

QNEWS Q DIGITAL

A Quest Publication

Issue 23

January 2022

A Note From the President

First of all, best wishes for a Healthy and Happy New Year! Hopefully you've been able to stay active and connected during our time away from Quest. As you know, our video recordings of past Quest presentations are available on our website at questlife-long.org, as is our spring 2022 Catalog of courses.

Many thanks to those of you who have made or are planning to make suggestions for our Summer Encores program at QuestEncores2022@googlegroups.com. Our Summer Encores committee is preparing an exciting summer lineup of presentations.

As to our possible return to 25 Broadway, we will be letting you know on a two-week by two-week basis regarding our spring semester courses, which will start on January 31st. Consult your email regularly to find out if classes will

continue to be hybrid or if they will be on Zoom only for each 2-week period. We will also let you know whether masks will be required if and when we return in person.

Our organization continues to be robust. We have more than 140 members and our finances are in a healthy state. Our newly formed Long-Term Planning committee, chaired by **Nan McNamara**, is looking into our evolution over the next several years and beyond.

This spring we will be electing three Council officers and three at-large members. Our Nominating and Elections Committee (NEC) will include both seasoned and relatively new members: **Bob Gottfried**, **Andrea Irvine**, **Mary Beth Yakoubian**, **Beth Callender**, and **Paul Golomb**. Our current vice-president, **Wayne Cotter**, and our current secretary, **Karen Levin**, wish to be renominated

and reelected. Our treasurer, **Stephanie Butler**, has decided not to run for re-election. **Arlynn Greenbaum** and **David Bernard** both wish to be renominated as Council members at large, and we will also need to fill the seat of departing Council member at large **Penelope Pi-Sunyer**. It is the custom of the NEC to nominate two candidates for each at large Council seat vacancy, and to simply nominate the returning officers.

Our major responsibility this year will be to find a suitable candidate for treasurer, someone with both accounting and computer skills. If you are aware of such a person, feel free to contact Bob Gottfried at bob@gottfried.net

Please continue to enjoy our winter break; looking forward to "seeing you soon!"

— Warm regards,
Ruth Ward

Spring '22 Membership Renewal Reminder

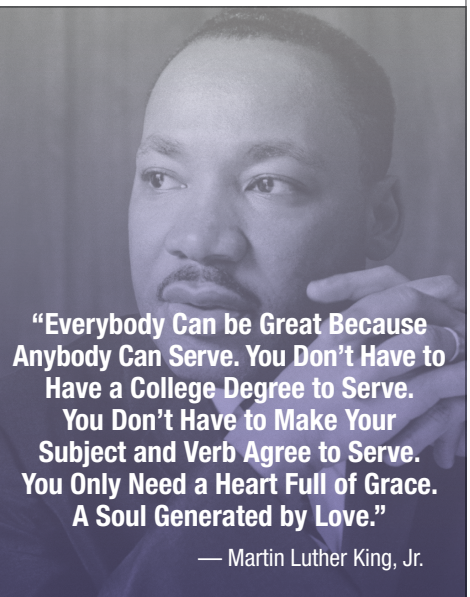
If you have not done so already, may we ask that you please renew your membership for our spring term. It's as easy as **1-2-3**:

1. Write your check for \$275 payable to CCNY/CWE/QUEST. Please print your name clearly on the subject line. (This fee includes our summer classes as well)



2. Mail your check to:
Ms. Donna Ramer, 111 Third Avenue
Apartment 11E, New York, NY 10003
3. Pray for an end to Covid-19 pandemic!

IMPORTANT: Renewal checks will not be accepted at 25 Broadway, and should not be left there.



"Everybody Can be Great Because Anybody Can Serve. You Don't Have to Have a College Degree to Serve. You Don't Have to Make Your Subject and Verb Agree to Serve. You Only Need a Heart Full of Grace. A Soul Generated by Love."

— Martin Luther King, Jr.

REMEMBER TO WASH YOUR HANDS

Books Questers Recommend

Sheryl Harawitz asked us to submit books we recommend. We had only two duplicates (**) and one triplicate (***). What does that say about Questers?

A Little Life by Hanya Yanagihara
A People's History of the United States by Howard Zinn
Agent Sonya: the Spy Next Door by Ben McIntyre
Aubergine and The Seven Sisters by John Hunter
Beneath a Scarlet Sky by Mark Sullivan
Deacon King Kong by James McBride
Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine by Gail Honeyman
Faithful Place by Tana French
Great Circle by Maggie Shipsted
Hamnet by Maggie O'Farrell
Homeland Elegies by Ayad Akhtar **
House of Mirth by Edith Wharton
Madame Bovary by Gustave Flaubert
Becoming by Michelle Obama
Middlesex by Jeffrey Eugenides
Milkman by Anna Burns
Never Let Me Go by Kazuo Ishiguro
Oh William! by Elizabeth Strout ***
Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind by Yuval Noah Harari
Seven Gothic Tales by Isak Dinesen
The Big Con by David Maurer
The Blood of Flowers by Anita Amirrezvani
The Free World: Art and Thought in the Cold War
 by Louis Menand
The Invention of Nature by Andrea Alexander
The Magician by Colm Toibin
The Mind-Body Problem by Rebecca Goldstein
The Music at Long Verney by Sylvia Townsend Warner
The Other Paris by Luc Sante
The Promise by Damon Galgut **
The Purple Swamp Hen and Other Stories by Penelope Lively
The Shadow King by Maaza Mengiste
The Vanishing American by Zane Grey
The Warmth of Other Suns by Isabel Wilkerson
The Way We Live Now by Anthony Trollope
The Weight of Ink by Rachel Kadish
These Precious Days by Ann Patchett
Time and Again by Jack Finney (1970)
We Band of Angels by Elizabeth Norman (1999)
Why Trust Science? by Naomi Oreskes
Word Is Passed by Clint Smith

Dave Robinson by Michael Wellner

Quest is fortunate to have many members, like **Dave Robinson**, who have had fascinating, and often genuinely distinguished careers. Working in the Kennedy White House, Dave had many interactions with James Webb, who headed NASA and supervised our Apollo lunar landing program. Here are some of Dave's recollections of those "good old days."

Dave's first job (in 1961) was to staff the Communications Satellite Panel of the President's Science Advisory Committee. At the time, AT&T was building TelStar, a low orbit network of some twenty satellites that would receive and retransmit signals from the earth. NASA was also supporting a program at Hughes Aircraft to build a single satellite that would orbit the earth 23,500 miles above the equator, and appear to be stationary, thus allowing long periods of communication, although with a delay of about a quarter of a second between transmission and reception, which AT&T said was unacceptable for telephone communication (Dave's panel said, "Wrong!"). Undeterred, Dave and his team talked with Webb, who supported and defended the Hughes single satellite program. After the meeting concluded, the Chair of the Panel said: "Jim Webb smiles, nods, never raises his voice, but if you disagree with him, at the end of the meeting, you will find your head separated from your shoulders!"

Then a year or so later, after the moon shot was announced, Dave met with Webb in his office, to discuss the communications satellite budget. In an attempt to start the conversation in a light tone, Dave said, "Jim, every Cabinet-level member but you is driven here in a big black Cadillac. But you always arrive in a black Checker cab. Why no Cadillac for you?" Jim replied, "There



is much more leg-room in the back seat of the Checker, and we ride in the back seat. And when I come out of a Cabinet-level meeting, I can always find my car and driver, while everyone else has to search!"

Webb was a character. Dave has lots more stories that he'd be delighted to share; just ask him!

Shining a Light on Quest Committees

In the last issue of QNEWS you may recall we had a long article on the Tech Committee. Because of an editing error, the article failed to mention **Sharon Krutzel** (now on leave). Sharon had worked in the past with companies to get their technology programs up and running in user-friendly ways. As Co-Chair of the Zoom Tech Team, Sharon worked tirelessly guiding the Team as well as assisting Quest members with accessing and using Zoom. It's no exaggeration to say that we could not have succeeded without her.

City Wanderings

by Frank Montaturo

I have taken to visiting this ever diverting flea market after Sunday morning service at Marble Church. There are vendors selling their usual African weavings ... stools and masks and maces for bludgeoning ... others with piles of silver seemingly harvested from a mine in Potosí ... others still with clothes or crockery or prints and this gentleman with his vintage porcelain kitchen canisters and dancing figures. I was not tempted to buy them ... really a bit too kitsch even for me ... but I did indulge briefly in a reverie of Hungarian musicians and dancers in an energetic csardas ... And such reverie brought me back many years to a damp February and a 16mm projection one Saturday afternoon ... folding chairs and free popcorn ... of old German language movies ... in this case ... the 1951 *Csardasfürstin*. These films were trotted out for a dwindling German speaking congregation at Zion-St Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church on the East Side ... in Yorkville. I went twice



Csardas, Chelsea Flea Market, December 2021

... both times for musicals. My own German language skills would confuse a three year old, but I would give this a try ... cultural immersion, I told myself. On the first occasion there were no subtitles ... well ... there was the music ... and on the second ... for the above film ... they fluttered barely visible at the bottom of the screen ... well ... there was still the music. There was also some grumbling from congregants: Your head is in my way! Where's the popcorn? Well ...

there was the music and that's what I heard when I saw these figures.

I have checked the church's website and am happy to learn that it still stands. They have a Sunday 11:00AM bilingual Gottesdienst ... temporarily suspended because of the pandemic. They had scheduled a Fundraising Event in 2021 ... cancelled also. The same holds true for the German classes and for Choir. I was happy to learn that they still have a film program ... but suspended because of the pandemic. A pity ... I would have braved another movie ... if only for the popcorn.

Quest Book Club

by Jan Goldstein

The Quest Book Club will continue in the Spring semester with a wide cross-section of novels by both new and established authors, from this country and abroad, across a range of genres. The books chosen are not necessarily what you yourself might ordinarily pick up — think of it as a chance to discover something you didn't know you liked!

We meet once a month on the second Wednesday of the month from 12:10 – 12:55 pm, in-person at 25 Broadway.

Here are the dates and reading selections for spring 2022:

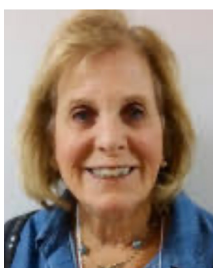
February 9: *Great Circle* by Maggie Shipstead

March 9: *The Personal Librarian* by Marie Benedict & Victoria Christopher Murray

April 13: *Pride & Prejudice* by Jane Austen

May 11: *Apeirogon* by Colum McCann

Who's Doing What



Gale Spitalnik got the New Year off to quite a start with a midnight run in Central Park — as she has done each of the past 15 years! She joined some 3,000 hearty,

happy people to celebrate the new year, watch fireworks, and run (or power walk) four miles. Her report: "In the midst of brilliant fireworks, live music, champagne (of course) and mild weather, I celebrate 2022, embracing good health (at almost 81), dear family, and friends (including many Questers). I am grateful for a fabulous life in our *great* city. Play hard, love always, and smile often. Happy 2022!"

• • •

Pete and Judy Weis went to Providence to visit son Eric, daughter-in-law Mandy and 11-year old granddaughter Violet for Christmas. Eric and Violet joined them on a flight to Washington DC for several days, visiting many museums and memorials, doing a lot of walking and eating. The spectacular ceiling is the Library of Congress.



Last One Standing

by Arlynn Greenbaum

Long before the Omicron variant surge, three Quest friends (who shall remain nameless) and I planned a day trip to Philadelphia to go to the Museum of Art primarily to see part two of the Jasper Johns exhibit. We booked our train tickets and our timed entry admission to the museum.

As January 6 approached, they got cold feet and all said they were regrettably going to cancel. Having recently recovered from a mild case of Covid and a boring quarantine, I was looking forward to the outing and a change of scenery. Also, I had told my cleaning woman to come that day so I decided to go solo to Philly.

I took a fairly empty 9:30 am Keystone train and leisurely read *The New York Times*. I arrived in Philly right on time at 10:50 am and took a short cab ride to the museum. When I saw the steps from "Rocky," I was elated — "I did it," I thought. When I entered the museum, I found out they were having a docent tour of the Johns exhibit at 12 noon — perfect timing! I had lunch at their lovely cafeteria and checked out the permanent collection which had some wonderful Impressionists and Picassos. They also had an Emma Amos special exhibit which was interesting.

I was done by 3 pm so took a cab back to the train station and made a 3:25 pm train back to New York City. I relaxed and read my book (SULA for the literary heroine course). I was at my apartment by 5:30 pm and as a bonus came home to a clean apartment and the laundry done.

All in all, a very successful day. And as everyone wore masks on the train and at the museum, I felt it was relatively safe. <https://www.philamuseum.org/>

Who's Published: Mary Beth Yakoubian

Mary Beth spent the COVID-19 lockdown productively and wrote a book titled "There's Nothing Wrong With Her: A Memoir." It tells the story of her mother's battle with Alzheimer's, and the many obstacles Mary Beth had to overcome to provide her beloved mother with proper care while living over one thousand miles away. We're certain it's a subject many Questers are familiar with and may have experienced, too. The book is available at Amazon, or you can check Mary Beth's sites for more info: Mary Beth Yakoubian.com or booksnbeads.com

Born and raised in Stratford, CT, Mary Beth moved to New York City at twenty, where she later met her husband, Dan Cox, of Philadelphia. In addition to earning graduate degrees at New York University and Hunter College, she honed her writing skills at the acclaimed Gotham Writers Workshop. Mary Beth taught Phys. Ed., Math, and Music at High School for the Humanities in Manhattan.



"The hardest thing of all is to find a black cat in a dark room, especially if there is no cat."

— Confucius

Spring 2022 Distinguished Guest Lecturers Announced

Arlynn Greenbaum, Estelle Selzer, Karen Levin, Phyllis Weiss, and Bob Reiss are pleased to announce the following roster of guest speakers on Wednesday afternoon of B Week for Spring semester. Several of these speakers were recommended by Quest members. Please feel free to give us your suggestions for next Fall.

February 9: Joshua Greene, author of *Unstoppable*.

February 23: Joseph Bertolozzi performing Bridge and Tower Music.

March 9: Jane Brody, *The New York Times* Personal Health columnist. Kenneth Leedom/Peter Cott Memorial Speaker.

March 23: Elinor Lipman, author of *Rachel to the Rescue*.

April 6: David Hunt, retired CIA officer, on Intelligence in Flux.

April 27: Kevin Coughlin and Traci Rosow, authors of *Unblinded*.

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A Quest Publication

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REMEMBER TO WASH YOUR HANDS

CultureQuest Committee

edited by QNews Staff

CultureQuest is a program of cultural events, which take place on Fridays, offered to all Quest members. We usually schedule five or six events each semester. For many years Quest had classes only Mondays through Thursdays, and Fridays were simply a “day off.” Then someone had the bright idea of using our “idle” Fridays to visit museums and similar cultural institutions in the city.

Before the CultureQuest program officially began in 2017, **Yvonne Kress** would organize several museum tours during the year with the help of **Joan Briller**. **Bob Reiss** got involved by organizing docent-led tours at MoMA and creating a liaison with the museum’s outreach to seniors program. As part of that program, MoMA invited Quest to make presentations in the museum itself. **Lynnel Garabedian**, **Ellen Shapiro**, **Bob Reiss** and the late **Myra Nissen** gave these talks which focused on current exhibitions in the museum. As a result of this experience, Bob included in Quest’s Long Range Plan of 2016 a provision to have our organization take greater advantage of its proximity to New York City’s great cultural institutions. The CultureQuest (name suggested by **Linda Downs**) committee was formed as a response to this provision in the long range plan.

Linda became the first CultureQuest chair because of her extensive experience in the art world. Before joining Quest, she had been director and CEO of The Figge Art Museum in Davenport, Iowa and head of educational programs at The Detroit Institute of Arts and The National Gallery in DC. Renee Woloshin followed Linda as chair of the committee.

More recently, **CultureQuest** has evolved in several ways. We arranged for tickets for Quest members to see the final dress rehearsal of *La Boheme* at the Metropolitan Opera House last fall and have begun to offer walking tours in locations of interest.

During the height of the pandemic, through the magic of Zoom, we have also offered live docent tours at museums located not only in the New York area, but in other parts of the country — and the world — as well. For example, we had a virtual tour of the beautiful Crystal Bridges Museum in Arkansas last fall. And with a Danish guide, we had a delightful live virtual walking tour of Copenhagen. Our virtual events allow us to include more Questers as attendance is often not limited. This past semester we had an outdoor tour of a lovely sculpture park in New Jersey.



At the Quest Spring luncheon about five years ago, **Madeleine Brecher** and **Dena Kerren** heard Linda Downs talking about the

CultureQuest committee. Luckily, they were looking for new members for the fall, so they were in!

As an active participant in the New York culture/museum scene, Madeleine thought it would be fun to work with others setting the Quest cultural agenda.

When she first joined Quest, most Friday trips were to museums in Manhattan and occasionally nearby boroughs. That concept has since changed a lot, and the committee has found great success with trips to wonderful museums outside the city. Two examples are the Rockefeller Estate, Kykuit, in Westchester County, and the Grounds for Sculpture in New Jersey.

With concerns about Covid, and the

availability of Zoom, the Committee has expanded its selections to include (far) out of town museums, such as the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art. And they also had an excellent, well-received personal tour of the city of Copenhagen last spring, with a wonderful guide who was able to respond to individual questions live on the tour.



Linda Downs named this committee CultureQuest and became the first Chair.

**I Posted a Photo of
My Clean House
and It Was Removed
as “Fake News”**

CultureQuest Schedule Spring 2022

February 11: Virtual walking tour of “Mosaics and Murals of Spanish Harlem,” with NYC tour guide Leigh Hallingby, who gave us an excellent virtual tour last spring of the Audubon Mural Project in Washington Heights.

February 25: Live virtual tour of Persepolis, an ancient city in Iran, with Miklós Sárközy, lecturer of the Iraq and Iran tours of the Spiekermann Travel Agency.

March 11: Live virtual walking tour of “Istanbul: The Capital of Empires,” with Istanbul guide Safek Kulansi.

March 25: In-person tour at the American Museum of Natural History which will include the new special Sharks Exhibition and the permanent Gems and Minerals Exhibition. The tour will be given by Quest member Marion Schultheis who is a docent at the museum.

April 8: Visit to the Museum at Eldridge Street. Depending on the Covid situation, this will be either a virtual or in-person tour.

May 6: In-person, outdoor walking tour of “Jewish Harlem” with Dr. Jeffrey Gurock, Professor of Jewish History at Yeshiva University.

**I Said I Was
Good at Making
Decisions.
I Didn’t Say the
Decisions I Made
Were Good.**

CultureQuest Committee

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When **Dena Kerren** first joined Quest a few years ago, she knew that she wanted to contribute in some way, and she selected CultureQuest thinking that she would meet like-minded members who share her pleasures in the world of art and design. Now, Dena enjoys researching and identifying exhibits that attract and encourage members' participation. And she's found that collaborating with knowledgeable and talented members with similar interests has been a rewarding experience.

Before retiring, she represented Canada as Director of Business Development for 17 years. Prior to that she held many positions in marketing and management. Dena loves to travel; last month she visited with her grandson who is in Spain on a Fulbright scholarship.

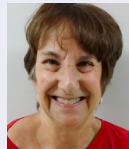


Bob Reiss was instrumental in establishing this committee, as he felt it would be a natural complement to the Artists and their Work course at Quest, of which he was the co-coordinator. He felt that a more robust museum tour program was a natural extension of that course.

Bob appreciates the great deal of creativity on the part of the committee members, citing the recent virtual tour of Copenhagen, which was well attended and utterly delightful.

Usually, each committee member arranges one tour per semester. This involves liaison with the venue, monitoring registration and coordinating with any technical committee members if required.

Keep your eye on Quest's events calendar. The Committee is working on a visit to a sculpture foundry in Long Island City, which should be quite interesting.



Estelle Selzer reports that as much as she wanted to be involved at Quest, she does not like giving presentations, and therefore committee work seemed like a perfect solution.

Her initial involvement was as a volunteer with the Guest Lecture Committee. Bob Reiss, who was with that group, had mentioned that he was also on the CultureQuest Committee, and invited her to one of its meetings. The rest, as they say, is history. Estelle likes all the arts and visits as many NY museums as possible, so CultureQuest was a natural fit.

She was instrumental in getting The Metropolitan Opera to invite us to a final dress rehearsal of La Boheme this past fall. She notes that patience is important in dealing with Quest members who sign up for events and then cancel or don't show (Hint!). Estelle welcomes our suggestions for cultural experiences.



Hedy Shulman reports that she has been passionate about culture and the arts since she was a young girl. No one in her family ever went to the theater, so it's a bit of a mystery how she found her way to museums, shows, etc. but she is grateful that she did, and that she was comfortable going on her own even when she didn't have friends to join her. Hedy embraced CultureQuest because of her passion for the arts, and because she had been looking for a way to contribute to Quest. It has turned out to be a perfect fit.



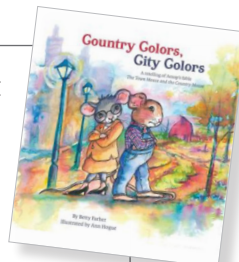
Renee Woloshin's professional life was in the fields of psychology and human resources information systems. Art and art history

have long been a passion of hers, and, because she wanted to contribute to Quest and loves visiting museums, especially art museums, the CultureQuest committee was a perfect fit for her.

Renee was a new Quest member when she joined the committee and for her it has been a way to connect with other Quest members. She finds it very gratifying to hear from those who have participated in CultureQuest events, and how much they have enjoyed them. "I am proud of the outstanding job our committee members have done in creating this program for Quest." We welcome new committee members who would truly enjoy planning cultural events for Quest.

Who's Published: Betty Farber

"Country Colors, City Colors," is **Betty Farber's** latest book for young children. In this modern retelling of Aesop's fable, The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse, a country mouse and a city mouse observe the colorful hues of both settings. Each gains a new appreciation not only for their own familiar neighborhood, but for those surroundings that are different from their own. This lyrical picture book teaches preschoolers colors and compares city sights and country landscapes.



Betty Farber, M.Ed., grew up in New York City. She loved the excitement of the city, the lights, the ballet, and the museums. She moved to Missouri when her daughters were growing up, and discovered she loved the country, too. When Betty taught preschool, she found engaging ways to teach about colors among other concepts, and was inspired to write this book, which was illustrated by Ann Hogue.