

QUEST Q NEWS

A Quest Publication

September 2019

A Note From the President



As Quest begins its 25th year, our members have much to be thankful for. Quest provides all of us a place

for intellectual stimulation, the ability to interact with our peers, form new friendships, and a pleasant way to spend our time post retirement. To all of our new members—welcome. Please take advantage of the opportunity to learn more about Quest by

attending our new member lunch time meetings, and by engaging other members in the lunchroom, before or after classes, or by coming to the Quest office to speak with our office manager, Barbara, or me. You will find me in the Quest office almost everyday class is in session from 9:30 to 10:30 am. We will also be having a monthly after class social event, organized and run by our new social committee, chaired by Marcia Friedland and Lois Cardillo to which all members are invited.

I urge all members to get involved. As a peer to peer learning organization,

Quest depends on its members to give presentations, join committees, develop ideas for new classes, and generally support our great organization. Please be courteous to your fellow members by trying to arrive on time to class, turning off your cell phones, entering and exiting the classroom quietly, once the presentation has begun, and treating your fellow Quest member as you would like to be treated.

It is with a deep sadness that I inform you of the passing of three of our beloved members, Leslie Fenchel, Stan Raffes Jan Eisler. They will be missed.
— Bob Gottfried

Guest Lecturers Set for Fall

The Distinguished Guest Lecturer Committee: **Arlynn Greenbaum, Bob Reiss, Arlene Hajinlian** and **Estelle Selzer** are pleased to bring you the following guest speakers this semester:

Sept 11 Rosemary Novellino-Mearns, author of *Saving Radio City Music Hall*.

Sept 25 Dawn Raffel, author of *The Strange Case of Dr. Courney*.

Oct 23 Colum McCann, *Letting the Great World Spin: How the Stories of Others Shape Our World* (Peter Cott/Kenneth Leedom Memorial Lecturer).

Nov 20 John Reddick, *Ragtime to Jazz: Harlem's Black and Jewish Music Culture*.

Dec 4 Jamie Bernstein, author of *Famous Father Girl*, daughter of Leonard Bernstein.

CultureQuest Events for Fall

Thanks to coordinators **Renee Woloshin, Linda Downs** and **Bob Reiss** who arranged these events.

Sept 27 American Folk Art Museum: Audrey Heckler Collection of Folk Art

Oct 11 Museum of Jewish Heritage: Auschwitz Exhibition

Oct 25 Dia: Beacon Museum in Beacon, NY: Permanent collection

Nov 8 Frick Museum: Sculptures by Edmund de Waal and Bertoldo di Giovanni; Manet paintings

Nov 22 Cooper-Hewitt Museum: Cooper-Hewitt Triennial Exhibition

Creativity Day

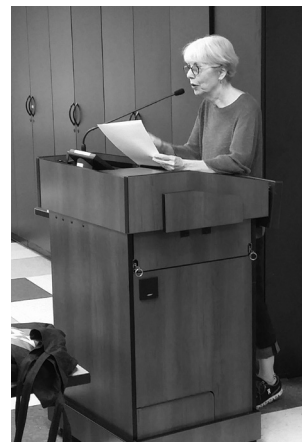
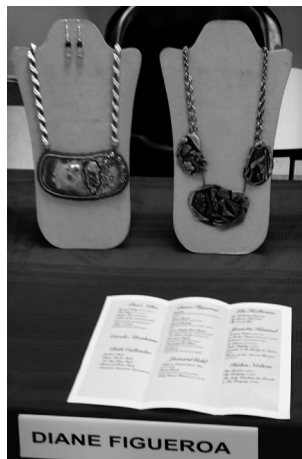
by Ruth Ward

Quest held its annual Creativity Day on Tuesday, June 25th. Attendees listened to a profusion of moving poems and prose selections written and read by talented Quest members, many of whom have been regulars at our Creative Writing and/or Poets' Workshops.

After the poignant readings, participants went from the lunch-room to room 27, where they could appreciate the varied talents of Quest's artists. They perused paintings in a variety of media,

such as acrylic, watercolor, oil, pastel, and graphite. They looked at intriguing masks of paper maché, leather, clay, and plaster of Paris, as well as gorgeous necklaces of sterling silver, fresh water pearls, and semi-precious stones. Also on display were intricate collages of paper and mixed media, as well as photo albums of action-packed trips to faraway places.

Many thanks to Mary Ann Donnelly and Pam Gemelli for organizing this event. It was well worth our Questers' collaborative efforts.



London in May with No Rain

by Steve Koenig



There was no rain for a week when a choice group of 14 Questers and friends lucked out and explored this great walking city in pairs, ever-changing groupings, and en masse. From our Strand Palace Hotel it was a leisurely path to Covent Garden and all interesting areas of London. We were charmed by walking over the Waterloo and other bridges spanning The Thames, and by strolling along the Embankment.

Our first night, we dined at the Simpsons' in the Strand which provided an elegant beginning to our trip with a cozy lounge and unique cocktails. We imbibed at the bar of the elegant art deco Savoy Hotel. Lots of eating and drinking.

A highlight was our afternoon tea cruise on the River Thames with three-tiered trays of sandwiches, scones and cookies while we viewed London landmarks on a beautiful sunny day.

For our art and history lovers there were museums aplenty: The Victoria and Albert, where we sat outside in the garden for lunch. We visited the National Gallery, the British Museum featuring the Rosetta Stone, the Elgin Marbles, and a Rembrandt exhibit. The Tate Modern had a Dorothea Tanning exhibit. For many, the museum highlight was the Churchill War Rooms, the actual underground bunker where much was conducted during WWII. (*italic*)

For more culture, a large group of us thrilled to *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Henry IV, Part 1*, at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, as well as a lunchtime violin and piano recital at St. Martin in the Field Church in Trafalgar Square with lunch in its Crypt afterwards, which Betty Farber said gave "a creepy feeling, but fun." Most of the group caught the latest West End shows including the *Lehman Trilogy*, *Admissions*, and *Starry Night*.

Lit-lovers wandered around the Bloomsbury district, home to Charles Dickens' home, and Persephone Books, which specializes in obscure 20th century women authors, and Gay Is the Word bookstore, both with hard-to-find titles.

As Joyce West noted, the finest aspect of the trip was, "most of all, the camaraderie and the weather."

In Memory: Leslie Fenchel

by Linda Downs, Joyce West, Jane Lubin
and Caroline Thompson

A shining light from Quest has been extinguished. Leslie Fenchel's death has touched so many of us. She was a passionate reader of Victorian literature and was a very active participant in the Middlemarch course and co-taught the course on Trollope. She loved to laugh, travel and explore ethnic food.



At Quest she was a vivacious presence with sparkling conversations and engaged fully in vigorous analysis and debate. She had planned to spend part of the summer at Chautauque with us, a place that she would have loved but, alas it was not meant to be. Her death leaves a well of sadness in all of us. We are at an age when even recent friends, who have become part of our lives, are lost.

In Memory: Jan Eisler

by Caroline Thompson and Steve Allen

After a 2-year struggle with cancer, our dear friend Jan Eisler died on August 18th. All who knew Jan understood how delightful she was, always interested in others, always cheerful.



The early part of her adult life was spent in Rochester where she worked as the City Desk Editor for The Times-Union, then in public relations for the University of Rochester and later as a publicist for Wegman's Supermarket.

Jan and her husband Stu joined Quest in 2009. Over the last six years, Jan offered 18 illuminating presentations and was an active co-coordinator and presenter for *Mind and Brain* for two and a half years. She took her presentations to heart and worked diligently. Her last talk this past spring was about *Immunotherapy*, a treatment she was receiving at the time. She was an admirable Quest member.

Jan was such a wonderful person in so many ways^{3/4} warm, generous, unassuming, positive. She has a son, Hugh, who lives with his family in California. As Hugh said, "Mom was always modest and would downplay any impact she had on others, but in truth her friendship was a gift and blessing to so many." She will be greatly missed.

In Memory: Stan Raffes

Stan Raffes, Poet had the great gift of letting us see into his life and his family history through his story-poems. In them he painted vivid pictures and conveyed feelings that let us into his world.



He was one of the best poets at Quest and knowledgeable about poetry and poets. He'll be missed at Quest especially by the Poetry Workshop and the Contemporary Poetry class.

A sample of Stan's poetry is below.

Brigadoon in Bryant Park

by Stan Raffes

Mary Oliver, our matchmaker
Our Scottish heather.
Cement planters sprouting fall flowers,
I, the world weary Gene Kelly, scowling
Stumbling across the moors of New York,
Waiting for my own Brigadoon to emerge
Just once, every hundred years.

A back ordered poetry book from
The Coliseum Book Store on 42nd Street
Drew me to Bryant Park.

Met Vali from Romania
Sitting, smiling at a table drawing in pastels,
A picture of smiling children playing
In front of thatched cottages in the Romanian countryside.

She'd never been to Bryant Park before
She thought Mary Oliver
Was an extra dry martini
We talked about art, poetry, New York, Romania.
I read to her from Oliver's Fall Song
"Another year gone, leaving everywhere
Its rich spiced residues: vines, leaves,"

We got married, me for the first time at age 60,
On a cold clear February night
On a terrace of a hotel overlooking Times Square
Just as the pastel miracle of Brigadoon
Emerged from the mist.

Who Am I?

We turned back the hands of time and sent high school and college pictures and now expect you to recognize who we are... Can you guess?

The answers are numbered according to the pictures on insert.



Q News Staff

A Quest Publication

Editor in Chief
Carolyn McGuire

Copy Editing
Martha Drezin

Consultant and Proofreader
Michael Wellner

Quest, a community for lifelong learning,
is affiliated with the City College of
New York (CCNY), and its Center for
Worker Education (CWE).

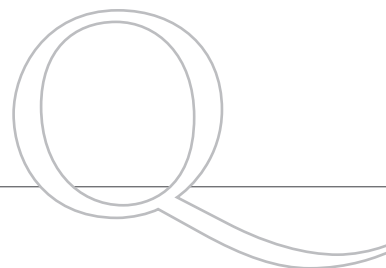
25 Broadway, New York, NY 10004
212.925.6625 x229
questlifelong.org

CultureQuest Tour of The Ford Foundation *by Madeleine Brecher*

On Friday, April 26th, Questers spent a wonderful morning at the newly renovated Ford Foundation for a tour of their inaugural exhibition entitled *Perilous Bodies*. Upon arrival, we were ushered into their reception room for coffee and bagels. From the floor to ceiling windows, we had stunning views of art, offices and the beautiful indoor garden area.

The Ford Foundation exhibition space is dedicated to exploring issues of justice and injustice. A collection of artists from around the world offered varied interpretations of their own cultural traditions to address societal oppression. The artworks made “powerful statements about ideas and realities we are always quick to turn away from.” Through these works, the artists seek to transform a world in peril into one we would all want to live in. The first work you see as you enter the gallery is called *Road to Exile* by Barthelémy Toguo of Cameroon and France. It is a large wooden boat floating on bottles symbolic of water and waves. The boat is overflowing with bags made from African fabrics and examines issues of migration, colonialism and race in the relationship of the Global North and Global South. Each of the artworks had a fascinating story. The exhibit was sensational and our docent was truly excellent.

Another show will be displayed in the gallery through the remainder of the year on the theme of *Utopian Imagination* from September 17–December 7, 2019. Do try to take it in, you will not be sorry: Check the fordfoundation.org/gallery website for days and hours the gallery is open



Who's Doing What



At Quest's Third Annual Baseball Mini-Outing on June 6, the Mets

enjoyed a rare

victory defeating John Davis' hometown team, the San Francisco Giants. Pictured are **Wayne Cotter, John Davis, Art Spar, Roy Clary.**

Michael Hamburg and his wife spent the month of August in the Berkshires. After that he plans to go to Parma Italy for a Verdi Festival. Sounds wonderful.

Marilyn Rosen and her family will be spent the month of August in the Berkshires. It's a very popular spot for Questers with great theatre, music and beautiful scenery.

Jeanette Himmel will be traveled north to Montreal for a wedding over Labor Day.



QM2 sailed away over the 4th of July weekend with Questers, **Michael & Marva Wellner, Steve Rubin, and Fred Endelman.**

Their route took them to Halifax,

Newfoundland and Boston for the fireworks. Beautiful ship and great get away for seven days.

Ruth Kovner, Anita Hunter & Shoshana Kagan. On a chilly night in June these intrepid members of Quest joined over 50,000 others to listen to great music performed by the wonderful New York Philharmonic on the great lawn in Central Park. This was the first performance in Central Park for Jaap van Zweeken, new music director of the Philharmonic, and he acquitted himself well. We were also introduced to the music of two young

composers, each about 12-years-old, members of New York Very Young Composers. Can you imagine their excitement at hearing the Philharmonic play their music? There followed music from Rossini, Copeland and Rachmaninoff. We sat on the grass, picnicked and enjoyed a splendid concert. All this was capped off by fireworks. The next time we'll bring extra blankets.

Joyce West has been busy. She spent a week in London in May with 12 other Questers, two weeks in Chautauqua in July, also with folks from Quest in attendance and the month of August in her country cottage with weekend visits from other Quest members.

Marilyn Weiss recently visited with friends who are part of the "Hidden Children" group, the youngest survivors of the Holocaust who were hidden in convents, orphanages, farms and villages in remote areas far from their homes. They lived openly under false names and are the lucky ones, the last survivors. These survivors have been in contact with others who were hidden and Marilyn has made many friends among them. The organization publishes an international newsletter that is sent to Holocaust centers and college and university libraries.



Judy and Pete Weiss spent two weeks traveling around Ireland in June, with Pete driving counterclockwise around the periphery of the country on the left side of the road through too many roundabouts and Judy nervously navigating with maps and a GPS system. Ireland has numerous road signs telling you how to reach destinations, but very few road signs to tell you where you actually ARE. They drove through both the Republic and Northern Ireland, and the only way they knew they crossed the

border is that in the Republic the road signs were bilingual, but in the UK part, only in English. The GPS system worked quite well and got them to places that they couldn't have found without it. (How did we manage before computers?) However, it seemed to have an inordinate fondness for narrow roads that are one-lane wide with grass down the middle—but actually are two way. Despite all this, they loved it all—the spectacular scenery, the music, the folktales of fairies and leprechauns, and the delightful accents.



Patricia Geehr and husband **Jack** spent a week in Rome this past spring in order to beat the summer rush. While there, they visited all the sites and met with friend who

live in Rome. Lovely holiday

Carolyn and Pete McGuire for the fifth year in a row spent time at the *Galway International Arts Festival*. This international festival mirrors the Edinburgh Fringe with Theatre, Music, Visual Arts, Street Art, Opera and Dance. Highlights for this year were Australian sculptor Sam Jinks with an exhibition of sculpture from silicone. Burt Bachrach for a 3 hour show was nostalgic and, of course, Irish Traditional music sessions were fun. Major first reading of Druid plays were excellent. Hopefully, some will come to New York. Seamus Scanlon joined the McGuires for "Strolling with Ulysses", a one man show which tells the tale of Bloomsday. Between visits from Irish family members and running around to theatres, the 18 days passed quickly and will be extended for next year.

Michael and Marva Wellner had an adventure not too far from Quest—Camping out in a tent ("Glamping") on Governor's Island this summer. What's this?

Marilyn Weiss Showing in Jamesport, Long Island

by Martha Drezin



Lunch Anyone?" is one of the works on display created by Quest's own NYC/Westhampton artist, Marilyn A. Weiss. Marilyn creates collages using many elements and colors. A thoughtful witty narrative emerges from threads and fabric, paper and paint. Marilyn is one of the *Abstract Women II* artists in the August group show which opened on August 10th at William Ris Gallery in Jamesport, Long Island. The intricate layers of texture and detail are best appreciated when you view the work in person. Marilyn reports that prior to the show, the gallery sold a major painting of hers that is being shipped to a home in Saratoga, NY. Congratulations, Marilyn!

Quest Travels

by Michael Wellner

Lately your Quest Travel Committee seems to be getting little sleep! We have been working hard and have a pretty full schedule of very well-subscribed trips.

Here's where we stand:

This past spring and summer has seen Quest trips to **London**, a July 4th cruise on the beautiful *Queen Mary 2*, and to the annual Shaw festival in **Niagara-on-the-Lake**.

This fall, September 12–15, a group of 25 Questers will be heading to **Philadelphia** to visit the Barnes Museum and the Philadelphia Museum of Art (among other sights).

In January a group of 13 has already booked a cruise, sailing from nearby Port Liberty (NJ), to the warm waters of the **Caribbean**.

And in late May, we have more than 30 people who have expressed interest in our ten-day trip to **Puglia (Italy)**. If you'd like to join us, or just learn more Carolyn & Michael have more information.

Under Milk Wood Comes to Quest

by Ruth Ward

As the culminating event before the Quest end-of-the-year luncheon on Thursday, May 16, 2019, the Quest Advanced Acting Workshop under the direction of Marilyn Rosen, Panny King, and Roy Clary presented the intriguing drama, *Under Milk Wood*.

The success of previous Quest productions encouraged an impressive turnout. The auditorium was packed—it was standing room only. Questers were treated to a concise version of this 1954 radio drama by Welsh poet Dylan Thomas, commissioned by the BBC and later adapted for the stage.

Quest was in good company in its appreciation of Dylan's work. A film version of *Under Milk Wood* directed by Andrew Sinclair was released in 1972, and another adaptation of the play, directed by Pip Broughton, was staged for television for its 60th anniversary in 2014. Welsh composer John Metcalf composed *Under Milk Wood: An Opera*, a chamber work in one act, the libretto of which was directly adapted from the Dylan Thomas play and which also premiered in 2014.

Back in the Quest theater, omniscient narrators invited the audience to listen to the dreams and innermost thoughts of the inhabitants of the fictional small Welsh fishing village, Llareggub. The colorful backdrop and nuanced acting of the ensemble cast drew us into a world that seemed both very different and yet, somehow, similar to our own.

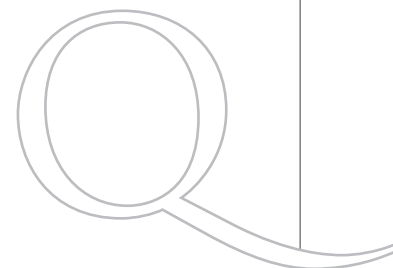
Many thanks to Marilyn, Panny, Roy, and the entire cast of *Under Milkwood* for helping Quest end the spring 2019 semester with such zest.

The link to the YouTube of the Quest production can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1w2NvM8jRY>.



Here I Am...

1. Barbara Gelber; 2. Michael Hamburg;
3. Paul Adler



Biking in the Netherlands

by Caroline Thompson

Steve Allen and Caroline Thompson took their annual bike ride (their 23rd) to the Netherlands this summer, but we decided to try something different. In past years, except for the first few, we have done self-guided tours. That means there is no group, we are totally on our own, but the route is set up by a company, as are the hotel reservations and transport of our luggage from one hotel to the next. This year we decided to stay in one city for 10 nights, so we could decide when and where to ride in conjunction with the weather forecast. As it turned out, the weather was great! There was only one day of inclement weather so we biked for 7 days and took a train to nearby cities for 2 days. Our chosen city was Zwolle, recommended to us by a Dutch friend as one with the most interesting day routes going from it. It was a great choice! We stayed on the 3rd floor of an AirBNB, rented our bikes daily from a nearby shop, and chose different route for each day, usually 25-30 miles.

The Netherlands is truly bike heaven! I think people bike here much more than in any other country; it's just a way of life. There are more bicycles than residents in The Netherlands and in cities like Amsterdam and The Hague up to 70% of all journeys are made by bike. At train stations, one sees a huge number of parked bikes. In the university city of Groningen, a cyclists' dream even by Dutch

standards, the central train station has underground parking for 10,000 bikes.

What distinguishes it from virtually all other countries where we have biked (13 of them)? I will mention 3 things. First, it's the bike path system. The Netherlands has a network of bike paths that is huge, covering the entire country. These paths are clearly marked, have smooth surfaces, separate signs and lights for cyclists, and are wide enough to allow side-by-side cycling and overtaking. In many cities, the paths are completely segregated from motorized traffic. We have a booklet of maps (43 of them) which show all the connections from one route to another, so one can put together a ride to fit any desired itinerary.

The second heavenly aspect of biking in the Netherlands is the scenery. We mostly ride in the country, so we see many different animals in the fields and lots of bird life by the canals and rivers. Paths go through forests, by farms, along water and country roads, and through charming towns—and they are charming! And finally, the 3rd feature that make it heaven: most of the routes are flat. No huffing and puffing for us, just slow, relaxing pedal-pushing.

We hope to keep taking an annual bike trip for many years to come, but the Netherlands will probably weigh heavily in our choice of destinations. Who wouldn't want to experience heaven right here on earth?

Quest Group of Theater Enthusiasts Visits Shaw Festival in Niagara On The Lake, Canada

by Bob Hartmann

Thirteen Questers trekked north to attend the famous Shaw Festival to see three or four very professional theatrical productions including *Brigadoon* by Lerner and Loewe, *Getting Married* by G.B. Shaw, and *The Russian Play*, a fascinating 45 minute play about life in Stalinist Russia written by a contemporary Canadian female playwright.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the trip was the inclusion of pre and post discussions about each play, chaired by a cast member or a behind-the-scenes tech person. Other activities included lectures on Canadian politics and history, visits to the Falls, a back stage tour of the largest of the three Festival theaters, as well as free time to explore on our own the charming village of Niagara on the Lake.

This was a Road Scholar trip and is highly recommended. It is included in their catalogue every summer.



Quest Gala End of Term Luncheon at the Beautiful Battery Gardens



On may 16th quest held their annual end of term luncheon at the Battery Gardens Restaurant. It was well attended with over 160

questers enjoying the camaraderie as well as the good food. Thanks to Jane Lubin for arrangements.

Dates to Remember

Freshman Class Meeting
Last Tuesday in September

Philadelphia Trip
September 12–15

Quest General Meeting
Wednesday, November 6

Poetry Festival At CWE

The Americas Poetry Festival of New York 2019 (poetryny.com) is the sixth multi-lingual poetry festival and writers' conference organized by poets and professors Carlos Aguasaco, Yrene Santos and Carlos Velásquez Torres. This year the festival will take place on October 2nd, 3rd and 4th. The venues are Center for Worker Education, CCNY; Walt Whitman Birthplace State Historic Site and Interpretive Center; Consulate of Argentina, NY; and Instituto Cervantes, NY. This year's festival celebrates Walt Whitman's bicentennial with a series of multilingual readings and conferences.