

I M P U L S E

LE BULLETIN D'INFORMATION DE L'ASSOCIATION MONTRÉLAISE DE SCIENCE-FICTION ET DE FANTASTIQUE, L'AMonSFF

September / Septembre 2019 (Vol. 23, No./N° 7)

NEXT CLUB MEETING IS THIS WEEKEND

Saturday, September 14, 11:30AM-5:00PM

St-François Room (second floor) Hôtel Espresso, 1005 Guy St. Downtown Montreal

MEETING THEME: Superheroes! Wear a T-shirt or other article of clothing sporting your favourite comic book superhero!

PROGRAMME

11:30AM-12:45PM

(Pre-Meeting Session)

UTOPIA PLANITIA SHIPYARDS

COMPETITION: MonSFFA's 2019 group project continues as our build teams finish assembling and detailing their scratchbuilt model spacecraft, then paint and weather them! If possible, additional time will be allotted in order to allow the completion of this project.

1:00PM-2:00PM

CAN YOU SEPARATE THE ART FROM THE

ARTIST?: Should we judge artists solely based upon their works? Can a terrible person still be considered a great sci-fi writer or filmmaker? Is it reasonable to impugn yesteryear's creators for attitudes, language or actions that would only by today's standards be considered inappropriate?

2:00PM-2:30PM

MID-MEETING BREAK: Fund-raising raffle; brief discussion of recent club business

2:30PM-3:30PM

IT'S A BIRD! IT'S A PLANE! IT'S...?: How well do you know your superheroes? Game in which players are challenged to identify comic book superheroes from just a quick, partial peek at their costumes!

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

- October 26 (Halloween)
- November 9 (Fund-Raising Book Sale)

WEATHER PERFECT FOR CLUB'S ANNUAL SUMMER BARBECUE, WASHROOMS LESS SO!

MonSFFA's annual Summer Barbecue-in-the-Park unfolded this year on Sunday, August 11, with some 20 or so club members and friends gathering in Lasalle's Parc Angrignon under absolutely wonderful weather conditions, in stark contrast to the steady showers that soaked last year's picnic. While rain fell on the days leading up to and immediately following our barbecue, the 11th proved a splendid day—sunny, comfortably warm and dry, with a slight breeze wafting across the park that kept the insects at bay.

We had moved the barbecue from its traditional July booking into August in order to accommodate our plans for a club meeting on July 20 celebrating, to the day, the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landing (see next item).

Folk began assembling under our usual stand of trees about 10:30AM, where a number of picnic tables were secured and not too long afterwards, our portable barbecue was erected and fired up. Within about 45 minutes, a variety of burgers and sausages were sizzling on the grill while salads, snacks, and drinks were scooped in advance of the main course.

Casual conversation ranged from the recently wrapped second season of Star Trek: Discovery and the latest Marvel movies to the about-to-unfold Worldcon in Ireland, other more local vacation plans, and additional morsels of summer frivolity.

All in all, a quite pleasant afternoon of easy conversation, tasty fare, and refreshing drink enjoyed amongst the company of fellow MonSFFen and friends.

DOES YOUR NAME APPEAR BELOW? CHECK THIS SPACE TO KNOW IF YOUR ANNUAL MonSFFA MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE

The Annual Membership Fees of the Following Club Members are...

Overdue:

DUROCHER, Marc
HAMMOCK, Christopher
HICKEY, Mark
MOIR, L. E.
NOVO, Alice
PICARD, Shawn
TOUSIGNANT, Yves

Due This Month, September:

ASPLER, Joseph
BOIES, Marquise
BRAITHWAITE, Erin
BRAITHWAITE, Keith
BRAITHWAITE, Scott
DUFOUR, Paula
DUROCHER, Dominique

Due Next Month, October:

PELLEY, Lynda
PETTIT, William S.
ST-PIERRE, Sylvain

Standard membership is only \$25 annually. We offer a family rate of \$40. Add \$10 to either of these to enjoy our premium "Platinum" membership level. Please complete the form below, include payment (cheque or money order made out to "MonSFFA"), and mail to:

**MonSFFA c/o
4456 Boul. Ste-Rose
Laval, Québec, Canada
H7R 1Y6**

Thank you for your patronage

MonSFFA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please print legibly. Cut out form and mail as per directions.

AMonSFF FORMULAIRE D'INSCRIPTION

Complétez lisiblement. Découpez le coupon et postez tel qu'indiqué.

NAME/NOM: _____ AGE/ÂGE: _____ TEL./TEL.: _____ - _____ - _____

ADDRESS/ADRESSE: _____
No. & Street/N° et Rue Apt./App. City/Ville

Province Postal Code/Code Postal E-MAIL/COURRIEL: _____

INTERESTS/INTERETS: _____

The afternoon was marred, however, by the utterly filthy condition of the on-site washroom, a single Port-a-Potty temporarily installed while the park's permanent facilities were apparently under repair or renovation. This latrine hadn't been emptied or cleaned in weeks, it seems! The stench was eye-wateringly vile and the floor and toilet seat were smeared with excrement, rendering the commode unusable.

This has prompted a number of suggestions from inconvenienced MonSFFers that we look into moving our barbecue elsewhere should Angrignon's washrooms not see a marked improvement by next summer. The club is seriously considering such action and exploring possible alternate sites.

July 20 MonSFFA Meeting Commemorates 50th Anniversary of Moonshot

On July 20, 1969, the lunar lander Eagle touched down on the desolate surface of the moon, an astounding exploratory and scientific feat that was achieved from conception and design to testing and realization in less than a decade. A few hours after that historic touchdown, Astronaut Neil Armstrong became the first human being to set foot on another world, followed shortly thereafter by crewmate "Buzz" Aldrin. The event was watched back on Earth by a worldwide television audience of some 530 million!

At the club's July 20, 2019, meeting, Keith Braithwaite presented a series of short video excerpts highlighting the television news coverage of the Apollo 11 mission by the major U.S. networks while he and a panel of MonSFFers reminisced on the monumental achievement that was Apollo 11.

Keith, along with Joe Aspler and Dominique Durocher, offered their childhood memories of the event, and their general knowledge of the Apollo program. For science fiction fans, the first manned excursion to the moon was not so outlandish a proposition; after all, they had been for decades prior reading imaginative fiction and watching fantastic films about just such an adventure. But the real thing was undoubtedly even more thrilling, perhaps especially for science fiction fans, who had been primed for and anticipating what they saw not as an impossible fantasy, but an eventuality.

Our panelists recalled the exhilaration they felt at the time, as the countdown to launch marked each second leading up to the mighty burst of roiling fire and smoke that propelled the giant Saturn V rocket skyward. A few days later, it was those breathless moments experienced raptly following the radio communications between Eagle and mission control as the LEM maneuvered over the Sea of Tranquility with just minutes of fuel remaining. The world held its collective breath waiting for Armstrong and Aldrin to confirm a successful landing. And, of course, the

highlight of the whole venture, the historic first step, broadcast live from the lunar surface, was every bit as awe-inspiring today, viewed in retrospect, as it was while it was happening on that memorable evening in 1969.

Keith further offered a brief slideshow overview of the work of celebrated NASA and space artist Robert T. McCall (1919-2010), who chronicled in illustration the progress of the American space program from the early days of the Mercury flights, through the exciting Gemini and Apollo years, and on to the Space Shuttle missions of the 1980s and beyond. His drawings, sketches, and paintings have appeared in books, magazines, and NASA's promotional publications, while his inspiring wall-sized murals are featured in museums.

McCall's style is painterly, boasting bold, descriptive brush strokes and exhibiting his keen eye for lighting. In addition to his detailed visual record of NASA's history, he looked to the worlds of tomorrow, envisioning a vast technological society expanding outward from Earth, and a bright future for man in space.

McCall also did conceptual and poster work for Hollywood, most famously for 2001: A Space Odyssey and Star Trek: The Motion Picture.

Sandwiched between these two similarly-themed presentations, Danny Sichel's fascinating PowerPoint presentation took us down another path entirely, examining the topic of music in science fiction and fantasy from several perspectives. Star Wars' famous Cantina Band, shown clutching their strange instruments, were quickly recognized by MonSFFers, as were musical instruments like Mr. Spock's Vulcan lute or the Holophonor depicted in an episode of Futurama. Iain M. Banks' Culture novel The Hydrogen Sonata features an 11-stringed instrument that can only be played by a four-armed musician!

Danny listed SF/F books, comics, movies, and television programs as varied as Orson Scott Card's Songmaster, he of the emotion-amplifying singing voice, and the animated children's cartoon Jem and the Holograms, about a rock band that employs advanced holographic technology on stage. Or Alan Dean Foster's Spellsinger, about an aspiring rock guitarist whose repertoire allows him to perform magic in the fantasy world to which he has been transported, and the recent film Yesterday, in which only one man remembers The Beatles and becomes famous by claiming their songs as his own. These and other stories were explored, focusing on the particular, and sometimes peculiar role of music in the narrative.

The pre-meeting Utopia Planitia workshop scheduled that morning had to be scrubbed as organizer Keith Braithwaite was unable to make it in on time due to Montreal's on-going construction-related weekend road closures and many lengthy detours. We hope to finish this model spaceship scratchbuilding group exercise during the upcoming September 14 pre-meeting session, with a modest slice of the meeting's time itself possibly to be added on in order that we complete the project as originally scheduled. We'll have to play that one by ear on the day-of.

We thank very much our presenters and panelists, and all those folk who helped to plan and run this meeting.

September Meeting Speaker Postpones Talk

MonSFFA's own Barbara Silverman was scheduled to give a talk, at our September 14 meeting, on mythology and the important role it has and continues to play in human history, but has informed us that, regrettably, she will be unable to attend as planned and must postpone her presentation. We hope to reschedule her for early next year.

But we have slated what could prove a heated debate that asks the question "Can you separate the art from the artist?" If a favourite sci-fi writer or filmmaker is revealed to be a blatant sexist or racist, or holds political views, perhaps rather controversial and in pronounced contrast to your own, can you still appreciate the individual's work, if not the individual? We also have a game scheduled that challenges folk to correctly identify comic book superhero characters from limited glimpses of their costumes! Can you recognize that cape or mask before your opponents? And, as mentioned above, we may find a little extra time to devote to completing our on-going group project.

So do join us for our September 14 MonSFFA meeting this weekend! (See also Events Column, page 1.)

Visit MonSFFA on the Web / Visitez l'AMonSFF sur internet: www.MonSFFA.ca

Impulse is put together monthly by Keith Braithwaite of behalf of MonSFFA and is available on MonSFFA's Web site courtesy Cathy Palmer-Lister. Contact Keith in regards to this publication by any of the following means: In person at a MonSFFA meeting • E-mail: keith1958@live.ca • Voice mail: 450-692-8831 • Via the club's mailing address, to the attention of "Impulse": MonSFFA c/o 4456 Boul. Ste-Rose, Laval, Québec, Canada, H7R 1Y6

Impulse est préparée une fois par mois par Keith Braithwaite au nom de l'AMonSFF. Il est disponible sur le site internet du club grâce à Cathy Palmer-Lister. Pour toutes questions concernant cette publication, contactez Keith soit: En personne à une réunion du club • Courriel: keith1958@live.ca • Boîte vocale: 450-692-8831 • Par la poste à l'adresse du club, à l'attention de "Impulse": AMonSFF a/s de 4456 Boul. Ste-Rose, Laval, Québec, Canada, H7R 1Y6