



December 2010 Volume XXIII, Number 11

DECEMBER CALENDAR

For more information, PLEASE contact the person indicated for each event!

- Fri 3 - Special Program postponed: Emily Dickinson Poetry Group...meets 10 Dec - see below!**
- Fri 3 - Special Program: Encore Presentation: The New Architecture of Berlin** by Marybeth Bridegam, 11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m., Applewood, Amherst. **Contact:** Chris Hurn.
- Fri 3 - Special Program: Conversational Italian** with Dean Poli and Zina Tillona, Newman Catholic Center, 472 North Pleasant St, Amherst. **Contact:** Dean Poli **NOTE:** this is the last meeting of the semester; Italian will resume on February 19th.
- Fri 3, 10, 17 - Special Program: French conversation**, 1:30–3:30 p.m. Room 208, Amherst College Campus Center. **Contact:** Judith Pool
- Thurs 9 - Council meeting**, 2:30–4:30 p.m., Five Colleges HQ, 97 Spring Street, Amherst
- Fri 10 - Special Program: Emily Dickinson Poetry Group**, 10:00 a.m.– 12:00 noon, 55 Amity Street, Amherst **PLEASE contact** Lise Armstrong if you plan to attend!
- Fri 10 - Special Program: Encore Presentation: Bauhaus**, by John Martin, 11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. Applewood (1 Spencer Drive, Amherst) **Contact:** Chris Hurn. **No** registration needed!
- Fri 10 - Special Program: Opera Prep by Peggy Bedell, for Verdi: Don Carlos**, 1:30–2:30 p.m., The Meeting Room, Northampton Lathrop. **Contact:** Peggy Bedell **No** registration!
- Fri 10, 9:00 a.m. - Close of registration for lottery of spring semester seminars. You may register after this date, but only those who have registered by 9:00 a.m. on Dec 10 will be included in any lottery that may be necessary to determine participation in over-subscribed seminars. Don't snooze and lose...**
- Jan 6 - Memorial Program**, Amherst College Alumni House, 10:00 a.m.–12:00 noon (see p. 3)
- Jan 6 - Special Program: Viewpoints** with Hy Edelstein, 12:30–2:00 p.m. Highland Valley Elder Services, 320 Riverside Drive, Florence. **Contact:** Hy Edelstein
- [Jan 7 - Snow date for Memorial Program, 10:00–12:00, Amherst College Alumni House]**
- Jan 7 - Special Program: Opera Prep by Peggy Bedell, for Puccini: La Fanciulla del West**, 1:30–2:30 p.m., The Meeting Room, Northampton Lathrop. **Contact:** Peggy Bedell **No** registration needed!
- Jan 11 - Computer workshop:** Improving PowerPoint, Room 212 Seelye Hall, Smith College, 9–12.
- Jan 12 - Computer workshop:** Improving Word Documents, Room 212 Seelye Hall, Smith College, 9:00 a.m.–12:00 noon

Notes from the President... Larry Ambs

The Semester has drawn to a close and we have held the Spring Preview. I was very pleased with the new venue for the preview this fall at Valentine Hall. The room was pleasant and open and the refreshments were well received. Everything seemed to integrate into a very hospitable affair. Accolades for all those who worked to make the preview a success.



We have a wide range of seminars being proposed for next semester. The deadline to be considered for the lottery is Friday December 10. My only concern with the spring seminar allotment is the distribution of seminars over the week. Only seven of the twenty-four seminars are being offered in the mornings. Monday and Tuesday afternoons have 5 each and Wednesday afternoon has 7. The Curriculum Committee has begun discussions on how to even out the seminar offerings in the future. This is also important because of limitations we have for space on the campuses.

Last month I asked about member interest in considering some type of discussion activity for the fall, such as a science or humanities series. I am pleased to say that I have been told that some of our members are interested in developing such activities. A “Science Activity” is under discussion and I have been asked by one member to solicit additional member interest in the humanities. Please contact me if you have an interest in either of these activities.

Don’t forget to look at the January Programs catalog. Something is scheduled each week in January and some will require pre-registration.

If you are interested in commenting on my suggestions or wish to contact me, please send me an email.

Larry

Friends to Remember

Our Memorial Program is on January 6th, from 10:00 to 12:00 noon, at the Amherst College Alumni House. (The snow date is January 7th.)

I would be grateful if you would look at the names mentioned below and call the office if you see that we have omitted someone. At the memorial we remember our friends and acquaintances who were members of 5CLIR at one time, be it recently or at some time in the past. (If you call or email with information but do not receive an acknowledgment, please contact the office again, since phone messages and emails can go astray, and we will acknowledge receipt of all messages.)

If you have a remembrance that you would like to share at the memorial, please contact Sara Wright. It is always touching and meaningful to hear about those special moments that you shared with your 5CLIR friend.

We will be celebrating the time that these people shared with us in 5CLIR: Claudine Blanchard, Sabina Braunthal, Joan Hastings, Chad Johnson, Klaus Kroner, Kerro Knox, and Barbara Snoek.

BAUHAUS: An Encore Presentation

John Martin will present "Bauhaus" on December 10th at Applewood. As I was not quite sure what Bauhaus encompassed, I asked John to write a short description for me – and here it is...

Bauhaus was a German school of design founded at Weimar in 1919, by combining two existing schools of craftsmanship: the school was following principles established by the Arts & Crafts Movement. The Bauhaus became a symbol of cultural renewal for artists and craftspeople despite the economic chaos following Germany's defeat in WWI.

Walter Gropius, the first director, attracted students from Germany and beyond; his genius was a magnet that drew teachers from among the leading *avant-garde* designers and artists of the day. The Nazis closed it in 1933. Nevertheless, its art, advanced design ideas, and products form the foundation of modern design and architecture today.

The *5CLIR Reporter* is published by Five College Learning in Retirement, Room 9, Mason Hall, Smith College, MA 01063. www.5clir.org tel: 585-3756. email: 5clir@smith.edu
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“Cooking and Eating: History, Science, Art, Performance”

A 5CLIR Seminar Moderated by Nina M. Scott

This seminar was created around all the food-themed offerings featured this fall by Museums 10 (www.museums10 subheading “Table for Ten”). I urged my participants to interact with as many of these programs as possible, and no one was more adventurous than Katy van Geel, who took the “performance” aspect of the seminar very much to heart. She entered the Emily Dickinson Bake-off in late September and took first prize for Emily’s Black Cake and second for Indian and Rye Bread, for which Katy was awarded a prize of fifty cents, which was what Emily herself had won. Katy also took instructions for preparing 10 lb. batches of Maine “Beanhole Baked Beans” (the subject of my presentation to open the seminar) and whittled them down to a manageable family recipe.

Joan Davis from South Hadley covered “Art” spectacularly. Joan arranged a personal tour for us of the “Wine and Spirit” exhibition at the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, escorted by the curator, retired professor of art John Varriano. This exhibit spans roughly 7,500 years, with artifacts lent by many museums; it will remain on view until December 12. Food historian Megan Elias came from the Five College Women’s Studies Research Center to talk about U.S. food writing from the Civil War to the demise of Gourmet magazine. We also took in “A Cabinet of Culinary Curiosities” at Smith College’s Neilson Library. Assembled by Barbara Blumenthal of their Mortimer Rare Book Room, it features historic tomes on foods and food preparation that dazzles with its scope (closes January 20).

Jim and I paid several visits to “What’s Cooking at the Mead,” a Sunday afternoon series of short talks on specific objects displayed at Amherst College’s Mead Art Museum, followed by a reception hosted by local restaurateurs (Chez Albert, Tabella, The Blue Heron, et al). It has proven to be so popular that Museum Director Elizabeth Barker is considering continuing it, and perhaps expanding it to include other members of the local community.

There were spirited talks by the other seminar participants as well, ranging from the evolution of the Pillsbury bake-off (Janet Price) to dining etiquette and utensils (Katy van Geel) and Jean Miller’s personal experiences with living and eating in Lebanon. Anne Williamson and Ellen Kosmer instructed us in matters scientific: the invention of Luther Burbank’s russet potato and the science behind garlic’s pungency. Nancy Frazier covered lobsters, and Kathleen Walker the topic of edible wildflowers, while Myra Lenburg told us of the history of U.S. candy-making czars Mars and Hershey (and brought us bags of old-fashioned penny candy). Serene Rubin, in spite of being wheelchair-bound after a severe stroke, came to every class and presented on “The Evolution of the Kosher Kitchen.” Arguably our most flamboyant presenter was Mike Lally, who hails from Ireland and brought us a variety of his own soda breads, accompanied by good Irish butter, as well as a sack of Cabot cheeses, whose factory he had visited and whom he had sweet talked into providing samples for the whole seminar.

We were all sorry to see the semester end.

--- Nina M. Scott



Seminar members Joan Davis, Ellen Kosmer, and Anne Williamson, Curator Barbara Blumenthal, and members Katy van Geel and Jean Miller inspect the books at Nielson Library at Smith College.

picture courtesy of Nina M Scott



Left to right: Curator Barbara Blumenthal, Jean Miller, Joan Davis, seminar moderator Nina Scott.

photo courtesy of Ellen Kosmer

CHICKEN TAGINE with OLIVES & PRESERVED LEMONS

Recipe from Hilaire Walden's *North African Cooking*
brought to the "Cuisines of the Mediterranean" seminar.

2–3 tblsp. olive oil
1 red onion, finely chopped
3 cloves garlic
salt, pepper
3/4 tsp. ground ginger
1 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
large pinch saffron threads, toasted & crushed
1 chicken weighing about 3 ~ lb.
3 cups chicken broth or water
1/2 cup greeny-brown Moroccan olives or Greek kalamata olives – rinsed
1 large bunch cilantro, finely chopped
1 large bunch parsley, finely chopped
1 preserved lemon, flesh discarded if liked – rinsed & chopped

Heat oil and fry onion till golden. In a mortar, crush the garlic with a pinch of salt, then work in the ginger, cinnamon, saffron and a little pepper. Stir into the onions, cook until fragrant, then spread over the chicken.

Put the chicken in a heavy saucepan or casserole so it fits snugly, add broth or water and bring just to simmering point. Cover and simmer very gently for about 1¼ hours, turning the chicken 2 or 3 times.

Add olives, preserved lemon & herbs, cover again and cook for a further 15 minutes or until chicken is very tender. Taste the sauce; if the flavor needs to be more concentrated, transfer the chicken to a warm dish, cover & keep warm, then reduce the cooking juices to a rich sauce. Tilt the pan, skim off surplus fat, then pour over the chicken.

A Tale of Semolina Cookies (Ghoriba)

"When I was learning to make these cookies I was a good student, following the lead of all the ladies in the kitchen. Whatever they did I followed, but when it came time to make Ghoriba mounds, with their perfectly shaped domes, I couldn't seem to get them right. No matter what I did, I couldn't achieve the domes because the dough kept sticking to my palms. The other ladies, however, used a complicated rolling, clutching, squeezing and back-and-forth motion that produced perfectly smooth balls and left their hands clean of dough. . . they produced one-inch discs with slightly raised domes that were smoother and much more celestial than mine.

"I was glad, however, that when it finally came time to eat them, our cookies tasted the same."

recipe on next page...

GHORIBA

1/4 cup sweet butter
 1/4 cup salad oil
 2 large eggs
 2 cups confectioners' sugar
 2 2/3 cups semolina flour
 1 tsp. double acting baking powder
 1/8 tsp. salt
 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract

Heat ¼ cup butter in the oil. When melted, remove from heat and set aside.

Beat eggs and 1 2/3 cups of the confectioners' sugar until soft and fluffy. Add the butter-oil mixture and beat a few seconds longer. Using a spatula, fold in the semolina flour, baking powder, salt and vanilla. Blend well.

Preheat the oven to 350° F. Smear baking sheets with butter. Place the remaining confectioners' sugar in a flat dish. Form the cookies by pinching off walnut-sized balls of dough and rolling between your palms until a perfect sphere is formed. (Since the dough is very sticky, it is a good idea to moisten your hands from time to time) Flatten the sphere slightly, dip one side into the powdered sugar and arrange on a buttered baking sheet.

Bake on the middle shelf of the preheated oven for 15 to 18 minutes. When they are done, the cookies will have expanded and crisscross creaks will appear on their tops. Allow to cool and crisp before storing. *And to go with the Ghoriba, what better than.....*

.....Mint Tea from Morocco

The preparation of mint tea is considered an art by the Moroccans. It is traditionally served in a richly engraved silver pot and poured from a great height into ornamented glasses.

Boiling water
 1 tblsp. green tea
 3 to 6 sugar cubes
 A cup of fresh mint leaves with stalks

Rinse out a 3 cup metal teapot with hot water., then add the tea. Pour in boiling water, swish around in the pot quickly and discard the water, making sure not to discard the tea. This rinse removes the bitterness from the tea. Stuff the mint leaves with their stalks in the pot and add the sugar. Fill the pot with boiling water and let steep 5 minutes, checking occasionally to make sure the mint doesn't rise above the water, Stir and taste, adding sugar if necessary.

Traditionally, the tea is served in small glasses set in silver holders but demitasse or standard cups will do.

For second helpings, leave the mint and the tea in the pot., add a teaspoon of tea, several mint leaves, and some sugar cubes and fill again with boiling water. When the mint rises to the surface, the tea is ready.

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