

QUEST Q NEWS

A Quest Publication

Winter 2017 • Volume 2 Number 1

A Note From the President:



Welcome home! It is a bit hard to believe that it's really 2017—I can still recall when we were all worry-

ing about “Y2K”—and that's nearly twenty years ago. Time certainly flies when you're having fun! Before you know it spring will be here (just about six weeks); personally I

can't wait. I know that several of us used the winter break to travel to some interesting places—including Florida, the Caribbean, Brazil, Mexico, and Vietnam (among others). And if you want to continue your travels with some fellow Quest members, be sure to check out the travel committee's programs for this year—and next.

And speaking of doing things together, I'm sure that many of you have seen the recent articles in the *New York Times* (and other publications) about the increasing importance of community relationships as

people get older—and often find themselves living alone. I have always believed that the *community* aspect of Quest is by far the most important, and these recent articles have only confirmed that. We are fortunate, indeed, to all be a part of such a vibrant, warm, and caring group!

Once again, welcome home!

Michael Wellner

Law & Order *by Bob Moore*

A class in the Law and Order series was lucky enough to arrange for a talk by the remarkable New York-based, Mexican artist Andrea Arroyo whose exhibition of artwork 'Tribute to the Disappeared' was on display in the CWE hallway at 25 Broadway. Andrea, with the help of many examples of the work in the project, explained how she had used art as a tool to bring attention to social injustice. In particular, she, herself and over 300 artists from around the world produced art works which drew attention to the kidnapping in Mexico of 43 students from a teachers' training college in Ayotzinapa in Mexico. Andrea has curated many other projects, often focusing social change but also in adorning subway stations for the MTA and the cover of the *New Yorker* magazine. Her beautiful and impactful work can be found at www.andreaarroyo.com



Guest Speakers

Jenny Nordberg: February 8
former New York Times journalist and author of the best seller, “The Underground Girls of Kabul.”

Keith Ellenbogen: February 22
is an acclaimed underwater photographer and videographer who focuses on environmental conservation.

Lincoln Mitchell: March 8
has worked on democracy and governance-related issues in the Former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, the Caribbean, the Middle East, Africa and Asia. He also writes about U.S. politics and was on the faculty of Columbia University's School of International Affairs. His third book “The Democracy Promotion Paradox,” was published by Brookings in 2016.

Loren Schoenberg: March 22
is the founding director of The Jazz Museum in Harlem, saxophonist/conductor, music historian and winner of two Grammy awards.

Jeffrey Gurock: April 5
He is an historian and author of more than a dozen books and most recently wrote, “The Jews of Harlem: The Rise, Decline, and Revival of a Jewish Community.”

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Profiles *by Joyce West*



Ruth Kovner has served as Secretary of the Quest Council for several years. She has also been on the Curriculum Committee. She is a graduate of New York University where she was one of the editors of the school newspaper and has a masters degree from Columbia in Speech and Drama. She was a teacher of English and had a small private speech therapy practice. Once her children were in college she began careers at Dun & Bradstreet and Ziff-Davis Publishing, and then worked for three and a half years for Murdoch Magazines. On retirement, her first stop was at Quest, which, she feels, has enriched her life considerably.



Jane Lubin is a member of the Quest Council. She was raised and educated in New York City and, after raising a family in Great Neck, returned to live in NYC. She has taught English in the NYC schools and had a second career working at Scholastic Magazines and Consumers Union. She discovered Quest about five years ago after she was widowed and is now an avid Quest student, enjoying the intellectual stimulation, the challenge of preparing and presenting lectures, and the wonderful social community that exists here.



Estelle Saltzberg recently retired from a career as a Print Production Manager for a media company in the healthcare field. She grew up in the Bronx and attended Lehman College where she received a degree in English/Education. Estelle enjoys all the city has to offer, attending theater, movies, ballet, and Philharmonic performances as much as possible. In addition to attending Quest lectures she spends time doing one-on-one volunteer tutoring through the JCC, and is currently working with a second grader in the public school system.

Whimsy

The Mirror

Edmund Burke, Irish Philosopher
1729 – 1797

I look in the mirror
And what do I see?
A strange looking person
That cannot be me.

For I am much younger
And not nearly so fat
As that face in the mirror
I am looking at.

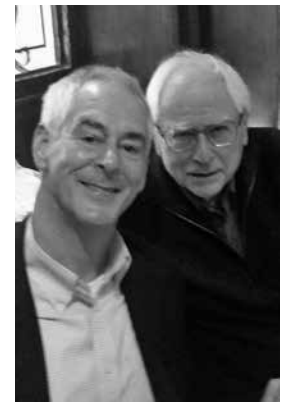
Oh, where are the mirrors
That I used to know
Like the ones which were
Made thirty years ago?

Now all things have changed
And I'm sure you'll agree
Mirrors are not as good
As they used to be.

So never be concerned,
If wrinkles appear
For one thing I've learned
Which is very clear,

Should your complexion
Be less than perfection,
It is really the mirror
That needs correction!

Holliday Luncheon



News You Can Use

Quest Committees

The following are the committees that are Instrumental in the smooth running of our organization.

Curriculum Chair: Caroline Thompson

Membership Chair: Roy Clary, Bobbi Gold

Freshmen Class Chair: Pam Gemelli

Tech Chair: Sandra Southwell

Q Review Chair: Wayne Cotter

Marketing Chair: Leslie Goldman

Emergency Response Team Chair:

Lila Heilbrunn, Doreen DeMartini

Health & Welfare Chair:

Liesje ten Houten

Q News Chair: Carolyn McGuire

Travel Chair: Michael Wellner,

Carolyn McGuire

Long Range Planning Chair:

Michael Wellner

Holliday Luncheon *cont.*



Important Dates

Friday Museum Tours: On February 24th there will be a visit to the China Institute Gallery, 40 Rector Street. This is the first time master works from the 3rd to 6th centuries will be on public view in the U.S. before returning to China. Lunch will follow.

Freshmen Class Meeting: will be held at 12 noon on Tuesday February 28th. All who joined Quest during 2016 are invited to attend this meeting and all subsequent meetings will continue on the last Tuesday of each month.

MOMA Tour: February 17th 10:00 AM. will be held at 12 noon on Tuesday February 28th. All who joined Quest during 2016 are invited to attend this meeting and all subsequent meetings will continue on the last Tuesday of each month.

CWE News

The Historical Memory Project, The International Coalition of Sites of Conscience presents, and the CCNY Divisional of Interdisciplinary Studies at the Center for Worker Education present, "A Conversation on Human Rights: Making Historical Memory into Present Action" on February 9, 7–9pm at CWE. In anticipation of PlayCo's New York premiere of *Villa*, writer/director Guillermo Calderon joins Kate Loewald (Founding Producer, PlayCo), Elizabeth Sikes (Executive Producer, ICSC), Marcia Esparza (Founder and Director, HMP), and Danielle Zach (Acting Director, Human Rights Studies at CCNY) for a conversation on how lessons from the past inform contemporary human rights. Moderated by Nancy Yao Maasbach (President, MOCA).

Noontime Knowledge

TED Talks at Quest

One form of Noontime Knowledge discussion that is relatively easy to put together is one that is focused around a video talk by a prominent speaker followed by a discussion among the class. The ideal length for such a video is about 20 minutes, which allows for an even split of the class period between the video and the discussion.

While there are now hundreds (probably thousands) of interesting videos posted to the web, TED talks are particularly well suited for this purpose, since so many of them are about 20 minutes long. The TED website (www.ted.com) explains that: "TED is a nonprofit devoted to spreading ideas, usually in the form of short, powerful talks. TED began in 1984 as a conference where Technology, Entertainment and Design converged, and today covers almost all topics—from science to business to global issues."

Steve Allen has agreed to initially serve as the focal point for TED talks at QUEST. Anyone who wished to volunteer to lead one of these discussions should contact Steve at stevenallen2@gmail.com. He can provide you with a choice of talks to lead a discussion of, or with the tools with which you can locate talks to choose from.



Who's Doing What In and Out Of Town

As we enjoy our free time during this winter break, Questers are enjoying all sorts of activities. Here is a brief rundown of who's doing what where.

Besides taking a jaunt to Key West to get warm, **Michael** and **Marva Wellner** are doing the NY scene. They attended a recent Wynton Marsalis concert at Lincoln Center where they met Ellie Chernick sitting just a few rows away. **Carolyn** and **Pete McGuire** also enjoyed the Marsalis concert, although on a different night.

Caroline Thompson will be attending a three-day workshop for early music people (instruments, singers, and dancers). This is certainly something different. Carolyn also performs in a chorus here in the city.

Judy Weis is packing a few things into her winter itinerary. She rang in the New Year on stage in a production of "Die Fledermaus." On a completely different note, Judy is working on protest and environmental activist marches throughout our city and the Women's March on Washington and other marches.

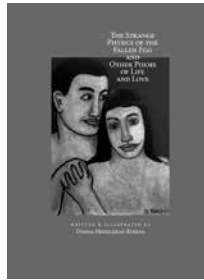


Phil Gisser hasn't done much in the city but has been running around Seattle at his

daughter's Frank Lloyd Wright house in the suburbs. He also visited the Car Museum in Tacoma.

Myra Nissen is spending family time in Nicaragua watching her son-in-law surf. She's counting the days until she can get to Provence for a week in an intensive French review... different strokes.

Donna Rubens has published "The Strange Physics of the Fallen Egg and Other Poems of Life and Love." It comprises 75 pages of poems and artwork produced by Donna over her life. Many of the



poems are touching remembrances of her husband Paul, to whom she dedicates the book. There are about ten works of art, all of which are reproduced beautifully.



Marilyn Weiss is at it again with some twentynew paintings added to her revised website. The website has been updated in preparation for another show in Jamesport this

spring. To see her latest work, check out www.marilynweiss.com.

In December, **Lillian Scheinblum** traveled to Vietnam and toured all around. The scenery was exceptional as was the cultural history but she was most impressed with a visit to the War Remnants Museum. This government museum houses exhibitions titled "crimes of war and aggression". Exhibits included the effects of Agent Orange, napalm and curiosities such as prisoners' cages and graphic photography. It blatantly portrays the horrors of war.

For the love of theatre, **Roy Clary**, recently suffered for art's sake when he made a commercial for Jet.com, an online shopping site. It was shot in a spot where the temperature was in the mid-80s and there was no AC. Roy was wearing a woolen sweater and socks and by the end of the day, he needed an ice pack on top of his head. Visit YouTube for jet.com/holiday-commercial



Bob Reiss and **Debra Gillers** recently attended a concert at Stony Brook

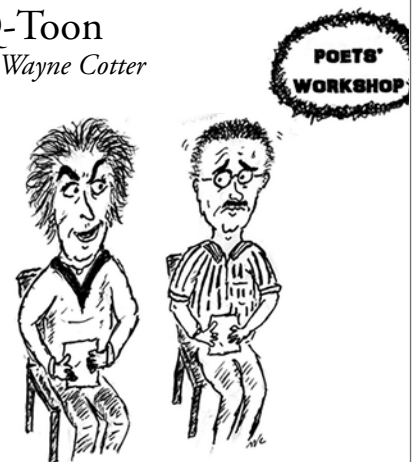
Univ. given by Broadway star, Kelli O'Hara. Bob and Debra were invited to the "After Concert" party and Bob was lucky enough to get this selfie.

Congratulations are in order for **Judith Weis** for co-editing a new book. "Biological Invasions and Animal Behaviors". While the rest of us are worried about human invasions, Judy explores what makes some animals more successful invaders than others. This book is intended for biological invasion researchers, behavioral ecologists and evolutionary biologists. It also addresses how organisms deal with climate change.

Marilyn Weiss and **Carole Abrahams** are exhibiting their artwork in a timely exhibit entitled "Unnatural Election: Artist Respond to the 2016 Presidential Election". The exhibit is at the Kimmel Galleries, New York University, 60 Washington Square South from January 19th to May 2017. It is free and open to the public. The curator, Andrea Arroyo, printed images for the show at the website www.unnaturalelection.com

Stan Raffas spent the holidays visiting family in Romania. While he was there he visited the famed Dracula Castle. It was quite an interesting visit.

Q-Toon
by Wayne Cotter



"To tell you the truth, I'm not even a poet. I just enjoy criticizing people."

National Museum of African History and Culture: A Visit

by Dolores Dolan

This year I had the great pleasure of visiting the newly opened National Museum of African History and Culture. It is part of the Smithsonian Institute and, therefore, free. My daughter had the prescience to order tickets a long time ago. It is so popular now that there are no tickets available until April of 2017.

The museum is beautifully located on the Washington Mall with the Washington Monument in the background. On the sunny, crisp day I visited, the sun was shining through its lacy dark brown metal façade, a stunning contrast to the solid, white stone of the other buildings on the Mall.

Our 2:30 tickets only gave us time to see the bottom three floors, which included photos, exhibits and artifacts of slavery, the Civil War, Reconstruction, Jim Crow laws, Civil Rights, etc., all powerfully displayed. The floors we didn't see include music, theater and art. This is not a museum you can visit once.

I felt very happy to see positive aspects of African-American history, but I also shed tears at photos of lynching, church burnings, and other unfortunate memories of our American history. I also felt good that this Museum was finished during the Obama presidency and that so many African-American people and their children are seeing their lives honored. How often I have been to museums where mostly, not all, the visitors are white, and the paintings they are looking at are mostly, not all, by white artists. At this new, beautiful museum in our nation's capitol, African-Americans can say that, finally, they are truly represented.

Quest Visit to The Roosevelt House

by Toni Dickenson

On December 2, a group of Questers visited the Manhattan townhouse where Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt lived from 1908 to 1932. The home, built for the extended family by Franklin's mother, Sara Delano Roosevelt, served as the launching pad for Franklin when he began his political career. Eleanor's first forays into public life and politics also began there.

After Franklin was stricken with polio, the house was the refuge in which he regained his strength and the optimism necessary to continue political life. It was there that the family hosted many important visitors from all walks of life.

When Sara died in 1941, the House was sold to Hunter College. President Roosevelt lowered the price to make the building more affordable and even donated \$1000 to fund the purchase of books for a new student library. The House is now used by Hunter for research, teaching and public programs.

While the interior of the building has been completely renovated to meet the needs of the College, the legacy of the Roosevelt's is very much present, thanks to the displays and tour guides. The tour rounded out insights we gained about the Roosevelts from the Quest trip to Hyde Park. Afterwards, our appetites whetted, we followed up with an enjoyable lunch at a nearby restaurant. The tour was a lovely way to end 2016.

Travel Update 2017

1 Sarasota Our first trip of 2017 saw 14 Questers spend a week in Sarasota, Florida. For a full report, see the article in the insert.

2 Sicily & Malta are the next destinations in our travel program. 14 Questers (and a couple of friends as well) are booked on a Celtic Tours holiday in Sicily, beginning June 8th. Several members of the group are going a few days early to travel first to the island nation of Malta, a country rich in history. If you are interested in either Sicily or Malta or both, please see Michael.

3 Canada & New Mexico: Closer to home, and later in the summer, we have two trips that we are looking at: **Canadian Odyssey:** An 11-day Road Scholar motorcoach tour beginning in Ottawa on August 14th, and visiting Toronto, Montreal, and Quebec. Highlights include Canada's parliament, Toronto's islands, and French Canada – home of the last walled city in North America. Cost is \$2,449 per person (double). Space is limited; if you are interested please let Carolyn know ASAP.

Santa Fe, New Mexico: If Canada is not for you, we can also take you in a different direction—to the beautiful Southwest. We are also planning a one week trip to Santa Fe, from August 5th to the 11th, including tickets to the world famous Santa Fe Opera. We'll fly from New York to Santa Fe via Albuquerque (Jet Blue flies non-stop to Albuquerque), and stay at the Hilton Santa Fe Historic Plaza, centrally located and steps from the Georgia O'Keefe Museum and some of Santa Fe's best cuisine. Our itinerary includes a walking tour of the historic Santa Fe Plaza with lunch at a top restaurant, a docent tour of the Georgia O'Keefe Museum, an Abiquiu Landscape Tour including the Ghost Ranch (O'Keefe's summer home) and lunch. There is much more, including a full day trip to Taos, including visit to the Taos Pueblo, Millicent Rodgers Museum, a visit to the Chimayo craft village. Lunch & dinner included. If you are interested, please let Bobbi Halfin or Carolyn know ASAP.

4 Other ideas include:
A. Rockefeller estate, Kuykuit: A one-day trip to Tarrytown, New York (only about 45 minutes away).

B. Home of Elvis Presley: A possible excursion to Nashville during Spring Break.

C. Croatia: For May of 2018 we are looking at several options for a trip to the beautiful Dalmatian coast. There are cruise, motorcoach, and combination trips available.

D. Holland: And, finally, perhaps a trip to Amsterdam or a river cruise in that area. (Michael did a river cruise from Amsterdam to Antwerp that he recommends.)

Please let Carolyn know if you are interested in these (or any other) trips. We are always looking for good ideas!

Sarasota Theatre Trip by Betty Farber



*Howard with the star
of the show!*



political play was “The Great Society,” a sequel to “All the Way,” (which was on Broadway), that told about LBJ’s last years in the White House. The projections on the set depicted the horrors of the Vietnam War, civil rights marches, and other disturbing events of that era. The cast of 25 actors played 60 roles. Quite an undertaking in three hours.

In addition to the focus on theater, we visited the Ringling Brothers Circus Museum. John Ringling hails from Sarasota and his legacy includes an opulent mansion, museum, and 60 acres of gardens willed to the State of Florida. The Ringling Miniature Circus is housed

“You live in New York and you’re going to Florida to see theatre?” asked a friend. “Yes, but it’s warm there,” I replied.

The weather is not the only reason to spend time in Florida in January. There’s a delightful Road Scholar program, “Backstage at the Asolo Repertory Theatre Company,” that drew 13 Questers this year. We were able to attend three plays and a staged reading, lectures and discussions about the theatre, and backstage tours. We heard from actors, playwrights, costume designers, and other experts regarding the production of a play. Our days were full of theater talk with “talk backs” after each performance. It was fun to voice our opinions and be heard.

The night of our arrival there was a staged reading of a comedy about a troupe of community theatre actors that was similar to an English farce. The musical “Sister Act,” which was reminiscent of Whoopie Goldberg, was our first night out and the first play we got to see. Getting to the theatre in our “Hippy Bus,” with flowers painted on the side, was an experience.

The theater performances included two political plays. One was “The Originalist,” which was based on the character of Supreme Court Justice Scalia and his interaction with a young black, lesbian, liberal intern who argued with him point on point. Quite an interesting take. Another

on two floors of a building and took over 50 years to complete. Ah, to be a child again... it brought back great memories.

Of course, the eating component of this trip was major... good, bad, or indifferent. All we did was eat. Two interesting dinners were a Chinese buffet and an Amish buffet. On this note we will move away from the academic and lifelong learning aspects of our trip. However, there was much more.

The social aspect of Quest was really evident each day as we had breakfast, lunch, and dinner together. We needed each other’s company to compensate for the “adequate” food. One night we were able to go off on our own and chose a restaurant in town, the “Crab and Fin,”... wonderful fine dining.

Each night, after a completely exhausting day, we gathered for our “night cap”... Irish Coffee (made with decaf and scotch). It was quite interesting and tasty and we all tried it out. . . a couple of times. Of course, we continued in our tradition of camaraderie when travelling together. They gave us very little free time on this trip, so we played like teens and “cut out” one afternoon and went off to the beach for lunch.

So, in general, it was a great trip and we look forward to the next one. In theatre language, we now say “Break a Leg”... want to know what that means? Ask one of us.