

### President's message

*By Jenny Mercer*

As I write this, the New Year has just begun and it is a perfect time to look back on my first full year as President. I am pleased with the progress that the Board has made even though much of it may not be immediately evident to our members. I am certain that our efforts will provide a solid foundation on which we can build for the future. Improving the Club's governance structure has been a major focus for the Board during 2016. Those who attended the Annual Meeting in September will recall that we proposed significant changes to our by-laws and these were subsequently approved by the membership. Among other things, these amendments realigned our committee structure in support of our strategic priorities.

The Board developed these strategic priorities at an all-day planning retreat held early last year. The retreat was ably facilitated by member Joanne Reid, a professional management consultant. It was a thought-provoking exercise that helped us in setting our strategic goals. As I reported to you at the time, our first priority is membership growth but we are also looking hard at the overall member experience with a view to improving in all areas. The survey of members that we conducted in September provided valuable insight into the types of services and programmes that would be of most interest to members. We are working diligently to ensure that the Club offers you what you told us you would like. One example of the changes we are making is described by the General Manager elsewhere in this issue. The bar is being reconfigured as an informal place to meet friends for a drink and a light meal while the Library will provide a broader and more formal meal service. I hope you will come to the Club to experience this innovation and to tell us what you think.

As you know, the Club exists to serve its members. Nevertheless, the Club cannot run itself. The General Manager and his staff do their best to ensure that everyone who comes into the Club receives excellent service and enjoys the experience. The role of the Board and its committees is to provide oversight and to relay the expectations of members to the staff. For this model to work, the Club relies on volunteers who are willing to join committees and to work for the common

good. Far from this being a burden, most members who have volunteered have found that committee work greatly increases their enjoyment of the Club. In the process of helping the Club, they make new friends and enrich the value of their own membership. I urge anyone who has the time and interest, to get in touch with me or Nico Barrett to discuss how you might help. I can almost guarantee that you will find the experience rewarding.

### Membership Matters

*By Judith Cole, Vice-Chair of the Membership Committee*

Every year the Club loses about 25 members due to resignation, relocation and inevitably, death. It is the Membership Committee's job to replace the lost members and to expand the membership base. This task is more difficult than it might seem. We need members who will not only appreciate the amenities of the Club but who are also clubbable, as described elsewhere in this edition.

Over the past months the Committee has drawn up a plan that it has dubbed **Double-Up by 2020**. The aim is to double the number of members over the next three years. This will lessen the Club's reliance on outside events to sustain our financial viability and make it a place primarily for members and their guests. To achieve our goal we have developed an outreach strategy which we will be rolling out shortly. Our target groups include young professionals, recent retirees, and women. As reported in the last edition of @the U Club, our former Front Desk Manager, Sean Mehrotra, has been appointed to the new position as Manager of Membership to work on the plan.

The Committee cannot grow the membership on its own. We need the active support of every member to talk-up the benefits of joining the Club with family members, friends, business associates, and anyone else who might be a prospect. We have changed the fee schedule to make it more attractive to potential members. We also plan to offer tangible incentives to anyone who brings in new members.

Details of the plan will be announced shortly. In the meantime, if you have any leads that might be followed-up, please contact Sean Mehrotra at 416-597-1336 or by email at [membership@theuniversitycluboftoronto.com](mailto:membership@theuniversitycluboftoronto.com)

## Clubbability

By Ross Peebles

I recently visited the website of one of our affiliate clubs in the U.K. and was intrigued by the club's requirement for membership. So long as one had achieved the age of majority, prospective members are only required to be clubbable. The website goes on to explain that those considering membership should "want to meet like-minded ladies and gentlemen to enjoy their company in convivial surroundings."

The Oxford Dictionary defines clubbable as "suitable for membership of a club because of one's sociability or popularity." The term, I have discovered, was coined by Samuel Johnson in about 1783. Dr. Johnson was himself a frequenter of London coffee houses and clubs and had been called a most clubbable man.

This got me thinking about the people who join clubs such as ours. What makes a club different from other places where people gather to eat, drink, listen to music, or exercise and what characterises clubbable people. Entering the Club is certainly not like entering the lobby of a hotel. Taking lunch or dinner at the Club is not the same as eating in a restaurant. But what makes the Club so different?

Firstly, a club is a place where one is known by and knows fellow members and staff. If it happens that one has not previously met another member, it is encouraged, even expected, that introductions will follow. Secondly, the purpose of a club is to interact with fellow members in the pursuit of mutually enjoyable activities. The Club's programmes are organised around the premise that shared experiences are preferable to those undertaken independently. Reading a book can bring many individual rewards. Sharing the experience with the fellow members of a book club brings new insights that would never have otherwise occurred to the reader. A meal taken at the Club Table provides the opportunity for a convivial exchange with fellow members and can turn a solitary meal into an enjoyable event.

Friendship and conversation are the soul of a club. Those who are clubbable enjoy both. An essay, entitled Clubbable Men, which appeared in the March 27, 1897 edition of **The Spectator** dealt at length with the nature of clubbability. It concluded that clubbable people are both interested and interesting. They enjoy sharing ideas across a variety of topics, both great and trivial. They enjoy listening as much as they enjoy talking. They like to challenge each other as much as they appreciate being challenged. They seek out new friendships and acquaintances whenever they have the opportunity.

We are fortunate to belong to a club that has members from a diversity of backgrounds and experiences. We owe it to

ourselves and to each other to remain clubbable – to be friendly, sociable and companionable. As Dr. Johnson said, "If a man does not make new acquaintances as he advances through life, he will soon find himself left alone. A man, Sir, should keep his friendship in a constant repair."

## Fortified Wine Lunch

December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016



## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

The editors welcome your comments on anything you see in @theUClub. We would also like to hear from you if you have suggestions for future stories.

Please direct your comments to the General Manager, Nico Barrett, at [gm@universitycluboftoronto.com](mailto:gm@universitycluboftoronto.com).

## Yuletide Lunch

December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017



Rares & Roxana Pateanu, Andrew Rogerson



Main Dining Room, Yuletide feasting



From left clockwise: Sean Lawrence, Esther Shipman, Valentine Lovekin, Claire Hopkinson, Diana Wiley, Will Delgado, Moira Shipman

## From The General Manager

By Nico Barrett

Well, another year has passed and we have settled into winter with a busy schedule of events. We were pleased with the turnout at all of our December events. The December 5<sup>th</sup> concert evening featuring TSO Chamber Soloists had a sell-out crowd for what was deemed one of the most magnificent and magical evenings at the Club. Superlatives, yes – but if the buzz afterward was any indication clearly well deserved. Deepest thanks to Diana Wiley for arranging such a memorable evening. The annual Yuletide luncheon buffet was better attended than the previous two years, even though it was slightly earlier than usual. What can one do when the calendar falls so? Next year I would hope it



Nico Barrett

could be on the 15<sup>th</sup>. And the Fortified Wine Luncheon had close to 40 attendees, almost pushing us to capacity. By the time you read this, our January and February events will have passed.

If you've been in the bar over the past few months, you'll notice some subtle changes. Incrementally, we are nudging the space into becoming a bar; central to the Club's social life – less focussed on dining and more on drinks and snacks. But more than just changing the space we'd like to change members' mindset about how the bar is used. As it evolves we'd like you to think of it as a 'go to' space for entertaining friends and colleagues – less formal, more a place where one can loosen one's tie, order a libation from our new extensive cocktail list and bid farewell to the working day. We'll certainly continue to offer meal service in the bar but we'd love to see the focus of dining move upstairs to the Georgian splendour of the Library. Over the winter, we've broadened our offerings to create new interest in the Club's activities – Raclette, Karaoke Night, Winterlicious and we were quite fortunate that Valentines 2017 fell during the week allowing us to host a Table d'Hotel evening.

All in all, I remain convinced that the Club is evolving not only to accommodate the needs of current members but is also moving in a direction that will make it more attractive for potential members. And to this end we need the support of our current members to recommend persons for membership and to share in this wonderful Club. The Club's future depends upon this. The UCT is a place where friendships are made and nurtured and it should be shared amongst a wider, diverse group of people who can claim it as their own.

## Sold-Out Performance of TSO Chamber Soloists at the Club

With violinist Jonathan Crow, cellist Joseph Johnson, clarinetist Joaquin Valdepeñas, and pianist Serouj Kradjian, December 5, 2016

*“For me, tonight was like walking into a small nightclub and finding the Rolling Stones on stage.”*

—Gary Hanson, interim CEO of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra in his after-dinner remarks on the extraordinary performance by Jonathan Crow and the TSO Chamber Soloists earlier that evening

By Diana Wiley, Chair of the Arts & Culture Committee

Languishing in a German prisoner of war camp, the music surging through Olivier Messiaen’s brain in sound and synesthetic colour was his monumental *Quatuor pour la fin du temps* (Quartet for the End of Time). A deeply religious man, his apocalyptic vision was framed by images from the Book of Revelation. A sympathetic guard provided the young composer with paper and pencils to capture his music, and found some (poor quality) instruments. The first performance was given in Gulag VIII-A in Görlitz before an audience of 400 prisoners-of-war and their guards on January 15, 1941.

The interpretive power of the TSO Chamber Soloists, led by Concertmaster Jonathan Crow, as they performed this challenging work in the intimacy of our Lounge created an effect that is hard to describe. In its expression of longing and suffering and eventual transcendence, the music seemed to speak to one’s deepest core. I was not the only person in the audience who admitted to weeping in the long solo cello and violin movements. When the violin drew its last impossibly high note, applause was muted, as though no one wanted to break the spell; rather, the audience rose in a single gesture of gratitude for an extraordinary musical experience. Afterwards, many people commented that they had never before responded to a piece of music in that way.

An important component of the evening was the quality of the piano: Rosa Remenyi of Remenyi House of Music had shown princely generosity (and trust!) in loaning us a beautiful Fazioli piano — the Ferrari of pianos, as our appreciative pianist Serouj Kradjian remarked over dinner. Rosa felt strongly that the piano should be up to the standards of our stellar pianist and the wonderful instruments the other musicians were playing. (*We have started a piano fund, with \$10,000 from our first generous donors; we’ll need a fairy godmother/father to ever own an instrument of this calibre, but what a difference it would make to our music program!*)

The evening continued with a note-perfect dinner. Mingling

with the musicians over dinner and late into the evening around Chef Patrick Desmoulin’s dessert table, we felt exceptionally privileged to have shared this magical evening.

## Literary Evening with Harry Underwood

By Diana Wiley

December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017

The Club hosted an intellectually stimulating literary evening just before Christmas, with author and independent scholar (and former McCarthy’s senior partner) Harry Underwood and actor James Graham. What made the evening unusual is that the book on which the lecture was based is a scholarly—albeit approachable and far from dry—philosophical discourse, and the presentation was illustrated by readings of excerpts from Proust, Knausgaard and Nabokov by an accomplished actor.



left James Graham and right Harry Underwood

Dipping into a book of philosophy for pleasure is not a common experience for modern readers. Philosophy has become a highly specialized field where arcane concepts are discussed in an equally arcane language. However brilliant the ideas that are covered in the pages may be, for most of us they have become, if not actually inaccessible, at least difficult to the point of discouraging all but the most arduous attempts at deciphering their meaning.

Harry Underwood’s book, *The Experience of Beauty*, goes a long way to reclaiming philosophical ideas as a guideline for daily living, partly by reconnecting the great ideas with their expression in nature and the arts — pictures, literature, and music. It is not a book that you read quickly, but rather savour over a period of time. Comprised of a series of eight beautifully written, thought-provoking essays, it considers the great questions of life — amongst them, what constitutes a good life, what gives it meaning, is truth subjective or objective — with reference to the responses of philosophers, artists, writers, critics and the author himself. For this reader, at least, finding a lyrical, even poetic, treatment of these questions in our ironic and cynical times was both moving and uplifting.

Conversation over a long table in the library afterwards was lively, and our forty guests lingered far into the evening.

# A Healthier You: A Quick Start Guide to Fueling Your Body Right

By Karen Csida, Sports Director

Without question having a nutritious diet is key to all aspects of health and wellness. From energy to disease prevention, to looking and feeling your best, the tremendous role a healthy diet plays is vital. Yet, even with food's important role, it is not always easy to fuel your body with the foods that it needs to be at its best.

With the wide range of recommendations for optimal diet out there – paleo, vegetarian, calorie counting, and so much more - it can become confusing to even know what the right way of eating is. Despite the many different variations of a healthy diet, one simple philosophy remains true across the board: *clean eating*.



**What Is Clean Eating?** Rather than a diet, clean eating is the simple practice of mindfully choosing real, whole foods to energize your body. Unlike traditional 'diets,' there are no banned food groups, no counting calories, and no cheat days. Instead, you focus on giving your body the nutrients it needs through choosing real foods and avoiding processed foods, refined carbohydrates, and artificial ingredients. Eat smaller meals and snacks made up of whole foods (preferably organic when possible) throughout the day. Here are some easy tips to get you started.

## Tips to Clean Eating:

**-Become a Label Reader.** Ideally, you want to avoid packaged foods as much as possible, but since that is not always possible, train yourself to become an avid label reader. Pick foods with



recognizable ingredients, and no processed or artificial ingredients or added sugars.

**-Listen to Your Body.** One key element of clean eating involves becoming a more mindful eater. By fueling your body five to six times a day with smaller portions you will learn to recognize when your body is full and how certain food choices make you feel. Doing so will also help you learn if any particular foods (such as dairy or gluten) are difficult for your body to digest, which can further help you focus on the optimal foods for your particular needs.

**-Enlist Help.** You don't have to change your eating habits alone. Find a friend to go on the journey with you, and/or seek the expertise of a licensed nutritionist and/or a qualified personal trainer. In addition to an exercise regime, a good trainer will be able to help you tailor your clean eating diet to meet your unique needs.

**-Become a DIY-er.** A great thing about clean eating is that you can still have your favorite foods, you just may need to do it yourself. For example, instead of choosing fast food fries (not clean), bake a sliced potato with some unrefined olive oil and sea salt to create some delicious homemade fries.

**Questions to Get Started.** These simple questions can help you get started on your clean eating journey. If you opt for working with a nutritionist and a personal trainer, this information can be helpful to share with them.

1. I tend to overindulge most often in \_\_\_\_\_
2. I tend to eat my biggest meal/snack \_\_\_\_\_
3. I feel \_\_\_\_\_ after meals
4. Record a typical day's food intake: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Rate Your Current Energy Levels from 1-5 with 5 being excellent: \_\_

\*For more information feel free to contact me at

[sports@universitycluboftoronto.com](mailto:sports@universitycluboftoronto.com)

## UCT Group Exercise Schedule: Winter 2017

Class Type	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Barre & Stretch	12:30 - 1:30				
Boxing	10:45 - 11:30			11:45 - 12:30	
Circuit Training		12:00 - 12:30		12:00 - 12:30	
Circuit Training & Stretch		1:00 - 1:30		1:00 - 1:30	
Cycle		12:30 - 1:00		12:30 - 1:00	
Cycle & Stretch		7:15 - 8:00 AM			
Cycle, Circuit Training & Yoga	5:30 - 6:30		5:30 - 6:30		
Eccentrics					12:30 - 1:30
Gentle Fitness		10:45 - 11:45	6:30 - 7:15	10:45 - 11:45	
Pilates & Yoga Sculpt			12:30 - 1:30		

## Staff Profile – Louie Nguyen

One of the most familiar faces to members of the UCT is that of our Head Bartender, Louie Nguyen. Louie came to Canada in 1982. Originally from the city of Danang in Vietnam, Louie or 'Nhon' in Vietnamese, arrived in Canada on his own. Although he was fluent in French which might have made Montreal a more reasonable choice to live, he opted to settle in Toronto. His original goal was to study and become a professional chef. He felt that working in the hospitality industry would be a means of transitioning towards his goal. Throughout the late 80s and 90s he worked in some of Toronto's largest hotels, including the Delta Chelsea Inn and the Intercontinental.



*Nhon "Louie" Nguyen*

He came to the Club in 2003 as a waiter in the Main Dining Room. As the Club evolved so did his role and in 2010, he assumed the role of Head Bartender. And although he hasn't become a chef, he still prides himself on being a very accomplished cook and often brings some of his creations from home for his colleagues to sample.

Looking back he says that he's had so many wonderful experiences at the Club. Perhaps the most humorous was witnessing the burning of a tie on the Club's flagpole. Being the gentleman that he is, he refuses to divulge the names of those involved. He feels a close kinship with many members of the Club, so much so that he thinks of them as part of his extended family. Having come from the hotel industry where the working days tend to be very long and weekend work is the norm, he appreciates the life balance that working at the Club gives him.

Louie and his wife Christine have two daughters, Elise 16, years of age and Sophie, 11. He is heavily involved in and supportive of their athletic endeavours with Elise being an accomplished tennis player and Sophie being a competitive swimmer. Louie also cares passionately about his work at the Club having an almost encyclopedic knowledge of our wine cellars and a seasoned bartender's knowledge of his patrons' preferences, favourites and likes and dislikes. If you're ever in the bar and at a loss for a bottle of wine to order ask Louie to suggest something off-the-beaten-track. I'm sure you'll be pleasantly surprised.

## Australian Wine Dinner

*January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2017*



*Malcolm Cocks of the Australian Wine Society*



*Sampling and mingling*



*Enjoying the first course of dinner*

# Robbie Burns Night

January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016



*The Piper – Michael Brown*



*The Honorable Donald Cameron*



*"A Bonnie Lassie"*



*"Long may yer lum reek!"*



*Robbie Burns night guest of Honour  
Privy Councillor Bob Rae*

## The New Club, Edinburgh

*A Review by Ross Peebles*

On first approaching the New Club, it is well to remember the old adage of not judging a book by its cover. As my wife and I made our way through the throngs of people who crowded Princes Street during the annual Edinburgh Festival, we scanned the landscape for a building that might be the club at which we had booked for a five night stay. Finding nothing that met our expectations, we paid close attention to the address. We were looking for number 86 which we eventually found above an unmarked, steel-lined door next to an ATM machine. I pressed the inter-com button rather hesitantly and hoped for the best.



*The New Club, Edinburgh*

I was greeted by a friendly female voice and the sound of a buzzer that unlocked the steel door. We stepped through the

door and into another world. From the din of the street, we entered a serene, paneled corridor that led to an elevator. The elevator took us up to the reception desk and main floor of the New Club.

In spite of its name, the New Club is actually the oldest private club in Scotland and is one of three clubs in Edinburgh with which the University Club is affiliated. It was founded in 1787 but in compliance with the wishes of the city planners, it was rebuilt in 1969 to modernise the character of Princes Street. The ground floor has been given over to shops and the Club was rebuilt to occupy three floors above them. The bar and dining rooms are on the first floor and the top floor has 22 bedrooms for members and guests. While the 1969 renovation preserved the ambiance of the original club, it allowed for floor to ceiling windows in the rooms on the front of the building that provide spectacular views of the Princes Gardens and the Castle beyond.

The bedrooms are nicely decorated with modern bathrooms, television and coffee making facilities. Free Wi-Fi is available throughout the building. The dining room is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner every day, except Sunday when a fine buffet lunch is served in place of dinner. The food is excellent and the service throughout the Club is helpful and friendly.

During our stay, we met guests from Montreal (who, it turned out, was a contemporary of mine at school), New Zealand, England, and others from Scotland, of course. Since there are several permanent residents of the Club, company is always at hand.

The Club's location makes it an ideal place to stay on a visit to Edinburgh. It is a short walk to the railway station, the Old Town, and the major shopping and tourist areas.

## Milestones

### Weddings:

Bill Panagiotakopoulos and Natalia Zelenova were married on October 28, 2016

### New Members (from October 2016 – December 2016):

BENTALL, Hammond

CORBETT, David N.

DELGATY, James

MULVIHILL, Peter R.

WOOLFITT, Benjamin

BLACKWOOD, Dr. Stephen

Non-Resident 70+, Retired Businessman

Resident: Lawyer&Chair, Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal

Resident 40+, Pilot, Air Canada

Resident 40+, Professor, York U Environmental Sciences

Resident 70+, Artist

Non-Res, President Ralston College, Savannah