



A newsletter for members of the York University Retirees' Association (YURA)

Summer 2020

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YURA is a member of CURAC/ARUCC, the federation of the College and University Retiree Associations of Canada/Associations de retraités dans les universités et collèges du Canada

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Message from the YURA Co-Presidents

It is a June like never before! Spring/summer has finally arrived, and few of us are preparing for holidays or cottage outings. The YURA office has been closed since mid-March, although we have continued to monitor YURA email and telephone messages from the homes of our volunteers.

The Executive Committee has met only once so far in 2020, on February 18. At that time, we were busy making plans for our June 9 trip to Stratford, and unfortunately that had to be cancelled. We are still hoping that we can go ahead with our September 29 trip to the Shaw Festival to see *Gypsy*. Watch for announcements on our email list or check our web page for further details.

Our YURA officers have continued to meet through zoom, and the YURA Executive Committee will have a zoom meeting on June 16. Our Events sub-committee is continuing to work on plans for outings or virtual get-togethers. If you have ideas for visits that YURA could organize for our members, especially during this period of limited contact, please send an email to YURA@yorku.ca.

Our annual membership renewal drive, which normally begins about now, will be delayed a few weeks until we have easier access to university facilities.

YURA's major fund-raiser for 2020 will be our participation in the 5 km walk/run in the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon Charity Challenge on Sunday, October 18. YURA has been approved as an official charity, and we are now listed on the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon Charity Challenge web site. Whether we can participate in the charity challenge in downtown Toronto on October 18, or whether we will be participating in a substitute activity, we will definitely be fundraising for the YURA graduate scholarship through the Charity Challenge. In 2019, eight YURA members walked five km, had a great time, and raised nearly \$12,000 for YURA graduate awards. In 2020, our goal is to raise at least \$20,000. To do this, we will need 20 team members who will walk and raise

donations. Please consider this event and participate if you are able. We expect that it will be possible for our walkers/runners to begin registering to participate in two or three weeks. If you would like to register or would like more information about how this fund-raiser works, please contact one of our co-champions for the event: Ian Greene at igreene@yorku.ca or 416-571- 8742 or Peter Victor at peter@pvictor.com. It is important for you to contact one of us as soon as possible.

As many of you know, in May York University was the victim of a cyber attack, and all passwords had to be changed. We received many inquiries from our members about how to restore their email. If you have trouble with your York email in the future, this is what you should do:

1. Send an email from your alternate email address (your mail/hotmail/yahoo/etc. personal email address) to askit@yorku.ca.
2. Include the @yorku.ca email account that you are trying to access, and a phone number that University Information Technology can reach you at.

We would also like to remind our members with York email addresses to switch to Outlook as soon as possible, if you haven't already. The problem with the older email systems at York is that it is no longer possible to get replacement parts for their servers, and at some point, perhaps soon, they will stop working. If you haven't yet switched to Outlook, send an email to askit@yorku.ca with your phone number and your York University email address stating that you need help to switch to Outlook. You will receive a reply with further instructions.

The YURA Annual General Meeting will take place on Friday, October 30, whether it is in-person or by zoom. Please put it on your calendar now. We will send out an announcement about the guest speaker once the speaker is confirmed.

We greatly appreciate of all the amazing work that Anne-Marie Ambert puts into both the Newsletter and the Person-to-Person as our Editor. Her contribution to YURA is extensive, and we thank her on behalf of all our members for her wonderful contribution to the Association. Another person we wish to acknowledge in the report is our Human Resource support person, Teresa Hunter. She will continue to collect our mail and support our membership renewal process. Thank you, Teresa.

We are grateful for the help of the volunteers in our office during the first part of 2020, and we hope that our office at 101 Central Square will reopen again in late August with their help. John Lennox has helped on Tuesdays, Agnes Fraser on Wednesdays, and Sara Kozlowski on Thursdays. If you would like to volunteer in our office once the university re-opens or would like more information about what our volunteer needs are, please let us know.

Through the summer we will be processing membership renewals and welcoming new members. We will answer the yura@yorku.ca email throughout the summer.

On behalf of the Executive we wish that your summer will be as happy and safe as possible, and we look forward to working with you and for you again in the fall.

--**Charmaine Courtis** and **Ian Greene**, Co-Presidents

Biographical Notes

We do not generally write biographical notes when new members join the Executive Committee. However, after reading the description of what Sheelagh Atkinson and Angus Anderson were doing before they retired, I felt that I had learned about interesting aspects, not only of their work lives, but of some of the things that go on behind the scene that make York work smoothly. Therefore, below, Shelagh and Angus share with us aspects of “York works” ...and we thank them both.

SHEELAGH ATKINSON

A proud York staff member and alumna, I worked at the University for 30 years. I began in Housing and was quickly moved to Hospitality York (the “Conference Centre”) once my background in the hotel and travel industry became known. From conferences and meetings, I moved on to manage Convocation at Student Affairs, then the Office of the President.

Convocation moved around and reported to various areas, until it eventually lived under the VP Advancement portfolio, where I consolidated all University events and ceremonies at the request of then-president, Dr. Mamdouh Shoukri.

During my time, convocation was centralized and many efficiencies and changes were achieved, including a number of ‘green practices’ and technology that allowed for the highlighting and celebration of each student as they crossed the stage.

After many years, I am pleased to report that the University now holds a ‘new student convocation ceremony’ that welcomes first-year frosh into the academy, thus bookending their academic experience with tradition and ceremony.

I am still a firm believer in Convocation as the single most important event the University holds and as the gateway for students becoming alumni and lifelong members of the York community.

ANGUS ANDERSON

I joined York in 1998 on a contract as an assistant in the President's office and was eventually offered a full-time position as Coordinator, Special Events, a job that I was lucky enough to do for three Presidents until my retirement in 2018.

My roles included working on Convocation which was one of the great pleasures of the job, seeing all the graduates and their families on what was such a proud day for them.

York's campuses have both grown enormously since I started, including the subway finally arriving at the main campus. Apart from working on the official opening, I did get to ride it to work for my last eight months at York, though I didn't take the last 196 bus trip from Downsview which I heard was a lot of fun!

That said, we also did many ground-breaking ceremonies and government announcements which meant working and planning with people from all departments, which makes you realize how many dedicated people work at York. I'm pleased to say this team work was one of the best parts of my job. I also took part in organizing many events like the Staff Recognition Awards, Retirees' Lunch, Bryden Awards, and the Chancellor's Convocation "Thank You" Reception. It was great to see colleagues recognized by the University.

Lastly, I worked on some of the events for the United Way. So all in all, I'm a proud "Yorkie", a term that I think was minted for the York Circle events.

IN MEMORIAM:

GEORGE FLOYD

Below are the last words of George Floyd, the 46-year-old man who died as a US police officer pinned him down, kneeling on his neck for almost nine minutes, including two minutes after he had no pulse:

**"It's my face man
I didn't do nothing serious man
please please
please I can't breathe
please man
please somebody
please man
I can't breathe
I can't breathe
please
(inaudible)**

**man can't breathe, my face
just get up
I can't breathe
lease, a knee on my neck
I can't breathe
shit
I will
I can't move
mama
mama
I can't
my knee
my neck
I'm through
I'm through
I'm claustrophobic
my stomach hurt
my neck hurts
everything hurts
some water or something
please please
I can't breathe officer
don't kill me
they're gonna kill me, man
come on man
I cannot breathe
I cannot breathe
they're gonna kill me
they're gonna kill me
I can't breathe
I can't breathe
please sir
please please
please I can't breathe"**

Then his eyes shut and the pleas stop. George Floyd was pronounced dead shortly after.

Life As It Was Back then: Reminiscence

Our 30th Reminiscence is authored by David Leyton-Brown. Before retiring in 2018, David was Professor of Political Science (Politics) and Head (Master) of McLaughlin College. He has written for us, "Growing Up in Regina: A Reminiscence."

I grew up in Regina, Saskatchewan, in the 1950's and early 1960's. It was a wonderful place, and time, to be young. Though many of the things we take for granted today had not even been thought of, we didn't miss what we didn't know about, and we greatly enjoyed a smaller, simpler community. Young people today would no doubt think we were deprived – technologically, materially and culturally – but it was not only normal for the time; it was a great childhood.

I can remember a time before television. When the first TV station opened in Regina, only one house on our block had a TV. They were kind enough to allow several neighborhood children to come to their house once a week - to watch Disney. And if I remember correctly, they didn't even watch with us (they were in another room eating supper). When my family got a TV, there were two channels we could watch, both black and white of course, which forced us to choose which to see. A lot of the programming was old black and white movies, both British and American.

Every house that I can remember had an outdoor clothes line, and a vegetable garden. If not for those gardens our diet would have included very little fresh produce, because the selection in the grocery stores was very limited, and varied by seasonal availability. I can remember the exciting announcements on the local radio stations each fall when the first trainload of "BC apples" arrived in town, and the next day in the grocery stores.

Schools were very traditional in design, operation and curriculum. In my elementary school there were separate boys' and girls' entrances, and playgrounds. Classrooms were laid out with parallel rows of desks (and at least in the early grades with girls' rows and boys' rows). All students covered the same material, at the same pace. We started every morning singing the national anthem, "God Save the Queen", to a musical accompaniment played over the P.A. system.

After school, we were free to travel around town and play unsupervised. We walked to and from

school (no school buses in the city), and I cannot remember a parent ever escorting a child to school or picking them up afterwards – until high school when we were taking driving lessons, and some parents arrived at the school with the family car to provide driving practice on the way home. If I had an organized activity, like a weekly music lesson, or swimming lessons at the YMCA, or cubs and scouts, I got myself there and back by bike, or in the winter by bus. But most activity was not organized – we simply went out to play, and were expected home by some specified time, for supper, chores, homework, bedtime, etc.

Things were very little different in high school. I lived an exact mile from my school, and travelled to and from by bike in the fall and spring. In the winter I walked a couple of blocks to a main street, and then straight along that street to the school, along with dozens and dozens of other students. Passing cars would stop and pick us up – we didn't even try to thumb a ride! It was very rare that I would walk all the way to school (but coming home after school was a different story, because we were not travelling at "rush hour"). There were a lot more school-related after-school activities in high school – sports teams, clubs, music and drama productions, student government, student newspaper, etc. High school football games were played in Taylor Field, where the Roughriders (the pride of Saskatchewan) practiced and played.

Throughout high school I aspired to go to McGill. Looking back, it is remarkable how certain universities had almost "colonized" the secondary school systems of much of Western Canada. In Regina, every top student, and their teachers and parents, wanted to earn a scholarship to McGill. Second best would be a scholarship to Queen's. And if you couldn't get either you would just stay at the University of Saskatchewan (no U of T, UBC, etc.). But that was in Regina. I am told that in Saskatoon, no one would ever go to McGill. Their first goal was a scholarship to Queen's, with a second choice being a scholarship to the U of T. And if neither, then stay at the University of

Saskatchewan. Well, I got my scholarship to McGill, along with about 20 other top students from Regina high schools (one of my classmates surprised and amazed us all by choosing to go to the University of Alberta – no one had ever heard of such a thing! But he wanted to become a veterinarian). This amounted to a major brain drain year after year, for as long as that set of expectations prevailed, since many of those students (including me) never returned to live and work in Saskatchewan. Of course, it did come to an end – when my brother finished high school five years later there were not the same unanimous expectations and social pressures.

So I set out for Montreal on the train. At that time the 40-hour train trip from Regina to Montreal, with a sleeping berth and meals in the dining car, cost about one half of the comparable airfare. So the eastbound trains were filled with Western Canadian students going to eastern universities (remember the colonization of the high school systems), as were the trains at the start and end of the Christmas holiday, and the westbound trains after final exams at year end. It was like a two-day party, with a seat in the dome car being particularly coveted. I remember a group of a half-dozen or so of us sitting on opposite upper berths, with our legs across the aisle and covered by a blanket, using the surface as a card table to play hearts (and unless my memory of the event has grown rosier over the years, other passengers thought it was a cute idea as they ducked underneath). All good things do come to an end, however. Train fares went up as airfares went down, and the trains became primarily freight movers rather than passenger movers.

–David Leyton-Brown

GUESS WHO?



(Contributed by Rosemarie Nielsen)

TIME-SENSITIVE READINGS

MAiD Legislation at a Crossroads: Persons with Mental Disorders as Their Sole Underlying Medical Condition

Interesting article from the *Institute for Research on Social Policy*

<https://tinyurl.com/y93tpzlk>

The Regulation of Long-Term Care Homes In Ontario

This is an interesting dissertation written by Poland Lai, a graduate student at our Osgood Hall Law School. Part of this doctoral research will be published as a chapter in a book called *Aging/Disability Nexus*, Edited by Katie Aubrecht, Christine Kelly, and Carla Rice, and to be published by the UBC (University of British Columbia Press, 2020).

<https://yorkspace.library.yorku.ca/xmlui/handle/10315/37486?show=full>

EPIDEMICS AMONG THE ALGONQUINS

In covid-19 times, it is pertinent to read this article which relates how the Algonquins went through waves of epidemics throughout the decades.

<https://newsinteractives.cbc.ca/longform/algonquin-epidemics>

TRAVELOGUE

Seven Weeks before the Mast

Part 1: Two and a half weeks to St. Helen Island

By **Jamie Savage**

The following is an account of a 2012 sailing trip from Cape Town RSA to the Azores (Portugal). This trip entailed 7 weeks at sea with two stops. I was part of the guest crew on the 100-year-old, three-masted, square-rigged Bark Europa. All information about the ship and the various trips you can take (highly recommended!!) can be found at www.barkeuropa.com. She is a Dutch registered ship and crew members come from all over the world. The record of this voyage is an assembly (some edited) of numerous emails I sent to my wife while underway. *Additional comments are encased in asterisks (**).*

May 1, 2012

Well, the sun finally broke out today in Cape Town and the ship was open for public access, so I stopped by. Fortunately, there are only 15 or so guest crew (out of a possible 45) going on this trip....so that means a lot more elbow room for the rest of us. I had been concerned about bringing too much stuff but, apparently, every rookie does that and there will be a lot of extra room to store it.

There are other Canadians on board, Jackie from Nova Scotia, who is part of the permanent crew and Tracy from Kleinburg, Ontario who is a guest crew member like me. The members of the permanent crew that I spoke with were exactly as I expected, young free spirits living an adventurous stress-free life all barefoot and tanned. I board in two hours, there is an orientation meeting, dinner etc. this evening. Apparently we cast off at 7AM tomorrow but we have to motor over and do 'some bunkering'...i.e....fill up the tanks with diesel fuel for the engines...which will take a couple of hours...so we'll be setting sail sometime before noon I expect. I hope the weather holds as it is beautiful here today.

May 4, 2012 Title: **we're off!**

A bit of a rough start, we had to motor for the first two days as we were straight into the wind. I was seasick as this old girl really likes to roll when using the engines only. We are under sail now so she's much more stable. Three of us in a cabin for six so lots of room. Doing 2 x 6 hour watches a day...0200-0800 (2AM-8AM) and 1400-2000 (2PM-8PM). Saw the moon go down and the sun come up...clear sky, the milky way like never before, the southern cross and the Clouds of Magellan which just look like smudges in the sky but are actually galaxies. Albatross and seals so far, it's a beautiful day so lunch outside on the main deck.....later.....J

**A square rigger has to sail with the wind mostly from behind. It cannot tack close to the wind like schooners etc. so we had to motor due west for a few days to catch the northerly trade winds. It was a gorgeous sunny day when we motored out of Cape Town. I was standing beside the helm enjoying the sunshine and pitching and rolling of the ship. We were right off of Robben Island

(where Mandela was imprisoned) when it hit me!
Wow, all of sudden I just did not feel right. I emerged from my bunk three days later!**

May 6, 2012 Title: **getting close to St. Helena**
It took me 3 days but I'm now over being seasick. The proper "hurling" method is to lean out over the side rail, face downwind and hang on to your hat and glasses....I became an expert quite quickly. We've been holding the same course for a few days now as we're in the trade winds and are heading NNW to St. Helena Island. We have had a tail wind for a few days and have not had to touch the sails much. We're making 6-8 knots which makes the Captain content. We are alone here...no other ships



The Bark Europa

save one on the 3rd day. Modern shipping do not use this route so it's our ocean. The weather has been good....sunny days and clear nights. The captain estimates that we'll be in St. Helena on the 16th. We are currently a few hundred miles off the coast of Namibia....sounds kind of exotic. Not much changes from day to day at the moment as we are into our routines.....all is well.....J

While seasick I tried to be a trooper and show up for my first watch. Fortunately, most of the work is involved with setting, adjusting and taking in the sails. My watch mates decided, as we were motoring, they could do without me while commenting on the colour of my face. So, they sent me back down to my bunk with no argument from me

Commercial shipping always takes the shortest route from A to B to save time, fuel and money so there is no one going south-to-north out in the middle of the South Atlantic but us

May 9, 2012 Title: **sailing along**
We've been at sea a week now and have been spoiled by beautiful weather...sunny days and clear nights...however, not much wind so we've been motoring for the last day or two...hoping to get some wind tonight. We've seen sea turtles and dolphins but not much else...still no other ships. We're still on schedule to be in St. Helena Island on the 16th.
We've been given the night off so it's party time in the deck house. We're changing watches so my watch will be from 0800-1400 (8AM-2PM) and 2000-0200 (8PM-2AM) and we're crossing a time zone tonight. Air and water temps are rising daily. Did some scraping and sanding today between watches, varnishing tomorrow, the time seems to just float by.....that's it for now...J

we have a daily meeting where Captain Harko (Netherlands) lays the chart on top of the ships capstan and updates us on our position, nautical miles covered in the previous 24 hours and estimated arrival at our next destination. With light winds and motoring it's somewhat disappointing to hear that we only covered 100+ miles in the previous 24 hours. It feels like we're never going to get anywhere!

May 12, 2012
I've still not gotten used to how long it takes to get anywhere, we're still 4 days away from St. Helena. However, the weather is still beautiful. Spent an hour yesterday in the netting hanging off the jibboom (the pointy stick thing up front)...a beautiful place to spend some time and watch the occasional dolphin riding our bow wave. Went aloft to the 1st platform, called the fighting platform, and spent a while there.
Started to go up to the 2nd platform but the rolling of the ship and the twisting of the stay/rope ladder helped me decide to do it another day...i.e...small steps. Finally saw another ship last night.....we're not alone! We've been trolling 2 fishing lines daily

behind the ship for 800 miles....nothing yet...hhmmmm???.talk to you later.....J

May 14, 2012 Title: **two weeks gone by**

Two weeks and 1500-ish nautical miles have passed by and we'll be anchoring off Jamestown on St. Helena Island tomorrow sometime. We've all placed bets on when land will be first sighted. We've seen lots of flying fish and they are attracted to the ship lights at night so a few of them fly on to the deck and we have to throw them back. Jacques, a videographer from South Africa is making a movie of this voyage...filming and interviewing us etc....should be interesting. We're still running with the wind but it is coming from starboard a bit so we have stay sails and the Spanker set so it's reduced a lot of the roll. Looking forward to the change of scene on St. Helena.

May 17, 2012 1:30 PM Title: **St. Helena Island**

We all anticipated spotting St. Helena on the horizon and it suddenly appeared out of the haze just like King Kong's island in the movie. It's a volcanic island with very steep shorelines and absolutely no beaches. It is a British Overseas Territory with 42 square miles of ups and downs...no level ground anywhere. 3000+ inhabitants all who wave and say hello without exception. We took a tour around the island in a 1929 Chevrolet bus. Visited Napoleon's residences and his tomb (his body was moved to France 19 years after he died). Palm trees, cacti, volcanic rock and impressive vistas. Saw Jonathan, a 130-year-old giant tortoise (imported from the Galapagos) at the Governor's House. We climbed Jacobs's ladder which is a steep concrete staircase that goes up a cliff from the town to an old fort at the top. 699 steps, 924 feet up. Glad I did it but my legs are going to pay for it tomorrow. We're swimming off the anchored ship and the water is beautiful but we must be aware of the current. Tried out my underwater camera and got some cool shots of the ships propellers. Went into Jamestown several times...had a few too many one night...incriminating photos exist. I really like it here.

We've had a real downer...my bunkmate Gert-Jan (Netherlands) has suffered 3 strokes in the last 36

hours. He is in the local hospital with serious paralysis, but they have limited resources. The decision is made to send him to Cape Town. There is no airport here so he will hopefully go on the next mail ship which arrives in 3 days and the trip to Cape Town takes another 5 days. I now realize how remote we are. We cannot leave until all his arrangements are settled so we may be here an extra day. We are all truly bummed out about this.

Napoleon escaped from the Island of Elba off the coast of Italy where he was first imprisoned, so the British figured they better send him somewhere really remote. His "prison" was a fair sized manor complete with servants.

Gert-Jan suffered his first stroke around dinner time. Fortunately(?) it did not occur a few hours earlier as he was aloft furling the sails and it would have been a delicate operation to get him down. The local hospital (circa 1980's ?) did all they could and now wanted to discharge him. Harko (Netherlands), on his first voyage as Captain, had to deal with the hospital, local government, health insurance companies and the British and South African Navies to try and figure out what was best for Gert-Jan. It was decided that he had to go back to Cape Town. St. Helena had no airport (they do now) and it is out of helicopter airlift range so he had to wait for the mail ship. Some of the guest crew had only signed on from Cape Town to St. Helena so they would go back on the mail ship with him so that made us feel a little better. He finally received the care he needed 9 days after his stroke!...when time is of the essence.

May 21, 2012 Title: **leaving St. Helena**

We weighed anchor around 7PM and after 5 hours of sailing I could still see the lights on the 1000+ foot cliffs of St. Helena (and Gert-Jan) behind us. We are now seeing the glowing of plankton in the water at night. When they are disturbed by the ships passing they glow like fireflies in the water for a few seconds. Just a few here and there but when we got into more plankton rich waters they appear like glowing clouds...kinda cool. We caught a 10 lb yellow stripe tuna yesterday...lunch doesn't get much fresher. Spike

(Australia), the bos'n, when gutting the fish, took the heart out and we watched it still beating for almost 10 minutes...creepy! Ostrich meat loaf for dinner....pretty good. Watched a sailing documentary on the main deck under the stars complete with popcorn. Starting to notice the sun is getting pretty hot...water temp is 26c. I painted the bottle screws for the starboard stays on the jibboom. (The things that attach the cables to the pointy stick at the front of the ship)....hot work, was really contemplating going overboard. We did a man-overboard-drill today...had the ship stopped, zodiac deployed and rescued the crew-member (Lucie from France) in less than 10 minutes. Encouraging news about Gert-Jan....he is able to stand and is working on moving around with a walker and his speech has improved. He's now on the mail ship back to Cape Town. There is absolutely no wind today so we're running on the starboard engine in order to get to Ascension Island on the 23rd. There's a pin-rail race tomorrow.... gotta study but I'm not sure it's going to help.

**The are many pin locations around the ship.

Subtle changes in the sails shapes and deployment can be achieved by fastening the lines from the sails (sheets, clews, bunts halyards etc.) to the numerous pins arranged in rails around the ship. **THERE IS NOTHING ON A SHIP CALLED A ROPE!** The race entails a member from each team, with one hand on the capstan, being told what pin location or line to grab etc. and then the race is on to see who gets there first. The pins resemble rolling pins used for baking**

The text: 'Spent an hour yesterday in the netting hanging off the jibboom' (the pointy stick thing up front).' is shown in this video link.

<https://youtu.be/SxXMfiYY3HM>

Link to the photos of Cape Town.

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/8dEo1AJeNuFFxErbA>

Link to photos of St. Helena Island.

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/aaM9gWVDnAhYKBE8>

Link to photos of life on board referenced in this text.

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/azS6xeD5YnE4zox17>

To be continued.

UNEXPECTED LITERATURE

I am rereading a few old books. I wanted to share with you the glory of the following extract that particularly amused me. It's one of the pungent pages from James Herriot's "All creatures great and small" describing the first two years of his career as a veterinarian, probably in the years 1936-38, in the deep North Yorkshire countryside. Published in 1970. The situation described below is an "eversion of the uterus in a cow." (Anne-Marie)

"It happens when a cow, after calving, continues to strain until it pushes the entire uterus out and it hangs down as far as the animal's hocks. It is a vast organ and desperately difficult to replace, mainly because the cow, having once got rid of it, doesn't want it back. [...] The patient, a very fat shorthorn, was lying, quite unconcerned in her stall. Behind her, a bloody mass of uterus, afterbirth, muck and straw" [... After an epidural.] "I removed the afterbirth, cleaned the uterus and placed it on a clean sheet held by the farmer and his brother." [His assistant, Tristan, and he took off their shirts and put sacks around their waists] "and gathered the uterus in our arms.

It was badly engorged and swollen and it took us an hour to get it back. There was a long spell at the beginning when we made no progress at all and the whole idea of pushing the enormous organ through a small hole seemed ludicrous, like trying to thread a needle with a sausage. Then there were a few minutes when we thought we were doing famously only to discover that we were feeding the thing down a tear in the sheet (Siegfried once told me that he had spent half a morning trying to stuff a uterus in a cow's rectum. What really worried him, he said, is that he nearly succeeded) and, at the end, when hope was fading, there was the blissful

moment when the whole thing began to slip inside and incredibly disappeared from sight.

[...] Tristan's cheeks were prettily patterned where a spouting artery had sprayed him. [...] Lathering myself in the bucket and feeling the ache in my shoulders and back The cow, chewing contentedly at a mouthful of hay, had come best out of the affair."

GOOD READS

David Baldacci. 2019. *A Minute to Midnight*. NY: Grand Central Publ. (available in the TO public libraries.)

This is the second of Baldacci's books about fictive FBI agents Atlee Pine. Agent Pine is stationed in Shattered Rock, Arizona, the closest town to the Grand Canyon, in a one-agent office with her very experienced assistant, sixty-year-old Carol Blum. Pine is given an extended leave to travel deep into Georgia to finally return to the home she left 30 years ago in order to try to find some answers about the kidnap and possible murder of her then six-year-old twin sister when they were both left home alone one night by their parents.

She and Carol drive all the way and settle in the village's inn where they begin to make contact with the few persons remaining from her past. As if by coincidence, bizarre serial murders begin occurring and are somewhat enmeshed with some of the persons who were the only ones to know her parents long ago. The two women are joined by a former FBI colleague of Pine and a Georgia detective in their attempt to solve the murders and prevent additional ones from occurring. This page-turner nicely blends detective/intelligence investigative work with action and with familial as well as personal dramas. The difficulties of being a female FBI agent are also highlighted. The ending takes a totally unexpected turn. —**Anne-Marie Ambert**

HUMOUR

"**Lexophile**" is a word used to describe those who love using words in rather unique ways, such as "you can tune a piano, but you can't tuna fish," or "to write with a broken pencil is pointless." Below are the results of a competition held every year.

When fish are in schools, they sometimes take debate.

A thief who stole a calendar got twelve months.

When the smog lifts in Los Angeles U.C.L.A.

The batteries were given out free of charge.

A dentist and a manicurist married. They fought tooth and nail.

A will is a dead giveaway.

When you've seen one shopping Center you've seen a mall.

Police were called to a day care Center where a three-year-old was resisting a rest.

Did you hear about the fellow whose whole left side was cut off? He's all right now.

A bicycle can't stand alone; it is two-tired.

The guy who fell onto an upholstery machine is now fully recovered.

He had a photographic memory which was never developed.

When she saw her first strands of gray hair she thought she'd dye.

Acupuncture is a jab well done. That's the point of it.

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