THE SENIOR COLLEGE MESSENGER

Issue 32: June, 2024

This is an organ for members of Senior College to submit short articles that share news, letters to the editor, reactions to the program and anything that they feel will be of general interest. Its regular appearance will allow for an exchange of opinion of topics of interest to the members. In particular, it would be interesting to record reactions to the talks, colloquium topics, books discussed and items appearing in the Messenger.

Please submit contributions to the editor, Ed Barbeau at barbeau@math.utoronto.ca .

SENIOR COLLEGE ANNUAL

Seniority is not a synonym for dormancy. It is that time of year again for you to let us know about your accomplishments and scholarly contributions for the *Senior College Annual*. Just list your activities and contributions in the categories below with as much detail as you think would be of interest. This should take just a few minutes. Please return your list by the end of the first week in June to dan.lang@utoronto.ca.

1. **Awards and honours:** name of award or honour, donor, place and date bestowed.

2. **Publications:** author(s), title, journal, complete date, volume number and pages. These include published papers, articles, chapters in books, books, online formats, blogs, and encyclopedia entries.

3. **Invited Lectures:** title of lecture, name of sponsoring association or organization, location, date.

4. **Conference presentations:** title, sponsoring association or organization, location, date.

5. **Research grants, held or proposed:** title of research proposal, dollar amount of funding, period of funding, granting agency.

6. **Teaching activities:** institution, course title and number, dates, supervision of students, examining duties.

7. **Other activities, accomplishments, and contributions:** anything else that you consider significant, such as consulting work, an art show, a recital, a visiting professorship, membership on research and discussion panels, editorships, reviews of manuscripts and grants, or service on a Senior College Committee or Executive. You might even mention a College or Wednesday talk that piqued youe curiosity. Please avoid using acronyms that would not be understood outside your field of interest.

D.W. Lang, Editor, Senior College Annual

INTRODUCTION OF NEW FELLOWS

Senior College welcomes two recently appointed Fellows, **Martha Bowden** and **Karin MacHardy**.

Martha Bowden joined after hearing about the College from Brian Corman. She earned all of her degrees at the University of Toronto (BA Trinity, 75; MA, 76; PhD, 81). "After a period of intense domesticity (children born in 1981, 1984, 1986), an international move to the Atlanta area and seven years as an independent scholar", she joined the faculty at Kennesaw State University in 1992, retiring in 2017.

She specializes in Restoration and Eighteenth Century British Literature. Her academic contributions include an edition of three novels by Mary Davys (c. 1674-1732), a monograph on Laurence Sterne and the eighteenth-century church, and one on historical fiction. She is working on a study, *Words to the Wise*, of "eighteenth-century female authors' use of the structure of fables in other forms, to resist the male narrative of their lives and abilities".

Dr. Bowden edits the Pedagogy section of the Southeastern American Society for Eighteenth-century Studies' annual volume, *New Perspectives on the Eighteenth Century*, which reflects her interest in perdagogical strategies among teachers of this period in all disciplines. She is also interested in music, sings in a chamber choir and plays the piano (especially Bach (1685-1750)).

Karin MacHardy holds a Ph.D. in early modern history from the University of California at Berkeley and has retired as a history professor from the University of Waterloo. Currently, she is working on a historical novel, having received a U. of T. certificate in Creative Writing. She has authored several books and articles on the confessional conflict in the Austrian Habsburg territories during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, as well as on historiography. As an External Fellow, Karin values the exchange of diverse ideas that the Senior College offers.

IN MEMORIAM

Peter Rosenthal (June 1, 1941 – May 25, 2024)
Professor of Mathematics

Mary Seeman (March 24, 1935 – April 23, 2024)
Professor of Psychiatry

CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

Events marked with **F** are for fellows and external fellows. Registration a few days ahead is necessary for each event. This can be done in response to a weekly email from Senior College or the Faculty Club to its members that describes the events or through the Senior College website.

Book Club: Mondays 2-4 pm (Zoom only) (**F**)

June 3: Helen Macdonald, *H is for Hawk* (2014) (Leader:Peter Alberti)

July 8: Alex Ross, *The rest is noise: listening to the twentieth century* (2007) (Leaders: Linda Hutcheon, Michael Hutcheon)

Meet your colleagues: Thursdays 2-4 pm (Zoom only) (**F**)

May 30: Susan Pfeiffer
June 6: Bernd Baldus
June 13: Jonathan Dostrovsky
June 20: John Kennedy
June 27: David Milne

Aftermath

Let us define the *age* of a person to be the number of complete years that they have lived (*i.e.* the age last birthday). In particular, the age of a baby in its first year is 0. If you take any two people, then assuming that they live long enough, for times totalling of one year, the age of the older will be twice the age of the younger. We can understand why this is so by looking at an example. My older brother was born on August 2, 1932 and I was born on June 25, 1938. From June 25 until August 2 each year, my brother is 5 years older than I am; from August 2 until June 25 the following year, he is 6 years older than I am. So when I was 5 between June 25 and August 2, 1943, he was 10 years old, and when I was 6 between August 2, 1944 and June 25, 1945, he was 12.

One can also investigate when the age of the older person is some other integer multiple (three times, four times, *etc.*) the age of the younger. Another formulation of the same problem involves complete laps by two runners on a circular track, moving at the same speed, but starting at different times. When is the number of completed laps of the earlier runner in whole number times the number of completed laps of the other?

Speaking of birthdays, here is something you can try with a moderately sized class of a couple dozen students. Find out the birthday for each student. You may be surprised how often two of the students have the same birthday.

To be more precise, for a group of 23 people, the probability of two with the same birthday is slightly over 50%. In other words, about half the time this will happen. (Once, when I did this, there were three with the same birthday. Of course, if you have twins in your class, that tends to put a thumb on the scale.) For 30 people, the probability rises to about 70%; for 35, 80%; for 40, 88%; for 50, 96%. For 100 people, it is a virtual certainty. Here is a website that will perform the calculations for you: hhtps://www.omnicalculator.com/statistics/birthday-paradox.

As an experiment, I checked the death notices in the April 6 and April 13 editions of the *Globe & Mail*. In 22 of them, the date of birth was indicated. There were no duplicates; there were three pairs with birthdays on adjacent days. However, the subject of the Obituary on the last page of the Opinion section had a birthday that agreed with one of the 22.

The issue of April 20 paints a different picture. Out of 17 birthdays provided, there were two pairs of coincident dates (March 31 and May 3).