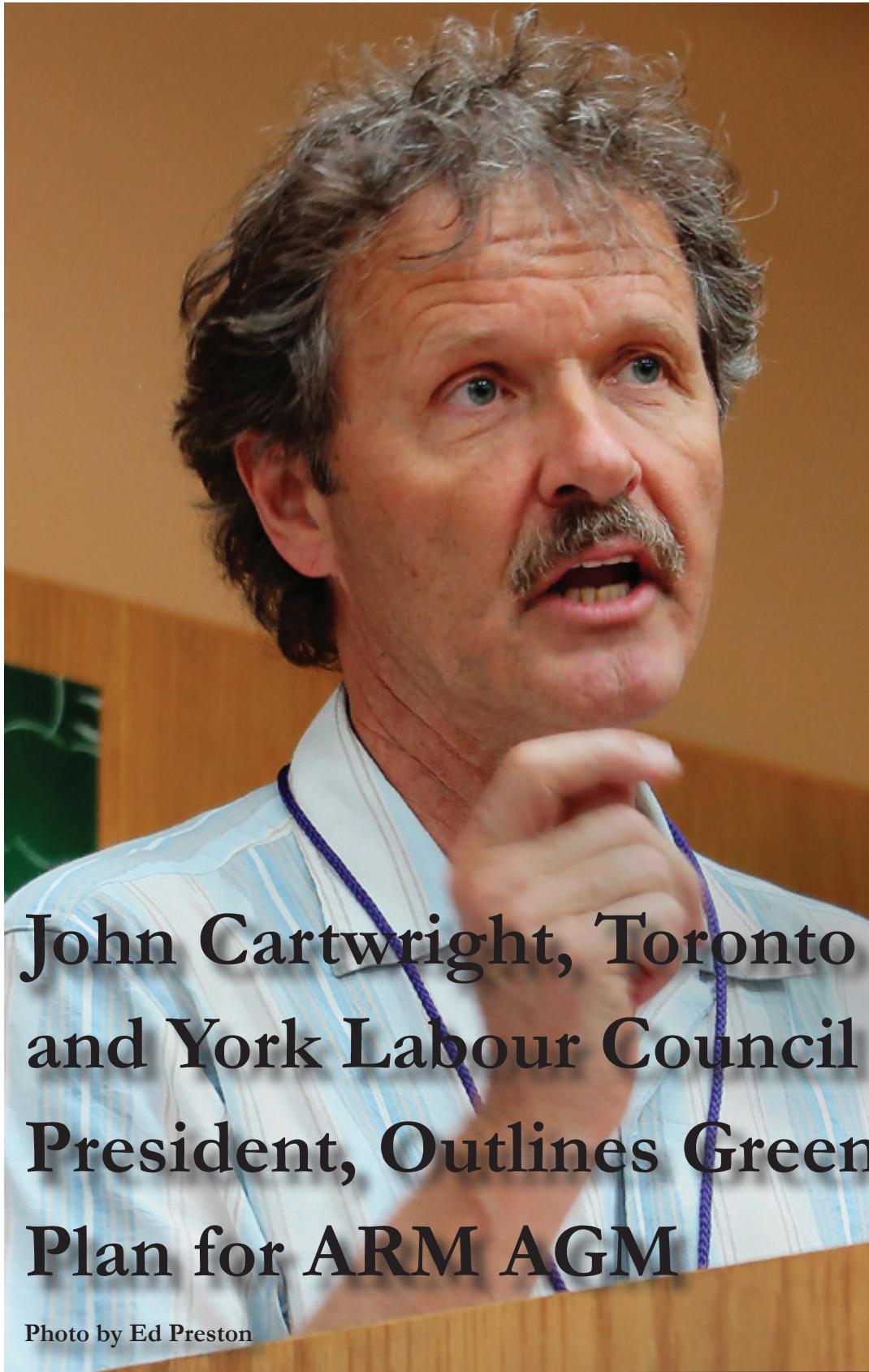


After School

armchapter12.org

Volume 18, Issue 3, August, 2016



**John Cartwright, Toronto
and York Labour Council
President, Outlines Green
Plan for ARM AGM**

Photo by Ed Preston

In this issue

Calendar . . . 3

*Presidential Perspective
. . . 4-5*

ARM AGM . . . 6-7

*Curmudgeon's Corner
. . . 8*

Economics . . . 9

Great Pubs . . . 10

Considered . . . 14-15

*Nomadic retiree . . . 16-
19*

Stratford . . . 20

Editorial Chatter

This issue is the Travel Issue: we have two travel articles, Cyprus and Mexico accompanied by the fine photography of authors Cyndie Jacobs and Michelle Barraclough.

Charlie Hawkes reports on our Annual General Meeting; we look forward to an article from keynoter John Cartwright in an upcoming issue.

Both Paul Rook and Karma Naike report on their experiences at Stratford this year, the fourteenth ARM C12 excursion to the theatres by the Avon.

Paul Rook also explores the boiling frog lesson in his Cormudgeon's Corner this issue. As always, his thoughts are perceptive and, well, curmudgeonly.

President Manfred Netzel looks at the issues that

need attention in this between-elections period.

Dave Gracey reminds us of the negative impact of free trade on Canada and the looming dangers of the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Allan Hux takes us on another pub tour at the Gull and Firkin in the Beach area.

David Schreiber brings us another insightful review: *Thomas Jefferson and the Tripoli Pirates: The Forgotten War That Changed American History*.

Finally, we feature another photo by photographer Ed Preston on the cover as well as a shot of our treasurer, Michelle Barraclough, in the Annual General Meeting story. A welcome addition to our pages.

You Are Invited

After School needs articles, photos, drawings, poems, other works of art, opinions

Please feel free to share your ideas, art, and experiences with other ARM Chapter 12 members.

Submit your work to editor Neil Walker, nwal.42@gmail.com

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After School Volume 18, Issue 3, August 2016

After School is the official publication of Active Retired Members of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, Chapter 12 Toronto (ARM C12)

Opinions expressed in *After School* are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policies of ARM Chapter 12 or of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation.

Submissions are always welcome but will not be returned. All submissions are subject to editing for length and style while respecting the author's intentions.

Editorial Team: Larry French, Cyndie Jacobs, Manfred Netzel, Ed Preston, Paul Rook, Neil Walker

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Calendar

Monday, September 5, 2016. Labour Day Parade. 9:00 am. Look for the OSSTF banners near Queen and University.

Wednesday, September 14, 2016. Annual Fall Swing For Kids Golf Tournament. Challenge Course at Rolling Hills Golf Course, 9:30 am Registration, 10:00 am, Shotgun tee off. Cost: \$70 includes 18 holes of golf, cart for two, BBQ luncheon including choice of meats, three salads, vegetable plate, assorted cookies, coffee or tea, taxes, gratuities and prizes. Proceeds of a 50/50 raffle and a silent auction are donated to 15 or more children's charities across Toronto. Send \$70 per golfer, by cheque, to Jim Loftus, 301-7 Roanoke Rd, Toronto, ON M3A 1E3. Cheques should be mailed by September 9, 2015 and made payable to ARM C12 Golf Tournament, c/o Jim Loftus, Coordinator. Call Jim Loftus for further information, 416-447-0811.

Wednesday, September 21, 2016. Islamophobia: What it is, how it happens, how to handle it.

Mohammed Hashim, Organizer working with the Toronto and York Labour Council, worker with Islamic youth.. Registration 10:00 am. Session begins at 10:30 am. Lunch to follow (\$18). OSSTF Provincial Office, 60 Mobile Drive, North York. Confirm attendance with Jim Loftus, 416-447-0811.

Wednesday, September 28. 2016 Ripley's Aquarium of Canada Visit, 288 Bremner Blvd., Toronto, Ontario, M5V 3L9, (southeast of the CN Tower)

Meet at the front entrance at 10:30am. Admission: Group Rates (10+) Adults \$24.28+tax; Seniors (65+) \$15.28+tax (\$17.27) Confirm attendance with Millie Oliver 416-580-9992 by September 21, 2016.

Wednesday, October 19, 2016. The road from Paris: after a decade of inaction, it's time for Canada to lead. Speaker: former mayor, David Miller, now president and CEO, World Wildlife Fund (Canada). 10:30 am. OSSTF Provincial Office, 60 Mobile Drive, North York. Buffet lunch to follow. (\$18). Confirm attendance with Jim Loftus, 416-447-0811.

Wednesday, December 7, 2016. ARM's Annual Holiday Celebration at the Latvian Centre, 4 Credit Union Drive (adjacent to OSSTF Provincial Office, 60 Mobile Drive, North York). Confirm attendance with Jim Loftus 416-447-0811. Lunch includes turkey with all the trimmings, beverage choices, good company and live music to usher in the spirit of the season.

Tuesdays, January 3 to March 14, 2017. Weekly Indoor Golf Training Sessions at Metro Dome. Two golf pros will coach 30 or so aspiring professionals in all aspects of the game. Fees are \$260 for all 10 weekly sessions and \$32.50 for each single session. Confirm your choice of 10 or single session participation with Jim Loftus at 416-447-0811 by Tuesday , December 20, 2016.

Keep up-to-date with ARM Chapter 12 events

**Check out newsletters and the calendar at
www.armchapter12.org**

Notify ARM and OSSTF of address and email changes

armchapter12@gmail.com

&

Giovanna Papatheodorou, 416 751-8300

No Election for the Next Two Years: Time for an Issues Debate

Innovative ideas deserve consideration to lead to societal reforms long overdue

BY MANFRED NETZEL, PRESIDENT, ARM CHAPTER 12

As you read this latest attempt to share my thoughts with the membership and friends of ARM Chapter 12, I hope that the incredible summer weather so far has found you either reveling in the heat and humidity or coping with same in some more comfortable and climate-controlled environment. In any case, enjoy the second half of the season with family and friends while traveling or in the confines of your own home or cottage.

In reviewing the past two Presidential Perspectives in the August issue of *After School*, our local ARM newsletter, I noticed that my main purpose in both 2014 and 2015 was to assess the key issues in upcoming elections (municipal and federal, respectively) and motivate the reader to become informed and get more involved for very specific reasons. Thankfully, that is not the case this time, so one can now focus on both ongoing issues and also take a more thoughtful look at some innovative ideas that could lead to societal reforms of benefit to us and our fellow citizens. Of course, the protracted political circus that is called the 2016 American presidential campaign will only accelerate over the next 100 days, so there will be another opportunity to comment on the results and their likely consequences for Canadians in the next issue of *After School* in November.

Somewhat surprisingly, the political honeymoon with Justin Trudeau and his Liberals has continued with Canadians and even more so internationally. Personal charisma aside, especially after the stolid mannerisms of his predecessor (what was his name?), the promise of significant policy changes and greater consultation with both the elected and unelected in political, economic and social leadership at all levels has shown some encouraging signs. Two areas of public policy that, I believe, have seen the most tangible action thus far are decisions related to First Nations' reconciliation and economic compensation, as well as the long-needed reform of the CPP. Although OSSTF has had a keen interest and active involvement in both issues at the senior level, we in Chapter 12 have also expressed support. We have done this through organizing a local presentation on the former topic with outstanding speakers and then also lobbying federal MPs on the need for CPP enhancement, both of which occurred in February.

The tentative federal-provincial agreement in early July that committed both levels of government to initiate the process of CPP reform and enhancement for Canadians born after the year 2000 was certainly welcome news. However, the general timidity and less than unanimous support of all the provinces still leaves the extent and speed of any improved pension implementation by 2018 in question. In fact, the Ontario PCs (backed by the small business lobby) recently raised objection to the costs related to the now-aborted Wynne Liberals' proposal for a provincial ORPP made in 2014, after the Feds agreed to initiate CPP reform. If the Tories' calculation of \$70 million is correct, it could be argued that using this as leverage to start the political process led by new Finance Minister Bill Morneau was likely worth the money when the future benefits for many now under-pensioned young Ontarians and Canadians is taken into account.

Of course, innovative and progressive policy ideas don't always result in timely actions as seen by the unfocussed and now apparently stalled Liberal campaign promise to reform the current voting system (aka first-past-the-post) in time for the next federal vote in 2019. The alternative systems ranged from preferential or ranked ballot, to one of full proportional representation, or some hybrid of one or the other. A parliamentary committee under the guidance of rookie Ontario-based Minister of Democratic Institutions, Maryam Monsef, seemingly had good intentions to reform our out-dated voting process to make it more democratic by better reflecting voters' preferences and, I hope, also increase future voter participation amongst the young and enhance smaller party representation in Ottawa. Once the composition of the committee was finalized in early June, after initial protests from the opposition parties, the work of the parliamentarians has been largely invisible due to the unease of many Canadians to change a fundamental political process and the subsequent musings about even introducing mandatory voting with related fines for not voting. As some voting reform advocates have said, if voting is a basic Charter right, then it should not be treated as an obligation or civic duty (such as paying taxes, jury duty, not littering or doing military service) and it is then incompatible

to punish someone for not exercising this right. Further, if we have made voting a privilege, then we have given up on the idea of being a democratic society. While I strongly support a reformed voting system in Canada as quickly as possible, I also want it done right and with full consultation by all Canadians.

Another example of bold and innovative thinking in Ontario, that perhaps will come to pass by the end of this decade, are two related public policy issues: a needed basic guaranteed income for all citizens and a comprehensive review of current provincial employment and labour laws. Both initiatives come from a stark realization that the rapidly changing labour market in the 21st century in Ontario and around the world is leading to a growing trend towards precarious work and inevitable higher levels of poverty for many in society, especially the young, women, the disabled and new immigrants and migrants.

In the first instance, Ontario has named a respected and progressive former Conservative senator, academic and vocal supporter of a conceptual basic income, Hugh Segal, to study and develop a discussion paper on creating a basic income pilot program for the province. Depending on the model proposed and levels of income support offered to lift people above the poverty line, everyone pays more to give a small number of very vulnerable fellow citizens more choice and more dignity. A quick calculation of such a system at the federal level could cost an estimated \$30 billion annually. In a recent referendum in Switzerland, voters rejected such a proposal because it was presented by opponents as costing up to 30% of the Swiss GDP. According to a senior economist at the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Armine Yalnizyan, a better and more universal solution might be to offer a model of basic services for all of us since these services (expanded dental/mental health, legal aid, recreation, child care, public transit and low-cost internet) would make income levels and free market forces less important.

For the second case, the recent release by the Ontario Ministry of Labour of an interim report on its so-called Changing Workplaces Review shows that “there is significant non-compliance with basic legal requirements” at more than 75 per cent of inspected places of employment across Ontario. According to the findings, provincial workplaces show:

- 84 per cent of precarious workers do not have an employer pension plan;
- 77 per cent of precarious workers have no medical benefits through their employer;
- 71 per cent of low-income workers are not paid for over-time work;

- 22 per cent of Ontario workers are not fully protected by employment laws due to legal exemptions of entitled rights like minimum wages and overtime pay;
- 14 per cent of private sector workplaces only are unionized.

According to provincial Minister of Labour Kevin Flynn, labour law enforcement is clearly not working and there are “massive gaps and loopholes” that law-breaking employers are exploiting against their employees due to current exemptions for at least 45 occupations regarding basic rights such as minimum wages and overtime pay. The Changing Workplace Review, originally due for release in the spring, is the first time that Ontario’s employment and labour laws have been examined at the same time, as part of the largest review of work ever conducted in the province in the opinion of the minister.

After further public input, the final report and its recommendations are now not expected until the end of 2016. Let’s hope that the result is worth the wait.

Unfortunately, it seems that our own City Council, under the leadership of John Tory, is still facing the same political gridlock around issues related to public transit, oversight of the Toronto Police Service, crumbling infrastructure and a ballooning debt ratio to revenue. Innovative ideas are constantly being proposed by individual and small collections of progressive-minded councillors, but the mayor and his executive committee seem to block these initiatives whenever possible. Of course, we now also have the newest situation where one of the 44 seats will again be filled by a kinder, gentler (and more gullible) member of the Ford clan, 22-year old former TDSB trustee, Michael Ford.

Meanwhile, at the TDSB, the opportunity to fill three vacancies through a resignation and two sudden deaths of the incumbents with several progressive thinkers fell short, as only one of the OSSTF-endorsed candidates, Chris Moise, was elected in Toronto Centre-Rosedale in late June. Unfortunately, both the other good candidates were then defeated in Etobicoke North and York Centre by-elections in July. Let’s hope that the ongoing contract troubles faced by our friends and colleagues in District 12 will soon be resolved with the addition of these new faces at the TDSB.

Finally, you will see from the calendar of events in this latest issue of *After School*, that your Chapter 12 Executive has already planned some events for this late summer and fall which you will find interesting and entertaining. Also remember to check our website and look for periodic email blasts between newsletters to keep you informed about all our events and activities. Enjoy the rest of your summer.

Chapter 12's Annual General Meeting

Keynoter John Cartwright, President, Toronto and York Labour Council, highlighted the green economy

BY CHARLES HAWKES



Treasurer Michelle Barraclough outlined ARM C12's expenses and income

Our chapter held its 17th annual general meeting on Wednesday, June 12, 2016 at OSSTF Provincial Office. Called to order by chairperson Paul Rook, the two-hour meeting saw executive reports, elections, greetings from federation representatives, and a keynote speaker.

Elections are held only for the positions of President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary in our chapter and all were uncontested. Manfred Netzel continues as president, along with Jim Loftus as one vice-president, joined now in that position by Neil Walker (who doubles as editor of After School). Michelle Barraclough stays as treasurer, along with Margaret McPhail as secretary. The complete list of nominated executive officers, and

members-at-large can be found at the front of this newsletter.

Domenic Bellissimo, political action director of OSSTF, gave a short talk on recent initiatives to support Pearson airport workers in their struggle with management, and the 'Fight for Fifteen' campaign for a provincial \$15 minimum wage. He described how other countries in the Americas, with whom the Federation has contact, are pushing a neo-liberal agenda in education, such as weakening teacher unions, reducing pay and pensions, and promoting merit pay based upon standardized testing.

In his address, President Manfred Netzel noted that ARM continues to attract new retirees, with over 4000 members organized into nine chapters throughout the province. (The newest chapter, Rainbow, is located in the Sudbury area). A major reason for ARM's appeal is the range of choice of health plans that OTIP offers retirees, and the freedom to switch between plans as



Chairperson and well-known author of this magazine's Curmudgeon's Corner kept the meeting moving smoothly and on time

individual circumstances change. As a side note, he stated that Chapter 12 will continue to increase the use of electronic communication, but for the foreseeable future, *After School* will continue to be distributed in print form. Special recognition was given to Eric Dempster's unstinting service over many years as treasurer and member of the executive.

Our keynote speaker was John Cartwright, President of the Toronto and York Labour Council that represents 205,000 union members in the Toronto area. Cartwright, a carpenter by trade, began by thanking a Scarborough history teacher (known to several of us) for inspiring his social conscience and encouraging him to become socially active. He described his early days as a young construction worker, when he first witnessed serious and preventable accidents, and unjust firings of his fellow workers. He came to realize that the role of unions is as much about health and safety, job security, and racial equality, and larger social issues, as it is about bargaining for better wages and benefits.

The main theme of his address was labour's role in the greening of the economy. How can job loss, the main concern of labour, be minimized? Cartwright approached this issue by describing how a real estate



Communications and Political Action Director Domenic Bellissimo told us of how rare Ontario is becoming in having a successful education system with teacher unions and public funding

collapse two decades ago in Toronto left thousands of construction workers facing unemployment. City and provincial governments came to the rescue with grants and tax breaks for green construction, retrofitting of private and public buildings to save energy, reduce pollution, and of course, save jobs.

Cartwright recounted his attendance along with 35 colleagues at the recent Paris climate change summit. Although the conference bound nations in the moral and ethical sense to reduce carbon emissions, it did not bind participants in any legal sense. As well, labour representatives failed to obtain a "just transition" clause that would bind governments to provide alternative employment for workers displaced by the shift to the green economy. Still, Cartwright remains optimistic that the path forward to a sustainable and green economy can be achieved if "right wing types" do not derail it.

Following Cartwright's stimulating talk, Paul and Manfred continued with the business part of the meeting. We received greetings from our benefits sponsors, OTIP, Teachers Life, and Educators Financial Group. Then, Chapter 12 executive and members at large gave short reports on the past year's activities, answered questions from the floor and engaged in some stimulating debate with attendees.

Exactly two hours from the call to order, the meeting was adjourned. Participants then streamed upstairs for a barbecue, libations, music and socializing to bring an end to our seventeenth AGM.



President Manfred Netzel thanks keynote speaker John Cartwright, president of the Toronto and York Region Labour Council. Look for an article from Cartwright in a future issue of *After School*



Boiling Frogs

Are politicians unable to think beyond the next election in four or five years?

BY PAUL ROOK

Our topic is boiling frogs and what we can learn from them. Don't worry; this is not turning into a column about cooking. Instead, we are going to begin by describing an experiment conducted by Friedrich Goltz in 1869. He discovered that if you throw a frog into boiling water it will leap out to save itself because the danger is so obvious. However, if a frog is put into water at a normal temperature which is then gradually heated to boiling the frog will remain in the water and die.

Before revealing how this relates to humans, I want to caution you not try this experiment at home. We now have the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Humane Societies and people with phones that take videos, which then go viral.

This experiment is used to explain the inability or unwillingness of humans to react to dangers that occur gradually. Yet when confronted by an immediate, serious danger we do react to save ourselves.

This summer provides a perfect example of how we react like the frog thrown into boiling water. Think of the Fort McMurray forest fire. Because the danger was so large, frightening, and immediate, people's fight or flight instinct came into play quickly. Residents fled to save their lives. People then came together to fight the fire. Fire fighters came from all over the world.

There are two other things to point out about this situation. Nobody attempted to deny there was a fire. How could you when it was on the news channels around the clock? Second, it was possible to resolve this problem quickly, though it may not have felt that way to the residents of Fort McMurray.

We also have an excellent example of humans refusing to be aware of, react to or even accept a threat that occurs gradually. The example I am referring to is climate change.

How appropriate. The world is heating up gradually just as the water around the frog was and just like the frog we have not acted fast enough to avoid the coming catastrophes. Most would accept that we are smarter than frogs, though I have my doubts. So why have we allowed climate change to reach a critical stage without doing much?

Part of the problem is that for years, many, including

scientists, denied it was occurring. Now why would this happen? Could it be because many of these people were associated with the fossil fuel industry, which would suffer greatly if immediate tough restrictions were put on this industry? See? It is easy to deny a danger that is developing gradually.

Other factors play into our inability to react quickly to climate change. The fire fighters already had the tools and practices to deal with a forest fire. We have had to create complex strategies to combat climate change, which must involve all countries and which initially are costly. Getting all countries to agree to anything takes a miracle. Could this be because politicians are afraid of the voters' reaction if they ask them to make sacrifices? Are politicians unable to think beyond the next election in four or five years? After years of studying and teaching politics, I know there is much truth to this.

Of course part of our inability to react is that many aspects of climate change don't seem to have an impact on us. So what if coral reefs are disappearing? I don't plan to visit them. Glaciers are disappearing but that doesn't impact on me! Actually glacier disappearance does, as the people in these areas start to migrate in massive numbers to areas where there is water and they can survive and grow food. We happen to live in one of those areas. Of course, people have to cross large oceans to get here so we can control the numbers for now, as we did with the Syrian refugees. However, one of the underlying causes of the revolt and wars in Syria was a prolonged period of drought. It wasn't just about a desire for democracy. It is interesting that this drought factor didn't get much mention in the media. Is this the case because democracy is a sexier topic? Or is it because some do not want us to know how bad things are becoming?

For 14 straight months, the world's temperature has increased. We are going through heat waves and drought-like conditions in southern Ontario. The Weather Network conducted an on the street poll asking people how they felt about the very warm dry summer that we are having. Almost everyone polled felt this was wonderful. Did the frog feel that way when the water was beginning to warm up before it reached the boiling stage?

Free Trade Folly

"Jobs, jobs, jobs" never materialized

BY DAVE GRACEY

The latest poll on NAFTA shows that 25 per cent are in favour, 25 per cent are opposed, and 50 per cent are undecided or indifferent. (*Toronto Star*, June 29/16)

It is surprising that the support for free trade is not stronger given the overwhelming propaganda emanating from the corporate media. We are constantly told that 'trade is good' and 'Canada is a trading nation', or, to use Marc Zwelling's phrase in his article "Canada Says Let's Make a Deal" in the *Bluffs Advocate* (Summer, 2016), "the importance of Canada being plugged into the global economy" – as if anyone was opposed to such platitudes. This is a classic example of what Noam Chomsky calls "manufacturing consent." But it has served well to divert attention from the real issues.

Has Canada benefitted from these deals? We have certainly increased our exports of raw materials, especially oil. However, our overall trade balance has deteriorated. Prior to free trade, Canada usually had a trade surplus. Our trade deficit in April was \$3.32 billion and in May \$3.28 billion – the two largest monthly trade deficits in our history. In January 2015, Bank of Canada governor Poloz "expressed confidence that the falling Canadian dollar ... would eventually fuel an export boom outside the energy sector" (*Globe and Mail*, July 7, 2016). It hasn't happened. The simple reason is that we don't have much of a manufacturing sector left to benefit from a low dollar. But don't expect the free traders to acknowledge that.

What about jobs? A group of U.S. researchers have found that the U.S. lost 2.2–2.4 million jobs to China alone between 1999 and 2011 (*Globe and Mail*, June 29, 2016). The overall job loss to Canada is estimated at 400,000. The TPP would certainly increase these numbers. Our automobile industry has been decimated. Parts and assembly plants have gone to Mexico, contributing to our \$10 billion trade deficit with that country. Imports have flooded in from South Korea and Japan, with no corresponding increase in our auto

exports to them.

The heart of these deals is investor protection, meaning protection for corporate profits. Corporations are permitted to sue governments if they pass laws that endanger corporate revenues. The case is heard by a tribunal established by the treaty, and the judgement cannot be challenged in a court. The treaty thus supersedes national laws and legislatures. Under NAFTA, Canada has been sued 39 times, fined \$190 million and is currently facing many more such challenges. The U.S. has also dealt with these, including one from Canada regarding their restrictions on our exports of softwood lumber, but to date have not paid a penny. Drug companies have received patent protection for their products, which have increased consumer costs and their revenues.

There is no doubt that we have benefited from lower consumer prices, though this is difficult to quantify. However we have lost thousands of good, well-paying jobs, and these have been replaced by temporary, contract, part-time, low-paying jobs. Corporate profits have risen but real wages have fallen and unemployment has increased. Tax revenues have fallen as corporations move production abroad. Inequality is on the rise as the corporate and financial elite rake in their ever increasing compensation packages.

I remember vividly how, in 1988, Prime Minister Mulroney promised unending prosperity and "jobs, jobs, jobs," and help for displaced workers, if we endorsed his free trade deal. It was all a lie, but it got him 40 per cent of the vote and a majority government.

Since then, the propaganda has been relentless. But the Brexit vote showed that many workers are no longer buying it. In the words of Professor Louis-Philippe Rochon (*Globe and Mail*, June 29, 2016), "when you kick around the working class for three decades, the working class eventually kicks back." It's happening in the U.S. and Europe. Can we be far behind?

The Gull and Firkin – a Fine Pub, a Pleasant Setting

1943 Queen Street East

BY ALLAN HUX

I would like to thank Trevor Owen for nominating The Gull and Firkin in the east end of Toronto. Neil Walker joined me on July 14 to share the ambiance and fare, and he kindly took the pictures that accompany this article.

The Gull and Firkin proved to be a fine pub in a pleasant setting in the Beaches although it violated one of my key criteria – it is not on or near a subway station. I took two subways and the Woodbine south bus and Neil took one subway and the same bus to get there so it is accessible by TTC. To refresh your memories, my remaining seven Pub criteria are: the brews, fare, service, atmosphere, design/layout/décor, price, and accessibility and I will address them in random order.

One of the most attractive features of the Gull is its large open-air seating on Queen Street which allows patrons to enjoy the outdoors. However, on July 14 at 5 pm, it was very warm and humid, and so I opted for the air-conditioning inside. I chose a table next to a large interior window overlooking the patio and facing north in a raised portion of the room with about five tables with seating for about twenty. This was a quieter part of the room where music and television noise did not interfere with our conversation as we debated provincial politics and bemoaned the American presidential race. Toward the back of the pub is a large bar on the west side with booths and tables opposite it and the ubiquitous TV set. There are several large, striking murals on the walls that are very attractive. Although the patio and interior are accessible, the raised part at the front and the washrooms downstairs are not.

The Gull offers the standard Firkin menu which is very colourfully laid out and offers many dining choices. The Gull had a wider range of brews and was promoting Butler's craft brew which was very refreshing as I waited for Neil. Our hostess, Crissy, was very accommodating and helped me sort through the menu items to avoid the onions. I resisted the temptation to order the standard fish and chips which looked very good and settled on the pub salad with chicken



Allan Hux and the standard Firkin menu

which was excellent. The portion was large and the ingredients were fresh. The cost was \$18 for the salad, \$5 for a Butler's brew and \$2.75 for a coffee plus HST which made it slightly over the \$25 target price. But I went ahead and had a second brew and I felt this was reasonable on my budget. In the end Neil was seduced (intrigued?) by the large picture of the shepherd's pie and after savouring the dish, observed that it was even tastier than the same fare at The Abbot Pub which he had sampled at the ARM 12 rendezvous on June 29th. Did you receive the email invitation to join this outing?

Karma Naike had proposed to the ARM 12 Executive that after each Pub column we arrange an outing for ARM 12 members to sample the fare and brews at the reviewed pub. Thank you to Karma, Rosemarie, Neil, Manfred, Roman and George for joining me at The Abbott on June 29th for a convivial lunch.

Be sure to mark your calendars for the next ARM 12 pub lunch. Neil and I are suggesting September 27 at 1 pm at The Gull and Firkin, 1943 Queen Street East, just east of Woodbine Avenue. Please email or phone Allan to confirm your presence. This sure beats playing bridge in the staff room in September! We hope to see you there.

Allan Hux allanhux@sympatico.ca 416.487.8255

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Labour Day Parade

2016

Monday, September 5, 9:15 am

**Meet at the OSSTF area near
Queen and University
early enough to get your OSSTF loot**

**Look for the ARM banner and
join your friends in ARM for the march along
Queen and down Dufferin to the CNE grounds**

**Make sure you get an admit-to-the-CNE bracelet
when you find the OSSTF gang**

Mythbuster: Does the type of car you buy affect your insurance rate?

Myth: The type of car you buy doesn't have an effect on your insurance rate.

Yes it does.

Fact: The Canadian Loss Experience Automobile Rating (CLEAR) system identifies the average size and frequency of insurance claims for most makes and models of cars. Most insurance companies use CLEAR to rate vehicles according to their safety record and the cost to repair or replace them, and may offer lower premiums to drivers who buy cars with better ratings.

For example, some vehicles may be more susceptible to theft than others; some may be better designed and less easily damaged; some are less expensive to repair; and some protect their occupants in collisions better than others.

We're here to help!

If you're considering buying a new car, talk to an OTIP insurance broker to find out how the type of car you choose will affect your insurance rates. One of our brokers would welcome the opportunity to find you the best coverage and value for your needs.

Call us today at 1-888-892-4935.

Helping your kids buy a home? Educate yourself first.

A study from the Canadian Association of Accredited Mortgage Professionals shows that 13% of a first-time homebuyer's down payment comes from family. As members of the education community, you have an advantage. Through its various lending channels, Educators Financial Group offers you and your family access to discounted rates. **Amedeo Perfetto, Regional Director with Educators**, says, "A lot of the mortgage questions that I get from educators are for their children. They do like to help out their kids in settling down."

Three lessons to learn BEFORE helping your kids buy a home:

1. It's not selfish to put yourself FIRST: If being generous now, means you won't have enough for your retirement or that you'll have to call on them for their financial support later, think twice. Your children will have the capacity to generate a paycheque long after you stop working.

2. Think about an early inheritance: It's called a 'living legacy', and it's becoming popular with baby boomers that have lived through some prosperous times. There are tax advantages to this practice, too. Gifting money in small amounts over a period of time can result in a smaller tax bill than the one that would be due upon your death. A tax advisor can tell you how this works.

3. Co-signing a loan—you are responsible: If you co-sign your child's mortgage, you would be liable for mortgage payments if your child defaulted. It may also impact your ability to borrow for your own needs.

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Considered

Thomas Jefferson and the Tripoli Pirates: The Forgotten War That Changed American History

By Brian Kilmeade; Don Yeager (2015).

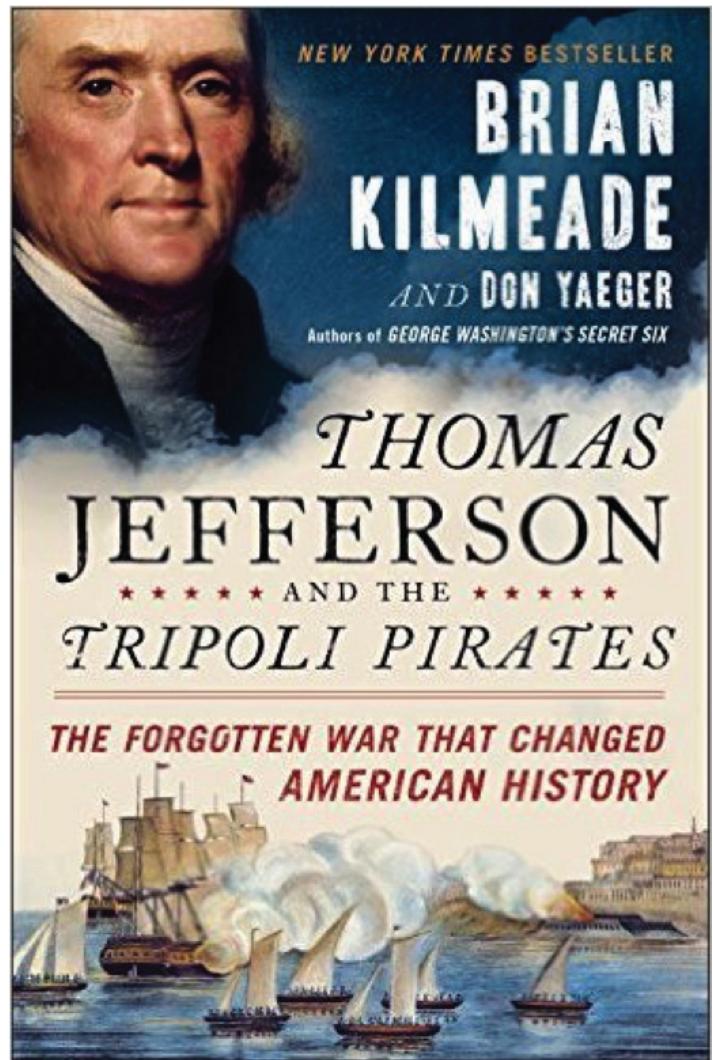
REVIEWED BY DAVID SCHREIBER

Before the United States won independence from Britain, pirates from the Barbary states (Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli) had a long history of depredations in the Mediterranean, beginning as far back as the era of the Crusades. In the sixteenth century, upon becoming part of the powerful Ottoman Empire, they expanded into the Atlantic, raiding not only shipping but even European coastal towns as far north as Iceland.

Plunder was not their greatest prize; more than anything, they sought captives, some to hold for ransom but most to sell into slavery in the Ottoman and Arab worlds. It is estimated that over one million Europeans were thus enslaved, some doomed to wretched lives as labourers, perhaps manning the oars of a pirate galley, some kept as house slaves, a lucky few given positions as high-level officials, while women, and especially young boys, were kept as sex slaves. The European powers never subdued the pirates or their political masters militarily, apparently finding it preferable to make annual tribute payments as well as putting up with periodic demands for luxury gifts, such as diamond-studded daggers and gold-inlaid pistols, by the various beys and pashaws.

At the end of the War of Independence in 1783, the US lost its protection under Britain's deal with the Barbary states, and soon several American merchant ships were captured. The Americans on board were enslaved, chained, and set to work breaking rocks. Several died.

The US was not in a position to do much. It had sold off its Continental Navy, and its treasury was so depleted that tribute payments to pirate nations were almost beyond its capacity. Yet it needed to keep its trade with Europe and the Mediterranean free in order to pay off its war debts. In 1786 Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, then ambassadors to France and Britain respectively, met in London with the ambassador from Tripoli to Britain, hoping to negotiate a reasonable settlement that would free American captives and protect American shipping. Instead, they were met



with demands for tribute payments of enormous proportions. And, what shocked them even more, the ambassador blithely told them that the Quran made it a right and a duty for Muslims to plunder and enslave unbelievers. By 1793 ten American merchant ships had been captured and hundreds of American citizens were imprisoned. The pirates built a new fleet aimed specifically at American shipping.

Although it took thirty years of effort, both diplomatic and military, the young US finally achieved what no other nation had done, ending Barbary piracy through military force, although not without some

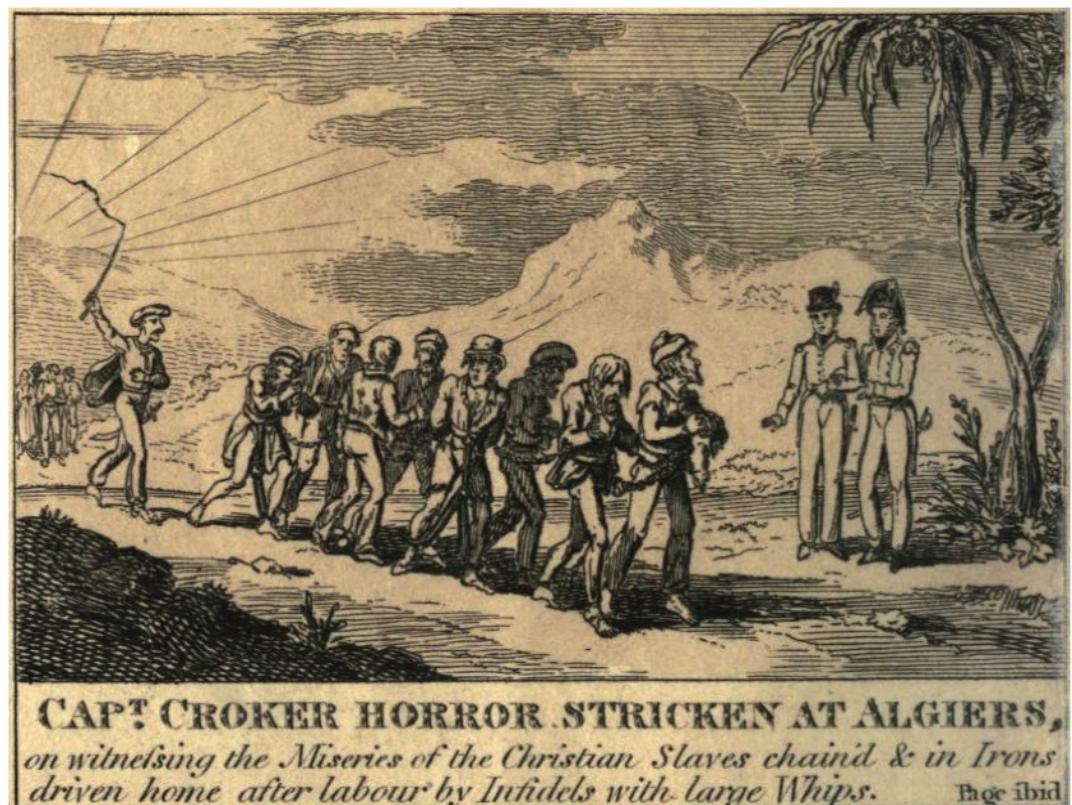
serious setbacks. Today the First and Second Barbary Wars are mostly forgotten, the memory kept alive mainly by the US Marine Corps in a song memorializing their first victory on land ("From the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli") and in their ceremonial sword, which is fashioned after the Ottoman-style, Mameluke sword presented to the Marine commander who won that battle.

Thomas Jefferson and the Tripoli Pirates is a vivid account of the Barbary wars, well researched from original sources, detailed enough to satisfy ordinary curiosity but with no unnecessary digressions, always keeping its focus on action and narrative. The big surprise of the story is how badly the effort went for the US for so long, the number of mistakes, defeats, and humiliations. Interesting characters appear amid all the action. Remarkable for his lack of heroism is the American naval commander, Richard Morris, sent with the USS. *Chesapeake* to blockade Tripoli. His wife wrote to the secretary of the navy for permission to accompany her husband on the mission and before the day of departure showed up with their son, too. Morris delayed his departure a month or two to avoid the rough weather of early spring. Arriving at Gibraltar for repairs, he delayed for three more months while he and Mrs. Morris enjoyed the local social life, hobnobbing with the British elite. Finally under direct orders to join the blockade immediately, he sailed out of Gibraltar but only to visit friendly ports along the southern European coast. In the first report he gave of his progress, he explained that he did not plan to advance toward North Africa until early in the following year because of the "advanced period of the season." Not long afterward, he was relieved of duty. There is also the renegade Scotsman Peter Lisle who, after being captured, converted to Islam, took the name Murat Rais, and became captain of a pirate ship. Eventually he was promoted to admiral of Tripoli's navy, and he married a daughter of the

dey of Tripoli. Thomas Jefferson and John Adams presented a stark contrast. Adams always advocated negotiating with the pirate nations, even after the Dey of Tripoli declared war. During his term as president he reduced the size of the navy. Early on, Thomas Jefferson, on the other hand, decided that force would be necessary to bring the pirates to heel, and throughout his career as ambassador, secretary of defence, and as president, he sought to expand the navy and gain the authority to use military force.

One of the most shocking incidents occurred when an American ship, arriving with tribute in Algiers, was found not to have all the promised goods. Infuriated, the Dey took control of the ship, replaced the American flag with his own, and forced the American crew to sail to Istanbul with the tribute he owed to the Ottoman emperor. Since slaves were part of his cargo, an American naval ship suffered the humiliation, not just of serving as an Ottoman cargo ship but of working as a slave transport.

After several military engagements, not all of which redounded to American glory, treaties were signed with all four Barbary nations. Then, during the War of 1812, Britain urged them to capture American ships again and take captives, and Algiers declared war on America. When the war with Britain ended in 1815, a much stronger US sent a formidable fleet of eleven warships to the North African ports as gunboat diplomacy, and the era of Barbary piracy came to a quick end.



Cyprus – unusual destination, fascinating history

My sister owns an apartment at the beach. Do I need a better excuse to travel there?

BY CYNDIE JACOBS

Cyprus - perhaps an unusual destination in these political times, given its proximity to Turkey, Syria, Lebanon and Israel. I've wanted to visit for a few years, since my sister and sister-in-law own an apartment at the beach outside of Larnaca. Ideal situation, perfect conditions.

June seemed like a good time to travel, in spite of the daily average temperature of 33 C. I chose to upgrade to the extra legroom seat for the flight to Athens, assuming it would be easier to sleep. The flight was late departing Toronto, and was, therefore, late arriving in Athens. Unfortunately, the layover in Athens was only 50 minutes, not much time to catch the connecting flight to Larnaca. I managed to make the flight, but my luggage did not. On arrival at their apartment, we decided to make the most of the time waiting for news of my luggage by visiting the beach bar. Several margaritas, some fresh calamari and other local dishes later, I fell asleep and let my sister deal with the tracking of my luggage. It arrived the following morning.

Over the next 10 days, we traversed the island, visiting the main cities of Nicosia (Lefkosa), Paphos, Limassol, Episkopi, Pissouri and the Troodos Mountains. Nicosia,



5th Century Sarcophagus at Amathus

the capital city, is also known as Lefkosa, the Turkish name for the city. The history of Cyprus is fascinating, beginning with its rule by Great Britain in 1878, followed by attempts at unification with Greece in 1955, the declaration of Cyprus's independence in 1960 and ending with the Turkish invasion and occupation of Northern Cyprus in 1974. Half of the city of Nicosia is under Greek Cypriot rule and the other half is under

Turkish Cypriot rule, complete with a guarded border in the middle of the city. We needed our passports to cross from the Cypriot part of Nicosia into the Turkish part.

The culture of Cyprus lends itself to those who appreciate great cuisine, art, ancient history, ruins and all things Greek. Both English and Greek are spoken everywhere, except for the Northern parts, where the Turks reside.

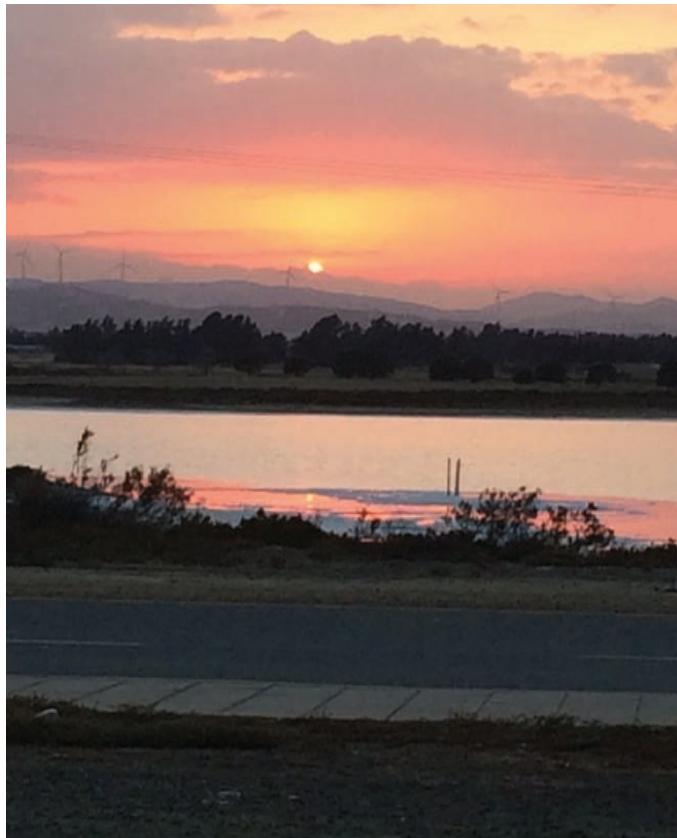
I will return to Cyprus, someday soon, with my daughters.



Amathus Ruins in Limassol - Apollo's Temple



Columbia Beach Hotel/Resort in Pissouri



Sunset in Cyprus



Marketplace in Lefkosa

Mexico

Enjoying a southern destination

BY MICHELLE BARRACLOUGH

Last January I visited the state of Chiapas in Mexico entering from Guatemala. It was an interesting journey, as you travel in a minibus from Antigua across the border to San Cristobal de Las Casas. Along the way you cross some of the most elevated towns in Guatemala and enter Mexico from a valley. On entering San Cristobal at a height of 2100 m, you realise that you are in what was the centre of the Zapatista region. Much colder than the border area, you put on a sweater and soak in the culture.

This was where the rebellion of 1994 was initiated. It is alive and well today with people still camped out in the main square. I had requests for help signing petitions and a donation to help the social justice cause. But life goes on, and the main square also houses the cafes and stores of other Mexicans.

San Cristobal is a UNESCO heritage site and as such is a mélange of cobblestone streets, Catholic churches, traditionally dressed women with their black sheepskin skirts, and traditional culture, that is slowly being worn away. It is the cultural centre of the region and several indigenous villages are only an hour or two away. There are many tourist bureaus that will arrange a day trip for a nominal charge.

From San Cristobal one can visit one of the many ethnic villages, San Juan Chamula, being one of the most famous, and Zinacantan. I was lucky enough to visit on the saints day and the men as well as the women were dressed in their beautiful traditional textiles. Along with the festivities, were the market place and the beautiful church where Catholicism and native religion meet. It was fascinating; unfortunately, photography was forbidden inside the church.

If you are interested in the anthropology of the area, a visit to Casa Na-Balom is a must. Originally built as a seminary in 1891, it became the headquarters of Hans and Trudy Balom in 1951. Trudy specialized in the photography of the Lacandon Indians, many examples of which are in the museum. It now houses a guest house and study centre, along with occasional piano concerts.

Additionally there are many other interesting sites, including the cathedral, the amber museum, and the Convent of Santo Domingo (with a fabulous textile museum). My favourite is the Orchid gardens where they are rescuing orchids that are about to be destroyed and trying to preserve as many as they can.

From San Cristobal, I caught an overnight bus to Puerto Escondido. Mexican buses, unlike what you might expect, are quite comfortable but for some of us, sleeping on a bus presents its challenges. As a result, I ended up sleeping most of the next day in my little hotel in Puerto. Puerto Escondido (Hidden Port) is a hidden gem on the Pacific coast. It is slowly being developed but perhaps has a year or two left of



San Miguel



Diego Rivera mural



Main cathedral, Mexico City

brilliance. It has two main beaches: the city beach (Marinero) and the surfing beach (Zicatella). My small, Canadian owned hotel, Rose de Maria, is a block from the beach and has a lovely Mexican flare. The walls are thick and tiled with those beautiful vividly coloured tiles and there is always a slight breeze from the ocean. It has a tiny pool on the roof beside the bar, a perfect haven away from the crowds on the Mayan Riviera. Mexican families frolic on the local beaches and if you want a bit of North America, a short trip to the surfing beach will give you all the coffee and souvenir shops you might want to indulge in. Here there are botanical gardens, sailing, snorkelling, diving, releasing baby turtles and a myriad of other activities and sightseeing to do.

After spending a week in the area I continued on to San Miguel de Allende, the smallest of Mexico's silver cities. It has been called the Mexican Disneyland, and for good reason. On entering the main square, you are blown away by the church, La Parroquia. It is constructed of Mexican pink sandstone and located high on a hill surrounded by a garden, which is the heart of the town. Due to the large numbers of foreigners, you can find whatever restaurant you want, the symphony, arts festivals and a thriving arts community. Many Canadian are now spending time enjoying the vibe of this retreat tucked into the hills of the Sierra Madre Occidental.

A short four-hour bus trip from Mexico City or a flight to Leon from Canada, and you are in a Mexico of the movies, with beautiful

mansions, cobbled streets and 19th century colonial architecture. The climate is pleasant although it can be a bit nippy in the early mornings, it warms up nicely during the day.

Spending some time in San Miguel is not at all difficult and I always have trouble tearing myself away from this lovely spot. But I have left the best, arguably, for last: Mexico City. This is a city of contrasts. It has beautiful colonial buildings, concerts, art galleries, all manner of entertainments, along with abject poverty. There are many social problems that the Mexican government has yet to address, the latest being the protesting students who have disappeared. That being said, I enjoy the culture of the Mexican people and their warmth-heartedness.

Mexicans are generally very family-oriented and are willing to



Church close to San Cristobal

include strangers in their lives. When in the city, I used Airbnb to book rooms in a variety of homes. My hosts in both places were extremely interesting women who shared local culture with me. Very graciously introducing me to Mexico city, Minerva took me on a tour of the Diego Rivera murals in the Ministry of Education buildings and some lesser known murals as well. We shared a lovely day as I bade farewell to Mexico and returned home.

Smash musical and Shakespearean drama

Breath of Kings, I – Turbulence of the Times

BY KARMA NAIKE

For fourteen years, ARM 12's theatre trip to the Stratford Shakespearean Festival has offered the choice between a smash musical and a Shakespearean drama. This year's selection, *Breath of Kings, I*, featured the story of Richard II and the emergence of Henry IV, a palette of events in history that demonstrates the turbulence of the times, the role and perception of the monarchy by the end of the fourteenth century.

The performance, subtitled "Rebellion" was unique in its staging. A busy cast of characters holding court on a stage, scene changes effected with the application of soil, and clever group clapping appearing crouched on the floor, to me, made the staging too busy. But King Richard's voice was clear as he stated the role of the monarchy. News of revolts kept popping up as Richard set out for wars in Ireland. Upon his return, he learns of a huge rebellion in Wales galvanized around Henry Bolingbroke who had returned in defiance from banishment, and angry at the death and dispossession of John of Gaunt, his father. Richard, lacking support, abdicated, was imprisoned, and was later killed by a servant who misunderstood the new King Henry IV, lamenting the deed thus: "Though I did wish him dead, I hate the murtherer, love him murthered. . . . I'll make a voyage

to the Holy Land, / To wash this blood off from my guilty hand."

Personally, I felt the need to read the play as I'd not quite gotten the performance fully, and it was a wonderful read. It relates and analyses the actions of men in language that appeals and captures. Memorably, Richard's lines, "Not all the water in the rough rude seas can wash the balm from an anointed King," and in his downfall, "Time hath set a blot upon my pride." And while Richard projects kingliness before setting out for war, "behold, his eye,/As bright as is the eagle's, lightens forth/Controlling majesty," he recognizes his everyman frailty, "For you have mistook me all the while, I live with bread like you, feel want,/Taste grief, need friends: subjected thus,/How can you say to me, I am a king?" It is an ordinary gardener who provides insight into Richard's life in pastoral terms, "He hath suffered this dis-ordered spring/Hath now himself met with fall of leaf./The leave which his broad-spreading leaves did shelter/That seemed in eating him to hold him up,/Are pluck'd up root and all by Bolingbroke." The role of the monarchy and the society were in flux.

The Stratford Trip is always enjoyable; we hope to provide choices that will prompt many of our members to continue to join us in future.

A Chorus Line – "One Singular Sensation"

BY PAUL ROOK

Stratford's *A Chorus Line* is a sensation because of its fantastic singing and dancing, creative choreography, and outstanding cast. It is singular because of its unique origins and format.

A Chorus Line was created from the stories of real chorus performers that the first director Michael Bennett tapped in 1975. In the show, which resulted from these interviews, Zack the director is auditioning 17 performers to be a chorus line of 8 performers. Instead of just having them sing and dance he asks each to tell about him or her self. Each starts talking and then sings and dances to tell about events - dysfunctional families, being bullied, being outed as gay - that lead to finding refuge and joy in dancing. As one sings "everything was beautiful at the ballet" others join in because they had the same experience. These stories are fascinating and made more interesting by dancing, singing and humorous comments. For example, Bobby was picked on in school and his father was a drunk. He confesses the he wanted to commit suicide but says that to commit suicide in Buffalo would have been redundant. As you hear each story you laugh, you cry and then you applaud.

When Paul injures his leg and can no longer audition, the performers are asked what happens when they can no longer dance. Fears and alternate hopes are expressed but then Diana Morales changes the tone when she sings "What I Did for Love" and they all

realize they had a rare opportunity to do what they loved.

Now these individuals have to lose their individuality and meld into a chorus line, where everyone sings and dances in unison and no individuality must be shown. Zack works with them to achieve this. This is tough for Cassie who had gone from the chorus to being a star for a while. Then, after failing in Hollywood, she needs a chorus job to survive. Zack has to force himself to stop making individual standout gestures. He succeeds.

In the final number, "One Singular Sensation," all the performers appear in identical costumes and perform brilliantly as a chorus. This is the best chorus dancing I have ever seen.

A Chorus Line benefits from having Donna Feore as director and choreographer. She has always been an outstanding choreographer. Here she proved her skills by creating new choreography so that the show could be performed on the Festival Theatre's unique thrust stage. She has also become a brilliant director of musicals at Stratford.

I loved *A Chorus Line* and will be going to see it again. If you enjoy musicals and good theatre I highly recommend that see *A Chorus Line*, which won the Tony Award for best musical in 1976 and a Pulitzer Prize for drama.