Bernini's *The Rape of Prosperina* and *Apollo and Daphne*, along with Caravaggio's *The Calling of St. Matthew* and *The Martyrdom of Saint Matthew*. What Tomain suggests is that in these works, particularly *The Rape of Prosperina*, one may find the culmination of 350 years of art history.

Through these and other works in various museums and churches, the paper led us on a personal tour of one of the major developments in Renaissance art, the portrayal of the human figure. From Cimabue's 13th century *Santa Trinita Madonna* to Giotto's *Ognissanti Madonna* to Michelangelo Buonarroti's *Doni Madonna* and *Pieta*, we witness the evolution of the human figure as it changed from two dimensional flatness to a more natural, more sensual, psychologically complex, even idealized man. The paper concludes with a return to the Borghese Gallery and now we see the 17th century canvasses of Bernini and Caravaggio as a bridge from the high Renaissance to the opening of the Baroque Era

Minutes of the Literary Club for November 23, 2009

President David Edmunson presided over 57 members and six guests.

The early sixties was a time of excitement and optimism. The Vietnam War had not yet gotten bad and there was a new and young administration in Washington. For many young people anything seemed possible and when Kennedy established the Peace Corps in 1961 many young Ivy League graduates flocked to it. But not Allan Winkler, at least not at first. In "From Whence We Came" Allen traces his path from graduate school at Columbia to the Philippines as a Peace Corps volunteer.

The thought of joining the Peace Corps did not cross Allen's mind at first. After graduation from Harvard and toying with the idea of law school Allen took the easy way out for an academic brat and went to graduate school at Columbia where he could be near his girl friend Alberta. Allen did not find Columbia completely satisfying and an off-hand comment to Alberta in response to an ad in the *New Yorker* led them to join the Peace Corpse. Allen and Alberta requested Asia and were assigned to Micronesia, which sounded promising until Allen talked to his father. Henry had been to the South Pacific and told Allan that Micronesia was hot and disease-ridden. Allen knew that a Peace Corps programs was about to start in the Philippines and Henry thought was better idea. Allen asked for and got a change of assignment.

What he did not know was that his father thought that Allen's leaving graduate school and joining the Peace Corps was a questionable, if not stupid decision and one that could have repercussions as far as Allen's draft status was concerned.

Training was in Hawaii and Allen and Alberta recently married looked forward to an extended honeymoon. They were quickly disabused. The nine married couples were housed in two rooms in an abandoned school. The rooms were partitioned into cubicles with cardboard walls and shower curtains for doors. Many of the other couples had been married for only a few days. Allen and Alberta got used to hearing the creaking of bedsprings.

Allan a historian was trained to teach elementary modern math and in due course they were shipped of to the Philippines to change the world. Which did not happen.

However while teaching math to future teachers Allen discovered how much he enjoyed teaching and the lives of the local children improved when Allen started a small children's library and with the help of the local Rotary Club arranged for free operations for children with hare lips or cleft palates.

There were rough spots, such as when Allen told a recalcitrant taxi driver that "Your brain is about the size of your prick". The apparently under-endowed driver took offence and Allan was forced to flee the taxi.

Allen closes by asking "was it all worth it?" and concludes that was but perhaps more for what it taught him rather than for what he taught Filipinos.

Minutes of the Literary Club for November 30, 2009

President David Edmunson presided over 59 members and two guests. David had the sad duty of announcing that Jean Judd passed away on Saturday.

Greased pigs, a love triangle and smoked clams. It must be a budget at the literary club.

Lou Prince came with the budget. The first paper "Greased Pigs For The Holidays" was written by Joe Moran. Greased Pig contests were popular among the Irish at Christmas and other holidays. The winner got to keep the pig. Horse racing at Christmas was also popular, as was blindfold wheelbarrow racing. In 1863 during the civil war the Irish Brigade decided to do it up right for Saint Patrick's Day.

The Irish Brigade was a Union brigade composed of Irish immigrants. Shunned by traditional American soldiers they had been forced to form their own brigade. As is often the case with such brigades they distinguished themselves with uncommon valor suffering a 42% casualty rate at the Battle of Fredericksburg. As is common in such cases they were more Irish than the Irish and celebrated St. Patrick's day that year by building an elaborate steeple chase course with room for 30,000 spectators. There were greased pig contests, blind wheelbarrow races, sack races and plenty to eat and drink. All just across the river from the Confederate Camp.

In "Triangle" Lou Prince told of a love triangle gone disastrously wrong. Mr. X a young lithe black male was initially more interested in Lou's wife than Lou but soon Lou and Mr. X developed a deep bond. Eventually Mr. X became jealous of any display of affection between Lou and his wife. Events came to a head one morning when Lou's wife leaned over at breakfast to kiss Lou good morning. Mr. X attacked Lou's wife and Lou had to make a very hard decision. Lou loved his wife and he was pretty sure that doing away with her would be a misdemeanor, maybe even a felony, and so Mr. X had to go. And Lou had to make one of the hardest decisions a man can make; he had to put his dog to sleep.

Sam Greengus wrote "Love The Sinner". Sam always thought that Bradley Goldfaden was pretentious, or at least his name was. He was also a reluctant scholar at best, and not really interested in studying rabbinical law. But it was what his father wanted.

The students to be sure could be excused if they wondered about the relevancy of their lessons. That year they were studying the tractate of *Gittin*, which dealt with divorce. For boys just entering puberty the material was remote. The topic of impotence, a valid reason for divorce and one the boys would have found interesting was glossed over.

The boy's had both a classroom rabbi and a rabbi who supervised their study hall and made sure that they did not fritter their time away with secular thoughts. Rabbi Mendel's task was not an envious one. Desperate to escape from his classroom rabbi, Rabbi Mendel and probably his father Bradley hatched an ingenious plan.

During Passover and in the school cafeteria Bradley took a single piece of matzo, opened a can of smoked clams, spread them on the matzo and began to eat.

The rabbis went easy on Bradley for they realized his sin was designed to provoke and not for his own pleasure but nevertheless Bradley's father soon withdrew him from the school. The lesson Sam believes is that there are indeed times when we should hate the sin but love the sinner.

Minutes of the Literary Club for December

Minutes of the Literary Club for December 7, 2009

President David Edmunson presided over 71 members and 3 guests.

An amendment to the constitution to allow the board to consider associate status for members who are no longer able to give papers passed.

Happiness or lack thereof is an essential element of the human condition. In "To Garden or Not to Garden" David Cave gave us a gloss on Happiness, Spinoza, Reason and Gardening. Happiness is a wide-ranging subject and is not easy to define but by happiness David and Spinoza mean human flourishing. To flourish Spinoza says we must understand our connection with Nature and this we can do through intellect and reason. Spinoza urges us to purify our mind of inadequate ideas, ideas that are generated by causes external to ourselves.

A life of reason, given over to intellectual pursuits often comes with a cost. Americans often see such pursuits as elitist and out of touch with the real world. A life of reason can be lonely. David spent the night of his senior prom at home reading when he would have preferred to be dancing.

Even Spinoza believes that when we are outside the field of Cartesian dualism we must garden. That is get our hands dirty and play in the muck of life.

David believes that Spinoza over estimates our ability to be rational. We are not completely objective, we often see reality as we would like to be, not as it is, and we are disposed to inertia. As a result we are poor prognosticators of what is best for us and more gardening maybe called for.

Minutes of the Literary Club for December 14, 2009

President David Edmunson presiding.

Like armies, intelligence agencies have a tendency to fight the last war. In "Vlad" Paul Shortt gave us a fictional account of the CIA's attempt to avoid this after 9-11. After 9-11 Director Tenet established a task force to forecast potential terrorist strategies and targets. Code named the "Red Cell" the task force was supposed to be imaginative; no scenario however extreme was to be left unconsidered. The "Red Cell" was staffed with imaginative types who were broken into small teams and charged with thinking unconventionally. Predictably they immediately began thinking conventionally and began compiling lists of the obvious targets; the Golden Gate Bridge, the Statue of Liberty and so on.

All but one, that is. WOOLY, at least that was his code name, had been based in Lahore, Pakistan and had arrived late. As a result he found himself working alone, which suited him. WOOLY was Yale educated and definitely unconventional. He was

a self-appointed devil's advocate, the sort who is always annoying and nevermore so than when he was right. WOOLY's supervisor had volunteered him for the "Red Cell" project chiefly to get rid of him

Unlike the others WOOLY asked "What if?" not "What" or "Where". What if 9-11 was not just a plot by al Qa'ida. What if it was a plot to draw us into a Vietnam like quagmire in Afghanistan? And if so, who was behind it? Putin, WOOLY thought. Not Russia but Vladimir Putin. Putin had been the head of the FSB and was an ex KGB agent. He had both the skills and the mindset to pull something like this off. It would be the ultimate act of revenge for the Soviet's US assisted losses in Afghanistan and for the loss of the cold war.

As he began to put his report together, two pages plus a cover page of bullet points, WOOLY lacked any hard evidence for his theory. Maybe a good title would help. After some fumbling he hit on Vlad, clearly short for Vladimir but also ominously recalling Dracula and Vlad the impaler. Thus, "VLAD: Secret Report from the Red Cell" was born. WOOLY sent the report to Tenet.

Fucking amazing... and absurd," commented Tenet. "I'll probably show it to the President anyway."

Two days later Tenet called WOOLY into his office. "We are both out of luck he said. They're not going for Afghanistan. They're going for Iraq." "Jesus Christ! This'll be a major Mogadishu," said WOOLY. "And the disruption'll send Russian oil prices even higher."

"The President, Cheney and Rumsfeld all think it will be a fast surgical war" replied Tenet.

Minutes of the Literary Club for December 21, 2009.

With President David Edmunson presiding 69 members, three guests and eight professional musicians settled in to enjoy the holiday celebration. David presented the Steward's traditional Christmas gift to Nico.

After our traditional musical program and feast, our three trustees came bearing holiday gifts.

In "For Goodness' Sake" Hal Porter made a plea for niceness. Hal admits that niceness is not on everyone's list of great virtues but as he points out, whom among us wants to be known for not being nice? And Hal believes that in the current political climate we could use a little niceness.

Santa embodies niceness; in fact he explicitly demands it from us. But Santa is not just some kindly old gent who hands out presents, not at all. He knows what we are doing, he knows who has been naughty or nice. Does Santa need a warrant? Santa is omnipresent, omnificent and omnipotent.

But what happens when Santa leaves? After all we all do a bit better when we are being watched. And what happens when God goes? For most of us Hal believes God remains and he agrees with Karen Armstrong that the heart of all the great religions is the demand to practice compassion, the ability to feel for our neighbors, and treat them with equity. Qualities that lie at the heart of niceness.

Fred McGavran came with “Corrine or a Journey of the Magi” a tale of blindness. W. Carter Haley, M.D. arrived at his practice on Monday December 21st only to find it strangely quiet, deserted in fact. Sure that his schedule had been rearranged due to a surgical emergency he called surgery only to learn that he was supposed to be on vacation. What the hell, his last vacation had been over twenty years earlier when he spent a long weekend in St. Louis after a professional meeting. After three failed marriages Carter Haley focused exclusively on his practice with little time for anything else including his office manager or his lawyers who were fending off claims from his ex-wives.

Yet, he was supposed to be on vacation. His practice closed for two weeks. It had, the surgery explained all been arranged months ago by his now retired office manager Corrine Whitaker. Corrine had retired in the summer and been diagnosed with cervical cancer two months later.

Lying on Carter’s desk was an envelope and a single patient chart. The envelope contained his passport, a plain ticket to Ft. Lauderdale and a ticket for a twelve-day cruise. The chart was for The Reverend Charles Spears, Rector of the Downtown Church of Our Savior. The Rector was due for his biannual check-up. Not that Carter wanted to see him. Once a week in church was enough.

Carter examined Spears on automatic pilot and put drops in his eyes to dilate them. Waiting for his eyes to dilate, the Rector set off to see Corrine Whitaker who was in intensive care. As the Rector fumbled his way to intensive care, his vision getting worse by the minute, Carter fumed. How dare Corrine do this to him. His competitors and enemies on the hospital board would never let him forget this. “Damn it, he thought. I can’t let her get away with this.” And with that thought Carter set off for intensive care.

“You’re too late,” the nurse said. “Miss Whitaker just died.” At that moment Derek Simpson burst in. Derek had recently been Spears’s Curate until the morning he stripped off his vestments and everything else and ran out of the church and into the side of a police car. Thanks to Corrine’s intervention he had been admitted to psychiatry rather than arrested. Standing there in nothing but his hospital booties Derek took the Rector’s pray book, opened it to the *Litany at the time of Death* and began to cry. Shaken by Derek’s grief Dr. Haley’s anger softened and for the first time in years he began to feel compassion.

As he finished Spears eye exam Carter’s mind was elsewhere as he thought of tropical breezes and stars over the Pacific.

John McDonough brought us our third holiday paper “Christmas in Belgium”. It was December 25, 1944 in the western German town of Prun three miles from the Belgium

border and Heima Mikkelsaar was preparing herself for another day of work at the Wehrmacht Advance Field Hospital 0127. Heima had wanted to become a doctor but the prerequisite for applying to the University was a year of "Farm Service" in Germany. Not wanting to pick potatoes Heima applied to nursing school, was accepted and shortly before her 18th birthday graduated from Nursing School at University Hospital in Tartu, Estonia.

Heima was always looking for adventure so when a Wehrmacht Medical Officer came to the school to recruit nurses for the German Army she volunteered and was posted to the Russian Front. After two Estonian nurses were captured, raped, tortured and murdered, nurses could request a side arm and cyanide capsule. Heima had grown up on a farm and was a good shot and she asked for and received a Walther 38 and a cyanide capsule.

The field hospital Heima was assigned to was well-equipped and German medicine was the best in the world but the death rate was still appalling. Heima's unit was forced to retreat twice to avoid the advancing Russian Army, first to southern Estonia and then to western Latvia. In the fall of 1944 the commander of the field hospital refused to do the required rotation of female staff. He said they were almost in Germany territory and that the war would soon be over. To the Colonel's annoyance Heima and one of her friends volunteered to go anyway. The Russians eventually overran the rest of the unit, and none of them were ever heard of again.

Heima's parents were living in Berlin and in December of 1944 Heima managed a brief side trip to visit them. A few weeks before Berlin fell her parents managed to walk to Dresden, which would become part of the American zone.

The Ardennes offensive also known as the battle of the bulge began on December 16, 1944 and casualties began to fall in the door of the 0127th Field Hospital. When Heima opened the hospital door on Christmas morning she smelled gasoline and diesel fuel. That meant tank burns. The worst. There was no Christmas truce; it was another twenty-hour day of pain and death.

Heima Mikkelsaar Aras is 83. She lives in Indiana and is Jack's mother-in-law.

Minutes of the Literary Club for January

Minutes of the Literary Club for January 4, 2010

President David Edmunson presided over 51 members and 2 guests.

David had the sad duty of informing the members that Joe Stern died. Tony Covatta has been asked to chair the memorial committee.

Richard Hunt was elected to membership.

Arsenic poisoning has become fashionable at the lit club. Fortunately that's papers about arsenic poisoning, not the act itself. In "Arsenic and Green Wallpaper" Virginius Hall brought us a tale of Napoleon, intrigue, controversy and possible arsenic poisoning. After the unfortunate incident at Elba the English were determined that this time would be different. This time Napoleon would go and stay gone. St. Helena was just what the British needed. It was small, had an existing British garrison and was 1800 miles from anywhere. As a bonus living conditions were unpleasant and the climate unhealthy. And the island was overrun with rats.

Thus, on October 17, 1815 Napoleon and a small entourage of 26 ended up in Jamestown, St. Helena. The entourage included Count Charles de Montholon who was accompanied by his wife Albine. Napoleon and his household moved into Longwood House, which, despite its fancy name was just a tarted up slum, damp and overrun with rats.

With little to do the court turned to intrigue for entertainment, seeking advancement and jockeying for position. Two prizes awaited those who played the game well, favors from the Emperor and favors of a more intimate kind from Albine.

In the early years Napoleon amused himself by playing a rather one-sided game of wits with the English governor Sir Hudson Lowe. Lowe was Napoleon's intellectual inferior and knew it. Ordered to show himself twice a day to prove he had not escaped, Napoleon remained in his room with the blinds drawn. Confined to the grounds of Longwood, Napoleon began daily horseback rides across the island.

The poor conditions at Longwood took a toll on the inhibits and in February, 1818 Napoleon's maitre d'hôtel Jean Baptiste Cipriani was stricken with acute stomach pains and died two days later. Cipriani had been in robust good health and rumors soon spread that he had been poisoned. Napoleon ordered Cipriani's grave opened but Cipriani was not in it. His body was never recovered.

Napoleon's health had also begun to deteriorate, he become bloated, couldn't stop vomiting and was in constant pain. In early May at the age of 52 he died. At the autopsy the English doctors ruled that he had died of stomach cancer, a disease that could not be attributed to either foul play or neglect. This despite the fact that the body was obese, not emaciated. The genitals were described as exceptional small. Napoleon's personal doctor, noting the enlarged liver argued for hepatitis or

poisoning but he was over ruled. The result was a controversy that still rages. Did Napoleon die of natural causes or arsenic poisoning? And was it deliberate or environmental. The green wallpaper contained ink made with arsenic, harmless when dry but not when damp. And if he was poisoned by whom? There are no creditable English suspects but Montholon was a creditable French suspect who among other motivations stood to inherit 2 million francs when Napoleon died. This theory is favored by the English but not by the French.

But this was not the only controversy, oh no. Napoleon's death mask may not be his and then there is the Napoleon relic. Now I know that no one here would be fascinated by a relic just because of prurient interest but others are not so refined. Rumor had it that Napoleon's penis had been removed from the body. It was now in a jar and if it had been small before death it was now truly tiny. About the size of a small piece of leather shoelace. Once again the English believed the rumor the French did not. It gives new meaning to the term Napoleonic complex.

Minutes of the Literary Club for January 11, 2010

President David Edmonson presided over 55 members and one guest.

Bill Sena gave the treasurers' report and assured us that the club is in good financial shape. Bill recommends establishing a building fund. Ed Burdell gave the conservators report. The building is in good shape but a new roof is in our future. Ed also thinks we need a building fund.

Voltaire's famous quote "in this country, it is good to shoot an admiral from time to time, in order to encourage the others" may well be true but the practice is bad for admirals and was disastrous for the admiral that Voltaire referred to, Admiral John Byng. Filling in as a supernumerary James Wesner came with his first paper "The Lamentable Case of Admiral Byng.

At noon on March 14, 1757 Admiral Byng walked out of the great cabin, knelt on a cushion and dropped a white handkerchief signaling the waiting marines to execute him.

Byng was the son of a navy officer Admiral George Byng and at age 14 served on his father's flagship at the Battle of Cape Passero. John Byng moved rapidly up the ladder, perhaps due to family influence and was promoted to Vice-Admiral in 1746. Vice-Admiral Byng served on a series of court-martials brought to try those responsible for the fiasco at the Battle of Toulon. Led by Admiral Mathews and seconded by Vice-Admiral Lestock the British fleet was to blockade the Italian coast. When a combined Spanish and French fleet left Toulon, Mathews chased and soon caught them but the rear commanded by Lestock was far astern. Mathews engaged anyway but the confusion in Mathew's line allowed the Spanish and French to escape. Mathews was cashiered for breaking the line while Lestock who had not fought was cleared. The lesson was clear, gallantry mattered less than formal adherence to the line of battle. It was one that Byng apparently learned all too well.

The Seven Year's War began with an attack by the French on the strategically important Island of Minorca. Despite Minorca's importance, the Duke of Newcastle's Ministry was caught unprepared and did nothing until March 8, 1756 when the Ministry promoted Byng to Admiral and ordered him to prepare a fleet to transport 4,000 Royal Fusiliers to Minorca. By the time Byng reached Gibraltar it was too late. A French army of 15,000 commanded by Due de Richelieu and escorted by a fleet commanded by the Marquis de La Galissonière had landed at Minorca and pushed General Blakeney and his 2,800 troops back into the fortifications at Fort St. Phillip. To make matters worse the Governor of Gibraltar, arguing the Minorca was already lost refused orders to supply a brigade from his garrison to add to the troops Byng was carrying.

Byng did not help himself with his dispatches home complaining that he had been sent too late and with inadequate forces to assure success. Although true, this did not endear him to the King who exploded saying "this man won't fight". Two new admirals were sent to relieve Byng and his second in command West. But Byng had already left for Minorca where on May 19 he encountered and engaged the French fleet with West's division in the lead.

The attack was botched and the line was broken with West's ships badly battered. Byng regrouped his division before pressing the attack, Mathew's fate clearly on his mind. This allowed a gap to open between his division and West's allowing La Galissonière to break through the British lines and attack West on both sides. Byng's division resumed its forward movement just in time and La Galissonière broke off the engagement and withdrew.

In truth the battle was a draw but Byng's fleet was badly damaged and withdrew to Gibraltar for repairs, which allowed the French to capture Minorca.

Upon his return to England Byng was arrested to await court martial. Although the battle was draw, a draw was a loss for England, the war was going badly and a scapegoat was needed. Byng was charged under article 12 with failing "to do his utmost to take, seize and destroy the ships of the French King..." Article 12 had been changed a few years earlier to require a mandatory death penalty but article 12 also required that the failure must be the product of "Cowardice, Negligence or Disaffection (treason)". With no testimony to suggest cowardice or treason, negligence it was and Byng was sentenced to death. Even the judges did not think Byng deserved death, unanimously recommended him as "a proper object of mercy". Byng's case was not helped by a letter from Due de Richelieu saying that Byng had acted prudently and in any case he was out of favor with the King. And so Byng was executed for the crime of being mediocre.

Very bad luck for Byng but for long after, British officers had the advantage of being more aggressive than their opponents.

Minutes of the Literary Club for January 18, 2010

President David Edmunson presided over 67 members and 6 guests. Richard Hunt signed the constitution.

It started out as a civil war paper or so I thought, with the story of Stonewall Jackson being mortally wound by what is now called friendly fire. But then it took a turn to Jackson's last moments when he smiled, said "Let us cross over the river, and rest under the shade of the green trees", and then he died.

Filling in as a supernumerary with his first full-length paper Thomas Bennett brought us "Tales from the Edge". Drawing on his experiences as a hospice chaplain Tom presented five vignettes of people "at the edge" between life and death. On the edge of this life. What do they see Tom wonders and how do they see it?

One Monday Tom got a call from Carla, the daughter of a patient named Caroline. Caroline had cancer and been fading fast. The hospice nurse did not think she would make through Friday night so Tom expected that Carla was calling to tell him her mother had died. But no, Caroline was sitting up and wanted to talk to Tom right away. Visiting Caroline was always an experience. The house could be described as unkempt. In addition to the mostly unchanged babies and small children there were a couple of dogs, a cat or two, rabbits and some chickens that had the run of the house. Chickens are hard to housebreak.

Over the weekend Carla had thought Caroline was dead. So did the hospice nurse who had come out but then Caroline coughed and the nurse found a heart beat. Tom hurried to Caroline's side. Caroline said, "I saw it". "Saw what? When?" "I don't know when-while I was dead since Friday". "Heaven Tom, Heaven. I saw it." Tom asked Caroline how she got from being dead to heaven. "Well that's the strangest part. First we went somewhere. It was really boring, kind of dim, dark kind of scary; but then we went right to heaven." Tom managed to suppress his first thought "My God, the Catholics are right. There is a purgatory." Instead Tom muttered some platitudes. "That's not why I asked you here, you idiot. I want to know what the hell I'm doing here. I didn't want to come back here. That's your job- what the hell am I back here for?" Tom fumbled around with some talk about it not being time yet or unfinished business and they settled on the idea that she had come back to tell Tom about the experience and then she really did die.

And there was Aunt Lora who was 102 and whose relatives fought over who she would stay with. But not in the normal way. No, everyone wanted Aunt Lora to stay with them. Tom shamelessly pumped her for information about her life. What was it like to be 102, what had she seen in her long life. Well, the wild chickens in Newport for one. Tom she said, "Life is an adventure, and now I get a whole new adventure", and then she died. She is Tom's hero.

Minutes of the Literary Club for January 25, 2010

President David Edmunson presided over 59 members and 2 guests.

Letter writing is a dying art. Probably a dead art, killed by cell phones, email, instant messaging and twitter. No one writes letters anymore. I would guess that even

literary club members write fewer letters than they used to. And that Keith says is a shame. But Keith's a Luddite, although a cheerful one. The budget was organized by Keith Stewart with a contribution by William Pratt. The two papers concerned personal letters as form of social exchange that used to be quite common. In "Samuel Johnson and the Black Dog" Keith explored the letters of Samuel Johnson, which fill five volumes. Johnson's letters are both formal, addressing the recipient as "Honored Sir (or Madam)" and closing with "Your Humble Svt", and intimate. Johnson considered letters critical in the maintenance of friendships and in a letter to his old schoolfellow John Taylor wrote "There is this use in the most useless letter, that it shows one not to be forgotten".

In letters to friends Johnson offers advice sometimes requested, sometimes not, on a wide range of topics ranging from medical to legal. A common topic of advice was "The Black dog of melancholy", what we in these more modern but less poetic times would call depression. Melancholy was fashionable in 18th century England and judging from his letters many of Johnson's friends seemed to be afflicted by it. Johnson himself suffered from it so his advice to friends was no doubt influenced by his own experience.

His advice is illustrated in one of letters to Boswell "... Fix your thoughts upon your business, fill your intervals with company, and sunshine will again break in upon your mind." In other letter to Boswell he quotes Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*: "Be not solitary; be not idle". A sound rationale for the founding of a literary club.

In "The Epistles of Ezra" William Pratt explored the letters of Ezra Pound. Pound was in many ways the polar opposite of Johnson. Johnson was a proper English scholar and a gentleman while Pound was neither but both had enormous influence on the literature of the respective ages.

Their letters reflected their styles and their ages. Johnson was polite and formal while Pound was informal, defiant and irreverent. Like Johnson Pound's letters are filled with advice, for Pound was constantly badgering other writers with advice on becoming better writers. And Pound could be brutal. In a letter to William Carlos Williams critiquing his poetry he said, "I hope to god you have no feelings. If you have burn this *before* reading." Pound was a tireless promoter of good writers and he had a keen eye for talent. He badgered Harriet Monroe the editor of *Poetry, A Magazine of Verse* to publish both Frost and T.S. Eliot.

Pound treated writing as intellectual combat, once challenging the British writer Abercrombie to a duel because of an unkind remark Abercrombie made about him in a review.

Pound was a prolific letter writer. There are 13 published volumes of Pound's letters and many still unpublished letters. William Pratt had the pleasure of discovering in the reams of Pound's unpublished letters not one but two written about him!

Minutes of the Literary Club for February

Minutes of the Literary Club for February 1, 2010

President David Edmunson presided over 66 members and 6 guests.

David had the sad duty of informing the members that associate member Alex Stolley died. A memorial committee is being formed.

Those of us with regular jobs, 9-5 jobs, you know real jobs. Jobs of the sort our father's urged us to get have always envied those who have managed to avoid our fate. I suspect they have always envied those of us who have regular jobs. But not Chris Miller. Chris has never had a regular job for more than three months and he's proud of it. In "Oddjob: Ruminations from Captiva or Narcissism Revisited" Chris described some of the odd (in both senses of the word) jobs that he has held. He was originally going to write on the philosophy of work but even cursory research revealed that the philosophy of work was a broad topic on which much had been written and that began to seem too much like work.

After a plea for counting three holiday music performances as a paper, a formula which would get Chris out of writing any papers, and thus out of real work, Chris told us about a few of the odd jobs he has held.

At twelve Chris' father got him a job breaking up concrete slabs with a sledgehammer. In the heat of a Georgia summer Chris lasted until the end of the morning shift. Many of Chris' jobs were the sort of normal jobs that most of us have held. Working at the Tastee Freeze, working construction or as a hospital orderly; normal jobs.

But some of Chris' jobs were truly odd. The job working as a caretaker of a civil war farmhouse and property was a good job. But then there was the job at an Anheuser Bush theme park called "The Old Country" which had pseudo historical recreations of old France, Germany, Italy and England. The park needed performers such as singers, dancers, magicians and the like and Chris auditioned and was hired.

For what he did not know, but it seemed promising. Would he be dancing and singing with hard-bodied cuties and gay guys providing ample opportunities to get laid or would Busch just headline him on one of their stages as a rising star. What could go wrong.

The monkey, that's what could go wrong. The fucking monkey. Two monkeys in fact. Chris had been hired to be an organ grinder. The monkeys had to be dressed and they hated that. It turns out that monkeys have a very poor work ethic. Chris had to walk around the park with two monkeys on his shoulder enduring taunts and jokes from his co-workers. The monkeys pissed and shit on him and there were few opportunities to get laid.

Chris has still not had a real job. For almost thirty years he has been a club musician on Saturday nights and a minister of music at church on Sunday. Years ago he faced the moral dilemma of getting laid by some hottie bar-fly after a gig or on break and then becoming a pious church musician a few hours later but with the wisdom that comes with age Chris now realizes that the dilemma is the trade-off between sleep and sex.

Minutes of the Literary Club for February 8, 2010

President David Edmunson presided over 59 members and 6 guests. David announced that Fred McGavran's collection of short stories "The Butterfly Collector" has just been published.

The literary club values intellectual diversity but a quick glance around the room shows that we do not welcome diversity in gender and when he joined the club 15 years ago Hal Porter felt a little queasy about that. But Hal's wife was involved with several women's groups and Hal made his peace with it. Sort of. In "Amphiachy" Hal uses the life of Elizabeth Cady Stanton to examine the women's movement and feminism.

It began with a tea party. A real tea party, not the sort currently in vogue, when in 1848 Elizabeth Cady Stanton raised in a strict Presbyterian congregation gathered for tea with four Quaker women. The women decided to call for convention to discuss the "social, civil, and religious condition and rights of women". The first women's rights convention was held ten days later and attended by over three hundred men and women. The women led by Stanton drew up a list of grievances and based on these eleven resolutions were drawn up. All passed unanimously save one, the resolution demanding the right to vote. The abolitionists felt that passing such a resolution would hurt their cause and even Stanton's husband felt it to be so radical that he skipped the meeting in order to avoid voting on it.

Support came from Frederick Douglass, the only Afro-American at the convention, who argued that women, like slaves had rights and that only through the right to vote would other rights follow. The resolution passed but narrowly.

In 1850 Stanton and Susan B. Anthony began a collaboration that would last 50 years and lead 70 years later with the passing of the 19th amendment to women's suffrage. Today of course, we cannot imagine it otherwise but the battle was long and hard.

Stanton has been called "The founding philosopher of women's rights in American" and she fought not only for women's suffrage but for a new world order where men and women would rule as equals. She produced "*The Women's Bible*" an effort to re-interpret the Bible through feminine eyes.

The struggle for women's rights continues. The Equal Rights Amendment was not ratified and in many parts of the world women has few rights even today. Hal sees working for gender equality and the natural rights of all persons around the world as the great moral challenge of the 21st century.

Minutes of the Literary Club for February 15, 2010

The meeting of the club was cancelled due to snow.

Minutes of the Literary Club for February 22, 2010

President David Edmunson presided over 47 members and 2 guests.

Willful Ignorance, the topic is vast but in "Willful Ignorance" written by Louis Gatch as the first paper in a budget read and organized by Lou, Lou choose to focus on the Patagonian toothfish. Like most large predatory fish including bluefin tuna and swordfish the Patagonian toothfish is in trouble. And in the case of the toothfish it's all because of a name change.

In 1977 in Valparaiso, Chile a fish merchant Lee Lantz spotted a toothfish while walking the decks of the fishing boat docked there. It was almost five feet long and over 100 pounds with a lower jaw studded with pointed teeth and Lantz had no idea what it was. Lantz was looking for new fish to sell in the American market and although he was told the fish was not good to eat because it was so oily, he cooked a few pieces and found that it had a good firm texture but very little taste. Perfect for the American market. But you cannot sell Americans something called toothfish. So Lantz renamed it Chilean Sea Bass and the rest is history. Today the Patagonian toothfish is overfished and headed toward extinction. Before Lou's paper you could eat Chilean Sea Bass out of ignorance, now if you eat it, its willful ignorance.

In "Ties that Bind" Polk Laffoon told the tale of Ali and Peter. While they where dating Peter and Ali spent lots of time together, taking walks, competing at doing the New York Times crossword puzzle and cooking together.

Peter was convinced that Ali had all he wanted in a partner, looks, intelligence, charm and yet a subtle willingness to defer. And in things big and small Peter got his way. From the wedding and honeymoon to the name of their first child Ali give in to Peter in order please Peter. After the birth of their first child she had gone back to work over Peter's misgivings. Ali was good at her job and she wanted an identity of her own separate from being a wife and a mother. However after their second child was born Peter talked a reluctant Ali in being a full time mother. She could always volunteer. Ali missed her colleagues and her job but threw herself into volunteer work and was elected president of the board at the Montessori school.

Wanting to surprise Peter she did not tell him ahead of time but Peter, away on a business trip missed the dinner at which Ali was installed as board president.

James Myers wrote "Nickels and Dimes". Cousin Patrick had a nose for money, other people's money. At the age of nine he cheated his five-year-old cousin out of 15 cents. At his first communion he made an obscene gesture and was yanked out of line by a vigilant nun. Patrick liked to gamble but in a way that reminds one of the famous exchange between Mae West and W.C. Fields.

Mae West: Is poker a game of chance?

W.C. Fields: Not the way I play it.

In short Cousin Patrick was the sort of boy your parents would not have let you hang around with if he had not been your cousin. When he was a little older Patrick gave illicit driving lessons with his father's 1930-something Plymouth. It was 5 cents for a ride and 10 cents if you wanted to drive. This went on until a careless driver backed the car into a drainage ditch. Patrick's father didn't understand how the car rolled down a flat driveway into the ditch but the boys managed to convince the adults that the driveway had a slight but noticeable tilt toward the street.

At about that time the boys learned that their mother's Uncle Killian had syphilis and had been watching dirty movies. Aunt Maggie said she hoped his you-know-what would fall off. The boys weren't sure how Uncle Killian had caught the disease but they were sure they knew what his you-know-what was. Uncle Killian had outlived his wife and lived with the boy's grandmother and great grandfather. The boys did not usually go voluntarily to their great grandfather's house but what boy can resist dirty movies? When they got there they found out that their uncles were all out at the bar, an apparently common occurrence. Their grandmother suggested they go upstairs and visit their grandfather, who as they had hoped was dozing. After some rummaging around, the boys found the dirty movies which they of course watched. One twice. Afterwards they woke grandpa up to tell him how much they had enjoyed the visit. Their grandmother sent them home with warm bread and told them to visit often. They did.

Minutes of the Literary Club for March

Minutes of the Literary Club for March 1, 2010

President David Edmunson presided over 50 members and 3 guests. Tony Covatta read a memorial to Joe Stern. Robert Dorsey, Henry Winkler and Anthony Covatta wrote the memorial. After the paper Alexander Sittenfeld was elected to membership.

Nose prints. What you may wonder are noses prints. They may conjure up the image of a young boy, his face pressed against the window of a candy store or perhaps against the living room window on Christmas hoping to catch a glimpse of Santa Claus. But you would be wrong. In "Nose Prints On The Kitchen Window" Edward Gleason defines them as "Moments of nourishment, quietly shared". Some are happy such as the fall afternoon Edward spent watching football with Tim Russell who would become one of his closest, most important friends. Some are poignant such as when Edward was seven and John Williamson the head of outdoor operations at the Gleason family camp fixed the one horse power outboard motor that Edward had been given as a birthday present. Surely one the best birthday presents a seven-year-old boy has ever received. Years later Edward learned that John knew nothing about outboard motors but Edward believed John could fix it, so John read the manual, ordered the parts and fixed it. And some are profoundly sad such as the last conversation Edward had with Tim Russell. Tim was dying; they both knew it and the conversation did not flow. But Tim's last words to Edward were "Kiss me. I love you."

Edward believes that nose prints mark life, but you have to listen closely and pay attention or you might miss them.

Minutes of the Literary Club for March 8, 2010

President David Edmunson presided over 56 members and 3 guests. Alexander Sittenfeld signed the constitution.

All families have myths about their ancestries. Sometimes they are even true. But not in Gordon Christenson's case, at least not completely. In "Who is Joseph" we are introduced to the mystery of Gordon's origins. Gordon and his wife participated in the Geographic project, a partnership between National Geographic and IBM formed to trace the migratory history of humans through DNA swabs. When Gordon's results came back they were surprising and puzzling. The results showed that Gordon's Y chromosome markers matched those of Haplogroup Q. Haplogroup Q migrated into Siberia and then across Beringia about fifteen-thousand years ago. Most Amerindian males have the same markers as Haplogroup Q. But Gordon's ancestors came from Sweden and the family has records to prove it. There is no evidence that Haplogroup Q migrated to Sweden so where did Gordon's Y marker

come from. His father and grandfather of course but where did theirs come from. Gordon paid for three more tests just to be sure but there was no mistake.

Gordon's great grandfather John Christenson came from Sweden in 1861 along with almost a thousand other Mormon converts. Shortly after arriving in Salt Lake, John marries his fiancé and a year later they move to American Fork, Utah. It's there that John meets Johanna a very unhappy young Swedish women. Johanna left Sweden to help her pregnant sister. She misses Sweden and her fiancé who is back in Sweden. Now she is on wagon train on its way to the Mormon frontier colonies and she has had it. She is going no further and stays in American Fork. She is Gordon's great grandmother. Eighteen months later she becomes John Christenson's second wife and gives birth to Joseph, Gordon's grandfather.

Gordon is a cultural, not a practicing Mormon. He long ago concluded that the *Book of Mormon* is 19th century American fiction of poor literary quality but Mormon history sticks in his bones.

A family narrative written by Johanna's daughter tells a love story. Johanna falls in love with John. He overcomes her defiance and converts her to Mormonism and with the permission of his first wife marries her. Gordon thinks that sound like a "Just So" story and he does not believe it. It wouldn't explain Haplogroup Q either. Johanna is trapped no doubt about it, she can not return to Sweden and a plural marriage would trade servitude for protection but what choice does she have. But did she have an affair with a Native American, or was she raped or abducted. Those things did happen. Gordon's sisters prefer the love story and his nephews only want to know what tribe they come from so that they can share in the casino money.

Gordon doesn't know the truth about his grandfather Joseph's heritage and may never but he does know that he loves his grandfather Joseph. As for Joseph Smith he will have to let him and his church go.

Minutes of the Literary Club for March 15, 2010

President David Edmunson presided over 47 members and 2 guests.

Homer's tale of Lotus-eaters maybe mythical but legend has it that the tale was set on the Island of Meninx which in the third century A.D. was renamed Djerba. In his inaugural paper Michael Nussbaum explored the culture and traditions of the Jewish community of Djerba. Djerba lies just off the coast of Tunisia. Mike claims that visiting Djerba is like travelling back in time. Although Djerba has been affected by tourism many of its customs and traditions have remained unchanged.

In sharp contrast to the rest of the Arabic world the Jewish community in Djerba is thriving. The Jewish community is growing by 4% a year, it is a center of Jewish

spiritualism and is one of the few places in the world where scribes still print the Torah scrolls on parchment and old women inspect the wheat used to make guarded matzo, grain by grain for impurities. The Jewish community in Djerba was founded by Jews who fled Judah when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and the great Temple in 586 B.C. Most of the Jews returned to Judah to rebuild their land and build the Second Temple when Cyrus, the king of Persia conquered Babylonia in 539 B.C. The Jews of Djerba, perhaps having eaten the Lotus, stayed in Djerba determined not to return before the arrival of the Messiah.

Life in the Jewish community of Djerba is very traditional with boys and girls attending separate schools and rarely finishing high school or leaving the community, as is common elsewhere in Tunisia. Religious life in Djerba is as it has always been, traditional, devoted and serious.

Yet, Djerba is small island in a country of 7.5 million Muslims. When asked to describe Djerba's place in Tunisia Rabbi Chaim Bittan, the Grand Rabbi of Tunisia and a Djerban native described it as "integrated not assimilated." How has the Jewish community there thrived? It helps enormously that the current Tunisian government is both secular and tolerant but Djerba has also had outside help. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee or JDC has helped many at-risk overseas Jewish communities including Djerba. The JDC has helped ensure that the Djerba Jewish community remains, vital, strong, self-sustaining and connected to all other Jewish communities.

Minutes of the Literary Club for March 22, 2010 (Written by James Myers)

President Dave Edmundson presided over 74 members and 6 guests.

David announced that Jack Lindy is recovering well from his recent surgery and would welcome notes or calls from fellow Literarians.

A recent application for membership was inadvertently left out of the month's mailing and will be mailed to members separately.

In Richard Lauf's multi-layered historical fiction "The Great Mutiny," it is 1971 and Army Captain Bill Hampton is sizing up his competitors for promotion while headed for his second tour of duty in Viet Nam. He is a lifer, with both combat experience and a stint on an elite planning staff with NATO. Even before leaving on this new tour he had begun to get an inkling of the extent of decline in the morale of American troops. The morale problem is verging on mutiny rooted in anti-war sentiment and fueled by drugs, alcohol, and sex.

In Viet Nam, assigned as a staff officer (a REMF – Rear Echelon Mother bleep), Hampton is determined to attack the morale problem head on, but struggles with the opposition of senior officers whose careers depend upon covering up the true state of affairs, and he encounters the mutinous behavior of his own drug-riddled pacifist battalion clerk, a soon-to-be political phenom back home.

President Nixon, beleaguered by the anti-war movement at home as well as in the field, and leery of a possible Russian move on Europe with American forces in disarray, reluctantly accepts defeat and ends the war in Viet Nam, leaving now-Major Hampton to muse on the enormous power of the nuclear arms he managed in Europe and their uselessness in the face of “the great mutiny” in Viet Nam.

Minutes of the Literary Club for March 29, 2010

President Dave Edmundson presided over 47 members and 2 guests. Howard Tomb organized the budget with contributions from Albert Pyle and Fred McGavrin. The only connecting thread was crime ranging from large to small.

In “The Empty Frames” Howard Tomb tells the tale of the now empty frames hanging in the Isabella Stewart Gardner museum. The museum was built in 1898 and is an exact copy of the Palazzo Barbaro. It was Isabella Gardner’s home and museum. She was addicted to her masterpieces and said, “I’ve got the picture habit. It’s as bad as the whisky habit”. On March 18, 1990 two thieves stole a dozen of Isabella Gardner’s masterpieces and with them the soul of the museum. This was no small crime. In current dollars the paintings may be worth as much as three quarters of a billion dollars. Even by the standards of the late Senator Everett Dirksen that’s real money. It is the largest art theft in history and the five million dollar reward for the recovery of the paintings is second only to the reward for Osama bin Laden.

No one knows who has the paintings. The “Dr. No theory” is popular. This theory holds that the paintings were stolen for a rich eccentric who had the paintings stolen for his private collection. But the late Harold Smith, a professional art investigator who worked for 15 years trying to recover the paintings considers the “Dr. No theory” poppycock. Smith noted that he had never found secret stash of paintings in a billionaire’s mansion.

Gardner’s will was carefully written and stipulates that none of the art could be moved and that if any of it was, all the art was to be sold immediately, with Harvard receiving the proceeds. And so the frames sit empty awaiting the possible return or recovery of the masterpieces.

In “Pep Pill” Albert Pyle brought petty crime. Charley Patrick was at a party making a mental list of reasons of why he was justified in not having a good time. In short Charley had a bad attitude, and a long list. He was at the party only as a favor to his wife. He did not like the hostess Shirley Cutter who was his wife’s boss and the sort of woman who had a little work done every couple of years. And he certainly did not like Shirley’s husband Ed Woodward. He did not like the proffered champagne, the house which was a big McMansion, the neighborhood, a collection of cul-de-sacs, not a town or the yard, which was full of weedy third growth timber. Nor, did he have any interest in talking to anyone at the party. Feeling a headache coming on and needing to pee Charley wandered off in search of a bathroom. The one downstairs

was occupied so Charley wandered upstairs. In McMansions upstairs bathrooms are always off bedrooms and Charley entered one, rationalizing that the partially open door meant it was OK. Using the same argument he entered the bathroom and rummaged in the medicine cabinet. Picking up a blue bottle he saw that it was not Aleve as he had assumed but Ed Woodward's Viagra.

Not, that he, Charley needed it. Of course not, at least not yet. But you did not have to need it to enjoy it. Or so he had heard. No, he didn't need it but he wanted it. He was curious and he certainly did not want to talk to his humorless doctor about it. This was his chance, his one chance to try it. But wasn't it theft? And what if he was allergic and it killed him. That would be embarrassing. Well, he would wait and take it at home. Curiosity overcame his scruples about theft and he slipped one in his pocket and hurried downstairs.

Downstairs he worried that his previous loner act would expose him as a furtive Viagra thief so he joined a group in the dining room to make conversation. To his horror and too late to do anything about it he saw that Ed Woodward was part of the group. Charley began to sweat profusely and a small chunk of plaque in his aorta began to break loose from its moorings.

In "An Ecclesiastical History" Fred McGavran returned us to major crime. Murder in fact. If Fred were to write an ecclesiastical history of Muhlenberg County, Kentucky he would begin with the murder of Tobias Penrod. So that's where he began. Tobias Penrod was found dead, shot, on his own land in 1806 by Henry Lamer. The only clues were the murderers footprints, a moccasin, an ancient curse and later a nearly empty grave. The tracks lead from the murder site back toward Tobias' cabin. The origin of the curse is uncertain but the Shawnee warned Daniel Boone that the land was cursed.

In 1805 both Tobias Penrod and his younger brother Peter claimed land in the Clifty Creek valley. Their claims overlapped and although conflicting land claims are common in Kentucky this lead to bad blood between the brothers.

Peter Penrod was the only suspect in his brother's murder. Lamer opined in court that the moccasin tacks that he had followed where made by the moccasin produced in court which was presumably Peter's. There is no record of how this moccasin differed from those worn by the other settlers but Peter was indicted and convicted.

Two years earlier a devout Anglican the Rev. Edmund Spears had appeared in the valley. He had a ravaged face, wild eyes and a sense of impending doom. He stayed with the Penrods and just before he left preached a five-hour sermon ending with "And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him."

Immediately after Peter's conviction his lawyer moved to have the conviction set aside. The next morning the court granted the motion and released Peter on bail. No one knows why. The case was called again six months later, only to be dismissed due to the death of the defendant. No cause of death was recorded. Two facts stand out

in retrospect. Rev. Spears returned to the valley the next year and Peter and Tobias's mother Catherine Penrod spent every minute sewing until her death two years later.

In 2004 surveyors and other advance men for strip miners dug up the Penrod family plot to move it up the hill. One of the coffins disintegrated and inside it they discovered a moccasin and the blacked remains of human foot.

The surveyor went to Harbin Memorial Library in Greenville to inquire about pioneer burial practices. One of the librarians remembered something called the "the Penrod Sampler". The needlework was embroidered with pigs and barrels. In the center were an axe, a tree stump and a human foot. At the bottom was a inscription in German and it was signed "Catherine Penrod 1807." The librarian translated "Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire."

Minutes of the Literary Club for April

Minutes of the Literary Club for April 5, 2010

President David Edmunson presided over 55 members and 2 guests.

Stephen A. Marine was elected to membership.

Thomas Zuck's memories of growing up on the shores of Lake Erie are rich and nostalgic. Tom assures us that even those memories of being punished for well, bad behavior are positive, at least in retrospect. In "The Point" Tom recounts his childhood growing up on Cedar Point. It was a largely idyllic childhood, filled with both the natural wonders of Lake Erie and the man made ones of Cedar Point. At Cedar Point Tom enjoyed the rides and amusements and when older he reveled in seeing the big bands live. Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey and others, Tom heard them and danced to them.

Tom also enjoyed the natural wonders of Lake Erie spending hours water skiing, poking about in the marsh and trap shooting with his father. But perhaps best of all was the sailing and sail boat racing. What boy could ask for more?

Will boys on "The Point" have as much fun as Tom in the years to come? Maybe not. Lake Erie is threatened by pollution, the marsh is gone and the fine sand beaches have been replaced by concrete walls and rip rap.

Minutes of the Literary Club for April 12, 2010

President David Edmunson presided over 53 members and 3 guests.

Philosophers and physicists have discussed the relationship between quantum mechanics and consciousness ever since the invention of quantum mechanics. In "Dissolution" Gareth Howell gave us a collection of musings on this and the mind body problem. Visiting CERN as the guest of his physicist friend Conrad Guettler Gareth was struck by the humility of the physicists in describing the limits of the current state of particle physics. This, as all the physicists in the room will tell you, should not be mistaken for humility on the part of the physicists themselves.

The mind body problem is hard and physicists have not made much progress. Easier is the problem of what happened to the bodies of two notable philosophers. Descartes whose work on Cartesian dualism has had enormous influence on the mind-body problem and Thomas Paine who had nothing to do with mind-body dualism but much to do with the birth of our nation.

What they had in common was an inability to stay buried. Both had their remains dug up and pieces of their bodies were put up for sale. Well, they were certainly dug up but the relics may well have been fakes. It appears that even the body part of the mind-body problem is hard.

Minutes of the Literary Club for April 19, 2010

President David Edmunson presided over 60 members and 2 guests.

Stephen A. Marine signed the constitution. Gibby Carey read a memorial to Alex Stolley written by Gibby and Charles Carothers.

The Literary Club values the written word above all, so it is fitting that in "Magic Pictures" Michael Kremzar introduced us to the Kremzar Linguistic Unified Theory of Society or KLUTS.

Sitting in the Shrine of the Stone Lion one hot summer day Mike began to wonder why the early pueblo people, who were clearly intelligent and sophisticated had not developed a written language. Indeed why had no tribe north of Meso-America developed a written language prior to the European invasion? Prior to the European invasion the continent had 400 tribes and a population of 15-20 million people, but no written language. Why not?

KLUTS holds that to develop a written language you need large stable communities, you need Chiefs who no longer hunt. In short you need taxes and a bureaucracy. This creates a need for record keeping and thus writing. Trade does this as well. All of which require farming, not hunting and gathering. And here Native Americans were at a disadvantage. North America did not have wheat or rice, only corn and the continent lacked animals suitable for domestication. Furthermore Native Americans are lactose intolerant and thus could not supplement their nutrition with milk. Not that milking a bison would have turned out well. Without large stable communities a language was unlikely to develop.

There are Mike admits a couple of anomalies that could pose a problem for KLUTS. There were large pueblo communities in New Mexico and Arizona and there was the ancient city of Cahokia. Cahokia was located close to present day St. Louis and flourished from 1000 CE to 1200 CE. At its height it had a population larger than London in 1250. Why no written language? However a broken stone table has been found in the ruins with elaborate carvings of heads with decorations. To Mike they look very much like early Mayan or Egyptian glyphs. Maybe they were the forerunner of a written language, the start of a literary club.

Minutes of the Literary Club for April 26, 2010

President David Edmunson presided over 50 members and 6 guests.

In a break with tradition the budget was instead a full-length paper by Henry P. Briggs. In an untitled piece Peter told the moving and deeply personal story of his bother Loring. Loring died last April in a VA hospital in New Hampshire and after his death Peter's sister Ellie flew to New Hampshire to go through the cottage where

Loring had lived alone for the last 45 years. There she discovered thousand of letters and 250 poems that Peter and Ellie had been unaware of.

Loring had served in World War II along with Peter's oldest brother Stewie. Stewie was killed in action and Loring was wounded both physically and psychologically.

Before the war Loring had been the most talented of the Brigg's boys. He excelled academically and was extremely gifted musically, playing the piano at a very high level and was fluent in French and German.

Upon his return from the war Loring graduated from Harvard in 2 and a half years and moved to Paris to be a night watchman and a translator.

When he moved back to the US Loring held a couple of real jobs teaching at first-rate private schools but neither lasted long. Loring's mental health declined and he began to distance himself from his family. His physical wounds may have healed but the psychological ones had not.

Then Loring made a decision that may have saved him. He bought a small cottage in Sandwich New Hampshire near where the Brigg's family had summered for over 50 years. Loring spent almost 45 years there, psychologically distance from his family but loved, cared for and protected by the locals.

Peter has come to realize that he and Ellie learned more about Loring from his paper and poems after his death then they had learned in the previous 60 years. They also know that it has drawn them closer together.

Minutes of the Literary Club for May 2010

Minutes of the Literary Club for May 3, 2010

President David Edmunson presided over 60 members and 2 guests.

Thomas Murphy was elected to membership.

The Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey is one of the country's crown jewels. In "Schools" Louis Witten traced its history and the history of Johns Hopkins University. It's not obvious but the two institutions share an intellectual and philosophical connection. There is a family connection as well, Lou graduated from Johns Hopkins and his son Ed is a faculty member at the Institute for Advanced Study.

The Institute for Advanced Study is small with approximately 30 permanent faculty and 200 visiting members. Professors have no teaching responsibilities, complete freedom to choose their research direction and are well paid. And the academic year is short. It's a dream job for an academic.

The founding of the Institute is connected to the founding of Lou's Alma Mater, Johns Hopkins. Johns Hopkins was born in 1795. His family owned a tobacco plantation in Maryland. Tobacco was profitable and slaves did all the work. However the family's financial fortunes changed when in 1807 The Society of Friends declared that owning slaves was inconsistent with the Quaker's faith. Johns parent's freed their slaves and Johns had to quit school to work on the plantation. At age seventeen Johns left the plantation and went to Baltimore to work for an Uncle in the grocery business. At twenty-four he started his own business and was extremely successful, so successful that before his death he endowed a University. His bequest did not restrict the trustees in any way, other than they had to create a university.

The trustees sought advice from the presidents of Harvard, Michigan and Cornell. All advised starting small with a technical college. Wisely the trustees ignored them and instead founded a University primarily devoted to graduate education with a small and flexible undergraduate school. This was the University that Abraham Flexner attended. Flexner thrived there in the open intellectual atmosphere.

Flexner went on to found a well regarded boys school in his home town of Louisville but eventually felt constrained by the professional and intellectual opportunities in Louisville. He and his wife left for Europe and he published his first book "The American College", a critical look at American Universities. A few years later he authored a scathing report on the state of medical education in the US. In 1929 he got a call from the Bambergers who had made their money in a department store in Newark. They wanted to build a hospital in Newark. Flexner thought that that was a stupid idea and told them so. He convinced them to endow an institute in the field of

general scholarship and science. The Institute for Advance Study opened in 1933 with Flexner as president and one school, the School of Mathematics. The faculty numbered five including Einstein, Weyl and Von Neumann.

Minutes of the Literary Club for May 10, 2010

President David Edmunson presided over 68 members and 4 guests.

Thomas Murphy signed the constitution.

Organizing a large international event on short notice and in Italy could be a daunting experience but Aaron Betsky enjoyed it. As Aaron said whatever went wrong happen to the architects not to him. In "A Telephone Call, or, A Tale of Three Presidents, or, My Venetian Adventure" Aaron relates the tale. It began, as few things do these days, with a phone call. "Hello, Mr. Betsky, this is Paolo Baratta. You do not know me, but I have a problem" The problem was that Mr. Baratta, the President of the Venice Biennale had found out that his predecessor had neglected to appoint a director for the next architecture Biennale that was only ten months away. Would Aaron take the job? He would and he did, fitting it in around his full time job as director of the Cincinnati Art Museum. And thus, Aaron became director of the 2008 architecture Biennale in Venice with the responsibility of filling the Arsenale, the medieval arsenal of the Venetian army that was the Biennale's main exhibit space. Aaron invited two-dozen architects to play in the space. In addition there were national pavilions, which he could only rubber-stamp. Construction was a nightmare. It cost as much to get a container across the lagoon in Venice as it did to ship it from China. The Chinese bamboo was not dried sufficiently and did not clear customs and Frank Gehry changed his design at the last moment. Yet in the end it all came together.

On the day of opening Aaron's work was ridiculed and vilified in most of the world's major newspapers. The New York Times did not even bother to review the Biennale. But this happened to all of Aaron's predecessors as well and will no doubt happen to his successor. She claims to be looking forward t it.

As for Aaron he enjoyed himself immensely.

Minutes of the Literary Club for May 17, 2010

President David Edmunson presided over 59 members and 7 guests.

Lou Prince will host the summer outing at the Indian Hill Historical Society.

When he landed in Caracas there was no reason for James Fitzgerald to think that this trip to Venezuela would be particularly eventful. Jim's wife Leslie was born in Venezuela and Jim had been there forty or more times so they were old hands. But this trip turned out differently, very differently. In "Café con Leche", Jim told the

story of his August 2008 trip to Venezuela. Accompanied by their son Sean, Jim and Leslie were in Venezuela for the wedding of one of Leslie's nieces. The title of the paper *Café con Leche* or coffee with milk refers to the multiracial culture of Venezuela. Jim and his family survived the wedding, which as with all Venezuelan weddings was "loud, lavish and long" and after a day of rest and recovery they, Leslie's sister Betsy and her husband Ramon headed to Barinas where Betsy and Ramon lived.

Tired from the drive they elected an early dinner with Jim's son Sean going for burgers with his cousin Ramon Jr. and a couple of friends and the rest of the group opting for an outdoor steak house. By 10 O'Clock the day's drive, large dinner and beer had taken their toll and Jim and Leslie went to bed. As Jim dozed off he heard loud noises coming from the main part of the house. Jim figured it was just Sean and his friends. That is until he found himself staring at a stranger pointing a gun at him. Two armed men had broken into the house. One is loud and aggressive and is in Jim and Leslie bedroom shouting at them and looking for money and other valuables. The other gunman is more passive and marches the others into the bedroom at gunpoint forcing them to kneel on the floor. The passive gunman left to look for valuables. Everyone is afraid they may be shot on the spot or kidnapped and perhaps killed later. Then the gunman's cell phone rings. Clearly a modern gunman. He shouts into the phone "I'm busy". His confederate returns saying, "Let's go. I have everything. They're decent people leave them along" And with that they are gone.

Ramon calls the police who show up 45 minutes later and do not even get out of their car to inspect the crime scene. The next morning, after a sleepless night, Jim goes downtown to get the police report for his insurance company. There is no written report and if Jim wants an official list of the items stolen from him he will need to submit the original purchase receipts. Finally Ramon persuades the desk officer to type the list up on Ministry of Justice letterhead, which Jim's insurance company accepted with out question.

As they waited at the airport for their flight back to Cincinnati, Jim ordered a coffee, with milk but on the dark side.

Minutes of the Literary Club for May 24, 2010

President David Edmunson presided over 56 members and 4 guests.

We all know Whistler's mother, or at least we think we do and that's what matters. But who was Whistler's father? He must have had one. In "Whistler's Father?" Arnold Schrier told us. George Washington Whistler, called "America's Forgotten Man" by his most recent biographer was born in 1800 in Fort Wayne, IN, then a military outpost. At the age of nineteen George Whistler graduated from West Point and went on to serve as a Civil Engineer in the Army Corp of Engineers. He retired as a major after an apparently undistinguished military career. His real love was trains, which were then a new invention and while on loan from the military to the B&O railroad he became one of America's first railway builders.

Such was his fame that when Tsar Nicholas I wanted to build a railroad between Moscow and St. Petersburg he sent for George Whistler. Nationality may have played a role. Tsar Nicholas refused to employ the French fearing the spread of French revolution ideas and one presumes the guillotine.

Given the job of building a railroad from Moscow to St. Petersburg George brought his family to Russia. The route was difficult, conditions for the workers were appalling and it took eight years to finish the railroad. George did not live to see it finished. In 1848 a cholera epidemic broke out. George sent his wife and children back to the United States but he stated to finish the railroad. In April of 1849, not yet 49 George Whistler died of Cholera. The railroad, his legacy was finished two years later.

After the paper the literary club held its mystical annual elections. Gibby Carey was elected President by acclamation. Fred McGavran was elected Vice-President. Polk Lafoon was elected secretary and Albert Pyle was re-elected as Clerk.

Minutes of the Literary Club for June 2010

Minutes of the Literary Club for June 7, 2010

President David Edmunson presided over 53 members and 6 guests.

David led the club in a toast to the 80th anniversary of meeting in our current building.

Steven Phillips was elected to membership.

For years politicians, economists and Fed Chairman have been telling us that inflation is ruining the American dream. To which Emerson Knowles says, “bunk” and in “A Great Hoax” he explained why he thinks its bunk. What does “An honest day’s wage for an honest day’s work” buy now, as opposed to 20, 40 or even 90 years ago? Mostly more. In 1919 the average worker needed 10 hours of wages to buy a typical bag of groceries. Today the average worker needs only two hours to earn the same bag of groceries. Priced in a days wage, lots of goods are cheaper now than they have ever been. Others are just better or larger, think about cars and houses or like computers and cell phones did not exist. Life expectancy has risen from 55 years in 1919 to 78 years today. Health costs have risen but our ability to treat and cure diseases has also increased.

So why does Emerson think the politicians, economists have got it so wrong. Because he believes they have underestimated innovation, which tends to drive real costs down. Life Emerson says is better than ever and will continue to get better. You should not believe those who forecast doom and you don’t need to buy gold.

After the paper Bob Dorsey explained the proposed amendment on honorary members. The amendment would increase the maximum number of honorary members from 10 to 12. It has been posted and will be discussed and voted on in the fall.

Minutes of the Literary Club for June 14, 2010

President David Edmunson presided over 81 members.

The club held its annual outing, hosted by Lou Prince at the Indian Hill Historical Society. Lou treated us to a brief history of the old school house that served as the venue for our outing.

David Edmunson lead us in at toast to Herb Curry.

A good reputation is more valuable than money. Or so am I told. In “The Devil You Say” Robert Watkins told the story of the old rumor that P&G’s “Moon and Stars” design was a symbol of the “Church of Satan”. This rumor threatened to do grave

harm to P&G's reputation. The "Moon and Stars" design dates from the 1850's. But the "Church of Satan" is probably old as well.

The rumor started in the fall of 1979 and P&G was never sure what started the rumor. Calls about the "Satan Rumor" came in at the rate of 200-400 per month in 1980 and 1981 and P&G's Public Relation Department took a very low-key approach. Ignore it and it will go away was the thought. It didn't. By January 1982 the volume of calls had increased eight fold and the rumor had crystallized into two parts. The first part claimed that the president of P&G had appeared on a television talk show, usually the Phil Donahue show, and stated that a large portion of P&G's profits went to the "Church of Satan". The second part was that in return for this P&G was permitted to place the symbol for the "Church of Satan" on its products.

Faced with increasing calls about the rumor P&G decided it had to take action. A letter was obtained from the Phil Donahue stating that no P&G executive had ever appeared on the show to discuss anything and mailings were sent out to the West Coast where many of calls were coming from. It did no good. They couldn't put a stake in it. Some stores started taking P&G products off their selves. Bob's mother called him, at the office, to inquire about P&G's connection to the devil. Bob admits that based on his childhood his mother may have had good reason to believe that he was connected to the devil.

Faced with an escalating volume of calls P&G got letters from well-known religious leaders attesting to the company's good moral character. The legal division began to bring suit against people who were spreading the rumor. Nothing worked and the company took the draconian step of removing the "Moon and Stars" from its product packaging and filed more lawsuits.

Most of the suits were settled without monetary damages. The defendants apologized and promised not to spread the rumor again. An exception involved four senior Amway distributors who spread the rumors to gain a business advantage. P&G sought and received a multi-million dollar judgment against them.

What struck Bob was that most of the people spreading the rumor were "good folks", decent ordinary folks". Why would they spread such a rumor? Bob thinks it may be to relieve the tedium of everyday life, maybe just because most of us like gossip.

After the paper outgoing President David Edmunson passed the gavel to incoming President Gibby Carey.