

# CUASA COMMUNIQUÉ

Volume 39 No. 3

Editor: Janice Scammell

December, 2008

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## Looking to the Light

2008 has been a year of ups and downs. We are still at war in Afghanistan, with no end to the conflict in sight. Millions of people have become hapless victims of an economy ruined by greed and near-sighted mismanagement. Every day we hear reports of natural calamities, many of which underscore the threats of global warming.

Yet there are grounds for hope. On the political front, American voters made an historic choice, one unthinkable a generation ago. Canada continues to enjoy the bounty of enormous natural resources, a cushion against dire economic developments. Young Canadians showed up and made the country proud at the Olympics. The worldwide lemon shortage seems to be abating as well, no small thing for those who like lemonade.

So there's our choice: glass half empty or half full. How shall we see the world? I think the earth gives a useful prompt here. For reasons I don't fully understand, our days get shorter in autumn, until in deep December they start getting longer again. This rhythm has governed our lives for millions of years. How confidently and eagerly we await the return of light and summer. If winter comes, spring is not far behind. As the light prevails, so should our optimism, faith and energy.

I wish everyone safe and happy holidays. Let's look forward to making the best of 2009, a future abundant with opportunities.

Arnd Bohm  
CUASA President

For the final Communiqué for 2008 I thought that it would be fun to canvas members of CUASA Steering for recommendations for books for holiday reading and gift giving. I offer their suggestions including a few of my own in an area of continual enticement -- cook(ery) books. There have been a number of recent books published by prominent food writers cum chefs or cooks such as Marcella Hazan, James Barber, Nigella Lawson, Rose Murray and Bonnie Stern. I have already dipped into the wonders of Stern's "Friday Night Dinners" as inspiration for my own Sunday night traditions and I will present the collection of the late James Barber's best recipes, in "The Genius of James Barber" to my youngest son who wonders what he will do when I am no longer active in the kitchen and to my oldest son who randomly watched "The Urban Peasant" after school and made his suggestions for dinners I could make. Rose Murray's "A Taste of Canada. A Culinary Journey" is colourfully illustrated in stylish coffee table book mode with a foreword by Elizabeth Baird, who raises and then answers the oft debated question of "Is there a Canadian cooking and if so what is it? with reference to Murray's accomplishment. Marcella Hazan's "Amarcord: Marcella Remembers" is another in a recent series of memoirs and biographies of internationally renowned food writers and cooks or chefs. I have read with respect and amazement at the wide ranging experience of Julia Child and Elizabeth David. I look forward to Marcella's stories. Not least, but last I am wishing for "Nigella Christmas" to round out my collection of holiday mags and books for perennial perusal.

Other choices for "good reads" include Susan Jackson's (CUASA Secretary/Treasurer) title, Ian Rankin's "Doors Open." Susan writes that this is a fast paced thriller set in Edinburgh about a group of art loving amateurs who are enticed to the underworld to plan the "perfect crime," an art heist from the National Gallery of Scotland. Excellent characters and a well developed plot. These are new characters, not a Rebus story so not quite so dark ...

Arnd Bohm (CUASA President) enthusiastically recommends Edwin Way Teale's "A Naturalist Buys an Old Farm" a 1974 title still available so Amazon.ca tells us. Arnd writes that "Teale was an amazing naturalist who wrote with precision, grace, poetry and humor. My discovery of him began with his "Journey into Summer," an account of how he and his wife drove across the USA one summer. One learns something on every page of his writing. It is a great escape from the humdrum world of jaded routine."

By far the best work that I have read this fall is Sheilla Jones' "The Quantum Ten: A Story of Passion, Tragedy, Ambition and Science." Jones is a Canadian journalist with an advanced degree in theoretical physics. She manages to weave personal, professional and academic threads of the "quantum ten" building to the climactic 1927 Solvay Conference in Brussels. Who would think that this book would provide a memorable quotation from Einstein on a key point of a successful male/female partnering!

The most timely book published has to be Niall Ferguson's "The Ascent of Money: A Financial History of the World," a tale for all who dare ....

Happy Holiday Reading

Janice Scammell  
Editor, CUASA Communiqué

### **Scholarship Announcement**

The winner of the CUASA Scholarship for 2008-2009 is Jason Abdelhadi, form the Bachelor of Humanities. The value of the scholarship is \$2,700.00. Congratulations to Jason.