

Newsletter

Fall 2018

OPEN HOUSE DRAWS MANY STUDENTS

On September 5, over one hundred students visited our new facility on Current Road. The most common remark heard was: “There’s so much room!” Besides three large classrooms, there are a lounge, a small kitchen, a library and a conference room, plus two offices. Our Director, Roberta, has ordered new furniture and arranged it for optimum space. Each classroom has a overhead projector, screen and computer. Obviously, our organization encountered extra costs for this move. We are still accepting monetary gifts to help with the added expense.



Class A, B and C



Nina Rensenhouse and Barbara Pauls were the first two members to arrive, followed by many others.

December 13 Classes End

December 14 Holiday Luncheon

February 5 Spring Semester
Information Meeting
1:00pm BCC

February 5 Spring Registration Begins

If you are an Amazon customer—please consider naming The Second Half as a charity on smile.amazon.com

A percentage of every penny you spend will go to us—at no extra cost to you!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Second Half has just completed its first semester in our new space on Currant Road in Fall River, and what a wonderful semester it was. We have daylight, safe and adequate parking, many classrooms, and so much space I sometimes can't find the library. Three classrooms are equipped with screens and projectors and can hold between 30 and 40 people, we have a big room for meetings, and a room just for the library, which you and Joyce Miller have filled with books, CDs, and DVDs. It's hard to imagine, in looking back, how we ever lasted four years on Bedford Street.

Many thanks to Robin, Russ Carey, and Roger Menard for their tireless work in getting the space ready for September classes. What a team and what dedication! Thanks to Ellen Christie for providing funding for the furniture and equipment needed for the new space, and for funding the move. Thanks also to the Board of Directors for funding the renovations and equipment installation.

There's a new sense of energy and positivity at The Second Half. Have you felt it? We're very excited about our many new members and the new people who are getting involved in teaching classes and offering workshops. We're planning a rock 'n' roll party in the spring. I hope everyone will come and dance or at least tap to the music we grew up with. Maybe even sing along.

The holiday luncheon will be on December 14th at The Cove Restaurant on the water in Fall River. Cocktails are at noon. Russ is chairing a Silent Auction, and we already have some auction items you may want to bid on. Don't forget to send in your reservations.

We have a great line up of classes for the spring—many of which haven't been offered before. Bridge and mah jong are back. We're working diligently to get the catalog to you as soon as possible.

I wish you all peace and joy for the holidays and in the new year.

Eileen Sorrentino

President

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

When The Second Half began in 2000, until 2013 it was financially secure with low membership and low registration fees because of its connection to UMass Dartmouth and their low overhead. After our separation from the University we moved to Bedford Street and our budget tightened but became manageable by increasing the registration fees. Since then our membership has steadily increased boosting our income. In addition, Roberta began the Tea Party, the Annual Appeal and organized the fashion show which all added to our bottom line.

A generous gift by Ellen Christie, one of the founders of TSH, was critical in prompting our move to Currant Rd. It allowed us to purchase additional furniture, technology equipment and pay for the move to our new facility. Also, the members of the Board of Directors generously stepped up to pay for the renovations and equipment installation.

Since 2013 as an independent nonprofit 501(c)3 organization, we have sought donations from the communities we serve. For the last two years we have received funds from the Mass Cultural Councils of Dartmouth and Fall River, and we hope they will continue to support TSH. In addition this year we have extended our search for grants to local independent philanthropic organizations.

Membership donations to TSH have been generous and important to supporting operations. At the Holidays there will be an opportunity for members to donate during the Annual Appeal and to the Tea Party in March. Additionally, there will be a musical fundraising event in spring. I hope you all will support TSH by coming to sing and dance to the “Oldies” at our Rock ‘n Roll Party in April.

Jennifer Brindisi

Fundraising Chair

BOSTON HARBOR CRUISE

By Dot Sullivan

On a beautiful day for a cruise of Boston Harbor, we left White’s of Westport on Thursday, August 30th at 9:30am on a comfortable coach and rode to the World Trade Center where we were dropped off right at the pier to board the “Spirit of Boston”.



Cruising Boston Harbor



Dot and Satya Khanna Dot and her husband

After a delicious luncheon we set out for a 2 hour cruise of the Harbor and the Islands, passing many sights, including a fort, lighthouse, many boats - among them, Old Ironsides. The ship offered music and dancing as well, or you could choose to just lounge on the upper deck.

We were back at White’s by 4:00pm having had a nice relaxing day. Thanks to Paulette for arranging a great day trip.

MEET YOUR FACILITATORS AND FELLOW STUDENTS

Each issue of the newsletter, I'll interview one or two facilitators and students as a way to get to know them better.



Interview with Joseph Cote, Facilitator

Joe Cote is a native of Fall River. He received his undergraduate and doctoral degrees from the University of Georgia.

1. How long have you been facilitating study groups for TSH?

Joe: I joined The Second Half in 2004. I began facilitating courses in either 2005 or 2006. Every year since then, I have taught either one or both semesters.

2. What courses have you facilitated?

Joe: Nineteenth century Supreme Court Decisions, Twentieth Century Supreme Court Decisions, Presidential Elections, Robber Barons and Founding Fathers

3. Why do you volunteer to lead study groups?

Joe: My parents instilled in me the importance of education. I was the first in my family to attend college. I taught for 30 years and when I retired and moved back to Fall River, I felt that something was missing in my life. I missed the opportunity to share my knowledge with other people—I missed teaching.

4. Tell us about your background that helps you to prepare for the courses you teach.

Joe: Well, I have undergraduate and doctoral degrees in History. I have a love of learning. I never want a day to pass that I am not reading a book. There is so much history in this area of Massachusetts, that you can't live without running into it.

5. What is your favorite period in history? And why?

Joe: I love all areas of history. But if I had to choose a favorite, it would be American History. I especially like the social and intellectual parts. I am interested in how the people at that time lived, what their entertainment was, how they dressed, etc.

6. What do you like to do in your 'spare time' when you are not preparing or teaching a course.

Joe: I play the piano—I have a baby grand. I like and play all types of music: classical, contemporary, Big Band, romantic. I also have a 15 yr old grandniece that I help transport to her activities and I enjoy spending time with her. And sometime in the near future I am going to get another dog—I love animals and have always had a dog. It will be a black lab!



Interview with Nina Rensenhout, a Second Half member

Nina is currently enrolled in Ridley Rhind's *Poets and Their Times* and James Cronin's *Short Stories*

1. When did you join TSH?

Nina: If I recall correctly, I joined in with TSH 4-5 years ago. I volunteer at a hospice nursing facility and met B.J. Nooth there. She has been a member and facilitator at Second Half for a while and she encouraged me to join. I am very, very glad that I did. It is a very enjoyable place for me to be.

2. What is the best part about being a Second Half member?

Nina: The high quality of facilitators, the comprehensive curriculum offerings, the exceptional people that I have met in my classes, all of these things have been a very rewarding result of my joining in with this group.

3. What are your favorite type of courses to take? Why?

Nina: The courses that I have enjoyed taking up to now are French, Short Stories, history and art courses. It is quite a struggle for me to hold my course selection down to 2-3 classes each term. This is my goal, but I often don't meet it. A 4th or 5th class is usually pulling at me. So many great class offerings.

4. Do you have a hobby? If so, can you explain a little about it.

Nina: My hobby list is very short: reading, movies, museums, travel. These are some of my interests that I guess could qualify as "hobbies".

5. Is there anything else you would like to share with the membership?

Nina: After a long career of travel, followed by a short second career as a conference administrator in Boston, I find the stimulation and knowledge available here at the Second Half, both from facilitators and fellow students, amazing and exciting. Truly a joy to be involved with.

6. Is there an area in which you would like to see a course offered through Second Half?

Nina: The selection of courses offered is very comprehensive and varied. There are always things, down the line, that will come up as interesting topics for a future class. I feel that the current course selections are wonderful and I trust that they will stay that way, even as they change and are added to.

MSA Cultural Tours trip to The Greek Islands and Athens October 2018

By Professors Emeritus Ben Taggie and Anthony Miraglia

On the evening of October 8, 2018 a group of adventurous travellers left Logan Airport for Athens, Greece. This trip, organized by Ben and Louise Taggie of MSA Cultural Tours included Tony and Prof. Kathy Miraglia who enriched the tour by offering their artistic expertise and knowledge. We arrived in Athens late on the evening of the 9th tired but eager to begin our adventure the following morning. Our group of 29 included nine students who had taken the course *The Ancient World and Mediterranean Islands* taught by Ben and Tony in the spring semester of 2018.

Our first day began after enjoying a breakfast buffet feast provided by the Herodian Hotel where we stayed. This beautiful hotel is located just around the corner from the new Acropolis Museum and offers a stunning view of the Parthenon from its 5th floor outdoor restaurant, The Point. Ben led us for a walking tour of the Acropolis District that began on the Areopagus a rocky outcropping on the northwest side of the Acropolis where the Council of Elders or ancient court met. Ben presented his first lecture on the history of the Acropolis area. From here we enjoyed stunning views of modern Athens, the Acropolis, the Agora and the Temple of Hephaestus in the distance. We continued our walking tour past the Temple of Zeus as we made our way to the Parliament building to see the colorful and rhythmic changing of the Parliament Guards at noon. A free afternoon allowed for all to wander, dine, take in the museum and walk through the market (the Plaka), or just kick back.



The Parthenon, Athens

Day two we readied ourselves and headed by motor coach to the airport for our flight to the spectacular island of Santorini. We arrived in the early afternoon, settled into our rooms and hit the streets of Fira to take in the beauty and the dramatic sunset over the Caldera. On the following day, we boarded our coach for a tour of the island heading first to the town of Oia. From here one truly feels the magic that is Santorini. The stark white stucco of the buildings punctuated with ultramarine blue, salmon pink, light sienna and pale Naples yellows of the trim seen against the deep blue of the sea and cerulean of the sky was truly breathtaking.



Town of Oia, Santorini

From Oia we headed for the archeological site of Akrotiri. This ancient but highly advanced Minoan civilization was destroyed by the volcanic eruption in circa 1600 bce and created the immense Caldera. Like Pompeii in Italy, the site was buried under several meters of ash that preserved much of the structures, artifacts and striking and patterned mural paintings now in the Archeological Museum in Fira. We continued with a walking tour through the beautiful town of Megalochori and then onto the highest point on the island with the Monastery of the Prophet Elijah. Kathy and Tony closed off our visit to the island the following day with a morning lecture on fresco painting followed by a visit to the Archeological Museum that housed the treasures from Akrotiri and Cyclades.

On day five we boarded a high-speed ferry from Santorini to Heraklion on the island of Crete. We settled into our rooms at the Marin Hotel overlooking the harbor and view of the Venetian fortress. The following day we boarded our coach for a tour of the historic Minoan Palace site of Phaistos, one of three, the others being in Malia and Knossos. The Minoans, a Bronze Age Aegean civilization (2600-1150 bce) was a highly sophisticated and peaceful society who valued trade, a love of and respect for nature, art and equality of women. They lived peacefully leaving behind stunning works of wall painting, pottery and jewelry. The site at Phaistos, set high on a mountain plateau is a remarkable example of their knowledge of building and sophistication. We then stopped at Gortyn, the Roman Capital of Crete with its impressive Basilica of St. Titus, the site where Christianity is believed to have been introduced to the island. Crete contains 7 microclimates and we encountered a brief shower as we drove through mountain passes only to find the sun shining upon our return to Heraklion.

Day 8 was a free day with an option to go on a tour of the Archeological Museum in Heraklion led by Kathy and Tony. A group of 16 joined them in viewing this amazing collection of antiquities ranging from wall paintings from the Palace at Knossos, an extensive collection of Minoan pottery, jewelry and Cycladic figurines. The following day we boarded a bus and headed to the Palace of Knossos.



King Minos' Throne Room, Knossos

Perhaps the most impressive of the palace sites said to have had a population in excess of 100,000 people. We walked through this maze-like structure discovered by Sir Arthur Evans who began excavations in 1900 and gave the Minoan Civilization its name after the legendary King Minos. Ben, as he had on all our excursions offered his vast historical expertise by presenting the historical context, background and a review of Minoan society, religious beliefs and their language.



Town of Rethymnon, Crete

Lastly, we made our way through beautiful countryside to the port city of Rethymnon known as the Venice of the East. Built during Venetian rule, this visual jewel was for many the highlight of the day. A warm breeze invited many to sit by the harbor in outdoor restaurants and take in the view of the port and Venetian fort while sipping wine and partaking of fresh seafood.

The following day we made our way to the airport for our return to Athens. The rest of the day was free for each of us to do what we desired in this city that has so much to offer. Many relaxed, shopped or went to the beautiful Acropolis Museum to see works from the Parthenon including 5 of the 6 Caryatids that once graced the portico of the Erechtheion.



Caryatids, Acropolis Museum, Athens

On our last day in Athens we offered the group an excursion led by Kathy and Tony to the Archeological Museum. This comprehensive collection includes some of the very best artifacts from the Aegean Region that complete with an entire floor of Greek pottery, remarkable bronzes works, mosaics, and coins. We concluded this memorable voyage with a wonderful wine reception on the 5th floor of the Herodian Hotel. We raised our glasses to toast our hosts Ben and Louise Taggie for all of their hard work in planning this extraordinary trip with a special thanks to Louise for her oversight and care of all of the group's needs. With an illuminated Parthenon as our backdrop, we enjoyed each other's company, reflected on what we had experienced and followed this with our last gastronomic treat as all dined at the restaurant of their choice surrounded by art, new friends, culture and the rich history that is Athens.

Ben and Tony will be teaching a course entitled the **Historic and Artistic Origins of Portugal** in the spring semester of 2019. Please note that this class is not a requirement for anyone who wishes to join us on the MSA tour of Portugal in the fall of 2019. Please consult our website for information on the next amazing trip, the Origins of Portugal Tour, Oct. 12-22, 2019

<http://msaculturaltours.com>

Spring 2019 Trip

By Russ Carey

On May 28, 2019 35-40 eager Second Half members will be off to ten glorious days in Paris and environs to relish in everything that glorious city has to offer. Associated with the Second Half fall 2018 and spring 2019 classes, **The Story of Paris Through Its Historic Cafés**, participants will have the opportunity to visit some of the historic cafés discussed in class and experience first-hand why Paris is so renowned for its café culture. Travelers will also take in a concert at the magnificent Sainte-Chapelle, visit the Basilique Saint-Denis in the city of the same name, tour the Château de Pierrefonds in the lovely Picardie countryside, and take in a horse show at Chantilly, equestrian center of France.

Visiting Paris in late spring -- life doesn't get any better!





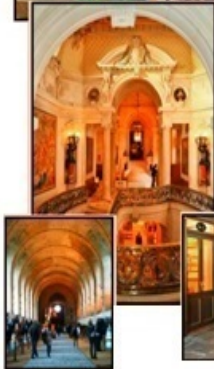
**Basilique
Saint-Denis**

Basilique Saint-Denis, located 7 miles outside of Paris in a city of the same name, is the first Gothic Cathedral in the world. It houses the tombs of every French king from the 10th through the 18th centuries -- an historical and architectural delight.

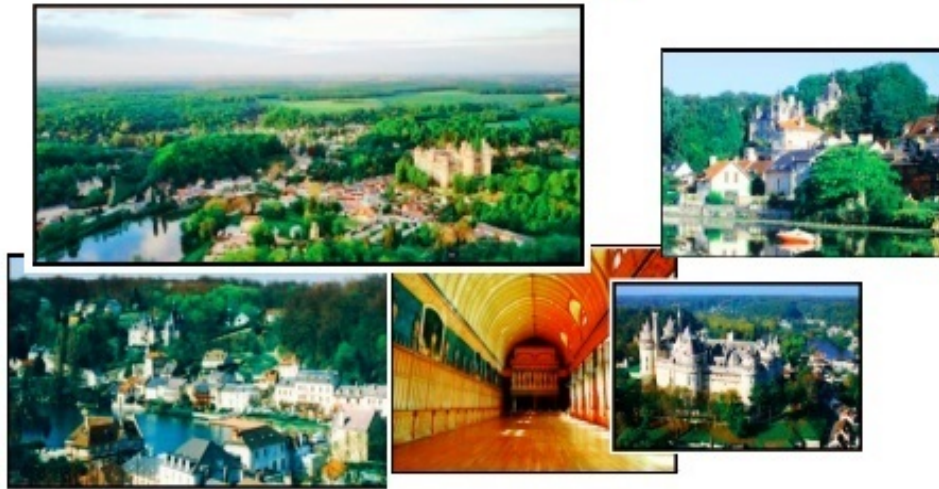


Château de Chantilly

Chantilly is the equestrian center of France. The estate grounds of the Château there house magnificent stables and an equestrian museum. The château itself was originally constructed in the 15th century and extensively rebuilt in the 19th century. The château houses one of France's finest art collections.



Pierrefonds



Château Pierrefonds, nestled in the forest of Compiègne, Picardie and overlooking a lake of the same name, is a classic example of a fortified castle. The castle was extensively renovated under the direction of Emperor Napoléon III, and is today registered as a National Monument. The village itself, located on the shores of the lake, is a little gem.

Sainte-Chapelle



Saint-Chapelle is a royal chapel within the Conciergerie complex, where the kings of France resided for two centuries. It was erected in the 13th century by King Louis IX to house the crown of thorns, a piece of the true cross, and other religious relics. Its stained glass windows are among the finest in France. Every year throughout the summer the Chapelle hosts evening chamber concerts.



Paris - Ville Lumière [The City of Light]

Paris defies description. One has to be there to understand why it is the most visited city in the world. The city is a global center for art, fashion, gastronomy and culture. Its 19th-century cityscape is crisscrossed by wide boulevards and the River Seine. Beyond such landmarks as the Eiffel Tower, the 12th-century Gothic Notre-Dame cathedral and the Arch de Triomphe, the city is famous for its world class museums, café culture, magnificent green spaces and designer boutiques. Everyone owes it to themselves to visit Paris at least once in their lifetime.



New Bedford Scale Model Solar System

By Roger Menard

If you haven't noticed it, New Bedford has a new attraction. Located on the bike path surrounding Fort Taber is a scale model of the solar system. This all came about through a collaboration between the Youth Opportunities Unlimited (Y.O.U.) of New Bedford and the Astronomical Society of Southern New England (ASSNE). Members of the Westport Council on Aging (COA) also provided important contributions.

The Y.O.U. is dedicated to providing inspiring experiences for the youth of New Bedford. Their mission has always been to broaden youth perspectives through transformative experiences. ASSNE is a group of people with a passion for astronomy. The club motto is to educate and inspire. ASSNE is committed to spreading the joy of astronomy and fueling interest in STEM education through observing nights and educational & outreach programs. Since the two organizations have similar missions, collaboration seemed natural.

This past spring Chancery (Chance) Perks from the Youth Opportunities Unlimited (Y.O.U.) of New Bedford contacted Rebekah Bartlett, President of the Astronomical Society of Southern New England (ASSNE) requesting assistance with their youth program. Ms. Bartlett reached out to ASSNE members to determine what type of assistance ASSNE could provide to Y.O.U. Since Mr. Roger Menard, an active ASSNE member and also a member of the Westport COA, lives in Westport, he decided to meet with Mr. Perks to discuss how ASSNE could assist Y.O.U.

Mr. Menard met with Mr. Perks in early spring. At that time the discussion centered around what could be done to provide an educational experience during rainy days. On sunny days Y.O.U. projects take place mostly outdoors and usually on bicycles. Mr. Menard offered to provide a presentation to Y.O.U. which would include props and would enlist the help of the audience. This would help Y.O.U. in providing educational and inspiring activities. During the meeting, Mr. Perks gave Mr. Menard a tour of their facility on Brock Ave. After some discussion, Mr. Menard suggested that he could build a scale model solar system on the Y.O.U. property. The scale model would include signs with thought provoking facts for each planet. Mr. Perks suggested that the signs also contain arrows pointing to the next planet and the distance in millions of miles included. An idea was born! Mr. Perks thought that it would be even better to expand the idea to encompass the entire bike path around Fort Taber. That way he could provide an educational experience why going on their bike rides. After walking off the 2 ½ mile bike path around Fort Taber, they both decided that this was an idea to pursue.

Mr. Perks focused on getting approval from the City of New Bedford to install the scale model solar system along the 2 ½ mile pike path. Mr. Menard focused on the design, construction, and funding for the scale model solar system.



Based on the 2 ½ mile bike path, Mr. Menard was able to determine the appropriate size for the Sun and all the planets, as well as the correct distance between the planets. The result is a Sun that is four feet in diameter, the Earth less than ½ inch in diameter, and Jupiter almost 5 inches in diameter. The distance to each planet varies greatly. The 'inner solar system' planets (Mercury, Venus, Earth,

and Mars) are easily seen from each other since they are only a hundred to a few hundred feet apart. The 'outer solar system planets' (Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune) are so far apart that you cannot see the next planet. Neptune is just under a mile away from Uranus! This provides a fairly accurate scale model of what our solar system would look like.

After Mr. Perks had made initial contact with the City of New Bedford, and Mr. Menard had developed the size and scale of the planets, they met again to actually pace off the distance between each planet. The plan was to start the solar system at the beginning of the bike path next to the boat ramp on West Rodney French Blvd, and finish with Neptune at the far end of East Beach on East Rodney French Blvd.

Mr. Perks then went back to the City of New Bedford with the details of the project for final approval. Mr. Menard presented the status of the solar system project at a monthly meeting of ASSNE. During that meeting ASSNE agreed to donate funding for the project and assist with the development of the signage.

The concept for the signs would be to include thought provoking ideas for each planet. Ms. Bartlett and Mr. Menard jointly developed the wording for each sign, and transmitted the information for approval.

An important part of this project is the accurate portrayal of each planet. To accomplish this, Mr. Menard enlisted artists from the Westport Senior Center to actually paint the planets. The Westport COA artists were excited to help out on the project. Mr. Menard provided sample pictures for each planet, but each artist was free to add their talent to capture the essence of each planet. The artists include Kate Jacobs, Eithne Porter, Jackie Cummings, Vicky Richard, Cliff Fiola, and Toni Keavy. The Westport COA artists actually painted two sets of planets. One set is used for the New Bedford scale model solar system, and the second set is being used as a traveling model to support local libraries and schools.





&



While Mr. Perks was working with Mary Rapoza, Director Bedford

Beaches worked to the signs mounting

The came to hot and Sunday in



New Parks Recreation for approval, Mr. Menard actually build the posts, have made, and complete the of the signs and planets.

project fruition on a sunny late August.

Mr. Perks and Mr. Menard toiled for six long hours to dig the 13 holes and install all of the posts containing the planets. Although they had rented a two man auger to dig the holes, it became apparent very quickly that most of the work would be removing the rocks from each hole by hand using crow bars and shovels. After they had completed the installation of the scale model solar system, they did a quick review of the model. All of the hard work had paid off. The solar system model is ready to provide both a learning experience and, hopefully, be an inspiring addition to the picturesque bike path around Fort Taber.



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