

Greetings, in this merry month of May, to members of this informal network of Individual UUs!

We have just one new person this month (don't forget to let me know of anyone else who might be interested in joining), and it's **Kathryn McIntyre** of the Hamilton, Ontario, congregation. (Her email address is kathmcintyre@sympatico.ca) Kath writes:

"Hi There Good Folks,

Thank you for this. Networking with UUs is good. I joined the CLF when we separated from district services and I felt a need for connection. I also wanted The World delivered to my door and find the CLF Magazine very meaningful.

I contribute to the UU Woman's Federation in order to have some small impact on crazy American social politics which will eventually influence me and my family. I contribute to the CUC Capital Campaign and modestly to the UUA campaign. Neo-Conservative religion has dominated US Politics for over eight years. There are signs of moderation, but at least until the US and Canada both operate as secular bodies Unitarian Universalism wherever it is organized needs support. I do what I can and enjoy the interaction.

Our Hamilton congregation is a member of the UUA and we hope to be hosting a CUC annual meeting in the near future.

Trying to walk the talk. Kathryn McIntyre"

There's also some welcome material from two current readers of this newsletter. First, some excerpts from correspondence with **Lloyd Ryan** – I started talking genealogy with him, which is an interest we have in common, and thought that some of what he wrote would be interesting to you even if you're not into the absorbing search for knowledge of your family history:

"I am reconstructing (fictionally, of course) the life of my gggrandfather, born Piddlehinton, Dorset, England, in 1805. There is every indication that he was an early Unitarian, getting himself kicked out of Oxford where he was studying for the Church of England priesthood in his last year of the MA programme. He came to Newfoundland. It's a story only the skeleton of which has survived via the oral tradition on the north east coast of Newfoundland. His mother, supposedly, was the bastard daughter of George, Prince of Wales. So goes the old story

Gggrandfather was George Bragg Oxford, son of Rev. Joseph Oxford, of a long line of Rev. Joseph Oxfords from the time of Henry VIII (we understand) beginning with Fr. Joseph Oxford who supported Henry VIII, was thus relieved of his oath of celibacy, married, and engendered the line of C of E priests.

His mother was an Adams from Barton St. David (the same Adams family of the 2nd and 6th presidents of US). Within 20 miles or so of where George grew up was not only the Stonehenge remains but also Glastonbury, associated with King Arthur, from whom the Adams family claimed ancestry, Goddess worship (the door of the old cathedral is situated right of the 'vagina of the World'!), the old Celtic church, both pre-Christian and Christian, the latter of which the Roman Catholic church destroyed, and also the site of the first Christian church in England, founded by none other than Joseph of Arimathea and which the child Jesus is supposed to have visited. Wow!!!*

I have done quite a lot of research, and am fascinated with the customs of Dorset which was preserved for us, in Notre Dame Bay, NL, and which we practiced, because so many of our ancestors came from Dorset. (If you read the phone books of Dorset and Notre Dame Bay, you see virtually the same family names.) I am also researching also the myths, ancestral songs, and holiday practices of the Dorset area. All to become fodder for my novel - already in progress and destined to be completed sometime before the year 3000

Ggrandfather George refused to pray to Jesus, because it was idolatry, and forbade his children from doing so - even my devout grandmother (his granddaughter) did not pray to Jesus, although she was not exactly clear why it was inappropriate. And so it goes

George was a wonderful musician, like his father. In the Rev. Joseph's will (1853 -- I have a copy) he willed several stringed instruments to one of his daughters. When George came out from England, he brought several volumes of his father's organ compositions with him. He (George) inscribed his family tree on the inside cover of one of them which was why Grandmother was so confident that she was a cousin to Queen Victoria. (She was also a descendant of the Beothucks. I have a wonderful photo of her - unbelievably dark - with two of her daughters, one unbelievably blond. DNA works strange magic!).

When grandmother was a maiden, she was quite competent on the button accordion. Her father gave her permission to play at dances at their home village of Little Bay Islands, but she was not permitted to sing the words. Her father said "There is no sin in the music; but some of them words can be powerful sinful!"

Many of the folk stories I have come from grandmother, including the one about the revival in the Methodist Church at Little Bay islands in 1896. I heard her tell that story a hundred times, at least. The story that I have just finished has to do with the matrix of belief of 'my people' and how they accommodated 'magic' because they also accommodated the 'magic' and mystery of Christianity. They knew that if they could accept the mystery of Christianity, on one hand, they could not reject it on the other simply because it came in a different form.

*Best wishes,
Lloyd"*

** Did you know that the list of U.S. Presidents includes four Unitarians (John Adams, John Quincy Adams, Millard Fillmore and William Howard Taft)?*

And from **Janet Vickers** I have this note:

“Dear Artists, Poets, Newsletter Editors and Readers,

The CUC's third annual chapbook will be available at the ACM in Thunder Bay, May 15 - 19, 2009. The cost is \$7 per book, or a special bulk deal for those at the conference of ten copies for \$50. Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes says in the Foreword:

*‘The title of this collection, *The Moon That Follows You Home*, taken from a poem by Helen Iacovino, reminds me that we are not alone in our search. We are not only surrounded by goodness, there is not only light in darkness, there is something more: a constant presence that does not lead us away from ourselves but rather follows us, accompanying us closely and gently along our path. We are still, and always, on our way home, to some place where (or some time when) our wholeness can be restored and celebrated. We are called to keep talking about our journey and keep walking that path, not by duty alone, but by our most essential humanity.’*

Contributors to the issue, besides our editors: Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes, Rev. Carole Martignacco, John J. Guiney Yallop, Diane Stevenson Schmolka, Keith Wilkinson and myself are - Belinda Betker, Rev. Audrey Brooks, Nathalie Brunet, Alex Campbell, Dan Coghlan, Jennifer Getsinger, Barbara Harsanyi, Elaine Harvey, Sterling Haynes, Helen Iacovino, Franci Louann, Angela Simmons (cover photo), Cassy Welburn, and Alex Winstanley.

After the conference the book will be available through the CUC Website or the Toronto office (1.888.568.5723, or 416.489.4121)

Best regards

Janet Vickers”

Hope you're still reading **Scott and Becky's** blog (<http://goingeast.ca/blog/2009/>) – here are three of the latest photos:



*Scott in a cave
(Thailand)*



*Becky and Scott with
Wat Rong Khun in the
background (Myanmar border)*



*Scott on a steep trail
(Thailand)*

And, because it's May, a perfect time to be spending time in a garden (your own or someone else's or a public park), here's a reading for your perusal – and of course, comments are always welcome:

"On Earth", by Jennifer Bennet from Our Gardens, Ourselves

The independent life of the soil became obvious to me one evening in late May when the vegetable garden had been spaded and the air was heavy with warm mist from a recent rain. When I entered the still mostly bare garden in the fading light, the scene before me resembled the seafloor more than anything terrestrial. The damp surface was writhing with earthworms that retracted with elastic swiftness into their burrows as I started to walk down a path. When I stood still, they emerged again, and all the soil's surface seemed to be in motion. Fascinated, I watched a dew worm about as long as my forearm fit its mouth around the fat white root of a sprouting broad bean and drag the bean toward its burrow. I felt a little like the owner of a restaurant discovering that as soon as I turned my back, the staff were dancing on the tables and eating the food from the customers' dishes.

I had never before witnessed the purposeful activity that went on in the garden when I was not in charge, although I knew only too well that if I stayed away from this bare soil for about a week, I would be greeted by a carpet of vegetation, evidence of the soil's own huge bank of seeds -- more than 500 to a coffee cup of garden soil, according to Charles Darwin. Despite my calling this place mine, I had come to realize that I was a visitor, I had only a temporary influence upon a place with its own secret agenda.

(Do you think the last sentence is true on a larger scale?

“Only a temporary influence”?

“Secret agenda”?

I'd love to get a conversation going!)

*Photo from my own garden,
taken by my spouse:*



Warm good wishes from the Editor, who is again looking forward to hearing from as many of you as possible – with photos, ideas, thoughts to share, questions, suggestions
“only connect”!

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